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(HANSARD)

Friday, June 3, 2005

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 3, 2005

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1000)

[*Translation*]

SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FEDERAL JUDICIARY APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, BQ) moved:

That the House denounce the recent remarks made by Mr. Justice Michel Robert stating that it is acceptable to discriminate on the basis of political opinion when appointing candidates to the federal judiciary and that it call on the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to create a special subcommittee with the mandate to examine the process for appointments to the federal judiciary and make recommendations for reform, with the primary goal of eliminating political partisanship from the process, by October 31, 2005.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to debate a highly important motion that speaks to the very state of law and the rule of law in our country.

The motion reads as follows:

That the House denounce the recent remarks made by Mr. Justice Michel Robert stating that it is acceptable to discriminate on the basis of political opinion when appointing candidates to the federal judiciary and that it call on the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to create a special subcommittee with the mandate to examine the process for appointments to the federal judiciary and make recommendations for reform, with the primary goal of eliminating political partisanship from the process, by October 31, 2005.

This motion, as you can see, has two main parts, one that looks back at what has already been done, and another that is more prospective. In other words, what can we do to resolve an increasingly recognized problem?

So, why this motion? Let us put this all in context. As a result of various witnesses appearing before the Gomery commission, the sponsorship scandal has hurt all politicians. Revelations by Benoît Corbeil suggest that the judicial branch is also affected by the scandal. We know that Benoît Corbeil, the former director general of the Quebec wing of the LPC, has stated that anyone wanting to be appointed a judge “needed to have friendly relations with those

people”—meaning members of the Liberal network—who can influence the political machinery.

A few days later, Michel Robert, the chief justice of the Quebec Court of Appeal, a long-standing Liberal and president of the Liberal Party of Canada from 1986 to 1990, spoke out and intentionally crossed the line into the political arena, by reprising contentious remarks he had made before.

What did Michel Robert say before and what did he say this year? Mr. Robert was interviewed by Mr. Maisonneuve on November 19, 2004, on *Maisonneuve en direct*, a popular show on Radio-Canada.

Mr. Maisonneuve asked him, “Mr. Robert, would you have been appointed to the Court of Appeal if you had been a supporter or an elected representative of a sovereignist party?”

Michel Robert responded as follows. “No, I would not be on the Court of Appeal because I believe the Government of Canada appoints people with federalist sentiments when there are openings in the hierarchy”.

Mr. Maisonneuve asked him, “So, there is a political dimension?”

And Michel Robert replied, “There is a constitutional dimension, in my opinion, yes, but beyond that, I believe that the system needs to be more transparent”.

Several months later, on April 26, 2005, in another Radio-Canada interview, Michel Robert made two points, “We normally must adhere to the federal Canadian system, since it's the system within which we operate. Personally, I have nothing against someone who wants to change the Canadian system into another system; this, he is perfectly free to do. But I don't think he should exercise judicial functions”.

He added, “To be nominated to a federal judicial function, I think it's a sort of prerequisite, one must not be sovereignist, I mean, I think this is a generally held opinion among Canadian judges”.

The comments of the chief justice of the Quebec Court of Appeal constitute a serious error in judgment. First, he crossed the line, which should be and which is extremely clear, separating the political and judicial branches. In other words, he did not fulfill his duty to refrain from public debate. He was not speaking as a judge but rather as a federalist and a Liberal. He ignored his duty not to take part in public debate and, of his own free will, he crossed the line into the political arena.

Supply

There has been another serious breach of judiciary duty on his part. In our legal system, because of the “constitutionalization” of rights and freedoms, judges play an important role, in fact an essential one. Indeed, they form the keystone of the protection system for rights and freedoms in Canada. By stating as he did that it is acceptable to discriminate on the basis of public opinion in Canada in the 21st century, Michel Robert sent the message that discrimination based on political opinion is okay.

● (1010)

But the fact is that a judge, and the chief justice of the Quebec Court of Appeal in particular, is among those chiefly responsible for promoting and defending human rights and freedoms in Quebec and across Canada. This means that one of the chief persons responsible for ensuring the promotion and respect of human rights came out and said that such discrimination based on political opinion was acceptable. As we know, this caused an uproar, quite a bit of an uproar in fact.

I would ask the members in this House who do not share the Bloc Québécois' political opinion to picture the following situation. Imagine that the PQ government announced at some point that it will be appointing to the Quebec Court of Appeal exclusively sovereigntist judges. I am convinced that people everywhere would rise up in protest. I can just see the headlines in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Gazette*, the *National Post* and the *Sun*, among others, denouncing such a decision. And they would be right to say it is unacceptable. That is the mirror image of the current situation.

There is a fairly serious problem of perception as far as the politicization of the judiciary is concerned, one that has been aggravated by Michel Robert's comments, among others. We have monitored the debates, the phone-in,—some of which I took part in—the editorials and press coverage. This has attracted a lot of public attention. Unfortunately, people are starting to mistrust the judiciary, which is, as I said, the cornerstone of our legal system in a country where the supremacy of law must be enforced.

That is the reason why I have, as you know, filed a complaint with the Canadian Judicial Council so that it may address this matter. It has, moreover, been a source of great concern to me that the Minister of Justice has not also filed such a complaint in support of mine, despite my questions, which I would say have been posed in a friendly and constructive manner.

One of the important, essential, vital roles of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice is, in my opinion, to protect the separation between the political and the judiciary. The minister has been remiss in one of his vital duties by not supporting my complaint with one of his own.

The public perception of a politicized judiciary is based on facts. I would like to refer to the excellent work done by the *Gazette* and CanWest—and those words are not likely to come often from my lips; perhaps this day should be marked on the calendar. Elizabeth Thompson and Cristin Schmidt, among others, have come up with the statistics. I will begin by quoting from an article by Elizabeth Thompson which appeared on page A1 of the May 6 *Gazette*. I will be reading it in the original, so I ask your forbearance for any mistakes of pronunciation I might make:

● (1015)

[English]

Nearly 60 per cent of lawyers appointed to the bench in Quebec by the federal government since the 2000 election contributed to the Liberal Party of Canada in the years leading up to their appointment, The Gazette has learned.

If professors and public servants are factored out, the proportion rises even higher.

Of the 29 law firm lawyers appointed to the Quebec Superior Court or Quebec Court of Appeal for the first time during that period, 21, or 72.4 per cent, had made individual contributions to the Liberals.

In fact, The Gazette's investigation reveals that the overwhelming majority of contributions made by those later named to the bench was to the Liberal Party during the 10-year period of contributions studied.

[Translation]

So the perception is based on facts which are troubling, to say the least. Hence the need to ensure that merit is the only consideration when people are appointed to the bench. This is why the explanations of the Minister of Justice that this is already the case do not hold water. Even the figures of the terribly sovereigntist *Gazette* indicate the contrary.

Now for the prospective part of the motion. The procedure has to be changed. This change received unanimous approval in the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, where I presented a quite similar motion. It got the support of the NDP and the Conservative Party. Initially, the motion was much harder on Mr. Justice Robert. However, at the request of my Conservative and NDP colleagues, among others, the wording was toned down a bit so as to take off some of the edge, if I can put it that way, and so the motion would be as balanced as possible. This is this motion we have before us today.

I wish to thank my colleagues from Provencher and Windsor—Tecumseh, both justice critics. They too have some fairly well based concerns. I am sure they will present examples that affect them, doing their best to be as non partisan as possible.

In this regard, the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness is generally speaking quite collegial. Despite the elevated levels of heat and antagonism in the House—as concerns the sponsorship scandal, for example—we manage to work together quite well. Everybody makes compromises, and the bills get moved along. This was the case with bills C-13 and C-2 on DNA banking and child pornography, respectively.

The Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and the justice critics therefore have an interest and have made a collective contribution. I therefore want to thank my colleagues from Provencher and Windsor—Tecumseh not only for supporting the motion but for helping to formulate it. What we have today is almost word for word what was before the committee. This proves we are capable of working together. I thank them.

So, it is important to change the procedure. We all know how judges are currently appointed. There is an advisory committee made up of seven members: one is appointed by the provincial bar association, one by the Canadian Bar Association, one by the federal judiciary, one by the relevant provincial justice minister, and three by the federal Minister of Justice. The individuals who are interested in becoming judges submit their candidacy to that committee. The committee then produces three lists: one for those applicants who are not commendable, one for those who are commendable, and one for those who are highly commendable. The Minister of Justice can choose between those who are either highly commendable or commendable.

The current system is not working as well as we would like it to. Indeed, we found, as indicated by the figures that I submitted earlier, that there is an over-representation of individuals who are of Liberal allegiance. It is important to point out that the fact that a person was previously involved in politics is no reason not to appoint him to the bench. On the contrary, we would be sending a very bad message if we told people they should do their civic duty by getting involved in politics, but that this will prevent them from being appointed to the bench.

I understand this very well, and I think that we should not prevent someone from being appointed as a judge on the ground that he is or was involved in politics. In fact, this political experience can often prove to be very useful, once a person becomes a judge.

• (1020)

However, there is a problem when the person must be affiliated to a specific political party and must believe in a certain political philosophy to be appointed as a judge, and when this has almost become a prerequisite. Unfortunately, in Canada, we are getting dangerously close to that.

The subcommittee that I am proposing would try to come up with solutions to eliminate political partisanship from the appointment process. At first glance, there are two things that come to mind rather quickly. First, why does the selection committee choose those applicants who are either highly commendable or commendable? Why does the process give full latitude and discretion to the Minister of Justice to choose from a list of highly commendable or commendable individuals? This means that the minister can appoint someone from the B list—if you will—that is, the list of those who are deemed commendable, and ignore those who are deemed highly commendable.

One way to tighten the appointment process would be to take away this huge discretionary power enjoyed by the Minister of Justice. This could be done if the committee submitted a short list of people and if the minister were required to appoint judges from that list.

I am sure my colleague from Windsor—Tecumseh will talk about the process in Ontario. He brags about it quite a bit. Since he will surely be a member of the committee, if it is formed, he will probably want to invite Peter Russell, who set up the committee in Ontario, to tell us how to go about it and to discuss the advantages that have stemmed from the process. Notably, there was the arm wrestling match between the Harris government and the members of

Supply

the committee. My colleague is in a much better position than I am to talk about it.

Second, is it necessary to have three representatives of the Minister of Justice on this seven-member committee? That is almost 50% when, in any event, the Minister of Justice will have very significant decision-making power since he will be appointing the judges in question. This begs the question: do we really need three representatives of the Minister of Justice on this committee?

Mr. Speaker, I see you are indicating that I should be wrapping up my speech. Twenty minutes is not a lot of time to talk about all this. I have two minutes remaining.

As a law maker, and simply as a citizen, I believe it is important for the judiciary not to be politicized. The public needs to have the impression and needs to know that the judiciary is not politicized. The keystone of our constitutional system must be protected by denouncing any intention to attack or even destroy the integrity of the judiciary system. We must denounce the politicization of the judiciary system. We must also protect the judges, who are essential, important and vital in protecting our individual rights and freedoms, which are constitutionalized in this system. With open minds, cooperation and non partisanship—the way things are in the justice committee, as I was saying—we must work on proposing a new process that will give the people of Quebec and Canada the least politicized judiciary system possible for the greater good of everyone.

• (1025)

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to our colleague with interest. I often agree with him, but not this time.

As far as the process of appointing judges is concerned, I spent nearly seven and one-half years in cabinet. I have often seen candidate lists. There is a major problem—as the Minister of Justice could tell us—in finding representatives of minorities to apply for judgeships, and then to get their names onto the list. If the minister has less discretion in choosing between “highly recommended” and “recommended”, these minorities will be even less well served.

I will give an example. For a long time, there were no francophone candidates in my province, not a single one. We just about had to hold a recruitment drive to encourage people to apply. If this were narrowed down still further, minorities would be shut out of the judiciary. I think this will serve us very badly. We need to maintain the minister's latitude to consult the list, choose from it and say that all those on it are qualified. No one is proposing to recruit, and appoint, the rejects.

As for the qualified candidates, we must ensure there are enough magistrates from any given group or language or racial minority. These people do not see themselves in the judiciary and must be sought out. I know that the Minister of Justice is very much aware of some of the difficulties connected with this, and we have spoken together about it in the past.

Supply

My response to my colleague is that there may be improvements to be made in the structure; that I do accept. But what I personally do not accept is removing all or most of the ministerial discretion. In my opinion, it is very difficult at this time, in my province at least, to find a number of candidates to serve the public. I am not just reporting hearsay; I have seen it for myself for years. I have personally telephoned around to lawyers I knew to try and recruit them as candidates. I knew they would be good, and I would ask them “Mr. or Ms. So-and-So, would you please be a candidate? We need people like you”.

That is what needs doing, not discouraging them further.

Mr. Richard Marceau: Mr. Speaker, the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is a staunch defender of minority rights, especially minority language rights, in his native province.

However, I would like to tell him that I found his question quite surprising. The member stated, without me putting words in his mouth, that if ministerial discretion is taken away, it will be more difficult for minorities to get judicial appointments. He is nodding in agreement. So he is saying—and I presume that we disagree on that point—that minorities would not qualify based on the merit principle only.

Having attended the Laval University law school and the University of Western Ontario, I am convinced that people from linguistic, cultural, ethnic or religious minorities are just as qualified to be in the “highly recommendable” group as the majority of Canadians, who form the pool from which the selection is made.

I am not saying that there can be absolutely no ministerial discretion. That has to be clearly understood. The judiciary must reflect as much as possible the society that it is supposed to serve, which means that issues such as gender and ethnicity can be discussed. I am not saying that there should be no discretion whatsoever. However, I am saying that it has to be tightened somewhat.

The member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell may not agree with me as to the degree of latitude that must be given to the minister, but it is not black and white; it is a grey area. Between ministerial discretion as it is now and taking away such discretion completely, there is some manoeuvring room, and that can be discussed at the subcommittee which, I hope, will be struck as a result of this opposition day.

• (1030)

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to what my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles said. I agree with him that it is important that these appointments be made on merit. In fact, I believe they are now made in this way.

I was president of the Quebec bar association in a previous life. I also followed these committees as the representative of Quebec's lawyers. Generally speaking, we have seen these appointments being made on merit.

My colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles also mentioned that belonging to a political party does not disqualify a candidate. Thus, it might be interesting to see someone with a varied life experience as a good candidate.

Where I disagree is with this talk about the politicization of the judicial system. I do not believe this is the case, from what I have seen, nor on the provincial level, since our PQ colleagues were in power for several years in Quebec. Consequently, can we say that all judges who were appointed in Quebec during the PQ government were staunch PQ members? I am not sure about this.

Rather than talk about politicizing a system, perhaps we should talk—and my colleague mentioned this earlier—about improving a system so that merit is recognized and is the basis of this system. However, when he mentioned—this is where I disagree a little—that one must belong to a political party to be appointed, I do not agree at all. Appointments are made on the basis of merit and must continue to be made in this way.

I agree more with my colleague's comments when he says that it is not a tie with a political party that disqualifies a candidate.

Mr. Richard Marceau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my Liberal colleague and former president of the Quebec bar for his question.

Actually, I do not think political action or having been a member of a political party should disqualify anybody from becoming a judge.

I tried a little test. I called the Quebec section of the Liberal Party of Canada to ask how many members they had. After a short discussion, I was told 70,000 to 80,000. So this is 70,000 to 80,000 members out of a population of about 7 million. This is not a big percentage.

When we look at the figures provided by the Montreal *Gazette*, hardly a sovereigntist mouthpiece—I do not think they are big fans of the Bloc, the Parti Québécois, or sovereignty—we see that 60% of those who have been appointed as judges made contributions to the Liberal Party of Canada. If we consider only lawyers in private practice, the percentage is 72.4%. There is certainly at least an appearance of politicization.

I think there is more than the appearance of a problem. The problem is real, if you consider that three lawyers out of four who were in private practice and have been named federal judges contributed to the Liberal Party of Canada. Therefore, there is a problem with politicization, which should be eliminated from the whole process of appointing judges, for the greater good of all Quebecers and Canadians

• (1035)

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles on the importance of this motion. Indeed, one of my responsibilities is to protect judicial independence and the rule of law.

[English]

Accordingly, because of this I will be voting against this motion, which I regard, taken as a whole, as being inappropriate, uninformed, unconstitutional and prejudicial to the independence of the judiciary and the responsibility of Parliament. Indeed, I am very concerned about the trafficking in innuendo in relation to the judiciary over the past few months.

Supply[*Translation*]

As my colleague has said, an independent judicial system is the cornerstone of our democracy, the cornerstone of our rule of law.

[*English*]

Therefore, public confidence in the independence and reputation of the judiciary is essential for the proper functioning of the legal system and the maintenance of the rule of law.

[*Translation*]

As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to preserve and increase Canadians' respect for public institutions, such as the judiciary and the courts. There may be short term gains in using the judiciary as a political toy, but in the long term, we all suffer if we do not give public institutions the respect they deserve. For this reason, we must be very cautious about making charges in the House and elsewhere.

[*English*]

It is not only highly inappropriate but in my view contrary to the Constitution for this House to be debating a motion of censure against Chief Justice Robert at this time. Regardless of the depth of feeling that some hon. members may have about the chief justice's comments, now is not the time or the place for these kinds of concerns or censures to be aired.

The framers of the Constitution gave careful consideration to all aspects of the relationship between the branches of government and in particular between the judiciary and Parliament. Section 99 of the Constitution reflects the importance of preserving the separation of these two branches by conferring on both Houses of Parliament the singularly important task of considering whether the conduct of a judge warrants removal. This is the exclusive role of Parliament, but it is also a limited role with only one sanction: removal. Parliament has no other power to censure or criticize individual judicial conduct.

An equally important and related point is that Parliament itself has established a specific process that is to be used to assist in informing its serious task in considering whether removal of a judge is warranted. In 1971, Parliament conferred the responsibility and authority on the Canadian Judicial Council to receive and fully consider complaints with respect to these matters and make recommendations as to whether the conduct in question warranted removal.

Parliament clearly recognized that the independence of the judiciary would be more appropriately preserved through this process, which allows for full evidentiary based inquiries upon which the decision whether or not to seek removal can be based.

[*Translation*]

I believe the hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles filed a complaint with the council, as is his right. We must therefore allow the council to carry out the mandate Parliament has given it. The council has expertise in matters of judicial independence and restraint. It will examine the complaint independently and objectively, as part of its procedures and make a decision.

[*English*]

This motion, however, seeks to vilify a sitting judge, with none of the processes or protections that have been established by this Parliament or by the Constitution. It is therefore not only premature and unfounded, but what is more serious is that this entirely premature and unfounded step could be perceived as an attempt by Parliament to influence the council's considered deliberations, if not circumvent the constitutional process established by Parliament for this purpose.

Indeed, there is as well a bigger problem with this motion. As indicated, the Constitution mandates that removal of a judge can only be accomplished by joint addresses to the House and the Senate. This House could be called upon at some point in the future to consider these issues formally in the context of the joint address procedure, that constitutionally mandated procedure. By prejudging the issue of the judge's conduct in this matter by voting in favour of this censure motion at this time, hon. members could be undermining the fairness of any future process that we may be called upon to implement.

As parliamentarians, we have a duty to act consistently with the Constitution and with respect to the separation of powers as protected under that Constitution. We must let the council process unfold and, if necessary, let the constitutional process unfold as it was intended to. Anything else is prejudicial to the independence of the judiciary and, I might add, to our role and constitutional responsibilities as parliamentarians.

I have said many times and I will say again that the quality of the Canadian judiciary is unassailable. Canadians are proud and have every right to be proud of our judicial system, which is studied around the world as a model of fairness, impartiality and independence. One of the main reasons for this is that our Canadian judges are seen to be of the highest calibre. They are diligent and dedicated and they deservedly enjoy a high degree of respect and admiration both within Canada and beyond our borders.

Accordingly, any reform of the appointments process must ensure that this important legacy continues to be protected and to flourish.

● (1040)

[*Translation*]

It is important to remember that the Constitution determines the context for the federal process of appointing judges. More specifically, section 96 of the Constitution Act, 1867, gives the executive—or cabinet—power to appoint judges to provincial superior courts by order in council. The executive remains responsible and accountable for the exercise of the power to appoint.

There are two important consequences of this. First, the power conferred on the federal cabinet cannot be delegated to another body, be it another level of government, a committee or any other entity. Second, the exercise of the executive's discretionary power in the appointment of judges cannot be hindered to the point where the executive has only limited latitude in exercising this discretionary power.

*Supply**[English]*

On a practical level, this prevents the government from adopting reforms which effectively delegate its authority to outside committees or which limit its discretion by requiring the government to select from a short list, as the member suggested.

We therefore need to examine carefully those proposals which are inspired by provincial processes that do not face the same constraints and constitutional frameworks as are dictated by section 96.

The federal judicial appointments process exists for one reason and one reason only: to ensure that only meritorious candidates are appointed to the bench. I strongly believe that my own appointments and those of my predecessors as well have been guided by this foundational principle.

There are also practical considerations that will limit the options that are available. This is not like the Supreme Court of Canada where there are nine judges, and vacancies normally arise every couple of years. In the Superior Courts, there are approximately 1,100 judges and there are always vacancies to be filled.

In April 2004, for example, the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs testified before the justice committee that 490 applications for the bench were received in 2003. There were 59 advisory committee meetings to assess these applications in every province and territory. In that year, 55 applicants were appointed to the Superior Court bench. In 2002, 499 applications were received. There were 47 meetings and 53 appointments.

These numbers do not include judges who were elevated from a Superior Court to a Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court of Canada.

[Translation]

A great many applications need to be assessed and a considerable number of vacancies need to be filled. When we talk about committees meeting and interviewing candidates for each vacancy or establishing short lists of candidates for each vacancy, the implication is that there is much work to be done, particularly if we consider the fact that, on one hand, the committee members are all volunteers and, on the other, their terms are relatively short.

In my opinion, we risk ending up with a process that cannot handle the applications submitted or fill the vacancies created when a judge dies, retires or is promoted to another court.

● (1045)

[English]

The present appointments process also permits the minister to promote diversity on the bench, as has been mentioned by my colleague, within the context of a merit based system. Indeed, since I was appointed Minister of Justice, we have taken great strides in improving gender equity. Close to half of my new judicial appointments and of my elevations and transfers have been women.

Our accomplishments do not end with gender equity, however. I have also had the honour, and this is important with respect to diversity, to appoint the first aboriginal judge to a Court of Appeal in Canada, the first person of colour to the Ontario Court of Appeal and the first Métis person to the Superior Court of Ontario. All this was

done under the current system of merit based appointments, which some of my opposition colleagues now seek to challenge.

In my view, any system of appointments must be structured so as to ensure that diversity can be promoted within the ranks of the merit based Superior Court judiciary. When we have courts that reflect the society they serve, this helps to promote confidence in the judicial system by all segments of our population.

There are seven basic points which are essential in examining the current appointments process referred to by the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles this morning. I believe these address a number of concerns that have been expressed about the system. The process is designed to ensure the Minister of Justice receives broadly based and objective advice about the qualifications of those who seek a judicial appointment.

First, the committee process for the federal judiciary is independent and at arm's length from the minister. The process is organized around independent judicial advisory committees which assess the qualifications of potential candidates.

[Translation]

Second—and this is extremely important—the Commissioner of Federal Judicial Affairs has supervisory power over the process. The commissioner has overall responsibility for administering the appointments process. He receives the applications and ensures assessments are diligent and thorough. He provides administrative support to the committees.

Third, as the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles mentioned, representatives of the judiciary, the Canadian Bar Association, the provincial law societies and the provincial attorneys general sit on the judicial advisory committees. These are all highly respected organizations.

Three members of these committees—two of whom must be laypersons—are selected by the minister. There are 16 committees: three in Ontario, two in Quebec and one in each remaining province and territory.

[English]

Fourth, judicial advisory committees vet applications from candidates in accordance with prescribed merit based criteria that are publicly available on the commissioner's website. In order to be considered for an appointment, a candidate must first meet the minimum of conditions in the Judges Act, the Federal Courts Act and the Tax Court of Canada Act, as the case may be. Candidates must have been called to the bar of a province or territory for at least 10 years or have 10 years' service as a combination of time at the bar and time in a full time judicial office.

The merit based criteria, which are set forth in the formula for the application form for candidates, include general proficiency in the law, intellectual ability, analytical skills, ability to listen, ability to maintain an open mind, ability to make decisions, capacity to exercise sound judgment, reputation among professional peers and the general community, capacity to handle heavy workloads, capacity to handle stress and pressures of the isolation of the judicial role, awareness of racial and gender issues, bilingual ability and such personal characteristics as sense of ethics, patience, courtesy, honesty, common sense, tact, integrity, humility, fairness, reliability, tolerance, sense of responsibility and consideration for others.

These merit based criteria, which are publicly available for evaluation and the like, do not include or make any reference to political affiliation or political belief. It is simply not considered relevant, nor can it be considered relevant.

[*Translation*]

The judicial advisory committees also consider potential impediments to appointment, such as whether candidates suffer from any debilitating medical conditions that would be likely to impair their ability to perform the duties of a judge or whether there are any past or current disciplinary actions against them, and so forth.

[*English*]

Fifth, the judicial advisory must evaluate a process then recommend candidates for evaluation by the Minister of Justice. The committee assesses candidates in one of three categories: recommended, highly recommended or unable to recommend. The files of all candidates are maintained in a separate and confidential data bank at the commissioner's office.

Sixth, and this is crucial, the minister can only choose from candidates who are recommended or highly recommended. I stress that no candidate has ever been chosen who was not recommended by the committee in its merit based evaluation.

Seventh, I, myself, subsequently engage in a consultative process with respect to the recommended candidate by the advisory committee. This consultation is intended to ensure it has the broadest possible set of information to determine who is the best candidate for a particular vacancy.

Turning to the question of political affiliation, it is important to stress once again that a candidate's political stripe, if any, is not a relevant criterion, nor can it be. It is not a prerequisite in the choice of a candidate. Nor can it be used to exclude candidates. The advisory committees do not take this into consideration, and I have repeatedly said that I do not either. Indeed, I have said on several occasions that for the most part, I do not know what a candidate's affiliation is and frankly, I could not care less.

• (1050)

[*Translation*]

Obviously, an individual should not be appointed to the bench because they gave money to a political party. But nor should that individual be discriminated against for having done so. A number of judges were once active in politics, and we should not exclude such individuals because, consequently, we would be failing to take

Supply

advantage of such excellent candidates and discouraging participation in the democratic process.

[*English*]

I truly believe the current appointment process is sound in principle. This does not mean, however, that improvements cannot be made. That is why I have undertaken a consultation process concerning appointments to the judiciary and how it is working. These consultations will start with the chairs of the various advisory committees who will have the experience on the ground in terms of how the process works in reality.

In addition, I also publicly have committed to consulting with experts to seek their views with respect to possible improvement. This process would not prevent in any way the parliamentary committee undertaking a parallel process, which it is free to do without the necessity of this motion. Indeed, this demonstrates that the motion has been brought in for purely partisan purposes unworthy of support in the House. This speaks to the issue of politicization that the hon. member himself warned against.

Before I conclude, I feel compelled to point out that the government's commitment to transparency in judicial appointments is further reinforced by our recent proposal to reform the Supreme Court of Canada appointments process. To the degree that the Bloc motion today would touch on that process, I would emphasize that the government's proposal achieves increased transparency and credibility of the appointments process for Supreme Court judges, provides for greater parliamentary and provincial participation and protects the independence and respect for the judiciary. At the same time, it preserves the constitutional authority for these appointments in the governor in council and protects, as I stated, from the constitutional framework, the independence of the judiciary, the integrity of the court and the responsibilities of the House.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his very well reasoned and researched presentation into what is a very important issue. As the minister knows, I am a member of the bar in New Brunswick.

[*Translation*]

In my province, as in many others, practising members of the bar have shown a great deal of interest in the judicial appointment process. I must say that since he has taken office, the minister has made some top-notch appointments.

What I want to know from the Minister of Justice is what he intends to do in this regard in my home province of New Brunswick. We have to appoint competent lawyers of course, but also bilingual lawyers. Some of my classmates still practice law. They tell me that in a province like mine, which is officially bilingual, the fact that a judge is not bilingual is often a problem for some witnesses or when documents are introduced.

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I know that the minister has said publicly that it was important for our judiciary, whether the Federal Court or the superior courts of my province, to be able to work in both official languages. As a minority francophone, I would be interested to know what the minister intends to do to promote these values regarding the appointments, while agreeing of course that all appointments must be based on competence and integrity.

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I will meet with the chairs of all advisory committees to encourage them to look at ways to encourage French-speaking lawyers to apply. This is also what I am trying to do when I meet with the French-speaking lawyers associations. I try to encourage them to apply for a judge position.

Diversity is an issue, but ultimately, all evaluations are based on merit.

• (1055)

[*English*]

In the pool of candidates we want to encourage more bilingual candidates, candidates that reflect the diversity of our country in order to promote gender equity, the inclusion of visible minorities and more bilingual judges, all of which speak to the issue of diversity, and this is important, within the framework of prescribed merit based criteria as I cited in my comments.

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has been interesting to watch the debate develop this morning, particularly the response from the minister. This is the problem I have. I am hearing from the minister that the system is basically functioning very well. We produce extremely good judges in our country. Generally I agree with him, but it is not as good as it could be.

We listened to the question from the member from New Brunswick and before that the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. What I hear is francophone judges do not get to the top of the list in sufficient quantity to represent our needs. They are not recommended or highly recommended. In my experience in Ontario, as a practising lawyer, there are a great number of highly qualified francophone lawyers in the province.

If they are not getting onto the list or high enough on the list to be recommended or highly recommended, does the minister not see that there is something intrinsically wrong with the system and in particular with the advisory committees that are either not encouraging it or, if the applications come through, are not giving enough credit to the merits of the francophone lawyers in this province, and I am assuming across the country? Does he not see that as a systemic problem with the advisory committees or with the system overall?

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I have discussed this question with the hon. member outside this chamber. As a matter of principle, the appointments process in my view is an independent, merit based one, at arm's-length from the minister, under the superceding authority of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs.

However, this does not mean that in its operational capacities the system cannot be improved and therefore, for that purpose, I have convened the chair of the judicial advisory committees to ask how

the system can be improved and to consult with a group of outside experts for the same purposes. In addition, there will be consultations on how to improve the diversity of our system.

Dealing with the issue of bilingual judges, if I look in terms of my own range of appointments, we have appointed a francophone to the Supreme Court of Canada and another to the Ontario Court of Appeal. The first appointment that I made to the Federal Court of Canada was also a francophone and we have appointed other bilingual candidates.

The main issue is how do we promote more applications from bilingual and francophone jurists. It is not only a question of whom we can choose from the pool. It is a question of whether francophone and bilingual applicants are themselves initiating that application process whereupon an evaluation and a choice can then be made.

It may involve more of an outreach capacity by the judicial advisory committees and the like. It may be that non-governmental associations may have to themselves engage more in the nomination of people otherwise merit based. I want to stress otherwise merit based, but who would also, if appointed, reflect the diversity.

In my view, the question is, how do we operationally include more applicants that will reflect the diversity of this country rather than any changes to the framework from the point of view of principle, let alone the constitutional framework itself?

• (1100)

The Deputy Speaker: There are approximately two and a half minutes left for questions after question period for the minister.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

HERITAGE NORTH BAY

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Heritage North Bay, an organization comprised of 750 volunteers who help run and maintain the heritage carousel, the heritage train and the heritage gardens along the shores of beautiful Lake Nipissing.

Soon Heritage North Bay will be introducing @discoverynorth-bay. Formerly known as the North Bay Museum, @discoverynorth-bay is a brand new facility located in a beautifully refurbished Canadian Pacific Railway station also near North Bay's waterfront.

On July 1 Heritage North Bay will unveil a brand new winter wonderland carousel complete with carved animals representing northern Ontario's wildlife. Each of these animals has been carefully hand carved and painted by Heritage North Bay volunteers.

I would like to commend and salute the hundreds of volunteers who serve Heritage North Bay and help make North Bay's waterfront one of the most beautiful destinations in all of Ontario and Canada.

Keep up the great work.

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[*Translation*]

RUTH LUND KIJOWSKI

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, recently, a resident of my riding of Brome—Missisquoi, Ruth Lund Kijowski of Cowansville, travelled to Armenia on behalf of the Canadian Executive Service Organization, known as CESO. This is an organization funded by CIDA through which Canadians share their expertise to stimulate the development of disadvantaged economies.

I commend Ms. Lund's extraordinary involvement as a volunteer with this not for profit organization newly established in Armenia, which provides training in fashion. Her extensive professional experience in management, particularly in the textile sector, has enabled her to share her expertise by conducting training sessions on the development of new products and the selection of fabrics for affordable clothing.

Thanks to Ms. Lund, four women have completed the training and are now ready to work and to share their knowledge.

Congratulations, Ms. Lund, for this great philanthropic gesture. You are a source of pride and inspiration for us all in Brome—Missisquoi.

* * *

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a few drops of the wealth of money that poured before the May 19 vote have fallen in my riding of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

The Minister of Transport has announced that his government will be covering 50% of the cost overrun for the construction of highway 175. It has even been suggested that this commitment was formalized in an agreement. Yet, this precious document is unobtainable. It would appear that there is no agreement, only an exchange of correspondence between Ottawa and Quebec City.

Time has taught us to be extremely wary of Liberal promises, especially since highway 175 has already been part of the Liberal platform in several elections.

The federal government has to stop bluffing about this and put its cards on the table once and for all.

* * *

[*English*]

PAUL HENDERSON

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Paul Henderson was a star hockey player who gave team Canada its winning goal against Russia in the famed 1972 series.

Those of us old enough to remember the series still remember the tension we felt as we were watching those games between Canada and the Soviet Union. Canada got off to a shaky start but came from behind to take the series by winning three straight games.

Paul Henderson, a well rounded, hardworking Toronto Maple Leaf player made it on to team Canada. He was also one of the few members on the team who played every single game in that notable

competition against Russia. Paul Henderson scored Canada's winning goal in each of the last three games of that historic series against the Soviet Union and his winning goal in the final game was the most important goal in the history of Canadian hockey.

Despite Paul Henderson's incredible contribution to Canada, the psychological boost and patriotic spirit which that hockey victory gave to Canada over 30 years ago, this star player has not yet been given the recognition he deserves. Paul Henderson has not yet been inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

It is time to give this great hockey player his due and to give Paul Henderson a place in the Hockey Hall of Fame and while we are at it, we should induct him into the Order of Canada.

* * *

COLE HARBOUR PLACE

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to and acknowledge the efforts of Mr. Michael LaGarde for his vision and leadership in directing Cole Harbour Place in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, a premier and award winning facility that focuses on lifestyle and preventative medicine as a means of enhancing wellness within the Cole Harbour-Westphal communities.

Cole Harbour Place has become a focal point for physical activity, a wellness centre and community gatherings, and has been used as a template by other communities across the country.

Mr. LaGarde was the original general manager. He recently retired from Cole Harbour Place. It is people like Michael LaGarde who build communities. I wish him well as he enters his retirement and I congratulate him on his commitment and service to Cole Harbour Place.

Cole Harbour Place will continue to lead the way in the promotion of health and wellness. Mike's leadership will be felt by all who follow in his path.

* * *

● (1105)

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, farmers in my riding of Prince George—Peace River received a rare piece of good news late last year when it was announced that the Peace Country Tender Beef co-op was to open a new slaughterhouse in Dawson Creek, B.C.

It was a great example of farmers pulling together to help themselves. One could imagine the disappointment felt by producers when the slated opening date for the new slaughterhouse came and went due to difficulties in securing the necessary financing.

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The loan loss reserve program announced with great fanfare by the government is so riddled with bureaucratic red tape and inadequacies that it has completely failed to help increase slaughter capacity in Canada. It is another program like CAIS, designed by bureaucrats for bureaucrats. It does little or nothing to help farmers during their time of crisis.

Yet again, the federal government's neglect and mismanagement of agriculture in this country has sent the message to farmers that they are left to solely struggle on their own. I continue to call upon the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to persuade the Prime Minister that now is the time for action, not more broken promises.

* * *

[Translation]

LANSDOWNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Mr. Lloyd St. Amand (Brant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the Lansdowne Children's Centre, a not for profit social services agency located in my riding of Brant.

[English]

The Lansdowne Children's Centre offers family centred services built on partnerships between families and professionals, services such as assessment, treatment and support to children with special needs, and to their families.

[Translation]

I will have the pleasure of taking part in the all star 2005 celebrations this weekend.

[English]

The proceeds will support Every Kid Counts, yet another program which greatly assists children with special needs. As my dad often said, a child's job is to play.

* * *

[Translation]

L'INFORMATION RÉGIONALE

Ms. Denise Poirier-Rivard (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to draw the attention of the House to the award of excellence bestowed on *L'information régionale*, a weekly newspaper in my riding.

At the recent annual convention of the association Les hebdomas du Québec held in La Malbaie, *L'information régionale* won second prize as the 2004 best weekly in the "28 pages or less" category.

Through this award, the newspaper has once again been recognized as one of the best weeklies in Quebec. *L'information régionale* also won four second place prizes in the following categories: front page, quality of French, writing and visual content. Our newspaper received no fewer than five awards during this gala.

I congratulate the team behind *L'information régionale*: Michel Thibault, Sylvain Daignault, Nathalie Simon, Dan Rosenberg, Carole Gagné, Andrew Clark and editor, Jeanne-d'Arc Germain. I thank the team for the quality of journalism it provides.

[English]

MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING

Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to commend Mothers Against Drunk Driving for its proactive approach in meeting with community members of the Niagara region to organize a Niagara branch. This initiative exhibits its sincere dedication to the safety and security of others.

MADD is an excellent educational and victims outreach resource organization. Whether this group is talking with students and adults about impaired driving legislation, helping victims' families through the court system or lobbying legislators, its members make an impact.

Regrettably, Niagara is above the national average for impaired motor vehicle collisions, a startling and upsetting statistic that must be changed. I strongly encourage citizens of the Niagara region to attend the June 21 meeting with Mothers Against Drunk Driving and to get involved in a noble, necessary cause.

I wish MADD and the Niagara residents the best of luck in their joint efforts. Education is the key to prevention. Working for the safety of others is always a praiseworthy deed and eradicating impaired driving is a goal for all.

* * *

MARRIAGE

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government is determined to ram through Bill C-38, the legislation that threatens the traditional definition of marriage.

The Liberals have used threats, coercion and intimidation as tools to get the same sex marriage bill into law before the summer recess. They have threatened religious leaders and the tax status of their churches. They have disallowed any member of the cabinet a free vote and threaten punishment if they disobey. They have threatened marriage commissioners with the loss of their jobs if they refuse to marry same sex couples. The Liberals want to ram Bill C-38 through before an election because they know the vast majority of Canadians do not support it.

If they succeed, I promise them that the people of Canada will never forget what they have done in their attempt to destroy the traditional definition of marriage and the voters will send a clear message of their anger to every Liberal candidate who supports same sex marriage.

There will be a price to pay for the Liberals' obsession with Bill C-38 and they may rest assured that the price will be paid at the polls.

HAROLD CARDINAL

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sorrow that I rise to recognize Harold Cardinal, a renowned first nations leader and a hero to his people, who passed away early this morning.

Harold was a law school classmate of mine and he was also a friend. He was also a dear friend and adviser to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Dr. Cardinal may be best known for his landmark books on first nations issues. He wrote *The Unjust Society*, *the Rebirth of Canada's Indians*, a book that brought attention and change to policies that would have eroded the integrity of aboriginal life.

Harold studied law at prestigious universities like Harvard and was president of the Indian Association of Alberta, chief of the Sucker Creek Band, vice-chief of the Assembly of First Nations and a Treaty 8 negotiator. Most recently he was working on his doctorate in law from the University of British Columbia. In 1999 he received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of Alberta and was called to the bar of Alberta last year.

I ask all members to join me in offering condolences to Harold's family and his countless friends. He will be greatly missed by all Canadians.

* * *

• (1110)

JUSTICE

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the B.C. federal NDP caucus made a statement on the beating and humiliation in Richmond, B.C. of an Indo-Canadian youth.

This young man reported that he was assaulted, had his turban knocked off and his hair shorn. We deplore in the strongest possible terms this shocking attack. We are deeply concerned about the apparent racist nature of the attack. Our sympathy and thoughts are with the victim and his family.

The Indo-Canadian community has contributed much to our region and our country through its hard work and generosity and the richness of its faiths, languages, and culture. When someone from the Sikh community is attacked, we stand in solidarity with the victim and the community.

The Richmond RCMP has vowed to track down the people responsible and we support its call for any information from the public that will help bring the perpetrators to justice.

We call upon everyone in the lower mainland and indeed all Canadians of every origin and faith to work together to achieve a society where racist attacks no longer occur.

* * *

BANTING MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Helena Guergis (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in Alliston, Ontario, over 1,000 students from Banting Memorial High School marched for diabetes. Their march began at the high school and finished at the Sir Frederick Banting homestead.

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Last year, the high school students raised in excess of \$16,000. This year their principal, John Fallis, challenged them to raise \$20,000. Well, the Banting Memorial High School students won their challenge and raised an incredible \$31,168.

The proceeds from the walk will go to both Camp Huronda, a diabetes camp for kids, and toward finding a cure for diabetes.

I must say that I am very proud of our local youth. Their commitment and dedication to such a worthy cause sets a precedent for others to follow.

In addition to the funds raised by the students, the former principal of Banting Memorial High School, Gordon Wright, contributed \$5,000, and Kit Andrews, a local businessman, donated \$500. This brought the total amount raised to over \$36,000.

This is just another example of the large impact that small communities have in our country.

* * *

[Translation]

YOUTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week there was a spectacular concert at l'Odyssée primary school in the Saint Nicolas sector of Lévis. Its 416 pupils treated their audience to renditions of a number of compositions by artists known for raising public awareness of environmental questions and of the need for children's rights to be respected in the world.

The performers, the kindergarten and primary students and staff members, interpreted songs by Annie Brocoli, Gilles Vigneault, Yves Duteil and Luc Plamondon, and even by Bruno Lemay, the school cook, who shares their concern for the environment.

The theme of the evening, expertly organized by teachers Alice Desrochers and Josée d'Anjou, was "Sing for a better world".

Numerous other volunteers, musicians and technicians have contributed their efforts to help these young people put their message of hope out on CD.

Congratulations to this new generation for their contribution to making our world a better place.

* * *

[English]

CANADIAN FORCES DAY

Mr. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a former soldier and the official opposition critic for national defence, I am pleased to rise in the House today to commemorate Canadian Forces Day.

Serving one's country in the military is both the highest honour and the most profound duty. It demonstrates an individual's willingness to assume the most demanding and dangerous obligations of citizenship and creates a debt of gratitude owed by the society they fight to protect.

Oral Questions

One day of tribute seems hardly enough to reflect and pay respect to the work done on behalf of Canadians by our military in Canada and abroad. I encourage my constituents and all Canadians to take time to recognize the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform every day.

I would like to personally thank all members of the Canadian Forces for their exemplary service.

* * *

• (1115)

AUDIOTAPES

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday senior Conservatives tossed about allegations based on bogus tapes that were released by a member of the party under a cloud of suspicion. They said that the tapes were “pristine” despite the fact that several experts had already questioned their authenticity.

Let me tell the House about those tapes. Several independent experts, including John Dooher, a forensic audio engineer hired by CBC News, have confirmed that the tapes have been tampered with.

After question period they admitted that, “I haven't heard the tapes. I haven't seen the tapes”. See no evil, hear no evil.

Why did members opposite not call for the authentication of the tapes before passing judgment? Instead, after making allegations, we get this statement from the Conservatives:

[*Translation*]

“It is not up to me to determine the authenticity of the tape.” Here we have one more Conservative rushing to give an opinion on evidence that is, in fact, not evidence at all. Does this remind you of anything?

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, from one end of highway 138 to the other, people were out on May 7 and 8 to express their displeasure with the federal government's handling of the employment insurance program.

In Montérégie, the people of Huntingdon blocked highway 138, to make their demands clear, one of which was reinstatement of POWA, the program for older worker adjustment.

More than 800 workers there have recently lost their jobs, and a quarter of these are 55 years of age or older.

In La Malbaie, another 150 demonstrators blocked their section of the highway to protest the status quo in EI. They were angered by the lies told by the Liberals during the last election campaign.

The unemployed have had enough of false promises. The Bloc Québécois supports them and calls upon the government to reinstate POWA and to remedy the shortcomings in the EI program so that it provides the unemployed with proper assistance.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a pattern in the Prime Minister's parliamentary purchase plan. First, develop plausible deniability by trying to insulate the directions of the Prime Minister. Second, when caught on tape, deny, deflect and divert attention to some tampered tape excuse.

We saw with ad scam no responsibility in the Liberal government, just rogue bureaucrats.

The Prime Minister's chief of staff and his Minister of Health are caught red-handed acting as agents trying to buy Tory votes to save a corrupt government.

Is the real reason the Minister of Health and the Prime Minister's chief of staff remain that they were simply acting on the Prime Minister's instructions to do whatever was necessary to save his corrupt government?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I honestly wish the official opposition would stop making these wild accusations and allegations without evidence that call into disrepute, not only their actions, but the responsibilities of all of us as ministers and members of Parliament in this House.

I think if there is any pattern here, it is a pattern being established by the official opposition. Yesterday afternoon the deputy leader said, “It is my understanding that those tapes are pristine. They haven't been altered, edited, nothing of the nature”.

We have the member for Calgary Southeast referring to four hours of discussions.

We have not seen four hours of tapes. They are—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Central Nova.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is on the tape what matters. That is what is in question here.

There is a bad smell emanating from the government's sordid attempts to buy votes, including attempting to get the Ethics Commissioner to take the cloud off an investigation and suggestions as to an RCMP investigation.

Tim Murphy's crass assertions hurt the office of the Ethics Commissioner. The commissioner himself said, “The cloud is over the person who makes the suggestion, not the office”.

Any complaints about his office being bandied about in these negotiations are wrong.

Why has the “let's make a deal Prime Minister” not fired his chief of staff for even attempting to manipulate an officer of Parliament?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner is an independent officer of Parliament, chosen by all parties of this House. He himself will make his own determination in this matter.

Oral Questions

He also said that he had not been approached by Mr. Murphy.

If any member has any information, such as the two hours of missing tapes, apparently, that can be provided to the Ethics Commissioner, we would ask the members opposite to do so.

• (1120)

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, even a senior Liberal member of Parliament is calling for the Minister of Health and the chief of staff to step down until an investigation into the vote buying takes place.

The member for Sarnia—Lambton says, “The situation is totally odious and it makes his skin crawl”. Another senior member says, “The bar is so low...”, probably lower than his mentor, Jean Chrétien.

The Prime Minister promised to bolster trust by ensuring Canadians know, “That it is always the public interest that motivates the public business”.

Why did the Prime Minister let the bar drop so low by allowing his personal ambition to pervert the public interest? What shoddy ethics from the highest office—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was absolutely clear. When it came to his attention that a member of the official opposition might be interested in crossing the floor, the Prime Minister made it absolutely plain that no offer was to be made to that individual. It is that simple.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is absolutely clear is the level and depth of corruption in the government. The self-proclaimed wire brush of ethics was going to restore integrity to Parliament. That is a joke.

Instead, the Prime Minister's own caucus has this to say about his ethics:

The bar is so low now.... Have you ever seen anything like this?

Everybody gets away with stuff. It's just a joke.

Will the Prime Minister take the first step in restoring integrity to Parliament by doing the right thing and demanding that his health minister and chief of staff step down?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if we want to throw quotes around in this House, let us see what the member for Edmonton—St. Albert had to say about the conduct of the member for Newton—North Delta.

I don't think that one-sided taping of conversations is something that we should brag about or be doing on an ongoing basis.

He said that he would not do it. Or let us quote from the member for Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, where he says:

"I don't think it helps the atmosphere of a minority Parliament...to be secretly taping conversations.

There are lots of quotes.

Mr. Jay Hill (House Leader of the Official Opposition in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we learned from Hardev Bal and Kushpal Gill that as early as April 30 the Prime

Minister was trolling to bring the member for Newton—North Delta across the floor to save his government.

Tapes now prove that both the Prime Minister's chief of staff and the Minister of Health were the Prime Minister's agents in this sordid vote-buying scheme. Neither Mr. Murphy nor the Minister of Health have been asked to step aside by the Prime Minister. Is this not because the Prime Minister was ultimately micromanaging this vote-buying scheme?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would advise the hon. member to be very careful about the allegations that he is throwing around. He has just referred to two individuals as the agents of the Prime Minister. That is a legal conclusion and it is another example of how those members do not have the guts to go outside and make that claim, but they come in here and are willing to destroy the reputations of innocent people and the offices they hold.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in this secret taping affair, we hear rumblings, even from within the Liberal caucus, suggesting that the government needs to put its own house in order and suspend the Minister of Health and the Prime Minister's chief of staff while this case is being reviewed by the RCMP.

Will the Prime Minister listen to his own members and do the only honourable thing in this situation, which is to suspend his Minister of Health and his chief of staff while this case is being reviewed?

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, there seem to be lots of allegations flying around. It is my understanding that the RCMP is reviewing this matter. The RCMP will determine what action, if any, it thinks is appropriate.

At this point we all need to stand back a little and stop throwing these allegations around that can impugn the character, integrity and reputation of individuals. I suggest that we simply let the Royal Canadian Mounted Police review the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton finds the references to Senate and ambassadorial appointments, which we can hear on the tapes, to be “totally odious”.

Will the Prime Minister face the facts and does he intend to make his chief of staff and his health minister step down immediately, as the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton asks?

Oral Questions

● (1125)

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again there is a reference to tapes. We have seen that there are serious and troubling assertions and issues around the tapes. It is my understanding that, unlike that which was said by the deputy leader of the official opposition that the tapes were pristine and turned over in an unaltered fashion, I gather now that is not the case. I gather that the members of the official opposition in fact themselves have indicated that the tapes that are public were not pristine.

I think we should all step back a little and wait to see what the RCMP's review—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Drummond.

[Translation]

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, another Liberal MP, who was reporting comments made by his constituents, said, “What people are telling me is that as long as the matter is not cleared up, everyone should step down”.

In light of such clear demands, not only from members, but also from the public, what is the Prime Minister waiting for to order the suspension of his chief of staff and his health minister?

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I think there are way too many allegations being thrown around here. The RCMP, as I understand it, is reviewing the matter. I understand the Bloc itself made a complaint to the RCMP, at least that is what was reported in the media. The RCMP is reviewing the situation and it will decide what action in its opinion it believes to be appropriate.

We should all, as I say, let cooler heads prevail. Members should understand that with these unsubstantiated allegations in relation to people and the offices they hold, all we do is call into question the integrity of the House of Commons.

[Translation]

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if the government has nothing to hide, as it claims, then why is it handling the situation with the health minister and the Prime Minister's chief of staff any differently than the situation in the past when the former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the chief of staff of the Minister of Canadian Heritage stepped down while investigations were ongoing?

What is the government waiting for to take action?

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, there are way too many allegations being thrown around here. Based on a previous experience involving the member for York West, we saw that throwing these unsubstantiated allegations around can be very hurtful of innocent people's reputations. It can also be incredibly hurtful to the stature in which

Canadians hold this House. Therefore, I would ask everyone to await the RCMP's review of this matter.

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MAHER ARAR INQUIRY

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence concerning his testimony this week before the Arar inquiry. I ask because the government needs to take some responsibility. The member for Halifax consistently raised Syria's record of torture in this House and elsewhere.

Presumably the minister knew of Syria's appalling record on human rights. He was, after all, the chair of the foreign affairs committee. How could he not know a Canadian citizen deported to Syria would be at risk for torture? How could he not have known that?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we have said before in the House, we do not comment on the daily testimony that is being put into evidence before a public inquiry. Regarding the Arar inquiry, Mr. Justice O'Connor was put in place to determine the facts around the conduct of Canadian officials in relation to Mr. Arar's deportation to Syria and his treatment while in Syria. That is his mandate. He is independent. We in the House do not comment on daily testimony.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question was for the minister who gave his own testimony. Surely he is able to comment on what he said and take responsibility for it. The question is, how could he not have known about Syria's appalling record about torture? To fall back on the idea that somehow his staff did not tell him is a total cop-out.

I ask the minister again, how could he not have known what might happen to a Canadian citizen deported to Syria and that he would face the risk of torture? Surely the minister can account for and be responsible for and have the government be responsible for the travesty of this affair concerning Maher Arar.

● (1130)

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of commenting on the evidence before the Arar inquiry. However, I have to tell the members of the House that I resent very much the allegations regarding members of our civil service. They worked their hearts out to do their best for Mr. Arar. They work around the clock in very difficult circumstances, and are doing their best for the people of Canada. They gave me the best advice they could, and we worked as hard as we could to get Mr. Arar released.

Believe me, I think we can be proud of the actions of our civil servants. We can recognize that we might have done better and we can learn from our mistakes, and we will from the inquiry, but let us not denigrate the work that was done which successfully got Mr. Arar out—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

*Oral Questions***MEMBER FOR NEWTON—NORTH DELTA**

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Deputy Prime Minister claimed there was no intention on the part of the Prime Minister to offer anything to any member who would consider crossing the floor to join the government. Yet the words spoken by the Prime Minister's chief of staff and the health minister indicate the exact opposite. It was wink, wink, nudge, nudge, sort of like Monty Python's flying circus but far more sinister.

Is there anyone on that side of the House who can provide a single shred of evidence that contradicts the evidence on the audiotapes that Liberals are prepared to do anything to maintain power?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will simply say again that the Prime Minister was absolutely clear that no offer was to be made to anyone. But let me suggest that when talking about people who are willing to do anything, it does seem passing strange to me that we have this situation where yesterday the deputy leader of the official opposition was talking about pristine tapes, unaltered and so on, and then a few hours later the very same party said that the tapes were altered.

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know that the chief of staff and the health minister met and talked numerous times with the member for Newton—North Delta. There are two possible explanations: either the chief of staff and the health minister have too much time on their hands, or they are addicted to meetings. There is no other explanation for all those meetings between the Minister of Health and the chief of staff, especially after the Prime Minister ordered them not to make any offers.

How many meetings do Liberals have to have before they can say no?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the problem here is that the member for Newton—North Delta would not take no for an answer.

* * *

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

Ms. Rona Ambrose (Edmonton—Spruce Grove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the 1996 Speech from the Throne, in response to the Quebec referendum, the Liberal government made the following commitment:

The Government will not use its spending power to create new shared-cost programs in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction without the consent of a majority of the provinces. Any new program will be designed so that non-participating provinces will be compensated, provided they establish equivalent or comparable initiatives.

Does the government continue to stand by its 1996 throne speech commitment on the right to opt out with full compensation?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we went beyond that. We have now the social network agreements that give the government the obligation to work with the provinces and to have the support of the majority of them before coming out with new social initiatives in provincial jurisdictions.

[Translation]

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Rona Ambrose (Edmonton—Spruce Grove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has invested billions of dollars in a child care program. This program encroaches on provincial jurisdictions. Yet the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs remains silent on this issue. The provinces have spoken: they want to have a choice. However, the Minister of Social Development refuses to acknowledge that demand.

When will the minister finally listen, and respect the rights of the provinces?

[English]

Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been involved in discussions and negotiations with all the provinces and with all the territories. We have come to an agreement with five different provinces: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia. We are in discussions with the other provinces and with the other territories. The provinces and the territories have engaged in these discussions with great interest and great delight, because the amount of money that is involved in an area of great priority to them would represent a 40% increase on what all—

• (1135)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

* * *

[Translation]

MEMBER FOR NEWTON—NORTH DELTA

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's chief of staff is intimating that he could put pressure on the Ethics Commissioner to hurry up an inquiry report on the Conservative member for Newton—North Delta.

How is it the Prime Minister is still hesitating about suspending his chief of staff who, according to the tapes, indicated his intention to influence the ethics commissioner?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, the Ethics Commissioner is an officer of the House. He is completely independent. He is chosen by all parties in this House. He alone will decide on this matter, since it has been brought to his attention, I believe.

Second, the commissioner himself acknowledged that Mr. Murphy had not spoken to him on this matter.

Third, when tapes that have been altered, reduced from four hours to two hours in length, are used as evidence, considerable caution must be exercised in making statements of the type made by the member opposite.

Oral Questions

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the commissioner himself has described the remarks of the Prime Minister's chief of staff as unacceptable. He also said that if there are any clouds hanging over anyone they are over the person making the suggestion, Tim Murphy, and not over the office of the Ethics Commissioner.

In the light of such a blatant allusion to political interference, does the Prime Minister not feel his chief of staff should withdraw immediately?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner said "if there are any clouds". I believe the hon. member opposite would do very well to follow this matter.

Judgments cannot be made based on recordings that have been altered. That is recognized now. They were reduced in length from four hours to two hours. I therefore think that the Ethics Commissioner, this House's independent officer, should be permitted to decide for himself, as he is empowered and is intending to do.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on the tape, we can hear the member for Newton—North Delta say, "If we have something then we don't need to lie to the media. We can tell them that OK, if we do something out of encouragement and conviction, then you have to have something for that. Some reward or whatever". To which the Prime Minister's chief of staff replied, "Right".

If that is not indicative of a desire to buy a member's vote, what is it?

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all I go back to the fact that we need to be very careful in terms of the allegations that we throw around in this place.

Yesterday we had an assertion that the tapes that are in the public domain were pristine or unaltered. A few hours after that statement was made, we discovered that this was not the case. I think we need to be very, very careful here in terms of the kinds of allegations that are being made and the basis on which they are being made.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Health is challenging the quality of the translation of his remarks from Punjabi, I will read an excerpt from what the Prime Minister's chief of staff said, and he said it in English. He said, "I think it is important that we are honest about it. But [we] also think that those people who take risk are ought to be rewarded for the risk they take".

If that does not hold the promise of an offer, what did it mean?

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Again, Mr. Speaker, let me be absolutely clear. The Prime Minister said that no offers were to be made and that is as simple as the matter is, but let me say that I think we in fact come back to a very basic proposition

here, which is that the hon. member for Newton—North Delta was simply not willing to take no for an answer.

* * *

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, taxpayers paid millions of dollars in rent for an empty building owned by the company of a Liberal senator. In committee hearings over this Liberal rent for nothing scandal, the public works minister admitted that his Liberal caucus colleague broke the law. I asked the minister, "You learned that he was contravening section 14 of the Parliament of Canada Act from me in question period?" The minister's reply, "That's correct".

Liberals wasted money and broke the law. When will they stop paying the rent?

Hon. Walt Lastewka (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if I could go over the sequence of events, the building in question was first started in May 2001. By the way, in December 2001 the contract was awarded. It was an irrevocable offer to lease. The document was signed. A fairness monitor, KPMG, was involved in the whole process and the building was done on time and on budget.

The situation with the departments moving in is that they were merging and it took a little time to merge those departments. There were 1,000 people involved in the move.

● (1140)

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on May 17 the minister's lawyer wrote the senator's company threatening to cut off the rent by the end of May because of this violation, but after a mysterious phone call, the minister's department granted the Liberal senator another month's rent worth half a million dollars. That is a half a million dollar phone call.

What happened during this secret phone call? What dirty deal was cut to give the Liberal senator's company another half a million dollars?

Hon. Walt Lastewka (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate. The contract was signed in 2001, an irrevocable offer to lease legal document. Let me also reinforce the fact that yes, when the Minister of Public Works heard about the situation, he acted immediately. He has referred it not only to the company but to the individual involved.

The Minister of Public Works should be complimented. On hearing of this, he immediately took action. That is what the minister does. He takes action.

*Oral Questions***SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

Mr. Jim Gouk (British Columbia Southern Interior, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I previously asked a question in the House regarding the laundering of ad scam money through VIA Rail, where Lafleur Communications Marketing was paid \$112,000 to carry a cheque from public works to VIA Rail. It then turned around and donated half the money back to the Liberal Party of Canada.

The question was answered by the then public works minister, now in charge of Canada's finances, who stated that he too was troubled by this file and had referred it to the RCMP. That was three years ago. What results do we have from this three year investigation that so troubled the present finance minister?

Hon. Walt Lastewka (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Gomery commission was appointed by this Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has said that we should let the Gomery commission do its work and it has done its work.

I know that there has been an ongoing parallel investigation here of no value at all, but the Gomery commission has done its work. Justice Gomery has concluded hearing witnesses and we look forward to the time when the Gomery commission reports to the House. I can assure members in this place and Canada as a whole that once Gomery reports, this government will take action.

Mr. Jim Gouk (British Columbia Southern Interior, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if after three years there are no results of such blatant money laundering it seems that it was only the bad publicity that troubled the minister. The Minister of Finance was at the time in charge of public works and is now in charge of the nation's finances. He should have been more concerned about the operation of public works then and about the theft of taxpayers' money now.

Given this incredible example of the ad scam at its worst, will the government commit to returning its proceeds from this theft of taxpayer money now, today?

Hon. Walt Lastewka (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that the member and the opposition do not understand that there was an inquiry and that Justice Gomery has done his work. He finished the work with witnesses yesterday and is now moving on to his report.

He will report in the fall. He will tell us exactly what happened. He will name names and he will also tell us about responsibility. He will make sure that we understand what needs to be changed, and this government will take action and it will take action immediately.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Mr. Marc Godbout (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have recently learned that new cases of polio have been reported in Yemen and in Indonesia.

Could the Minister of International Cooperation tell this House what steps Canada and its partners are taking to combat this terrible disease?

Hon. Aileen Carroll (Minister of International Cooperation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure this House that I will be monitoring very closely the development of new cases of polio. At a time when we were so close to eradicating this terrible disease, it is important that we continue moving in that direction.

Canada has invested nearly \$200 million in this fight, and we will continue to support initiatives to eradicate polio from the face of the earth.

* * *

● (1145)

[English]

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the security minister. An NDP access to information request just recently answered shows that 48 border badges, 65 border ID cards and 58 border uniforms are missing.

First it was airport security items gone missing and now we have 130 reports over the last five years of border security items also going missing. When is this minister going to protect our borders by fixing the basics instead of spending all her time writing sweeping security laws which we know simply do not work?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course I reject the fundamental premise underlying the member's question. Having said that, let me say that the Canada Border Services Agency takes it very seriously, as do I, when uniforms go missing or when any form of ID goes missing as it relates to individual officers. I can assure the hon. member that the CBSA and the management of the CBSA are following up on those concerns.

Clearly what we want to do is ensure that the collective safety and security of Canadians is always foremost, whether it is with the CBSA or other agencies in this country.

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is typical of just no responsibility on the part of the government and the minister. She wrote the Draconian security law, which we know does not work. Her department helped deport Maher Arar. She says that the border is secure even though 48 badges, 65 ID cards and 58 uniforms have gone missing.

Then she stands in the House and gives some platitudinous answer. Can she say if she has done anything specific about dealing with these thefts and losses?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have made it absolutely plain that the CBSA and the management of the CBSA take these assertions very seriously and are following up on them. I take them very seriously. I do not know what the hon. member does not understand about the fact that we take this situation very seriously and it is being followed up on.

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Mr. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, twice in this House the minister implied that if the budget bill, Bill C-43, were not passed, the military would not get its money. This is false. The Department of Finance advises:

Legislation is not required for many of the spending measures proposed in Budget 2005, such as the funding for National Defence, as parliamentary approval can be achieved through the normal appropriation process.

Why did the minister grandstand and mislead the House with respect to funding for the military?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, surely all members of the House will agree that members of the House would not go through the appropriations process without first having adopted the budget on which those appropriations were based.

We know very well, and every member of this House knows, that the budget has to go through and the appropriations have to be voted before our men and women will get the money they need to transform themselves and make themselves into an effective force for this century to defend Canada and Canadians. That is what we are going to do on this side of the House. Let us try not to get into this sort of insane type of obscurity about how the process is going to work. It will work because we are going to get the budget through.

Mr. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the other side that is giving us insane obscurity.

Recently, three of Canada's top military officers told our defence committee that they will soon be making recommendations to balance base infrastructure against the priorities detailed in the Liberal defence policy statement.

Infrastructure has been underfunded by the Liberals for years. This puts the military in a precarious situation where it must choose between base infrastructure and operational capability. Without a doubt it will choose operational capability. As a consequence, is the minister prepared to close any military bases?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly would agree with the hon. member, who is knowledgeable about the matter of the forces, that the proportion of base infrastructure spending must be looked at. I have discussed this with my officials. We are making sure this is done in proportion to keep our bases in good shape.

We will always look at our bases to make sure that the footprint we have in this country is that which is necessary for us to do our job and provide security for Canadians. That is how we do it. We will continue to do that job.

* * *

[Translation]

BORDER CROSSINGS

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a new state of the art facility at the Lacolle-Champlain crossing, along the border between Quebec and New York State, but on the American side only. Canada is spending nothing on the Quebec side of the border.

Why is the government not contributing to this important gateway between Montreal and the United States?

• (1150)

[English]

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we live in a just in time economy. Jobs and growth depend on the efficiency of transportation corridors.

Last February, the Minister of Transport met with U.S. transportation secretary Norm Mineta. They discussed ways to improve security and efficiency of gateways, including the need for additional infrastructure to improve traffic flows, new border capacity for the long term and expansion of border processing initiatives to help expedite cross-border traffic. We are looking into it. We are doing due diligence.

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the president of the Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce and the president of the Quebec-New York Corridor Coalition testified before the industry committee this week. They stated that the Canadian border facility is clearly inadequate and understaffed.

The new U.S. border facility is in danger of becoming a wall rather than a passageway unless there is Canadian reciprocity. Why is the government being so short-sighted?

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only short-sightedness here is not on our part but on the part of the opposition. The government strongly believes that it is important to take a strategic approach to transportation infrastructure investment. Over the last decade, the federal government has committed over \$12 billion to infrastructure in Canada.

I am very pleased to say that budget 2005 confirmed the renewal and extension of our strategic municipal, rural and border infrastructure programs to continue our strong support for Canada's cities and communities.

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[Translation]

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last year, Mohamed Cherfi was deported from Canada after officials with Citizenship and Immigration asked the police to violate a religious sanctuary in Quebec City where Cherfi had taken refuge. The United States granted him exile, recognizing that he was in danger and entitled to protection.

In light of the American decision to grant refugee status to Mohamed Cherfi, will the minister admit that there are serious flaws with the Canadian refugee protection division, which decided not to grant Mr. Cherfi similar protection?

Oral Questions

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are still in the process of changing all our procedures in order to determine which individuals truly qualify as refugees. I am not prepared to discuss individual cases. Obviously, if the authorities of another country have taken decisions that suited them, all the better for them. Our decisions are always based on the interests of Canadians.

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, this is in the interests of Canadians and Quebeckers alike.

Cherfi was granted refugee status in the United States thanks to a decision by the United States board of immigration appeals.

When will the minister admit that Canada needs to establish a refugee appeal division and that this need is urgent?

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should point out that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has already ranked Canada first in the world for its refugee status determination and integration system. We have nothing to apologize for. We have the best system in the world for refugees.

* * *

[English]

CANADA POST

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is the day. Judge Gomery has completed nine months of listening to countless witnesses testify. He will be reviewing thousands of pages of documents.

Coincidentally, it has also been nine months since supposedly Revenue Canada began investigating the former chairman of Canada Post who still has not accounted for his \$2 million in self-approved receipts. It has been nine months and any other Canadian would have been called to account in nine days.

When will the minister admit that he is covering up for his Liberal crony, or will he announce the date the audit will be made public?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ouellet provided some documents in December to Canada Post, but they did not cover all the expenses set out in the original Deloitte Touche report. Canada Post has given all the documentation to the Canada Revenue Agency and will continue to collaborate with the agency fully with the audit that is under way. The board of directors of Canada Post will take all necessary action at the conclusion of the Canada Revenue Agency audit.

• (1155)

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is a stalling tactic and it is a marathon audit.

The Prime Minister told party faithful last night at a speech in Montreal that “those who abuse the system will all be held accountable”. Video will show very likely that he was winking at the time.

If there were any other Canadian involved in a case like this, Revenue Canada would have completed that audit, penalties would

have been levied and possible jail terms would have been provided to those wrongdoers.

The revenue minister has failed the people of Canada. He has not upheld the responsibilities of his office. It is time for the government to admit that if it were interested in cleaning up anything, it would clean up the revenue minister and—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, personal insults and spurious allegations do not advance either the substance of the issue on the table or the reputation of the House.

The fact is the government, at all levels from the Prime Minister through all the ministers, has made it very clear that in this whole affair whatever needs to be investigated will be investigated through the Auditor General, or through the police, or the Gomery process or independent processes and on the basis of those facts, properly determine the proper consequences which will be followed without exception.

* * *

FORESTRY

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the brown spruce longhorn beetle continues to cause hardship for woodlot owners and residents of the Halifax area. They have been unable to move downed trees from hurricane Juan outside a quarantine zone established by the CFIA in 2000. The situation is now made much more dangerous by the onset of another fire season.

In a letter dated June 2, the Minister of Natural Resources indicates that “CFIA is poised to take a more aggressive approach this coming field season”.

Could the Minister of Agriculture give us some detail on the plan and provide some help to these people who have been so dramatically affected by circumstances beyond their control?

Hon. Andy Mitchell (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the longhorn beetle is a very destructive pest that puts in danger forests in the areas that it infests. The CFIA has been working hard over the years with many others to try to control this.

The hurricane has exacerbated this problem. We need to find new and creative solutions. The hon. member has been working very hard with my officials and officials from other departments to come up with those solutions. We intend to redouble our efforts in the days ahead to find suitable solutions for the woodlot owners and at the same time to protect the long term viability of the forestry industry.

*Points of Order***FISHERIES**

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources has promised the people of the Harbour Breton area that federal assistance will be made available to them to help offset the devastation caused by the closure of their plant. This fish plant produced up to 30 million pounds of product a year in the value of \$20 million.

If the Prime Minister can do a \$4.6 billion deal with the NDP over supper, why is the minister renegeing on his promise to the people of Harbour Breton?

Hon. Geoff Regan (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is sensitive to the situation in Harbour Breton, resulting from a decision of the FPI. ACOA is working with the community as is my department to assist in its adjustment. ACOA has been active in Harbour Breton over the past several years, committing over \$3 million toward the diversification of the local economy.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Lakeshore General Hospital in Ashern, Manitoba normally operates with six doctors to service over 10,000 rural residents, including five first nations communities. Over the past few years doctors have left and the last two doctors have finally retired. Now there are no emergency or clinical services available and patients have to travel over four hours to Winnipeg for care.

Under the government, health care in rural Canada has gone from hallway medicine to highway medicine.

Why has the health minister not used the fabled foreign accreditation program or developed a long term strategy to address the terrible doctor shortages in rural Canada?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of State (Public Health), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has invested tremendously in the health human resources plan with the help of the Canadian Medical Association. We are also exploring many different ways of primary care.

In Beechy, Saskatchewan, where there were once three physicians, two have left. Now one doctor and three nurse practitioners equally look after those 4,000 patients.

We need to look forward to a new way of delivering health care, using telemedicine and everything else. With our partners in nursing and medicine and by working hard—

● (1200)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

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[*Translation*]

FURNITURE INDUSTRY

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the employees of Shermag, in Victoriaville, asked the government to get involved. This furniture manufacturing plant will shut down in July, resulting in the loss of 175 jobs. Yet, the

only answer we got this week from the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec was that his department does not target this type of business. As for the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, she did not have anything to say.

When will the government take action by setting up, for example, a permanent program for older workers? When?

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have always had programs for workers who reach a certain age and who, unfortunately, find themselves between jobs. We have already set up programs in the last budget, and we are doing it again in this budget.

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HEALTH

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Public Health.

The United States Congress is still threatening to allow the bulk re-importation of pharmaceutical products from Canada back into the U.S., thereby threatening the medicine supply for Canadians.

I am asking the government again, when and how will it ensure that Canadians continue to have a safe supply of pharmaceutical products?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of State (Public Health), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first and foremost we want to ensure that Canadians have access to safe and affordable drugs. We want to find ways to reduce the potential threats to supply and cost originating with online pharmacies. The Minister of Health is the first one who can take action to protect the safety and health of Canadians.

I can assure the hon. member that Health Canada is currently looking at ways to achieve this objective soon.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my point of order is pursuant to a matter that the member for Nepean—Carleton raised in question period for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

In the preamble of the question, and I believe it is against our rules, the member discredited the reputation of a member of the other place, made allegations of wrongdoing and attributed incorrect statements to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

That member has demonstrated a disturbing pattern of making allegations which ultimately have been proven to be false. He knows better. I believe the question should have been ruled out of order. I would ask the Speaker to please look at the evidence from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates of yesterday afternoon which will show that the member is fully aware that the statements he made in this place today are totally false.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should take issue not with me but with his public works minister who conceded all the accusations that I raised in the House of Commons. Yesterday in a committee of this Parliament, government operations committee hearings, his minister admitted that the senator had contravened section 14 of the Parliament of Canada Act.

I have the transcripts of that meeting and I would be happy to table them with you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I merely repeated what the minister said about this situation. Furthermore, three letters from the Department of Public Works have confirmed that the senator is in contravention.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of cooperation and in trying to be helpful, I would refer to the Speaker that not so long ago in a session in the House, the Speaker ruled a question from the member for Nepean—Carleton on the same topic out of order. The Speaker may wish to refer to that ruling and when it was done in order to not allow such questions in the House.

• (1205)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that case bears no relevance to the question put today, which deals with testimony before a committee of the House by the senator yesterday. It is therefore within the purview of the House and by the minister with respect to the senator. Therefore, it is perfectly legitimately to raise that in the House as it is a matter of record in a committee of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank all member for their contributions on this point of order. Just to let members know, on the very first question from the member for Nepean—Carleton, I felt that was in order. It was a quote from committee and it was followed through on properly.

I do have some very grave concerns about the second question, which I think was the concern of the member for Mississauga South. I believe I will have to review the blues and get back to the House on that. It is not proper of course to impugn motives or to question the integrity of people either in this place or in the Senate. Therefore, I will review the blues specifically on the second question and report back to the House if necessary.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again in the spirit of trying to encourage greater civility and carefulness in the use of language, I would perhaps invite the member for Carleton—Mississippi Mills to be careful in terms of accusing members of the cabinet of misleading the House, which was a statement contained in his question.

Privilege

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure you are well aware as we are that it is quite permissible to use the term “misleading”, but you cannot impugn that it was deliberate. That is what was in our questions.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank both members for their interventions on that point, but I do not intend to follow up on it further. I do want to hear a question of privilege from the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ETHICS COMMISSIONER'S REPORT REGARDING FORMER MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members of this House know, some time ago there was a report tabled by unanimous consent in the House from the Ethics Commissioner regarding the former immigration minister. It was done by unanimous consent and it supposedly cleared the minister at that time of any wrongdoing.

Yesterday in committee, Mr. Shapiro was questioned quite roundly by members of all parties. He said at that meeting that he had not given anyone, except the former immigration minister, a copy of the actual report.

Mr. Rob Walsh, a parliamentary clerk and legal counsel, told the committee that allowing the former minister to see the full report ahead of the Prime Minister, the complainant and the public breached Shapiro's mandate.

The fact is that we found out at that committee meeting that the report that was tabled was an altered report and had names taken out of it. I think that's unheard of and I would hope that when we get the final report we can be guaranteed that it is unaltered. This is not a job for the government but maybe a committee and that is why I bring it up as a question of privilege. Somehow or other we have to get the message through to the Ethics Commissioner that this House does not want altered reports.

If we had seen the original report, the minister would not have been cleared as everybody said because it was her chief of staff who knew what was going on with the stripper, and she is responsible for the chief of staff.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to review this and see if there is a question of privilege. If there is, I would be happy to move the proper motion. We need guidance to ensure that the Ethics Commissioner, who reports to this House, lives up to his mandate and ensures we get all the information that is required on a very serious issue.

Supply

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner is an independent officer of Parliament chosen by all parties in this House. It is up to the Ethics Commissioner to interpret and abide by the statutory mandate as it is set out in the Parliament of Canada Act. The act is clear that, before releasing a report into allegations made against the member, the Ethics Commissioner is obliged to give that member an opportunity to present his or her views. How the Ethics Commissioner fulfills this legal obligation is at his discretion.

The Ethics Commissioner appeared before the committee yesterday and took the valid concerns expressed by the members of that committee under advisement. I do not believe this is a matter of privilege because the Ethics Commissioner has already indicated that he will take the advice—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I thank both members for their intervention. I believe what we have is a debate on how the Ethics Commissioner is going to do his business or has done his business.

I expect normally that the committee, upon hearing witnesses and whatever testimony, will follow through and table a report in the House on this matter. It is difficult for the Chair to know of course what went on in committee, but more importantly, normally there would be a committee report if the committee felt it was necessary. I invite the committee to complete its work, and then afterwards, if it feels it is necessary, to table a report in the House. The House would then be seized with it if that is necessary at that time.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

●(1210)

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you will be as pleased as I am to know that I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 98 petitions.

* * *

[*English*]

WAGE EARNER PROTECTION PROGRAM ACT

Hon. Ken Dryden (for the Minister of Industry) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-55, an act to establish the Wage Earner Protection Program Act, to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

TAKE NOTE DEBATE

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Minister of Internal Trade and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I propose:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, on June 7, 2005, a take note debate shall take place on the subject of supply management.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): A recorded division will be deferred until Monday, June 6.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

●(1215)

[*English*]

SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—FEDERAL JUDICIARY APPOINTMENTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): The hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General still had two minutes left in the time for questions and comments. The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

Supply

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief because I do not have much time left. I have two comments and one question.

My first comment has to do with the importance for the minister of maintaining the integrity of the judiciary, as he has said himself in his speech. This is why he decided against lodging a complaint in Michel Robert's case. However, his predecessor lodged one in 1996 in the case of Justice Bienvenue who had made discriminatory remarks against women and Jews. The then Minister of Justice is now Deputy Prime Minister.

My second comment has to do with the representation of minorities in the judiciary. Going back to the point made by the Minister of Justice and the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, if this is so important, can the minister tell us how many judges are bilingual now, as was asked three times during the April 19, 2005 meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages?

In closing, the minister is always telling us that merit is the only argument or the only factor in the judicial appointment process. I have always believed that in politics, rhetoric has to be based on facts. If such is the case, how does he explain that 60% of the Quebec lawyers appointed to a judgeship at the federal level since 2000 have contributed money to the Liberal Party of Canada? If we restrict ourselves to private practice lawyers appointed to the bench, that percentage goes up to 72.4%.

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, concerning the bilingual judges, a study of the matter is under way so we can give an answer.

As to the second question, if there is a certain percentage, it is no more than an allegation. Besides, there is a big difference between a correlation and a causal relation.

I will repeat what I have always said: there is no link between political background and the process of appointment to the judiciary. This process is based on merit only, as I said in my remarks this morning.

• (1220)

Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles. This motion is similar to another one that was introduced during another Parliament. I agree with the principle of this motion. It is a very intelligent initiative, and it is very good for our country, for the judges, and for the whole system in general.

[*English*]

This motion would result in the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness having a subcommittee created with a mandate to examine the process for the appointment of the federal judiciary and make recommendations for reform. Clearly, the primary goal of those recommendations would be to eliminate political partisanship from the process, which is something we in the Conservative Party completely embrace and favour.

If adopted, this particular process would be completed by October 31, 2005, which would cause a great deal of activity over the

summer, but that is what we are here to do. Certainly, this is an issue of great importance.

Before I begin my remarks on the substance of the motion, I must put personal reservations and concerns on the record regarding the wording at the beginning of the motion, wherein the hon. member indicates that we would condemn or, in the words used here, denounce the opinion of a judge. This strikes me as bringing this motion sadly into the realm of political commentary on the judiciary. In my view this somewhat undermines the actual principle and spirit of the motion, which is to move away from partisanship and not indulge in it further.

I have had discussions with the hon. member and I understand his passion for this issue. My own belief is that it would be preferential if in fact we could remove that particular reference and have the issue itself referred to a judicial counsel in the province of Quebec where it would be dealt with in an internal fashion and by an appropriate panel of peers as to the appropriateness or in this case the inappropriateness of this comment that is on the record now sadly outside of a courtroom, which again is problematic.

The removal of the first line would go a long way to improve this motion quite frankly. Having said that, this is a matter that should be above the political games that sometimes get in the way of motions such as this. We in the Conservative Party favour the creation, cleansing or purging of the politics from the political process in which appointments are made to courts throughout the land. They should be transparent and free from political interference.

[*Translation*]

I have a great deal of respect for the hon. member and the work that went into this motion. I appreciate his longstanding passion and commitment to this issue. He is very consistent in his work in the House and in committee.

[*English*]

I believe the motion may not be seen to be on the radar screens of many Canadians but it should be, in particular in light of some very disturbing allegations of Liberal patronage appointments to the bench that stem from testimony given by a Liberal at the Gomery commission.

I would say that many Canadians, particularly those who are in the practice of law or who are associated with the judiciary, are greatly concerned, and with cause, over these damning allegations about political interference and, essentially, reward for political support that led to appointments.

I reiterate my belief that the political partisanship should be set aside when it comes to issues such as this and we as parliamentarians have to try to raise that standard and raise the bar itself.

I will use my time remaining to reference some of the salient points around the pith and substance of the motion.

Canadians have been concerned about the appearance and, in some cases, the reality of the encroachment of the Supreme Court, the supremacy of the courts versus the supremacy of Parliament and the practice of reading into our laws interpretations that could be viewed and, in some cases, very much seen inconsistent with or outside the intent of the law when it was passed by Parliament.

Supply

Now there is a normal maturing process and there is a normal living tree analogy that is often used with respect to laws of the land but this atmosphere has led to a renewed interest in just how those who compose the bench at the appellant and at the supreme court level receive their appointments.

In the last few years we have witnessed a number of cases, at both the provincial supreme court level and the Canadian supreme court level, that seem to effectively take away or diminish the supremacy of Parliament. This contradicts, in my view, the intent of the Canadian Constitution and some of the societal values, which are the subject of these court decisions, that are held very dear by Canadians.

Yes, Canadians question the process and the individuals responsible for making these decisions, unelected versus elected. For example, the John Robin Sharpe case comes to mind. The decision by the British Columbia Superior Court and on into the Supreme Court of Canada allowed convicted felons the right to essentially have materials which were deemed by the police in the initial investigation and prosecutors to be of a pornographic nature.

There are other cases that involve the rights of felons currently serving in federal and provincial institutions to vote. This I and many Canadians find repugnant.

As well, we have witnessed how diverse decisions from superior courts of Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and other provinces have dealt with the issue of same sex marriage. This is why I think it is fair to say that part of the Supreme Court decision, on the reference question, as referred to by the government, was to send it back to Parliament for consideration when it came to the definition of marriage itself. Those opposed to judicial activism seemed to be very concerned about the contradiction that appears to be developing.

However I believe they can take solace in the court's decision to do just that, including the chief justice of the Supreme Court suggesting, quite appropriately, that this was a matter for Parliament.

The court's refusal to answer that question could also be interpreted as an admission of parliamentary supremacy in regard to that specific issue. The court's answer that it would not exercise discretion and not address the matter is somewhat unprecedented, in my view, that they would take the very direct step to send it back to Parliament to have this issue addressed by the elected body of the land, the Parliament of Canada.

That is a view the courts have held and a view I think Canadians generally hold. I believe it is a sign that the balance in our system can be struck and that our court system can be respectful to Parliament, just as we should be respectful of the role of the courts.

What it also suggests is that, despite court decisions, the government appeared to be prepared to forge ahead and amend the law as it saw fit regardless of the court's direction. This, I admit, may be a broad interpretation but relevant nonetheless.

• (1225)

By eliminating political partisanship from the appointment process and eliminating the perception or reality of interference, we would be making informed decisions on who comprises the

bench based on skill, on academic laurels and on merit which is the critical issue in all of this. We need the best minds, the best individuals and the most qualified persons comprising the bench at all levels. Having spent time in the courts, these are day to day decisions that impact directly on the lives of Canadians, directly in a way that can alter their families, their financial welfare, their very being and their freedoms.

I believe that the role of a judge in Canada equals, in many ways, the role of individual parliamentarians. In fact, in a more practical way, those judges on a day to day basis are interacting with Canadians on the basic rights and freedoms, privileges and protections that need to be supported and above any disrepute or suggestion of political bias.

By eliminating these suggestions and eliminating any direction that would lead to that bias and putting in place a more pristine process, a process that would be beyond any dispute, I believe we would enhance the role of judges in a significant way.

No one can argue that a shift away from partisanship is not a shift in the right direction. I believe the scrutiny by members of Parliament of appointees to the highest court would go a long way to determining the suitability of those wishing to serve and could possibly allow for greater diversity in the views reflected of those who seek to serve as judges.

This is not to in any way diminish the role of provincial bar associations or laypersons' input and the process that we currently have in place. It can all be incorporated into this view and vetting process that is suggested by virtue of the motion. In fact, the motion does not even go so far as to provide the detail of how this process of scrutiny would work.

To many it seems that the reading into the intent of laws in the courts can be viewed as a violation of the basic constitutional principle that Parliament makes the laws, the executive implements them and the courts interpret them.

However the root of the perception of judicial activism is in the Constitution itself. For the first time in Canada a constitutionally entrenched guarantee of civil rights through the Charter of Rights and Freedoms requiring the courts to determine the constitutionality of laws created this scenario and it is unprecedented, I would suggest, based on the British constitutional process in which we now have inserted a charter.

I do not mean to be crude in this analogy but it is like taking a carburetor from one car and putting it into the engine of another car. The system in my view is still working this anomaly.

Some have argued that this insertion of the charter has allowed for the erosion of parliamentary supremacy in which democratic accountability has been replaced by the supremacy of the Constitution as interpreted by the courts.

Should the motion lead to a change in the appointment process, it ultimately would allow for greater public scrutiny. Again, transparency, openness and public scrutiny raises public confidence in the process without jeopardizing judicial independence.

Our party has put forward suggestions, including the recommendation that the name and qualifications of a person proposed for appointment by the Prime Minister to the Supreme Court shall be presented to Parliament which shall after debate make a recommendation on the suitability of the nominee's candidacy. This type of directive would also be applied to the appointment of those at the appellate level.

One contrary view is that this would dissuade individuals interested in serving in that capacity from applying. It is always once again a consideration of the balance in the public interest. I would suggest that anyone qualified or who presents himself or herself as qualified for that position should be prepared for scrutiny, including public scrutiny.

I would not stand in this place and suggest that we should use the American model, not that the American model is frightening. It is what they have chosen to do and I do not think we should belittle that model. However I do not believe it is consistent with the Canadian traditions and the way in which we would pursue this matter. It does allow for perhaps a more public spectacle and an examination that can sometimes go very awry as we have seen in the case of the Clarence Thomas appointment.

• (1230)

A vote in the House of Commons on this particular matter could be conducted and the outcome communicated to the governor in council prior to such appointments being made.

This is not a new matter. As I mentioned, the member who proposed the motion brought forward a similar motion in the last session that would have invoked a process that could have led to a recommendation of Parliament to change the current parameters of these appointments.

If the motion today were adopted it would simply empower the parliamentary committee to study it further. We did have a very involved committee study that reported its conclusions in a discussion paper on the issue. Unfortunately, the committee's recommendations in its main report were insufficient and not acted upon.

The four recommendations in the report were: first, there must be substantive input from all the provinces and territories into the compilation of the lists of suitable Supreme Court of Canada nominees and that the input from the provinces and territories at that stage would not be made public; second, there must be a public review of a short list of nominees before a parliamentary committee, which is what this motion speaks to; third, that parliamentary ratification of the chosen nominee must be achieved and that the form of ratification must not infringe upon the constitutional right of the governor in council to make the actual appointment. It therefore would not be taking that power away but simply buttressing it with parliamentary authority and backing. The last recommendation is: that appointments must be made so that the appointment process becomes mandated, again adding to the legitimacy of it.

Unfortunately, the government has yet to make any substantial changes to the mechanics of the appointment process. I hate to sound dismissive of the process but it really was a sham. The decision had already been taken and the committee was simply being asked to

Supply

give an after the fact rubber stamp approval of the decision that was taken. It was unprecedented. I would be the first to admit and acknowledge to the Minister of Justice that this was a step in the right direction but it was not consistent with nor in keeping with the commitment to make the process more open to parliamentary involvement and discretion because, as I said, the decision was taken and the consultation was after the fact.

In reality, there is a need for parliamentary scrutiny. In fact, appearances before a specialized committee could take place in camera provided the parameters of questions were clearly laid out beforehand, and I believe that is appropriate. There should be limitations on the parameters of those questions. We should state on the record that we do not want to dissuade individuals from coming forward. We do not want to give the impression that this is an effort to pry into people's private lives and private affairs but to get to the central issue of merit, capability and appropriateness.

This does not mean that the committee would have a right, for example, to delve into financial records of an appointee or, for that matter, that the financial records of a person's spouse or partner would be subject to examination. I do not believe that type of information should be given any relevancy in terms of the appointee's ability to interpret the law. If there was some suggestion that, for example, in a federal or provincial court matter there might be some perception of bias or some conflict of interest that could arise because of a person's financial interest, that may open the door, but in general we should not go in that direction because it would, in my view, dissuade many.

The motion is aimed at ensuring the proper representation of Canadian views and values and I suggest that those views and values are not the property of any one political party. Those views and values of members democratically elected to represent Canadians should have the confidence to have input into such a critical issue. In this way we could provide a unique balance and a perspective in the process of judicial appointments that is uniquely Canadian.

I see this committee process as an opportunity to allow members of Parliament to act on behalf of those in their constituencies, those who have elected them to represent them here in the House of Commons, the highest court in the land, to delve into some of those beliefs of the appointees through examination, in some cases, of previous decisions rendered.

Again, I believe that type of examination should be taking place in camera. Those types of discussions are relevant when one examines the merits of appointments and the philosophic belief of judges that does bear on the appropriateness of their appointment.

• (1235)

I reiterate that no one wants to go down the road of confirmation hearings, a public spectacle that very much can damage a person's reputation, but strictly done for the purposes of avoiding political partisanship or the perception thereof.

Supply

The motion before us today could lead to the creation of a new appointment process that would invigorate and, in my view, further legitimize the appointment process. It would do away with some of the real and perceived bias, particularly around the appointment of judges to the highest court in the land. This would go to rebalancing what is sometimes seen as an unfair, secretive and partisan process by its very nature.

I believe that we support the spirit and intent of this motion in principle. I still am very much troubled by the preamble of the motion which calls for commentary from the House of Commons. I would have requested a friendly amendment from my learned colleague, my friend from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, yet I understand his position on this clearly. That is why we in the Conservative Party intend to view this as a very open matter, one on which we will be consulting further.

I have appreciated very much the opportunity to participate in this important debate. This debate has far-reaching ramifications not only for the courts, but for the important role that parliamentarians can play in improving the reputations and perception of judges and the confidence Canadians should have in judges who serve them on a day to day basis.

• (1240)

Hon. Stephen Owen (Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a couple of things came to mind in listening to the member's description of inadequacies, real or perceived, that he expressed concern about.

I would like to have him reflect upon the fact that the Minister of Justice over six months ago laid down with respect to the selection and nomination of Supreme Court justices a very comprehensive process which in every regard meets the tests that the member opposite raised, but for the appearance before a parliamentary committee by the nominee himself or herself.

I listened to him carefully. I agree with his concern, without being critical of the American process. We have seen just over the last two weeks the difficulties with the nomination process for the appellate courts in the United States. Nominees appear before political committees that are highly charged and unavoidably partisan and political. That creates a difficulty in the respect for and the distinction between the independent branches of government, the executive, the legislature and the courts.

I would ask the hon. member why is the process for the Supreme Court justices set up only missing that element of direct challenge? It would be a challenge and inevitably, as we have seen in the United States, a politically charged challenge by politicians. I worry about that.

I also worry about the notion of public scrutiny in the way that the member opposite expressed it in terms of accountability of judges. Judges are independent. It is a legitimate, independent, essential branch of government. It is often overlooked that judges are perhaps in the whole range of the three branches of government, the most accountable because they hear all of the cases and arguments in public. They must give reasoned, detailed judgments. They are appealable, usually at least to two appellate court levels. For their personal conduct they can be censured through a very detailed process by the Canadian Judicial Council and then back to the

Minister of Justice after investigation and perhaps an inquiry hearing which can be in public. They can be removed at the end of the day by the House and the other place.

That is the appropriate role I would suggest to the member opposite for the political process, the legislative and executive process, to play in this highly accountable system we have. I would hope that the member opposite, being a former officer of the court himself, a prosecutor, would understand and be forthright in protecting and celebrating the quality of the judiciary in this country, which I know he appreciates. If there are misapprehensions about that quality, as with the rest of us who have appeared before the courts, he must constantly reinforce it in the public's mind so that there is not the false perception that there is something wanting in the quality of our judiciary. Our judiciary is renowned around the world. The jurisprudence coming from our Canadian courts is as respected as if not more so than that in any other jurisdiction in the world.

My question is simply if the member's concern is that we not go to a politically charged system of appointment, of vetting of nominees by politicians as in the United States, what is missing in the Supreme Court of Canada selection process announced six months ago by the Minister of Justice, but that final point?

• (1245)

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, in a very direct way I would say to the member that what is missing is actual meaningful input before the decision is actually taken.

The process that we have seen, and I acknowledge in respect to the hon. Minister of Justice, was a new process. It was in keeping with some of the recommendations that came from the committee, but in my view it did not go far enough because the decision was already taken.

I do not take issue with what the hon. member has said as to the responsibility not only for members of the bar and officers of the court, but for parliamentarians as well. We must acknowledge the incredible talents and incredible people we have serving the people of Canada and serving in international roles, as we saw with Madam Justice Arbour.

I am not prepared to go as far as the hon. member, just as I would not go so far as to defend every member of the House of Commons, past or present. There will always be those in every profession for whom we are less than proud, but it is really much about public confidence. It is really much about the issue of allowing the people of Canada to feel that there is some element of direct accountability, not in an insular way through professional organizations such as bar associations and judicial councils where certainly they are accountable insofar as there are processes for removal, but I go back to the central issue.

I am not saying we should be electing judges, but I am saying that elected individuals should play a greater role in having actual discretion that is taken into consideration and respected by the executive branch which ultimately acts on those recommendations, acts on that information provided.

This is a process of such significance and great importance as put forward by my colleague that there is a greater need for public confidence. There is a greater need for public involvement through elected officials, even if it be in an in camera process where there is direct interaction with the Supreme Court nominee. I see no difficulty with that.

I think many members of the bar and many potential candidates would be prepared to come forward and subject themselves to some degree of scrutiny. Why would they not? If they want that position, why would they not be prepared to simply state that and state their reasons?

It is not sully the reputation of judges to suggest that they should be treated like anyone who is applying for a job to go before a body of essentially peers as parliamentarians and say, "This is why I want to serve the public in this capacity. These are my qualifications. This is the merit I bring to the job". What could be more straightforward than that? What could instil greater public confidence to know that level of scrutiny, not for the purposes of dissuasion, embarrassment or any kind of inappropriate prying, but simply greater respect for the Parliament of Canada to have input into what will ultimately be a decision taken by the Prime Minister in conjunction with consultations with the Minister of Justice and others who also play an important role in the selection process?

Hon. Stephen Owen: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the response from the hon. member. I wonder if he is thinking, when he comments on the procedure for the selection of Supreme Court of Canada justices, of the ad hoc process that took place at the last selection process and not the new process that was suggested six months ago where members of Parliament do have a direct role, not just after a decision has been made, but in vetting a list of recommended people. They have the right of leave under that process to reduce from eight prospective nominees to five and three. There is a very direct prior role in that process.

I must say that I respect the comment which was said in very measured, respectful terms, that members of Parliament would not inflame the situation or make inappropriate remarks, comments or questions to a nominee or to the Minister of Justice with respect to a nominee. As someone who has practised before the courts and has had an experience here for the last four years of courthouses and this magnificent House and the tradition it reflects, the solemnity of the process, the rules and conventions of courts and houses of Parliament, I can only reflect on the conduct in the House on a daily basis. Frankly, if the member opposite or myself, as officers of the court, as lawyers, had behaved in court the way that many members in the House behave on a daily basis, we would have been thrown in jail.

I worry about having too much confidence in the solemnity of that questioning process over individual nominees.

• (1250)

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I find myself very much in agreement with my colleague's remarks, particularly with regard to the tempestuous and very partisan conduct that occurs in this place. I would, however, say that throughout my remarks I have not suggested that we do this in the circus like atmosphere that sadly question period has become and some of the debate itself.

Supply

Again, as with bar associations and all professional associations, there is an undeniable and very real responsibility on the individuals who comprise that body to try to raise the standard themselves or suffer the consequences, to which my colleague has referred. I agree that the contemptuous behaviour here would very often and very likely in a court of law result in the bailiffs taking away offending solicitors and incarcerating them.

Our Sergeant-at-Arms is not empowered to conduct such removal, except on very rare occasions where they might touch the mace or make remarks that were unparliamentary.

The central issue is the enhancing and the shining up, so to speak, of the reputation of judges that instills greater confidence from the general population.

In response to my colleague's suggestion, I believe this new process, which we have yet to see implemented, may again move in that proper direction. An in camera session involving parliamentarians having direct interaction with judges is not something I would hope the Minister of Justice would rule out of hand as something that could be pursued. The option should be considered further by a committee, which is why my personal support in spirit for the motion exists, but for the reservations I have over the denouncement of a judge.

Again, I appreciate participating in a debate of this nature and the tone that we have maintained throughout it.

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are two parts to the motion that is before us today.

The first part has given both the previous speaker from the Conservative Party and particularly the Minister of Justice substantial concern as to whether we are crossing a line between the parliamentary wing of government and the judicial wing.

The second part of the motion is simply, as a preliminary, to establish a subcommittee of the justice committee calling upon Parliament as a whole to support the establishment of that subcommittee which would have as its mandate in purpose to prepare recommendations as to how the judicial appointment process is dealt with in our country at the Superior Court, Appeals Court, Supreme Court and Federal Court levels.

At the outset, I will indicate that we have taken the position as a party that we would support the motion.

The concern raised by the justice minister, in particular of this crossing over the line, is somewhat overplayed. I recognize the sensitivity of maintaining that constitutional framework. It is one that I think any lawyer in the country would recognize the importance. I think our average citizen would recognize the importance of having independence between wings of government.

I do not believe the motion goes so far as to cross the line and imperil the judicial independence. I think every member has spoken how highly in regard we hold that principle.

Supply

The reason I do not believe we are doing this is the fact that as members of Parliament, and I including the justice minister, we have the responsibility to absolutely guarantee to the Canadian citizenry that the judicial appointment process is one where one's political affiliation or ideological orientation is not up for consideration in denying one the right to become a judge. That is why the comments from Mr. Justice Robert in Quebec were of such concern to us.

I think the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles in particular felt the intensity of the comments. Earlier this morning he set out a number of occasions where in effect Justice Robert appears, at least, to be clearly repeating the statements that if one is a supporter of sovereignty for the Province of Quebec that in some fashion disentitles one to be considered or to be appointed as a judge at the federal level.

That is not a position our party would support. It is not a position of a country that has a Charter of Rights and Freedoms that guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of association, where the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized that there is an informal constitutional right if a province is to determine to separate how they separate and where issues around sovereignty and provincial rights, in particular, are constantly before our court, to deny somebody who has a particular ideological bent with regards to independence of the province of Quebec the right to sit on the bench.

I believe it is not only something that we are doing, it is something we should be doing. I believe as members of the House we have to say to the Canadian public, and perhaps in particular in these circumstances to the citizenry of the province of Quebec, that their affiliation to the sovereignty movement would not disentitle them to be considered as judges.

• (1255)

I believe this is the intent of the motion. It certainly is the intent of myself and my party in expressing our, and I do not want to use too strong a term because it is important not to do that, real concern on the comments made by Mr. Justice Robert.

I am perhaps being a little too lawyerish, although the minister was, but I want to address these comments more specifically—

An hon. member: A disease in the profession.

Mr. Joe Comartin: I will ignore the negative, sarcastic comment we occasionally get as members of the bar from people who are not members of the bar, including those members from my own party.

The minister has raised real concerns, and he is right about this, that we would be prejudging Mr. Justice Robert's position in terms of being involved in a fair process. He has set out accurately that the complaint has been made against them. It is before the judicial council in Quebec and ultimately there could be a recommendation by the council that Mr. Justice Robert be removed. It is hard to imagine that would happen.

I should point out in the history of our country it has only happened once. In fact, it never was fully completed. It would have been I believe. It only got back to the House once in the history of the country. Therefore, it is hard to imagine that happening. However, if it did, somehow by us expressing our opposition to the

comments made by Mr. Justice Robert, we would be prejudging, I do not see us doing that.

That is not my intent. If it ever got to the extreme that the judicial council recommended that Mr. Justice Robert to be removed from his office as a judge in the province of Quebec, the position I take today, which is the right of a sovereignist to sit on a bench is one that I believe is enshrined in our Constitution and specifically in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has nothing to do with the decision I might make at that point in my vote as a member of this chamber.

I do not see us crossing that line or coming anywhere near it. What we are saying is Canadians across the country have a right to take a position on political issues of the day, including on the right of the province of Quebec to separate, and that position will not disentitle them the right to sit on the bench.

I am fully supportive of the second part of the motion to have the justice committee investigate and I assume prepare a report as to how the judicial appointments should be handled at the federal level in the country.

Like other members who spoke today, we were involved through the summer last year in the two judicial appointments to the Supreme Court of Canada. Although we ultimately indicated our approval of the appointments, we were quite critical of the process. The minister has responded with a more detailed process, one with which I still have some criticism.

Before going to the process of what I think the committee would go through, let me say this. Again, this may be in response to feeling some degree of sensitivity to the comments made by the minister in his address to the House earlier today.

I do not believe there is anyone who spoke today who is not cognizant of the fact that we have an excellent judiciary in the country and the recognition that it may be the best in the world. I say that with a great deal of pride. I think it is a reflection of the educational process that we go through. Our educational process as lawyers is more extensive than the process in a number of other countries. I believe the attempt on our part of all political parties to try to make the process of judicial appointments as unbiased as possible contributes to that.

• (1300)

I believe that this division of powers which has been honoured with very few exceptions in our history since Confederation is all part of this. It is a model that I acknowledge and again with pride speak in favour of. It is a model recognized right across the world.

I will add this one additional point. Being in Windsor and having Detroit and the state of Michigan immediately across from us, I happen to be in a particular geographical area that allows me to be very cognizant of the differences between our system and the American system. I can see the differences in the quality of the judiciary. I can see the differences in the process and the effect it has on the quality of the judiciary.

The reality of that pride and the reality of just how good our judiciary is, I believe, also in part because we do not accept that it is perfect. It may never be perfect. In fact, there are times, and I think this is one of them, when there are some criticisms and I think a level of cynicism about political partisanship in the appointment process. It is there in the public. We know about some of the allegations that have come out of the Gomery commission up to this point.

We heard from the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles about the investigative newspaper journalist who looked into the appointments in Quebec and how many of them had Liberal ties in the sense of making contributions to the Liberal Party before their appointments.

I can say based on my own experiences in my community, and this is somewhat cynical but also somewhat real, that if someone is a member of the Liberal Party and there is a Conservative administration in power in Ottawa, one generally does not bother applying for a judicial appointment even though one may be able to meet the merit test. Similarly, if it is the reverse, one does not apply. I also have to say that someone who is a member of the NDP probably does not ever bother applying. That is the reality. It is somewhat cynical but also somewhat real.

After we finished the process last year, I got back to the minister by correspondence and said that all the attention has been focused on the judicial appointments to the Supreme Court, but the reality is that we are missing the point in over-emphasizing this. The appointments to the Supreme Court are, with rare exceptions, made from a pool of judges who have already been appointed at the lower court level, usually at the Superior Court level and sometimes at the appeals level and the Federal Court level.

Thus, if we really want to remove any partisanship or perception of partisanship, we have to go back to the trial level and look at those appointments and the process as to how lawyers are appointed to the bench at that level. Until this week, the minister had not responded to that. He is now indicating that he is going to initiate a review process.

I have to say that when he stood up in the House and indicated how the process was going to work it was glaringly apparent to me that he missed the point. The point was that there is no parliamentary process. The House of Commons justice committee was not going to be involved in his process. I have said this to him directly. I think he is taking it under advisement and more seriously now.

It is crucial that the elected members of this House, the elected members for the country, are involved in developing the process so that we eliminate partisanship from it as best we can and also so we are ultimately comfortable in the process. We cannot be comfortable with it unless we are involved in helping to develop it.

•(1305)

I would urge the minister to rethink the process he is in and involve both the justice committee and/or other parliamentarians in the process right from the very beginning, as opposed to the two step process he suggested in the House earlier this week.

With regard to what I expect the committee to do if we proceed in that way, with a subcommittee of the justice committee, I expect our members to take a very close look at the models being used

Supply

elsewhere in the country for appointments by our provincial governments for our provincial courts.

I must say that I am a strong admirer of the process in Ontario. I have looked at several others across the country. I am quite convinced that the Ontario model is best. I say that for a number of reasons, first because at one point I was being considered before this model was put into place and quite frankly I was scandalized by some of the suggestions that were made to me as to how I could ensure that I would be appointed a provincial court judge.

I have to say with some pride that I resisted those suggestions and I am not a member of that bench. I am here instead. Maybe that, in the overall fate of my life, is the appropriate result.

However, people should not have been put through that process. I was not the only one. A good friend of mine in London went through almost exactly the same process. I think we both felt very clearly that it was inappropriate and close to being a scandalous process.

With some degree of pride, I will say that the process has changed in Ontario, and because of all governments, although I am going to come back to one point when one government did try to undermine it. The Liberal government under David Peterson introduced the process. It was developed by Professor Peter Russell from Toronto. He was a strong advocate for it. He had done a lot of thinking about it and I think he came up with a process that has worked extremely well.

Under the NDP government that followed Peterson's, we continued with it. We made some changes. I am going to come back to that in a moment. Then the Harris Conservative government continued with it.

I want to make two points about our experience and the experience under the Conservative government. When the NDP first came into power in 1990 in Ontario, there were about half a dozen appointments being recommended by the committee. I am saying this for the minister because I think we have the same problem at the federal level. Those appointments did not reflect in any way a gender balance, even though there was very good reason to believe that one could be achieved and in fact we subsequently did. It did not reflect the multicultural, ethnocultural and visible minority composition of the province of Ontario, not at all.

I say again with some pride that our government rejected those appointments. We asked for them to be reviewed. At the same time, we looked at the composition of the advisory committee, because it really is the screening process. When that was done, it was quite clear to us that the province of Ontario was not adequately represented on that committee. With subsequent appointments as people's terms came up, we changed the composition so that it would reflect the sociological makeup of the province. From that time on, I think it worked very well.

Private Members' Business

It is interesting that under the Conservative government and the former premier, Mr. Harris, there was one period of time when there was almost a constitutional crisis in Ontario around judicial appointments. He wanted one particular appointment. The committee members refused to run the name through. They had reviewed it through an interview and screening process that is quite detailed and they felt that the candidate was not adequate to the task. The premier was stubborn enough to refuse to make any appointments. That logjam went on for the better part of 12 months before he finally stepped down as premier, but the committee, and I believe to its eternal credit, refused to budge, saying that the candidate was not acceptable.

• (1310)

Therefore, I believe the Ontario process is a strong one. It is a good one. The composition of the bench in Ontario has changed dramatically under it. It is much more reflective of the composition of the community as a whole.

Again for the minister, let me say that I think this is where the problem is with the process we have in place now. The advisory committees we have, and I am going to be gender-critical here, are still too much of the old boys' network. To give the minister his due, the first appointment of a woman in my community just happened a month or so ago. I congratulate him on making that appointment, but I have to ask why it took this long.

More than 50% of students at law schools are female. That has been the case for the better part of a decade. Numbers for the bar are nearly the same. But when we look at the bench it is not even close. The same can be said repeatedly in regard to visible minorities and a number of our ethnocultural communities that should have members from their communities represented on the bench. It is just not there. I believe that is because of the advisory committee process, which has to be looked at most closely.

Who are the people on that committee? I have to say to the minister that too many of them are politically affiliated to the minister's party, the party in government. Should we be making that committee more broadly based? I believe the answer is obviously yes, but there is a process. That is why we are supporting this motion. We believe that we should do the review and hopefully we will have a government in place that will accept the recommendations.

• (1315)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): It being 1:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded division stands deferred until the usual time of adjournment on Monday, June 6, 2005.

[*English*]

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, discussions have taken place among all parties and I believe you would find consent for the following order:

That, at the conclusion of the present debate on today's opposition motion, all questions necessary to dispose of this motion be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until the end of government orders on Tuesday, June 7.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If you were to ask it, I think you would find unanimous consent that we see the clock as being 1:30 p.m.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Is there unanimous consent to see the clock as being 1:30 p.m.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): The House will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION ACT

Mr. Christian Simard (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ) moved that Bill C-363, an act to amend the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act (profits distributed to provinces), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order on a technical question concerning this bill, that is the need for royal recommendation.

Private Members' Business

In my opinion, Bill C-363 requires royal recommendation. This bill would require Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to distribute to the provinces any surplus from its reserve fund. A royal recommendation is needed in this case for two reasons.

First, the transfer of money to the provinces constitutes new spending. We could argue that the funds reserved by CMHC are not part of the government's funds and are an exception. Yet, earnings retained by CMHC are integrated annually into the Government of Canada's consolidated revenue fund.

Under Standing Order 79(1), royal recommendation is required for any bill for the appropriation of public revenue, and section 53 of the Constitution Act, 1867, is similar. The current interpretation of this section would include all the funds under the control of the crown and its officers.

According to sub-section 5(1) of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act, CMHC is an agent of Her Majesty. By calling for a portion of the agency's assets to be transferred to the provinces, the bill affects public funds, that is to say moneys which would otherwise be allocated to the reserve fund or the Receiver General.

Secondly, in a ruling on May 9, 2005, the Acting Speaker indicated the need for a royal recommendation in order to change an allocation, saying:

As most members know, bills which involve new or additional spending for a distinct purpose must be recommended by the Crown. The royal recommendation is also required where a bill alters the appropriation of public revenue "under the circumstances, in the manner and for the purposes set out" in the bill. What this means is that a royal recommendation is required not only in the case where more money is being appropriated, but also in the case where the authorization to spend for a specific purpose is being significantly altered.

Now, a payment to the provinces does, obviously, constitute a purpose that was not set out in the original legislation, which stipulates that any surplus is retained by Canada.

For these two reasons I conclude—and I trust you will as well, Mr. Speaker—that this bill requires a royal recommendation. I hope that the Chair will look into all these elements carefully.

Mr. Christian Simard (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I challenge the interpretation here that royal assent is required in the matter before us. It involves no additional funds. We are talking about the allocation of existing funds of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This transfer to the provinces is for exactly the same purposes—for the same activities—as those of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. In fact, it is as if existing funds were delegated—and so, no additional funding. As regards the funds in the CMHC reserve, according to Marleau and Montpetit, at page 655 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*,

An amendment is therefore inadmissible if it imposes a charge on the public treasury.

The matter before us does not involve a charge on the public treasury, but rather existing CMHC funds distributed among the provinces for purposes identical to those of CMHC.

The Corporation has agreements of this type with the provinces with regard to affordable housing and uses similar agreements. So no new funding for new activities is involved, because the activities

were planned by CMHC. All we are saying is that, under C-363, the additional funds would be used by the provinces, thus distributed among them. They would be distributed on the basis of population for CMHC purposes. All that has changed is the agent. There are no additional funds. The type of activity is the same. The money simply goes to the provinces and territories, which carry out the activities of CMHC as if they were delegated.

Let us go back to page 655 of Marleau and Montpetit's *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that you will reach the same conclusions. CMHC has generated huge surpluses. They would be used by the provinces for social housing, in order to make housing more accessible to all Quebeckers and Canadians. A royal recommendation is not needed at this point—no supplementary votes, no treasury money and no new activities.

• (1325)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): I thank the two hon. members for their comments. The chair shall take them into account and make a ruling before the second hour of debate.

* * *

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

TAKE NOTE DEBATE

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, discussions have taken place between all parties concerning the recorded division requested earlier today on the motion to hold a take note debate pursuant to Standing Order 53.1 on June 7. I believe if you seek it you would find consent to deem the motion carried.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-363, an act to amend the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act (profits distributed to provinces), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Christian Simard (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think that the cart was put before the horse in explaining why Bill C-363 did not require a royal recommendation. Allow me to take a moment to go over the background, content and purpose of this bill.

Private Members' Business

First and foremost, members should know that, in recent years, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has accumulated a huge surplus, which is not part of its mission per se. This surplus is so huge that something has to be done about it. The fact is that CMHC's mission is not being respected. No effort is being made to house Canadians and Quebeckers through home ownership incentives. Accumulating in excess of \$3.4 billion in surplus does nothing to help them.

It is important that hon. members be aware of the figures that I am about to quote concerning CMHC. In 1997, as I recall, CMHC had an accumulated surplus of \$32 million. In 2001, its assets already totalled \$1.265 billion; in 2002, \$1.809 billion; in 2003, \$2.476 billion; in 2004, \$3.342 billion. It is also important to note that, unless something is done, by 2008, the CMHC surplus will have increased to \$7 billion. That is an annual increase of more than \$1 billion.

We are talking about a huge surplus. It is also important to know what the current \$3.4 billion surplus represents. To give it concrete meaning, let us say that, with that amount, 60,000 new housing units could have been built to house 60,000 families. This is based on a \$50,000 per unit subsidy.

Instead, a surplus was accumulated. There have been no program changes and no cost reductions to Canadians as whole. CMHC has accumulated a surplus which we feel is immoral and outrageous.

Huge surpluses have been hidden in foundations and in reserves, and in the government's general operating budget, and that was contrary to the spirit, the letter and even the ideal of natural justice that created this Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, whose purpose was to provide help to all Canadians.

This bill mainly seeks a debate on the surpluses hidden all over by the government. Those surpluses are being raked in while people's essential needs are not being met.

What could the government and Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation have done with such surpluses over the years? They could have done a lot of things.

I used to live in the world of housing co-ops. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under-invested in that field for a very long period of time. In fact, it stopped investing between 1993 and 2002. Before 1993, in some places, it also applied modesty criteria, which is how a significant housing stock could be renovated with very little money being spent.

In Quebec alone, there was a shortfall of \$555 million in investments made. The housing stock currently being financed by CMHC would need renovations in this amount. No investment was made in this project.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has generated this \$3.4 billion by all kinds of means, for instance, by overcharging people who take out mortgage insurance when purchasing a house. I believe people know that when someone is purchasing a house for \$100,000 and cannot come up with a \$25,000 down payment, that person must have CMHC guarantee the loan. These fees are high and extremely profitable for CMHC.

●(1330)

CMHC is basically acting as a bank, not a cooperative or a social bank, but a real bank.

It is important to note that CMHC generated surpluses of some \$3.4 billion even in its social program management. The government had given CMHC money for social housing programs, and when the interest rates went down, it pocketed the difference between the agreed and the actual rates. CMHC thus made a lot of money in social program management.

It is all the more odious that when a housing cooperative has problems, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation strips it of its autonomy. CMHC only guarantees second mortgage loans at high interest rates, with conditions that take away all its autonomy. To reach that point, the housing cooperative really has to be on the brink of bankruptcy. It is forced to readjust all its rents according to market prices, and it systematically loses the second stage of assistance, rent supplements.

We can therefore say that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is an inhumane bank in the way it applies its programs. This is evidenced by the way it treats the cooperatives and the not for profit organizations that do not have enough money to help the poorest of their members. If these organizations need to invest to renovate their housing units because of underfunding, they are faced with foul and appalling conditions that profit Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Unfortunately, CMHC has failed in its mission. It chose to build up exorbitant surpluses now reaching \$3.4 billion. If we do not do anything, these surpluses will reach \$7 billion in 2008. There is no sign that CMHC will use this money to improve the housing situation for all Canadians and all Quebeckers.

An important signal has been given. Bill C-363 would transform into assets any amount exceeding a reasonable limit set at about \$1 billion. This is an important measure. In fact, is exactly 0.5% of CMHC's assets. Today, according to the available information, that would be a little bit more than \$1 billion. Bill C-363 would allow CMHC to keep a \$100 million annual reserve. Let us be clear: out of its \$3.4 billion, it could keep \$1 billion for contingencies, such as major losses.

In fact, nothing forces the CMHC to produce a surplus. For years, CMHC did not produce any surplus but only did what it was intended to do. However, during that period, it was allowed to keep a \$1 billion reserve fund or 0.5% of its assets, which is quite enough. Moreover, CMHC pays fees to the government each and every year to have its losses guaranteed. Last year it paid \$21 million to the government. So, in fact, CMHC had two insurance policies: it kept a huge reserve fund for contingencies although it was impossible to lose that much, and it paid the government \$21 million to be insured against possible losses. That was double insurance and double payments too, and the situation allowed CMHC to accumulate a completely outrageous surplus.

With Bill C-363 we are sending a message to CMHC to suggest that it retain \$1 billion. Any other unspent money proves CMHC does not have the ability to spend it. CMHC must therefore pass it on to the provinces on a pro-rated basis. By the way, at the suggestion of my colleague, the leader of the NDP, I will be making an amendment to the bill, so that it will read “provinces and territories”. This we will do in committee if the bill is passed at second reading. I encourage all hon. members to vote accordingly, so that we may debate the bill thoroughly in committee and make improvements to it. We will also be able to make another little technical correction to the English, where the word “provide” is missing.

The signal is clear. CMHC can maintain a reserve that is more than reasonable at \$1 billion. It cannot, however, accumulate profits to detriment of its mission. The needs in the provinces and territories are huge. Housing is their primary responsibility.

• (1335)

If it has not been true to its mission, then, right now, everything in excess of that \$1 billion figure—we are talking about some \$2.4 billion, which would mean \$500 million for Quebec, more for Ontario and the rest on a pro-rated basis according to the population of the provinces or territories—should be handed over to the jurisdiction of those provinces and territories. This money is needed. These jurisdictions know what to do with it, and will. This does not prevent CMHC from correcting the situation subsequently and presenting balanced budgets.

The planned \$1 billion per year for 2006 and 2007, plus another nearly \$1 billion for 2005, could be used by CMHC to invest in social housing and to help cooperative housing.

Yesterday, the Minister of Labour and Housing was asked a question—I nearly called it a planted question—by one of his colleagues. He said that he, unlike the Bloc Québécois, was looking after cooperative housing. That was what we call a cheap shot, intended to denigrate me, when I have been involved in cooperative housing all my life.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation could very well use the money that will be left to balance its budget. It should invest in housing cooperatives and in not-for-profit organizations, and it should also reduce the interest rates that it imposes on owners. It could also invest for the homeless. The SCPI program, which helps the homeless, will end in 2006. CMHC could easily use the money that it has left to renew this program, if the government is strapped for money.

This is very important: if after agreeing to go along with the New Democratic Party with Bill C-48, the Prime Minister—and this is from him—following some cold calculations, not because of convictions or principles, or because this was part of the initial budget, were to decide, in the next year or two, to invest \$1.6 billion in social housing, then, perhaps it could be said that, because of convictions or principles, he could, over the past few years, have used the CMHC surpluses to fulfill its mandate and provide appropriate housing.

Currently, there are 1.7 million Canadians in Quebec and in all the provinces who do not have good housing conditions. They are spending too much money on housing. This phenomenon has been

Private Members' Business

on the increase since the current minister of Labour published his report, in 1990, along with the current Prime Minister. Indeed, there are now 400,000 additional households experiencing that problem. At the time, there were 1.3 million, but there are now 1.7 million.

We are being told that something will be done later, because the government was forced to act following some cold calculations. Something can be done now. With this bill, I am proposing that something be done now.

If this government is not capable of doing it, if it does not have the integrity or the morals to spend money properly, if it prefers to accumulate billions of dollars at the expense of the poor, when it could have built 60,000 new housing units, if it does not know how to manage, if it cannot stand the heat, then it should get out of the kitchen. It should give those surpluses, or a good chunk of that money, to the provinces. They will know how to use it.

The bill states that this money would be used for social housing, to help all Canadians and Quebecers find lodging and to improve their housing conditions. That is what the bill says and that is what will be done. It is an important political message. We cannot accumulate immoral surpluses without public debate, without talking about it in the House and without doing anything about it. We cannot get away with keeping people in poor housing conditions.

I also invite the Conservative Party to support this bill. In a way, it is also a Conservative bill, in that it tells the government to manage this money better and not to spend it. When there is a \$3.4 billion surplus, internally there is a tendency to spend less carefully.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation was used as a screen in the sponsorship scandal. CMHC did not manage the \$2 million advertising contracts, but the money came from CMHC and they had no say in the matter. On the inside they have a tendency to manage things poorly and to forget what their primary role is. It is inefficient and ineffective to allow a crown corporation to accumulate outrageous surpluses that go beyond its mandate.

• (1340)

I invite the Conservative members who have spoken out against the fiscal imbalance to support this important bill that respects provincial jurisdictions. Together we could improve it in committee, if necessary. As I said to the leader of the NDP and to the Conservative Party critic, I am prepared to improve the bill after second reading.

Let us debate, in this country, the importance of surpluses. That is what I invite my colleagues to do.

Mr. Guy Côté (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is always sad to hear such speeches which briefly but so eloquently summarize 10 years of federal government withdrawal from such areas, meaning 10 years of mismanagement.

I want to clarify something. Even without legislation such as Bill C-363, could the government have used available funds equal to the CMHC surpluses to meet the greatest needs in social housing, among other things, and in related areas?

Private Members' Business

Mr. Christian Simard: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier for his question. In fact, the government could have done that.

When the current Prime Minister was finance minister, he stopped all new funding for social housing, instead merely allocating the budgets in keeping with previous commitments. As a result, until 2002, no new money was allocated. Even in 2002, when the federal government started to reinvest, it was no longer under the responsibility of the finance minister, now Prime Minister. His insensitivity to social and cooperative housing is legendary to those in the field.

At the same time these commitments were being fulfilled, the surpluses were accumulating. So, the essential needs of the public are not being met, which has a direct impact on people's daily lives. There are housing cooperatives in Quebec City and Montreal that had to sell housing units to the private sector or even abandon them because they did not have the money to renovate them and the conditions CMHC was offering were impossible. People were living in social housing that had turned into slums. I could even give the addresses. I could invite the minister and the members of the party opposite to come and see these housing units.

At the same time that social housing projects were abandoned, people were left living in unacceptable conditions. I saw dwellings where water was leaking through light fixtures, which was extremely dangerous. Quebec City had to recommend that a housing coop be closed down not because it was badly run, but because the CMHC had not invested enough to begin with.

So, in response to the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier's question, it is clear that the government could have used these surpluses to respect the CMHC's mission. It did not. Now, they are engaging in electoral blackmail with Bill C-48: if you want money, you will have to vote for the bill, when we know that \$3.24 billion is hidden in the CMHC's coffers. We are asking the government to withdraw that money from those coffers with Bill C-363 and to give it to provinces, which will do the work and better respond to people's needs. If the federal government cannot stand the heat, it should get out of the kitchen.

• (1345)

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the member for Beauport—Limoilou for his valuable intervention and his valuable information. I will ask him the following question.

We know that the money that the federal government earmarks for social housing or affordable housing is entrusted to a crown corporation, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Under the circumstances, if we were to maintain the present administration, including the inappropriate reserves, would it not be preferable to transfer everything to Quebec and the provinces? The provinces, Quebec in particular, are already willing to take full responsibility for social housing.

Mr. Christian Simard: Mr. Speaker, negotiations, which began in 1997, are under way. We know that whenever we ask for something in Quebec, it generally takes ten years to get it, and sometimes longer. In this case, it will likely be more than 10 years.

We are talking about the transfer of the administration of social housing to the province, with full financial compensation. All co-op groups and non-profit organizations are demanding this transfer. And because it has not been done, there are consequences.

There has been no transfer, but at the same time, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation directs municipalities not to subsidize housing cooperatives because it says they already benefit from its subsidies. I will be very brief on this topic.

Thus, the social housing stock should be transferred with full financial compensation. One day, it will be interesting to see provinces take back all their responsibilities. But that day has yet to come. We think that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation can continue to operate, but on a smaller budget. It cannot continue piling up immoral surpluses without any action for housing. This is the goal of the bill.

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the remarks of the hon. member opposite. First, I did not want to raise a point of order earlier, but I take this opportunity to point out that this is a new expenditure for the Crown. We would take money out of a federal agency to hand out to the provinces. I do not think there is any doubt that this involves an expenditure. The hon. member opposite said that these programs are not new. As you know, this has nothing to do with the issue.

Here is an example. If I introduce a private member's bill that provides for the hiring of 100 inspectors by Agriculture Canada to inspect some kind of food that was not inspected up to that time, the problem will not be the hiring of inspectors in a new area, but the fact that a greater number of inspectors will be hired. So this is an extra expenditure, even if it is in the same category.

The member argues that he is not proposing new programs and that he is only suggesting taking money that is in the government's coffers and transferring it to provinces. However, that is of course money spent by the Crown. Be it the same program, an old program or a new one, a royal recommendation is needed, in my opinion, because it is a new expenditure.

The criteria are different in the case of reducing revenues. For example, if the bill sought to reduce premiums or something like that, I admit that it is not always the same criteria that apply. Here, in the House, we have had examples of private members' bills, which I did not always like, that sought to reduce the tax rate for certain people. The Speaker said that that met the requirements of the Standing Orders. The government's revenues were reduced, but there was no new expenditure. The criteria are different.

Private Members' Business

In any case, many Canadians wish to become homeowners. Without mortgage loan insurance, many would not be able to buy a house, ever if they could afford the necessary monthly payments. This is because many families would find it hard to save money to make the down payment for a normal loan. The down payment is always a problem for first-time buyers, particularly for young people and people with children.

Through its mortgage loan insurance, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC, has helped millions of Canadians finance the purchase of their home with a down payment of only 5% and interest rates comparable to those offered to buyers making a down payment of 25% or more.

I suspect that most of us in the House have, at some point, benefited from the mortgage loan insurance of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It is easy to say today that the CMHC has higher reserve funds than before, through sound management by the current Prime Minister and the government. However, this does not mean that we should be less careful in how we manage public funds.

• (1350)

[English]

The Canada Mortgage and House Corporation approved more than 650,000 mortgage insurance applications last year. In some cases, the CMHC mortgage loan insurance has allowed individuals or families to buy homes sooner, giving them a head start on the road to financial stability.

There is no doubt that the sooner people buy their first home, providing of course that they can make the monthly payments, the sooner the cycle of mortgage payments will finish. Owning their own home, presumably without a mortgage, will provide them with the kind of stability that people enjoy when they own their home.

In other instances, the CMHC has helped open the door to homeownership for countless Canadians who might otherwise have been unable to buy a home of their own. For others it has played a key role in increasing the availability of affordable rental housing or the supply of beds in nursing homes, retirement homes, shelters and so on across the country, including the riding that I have the honour and privilege to represent.

Over the years the CMHC's mortgage loan insurance programs have also evolved to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements of the housing industry and the changing needs of Canadians.

While its investments in solid risk management tools and cost effective processes has meant a strong financial performance, the CMHC has consistently and proactively lowered its insurance premium to maximize the number of Canadians it can assist in attaining their dream, the dream of home ownership.

For example, the CMHC lowered its home owner mortgage loan insurance premium for the second time in two years this April offering first time home buyers with 5% down a total reduction of 30% in their mortgage insurance premiums relative to what it was a mere two years ago.

I do not know about other members in the House but I sure wish my car insurance and my regular home insurance could have premiums of 30% less than what they were two years ago.

If the CMHC is able to achieve this, this means that it has had prudent management, it is well run and it has been able to give these kinds of reductions for the benefits of Canadians who have mortgages.

At the same time, the CMHC has introduced a further 15% premium reduction on affordable rental housing developed through the CMHC's partnership centre, as well as a full waiver of premiums for rental housing projects funded under the federal affordable housing initiatives which were designed to serve those in greatest need.

• (1355)

[Translation]

To stimulate construction of affordable rental housing, the CMHC has also made several improvements to rental property mortgage insurance in recent months by permitting, among other things, high value loans in this sector; by reducing mortgage insurance premiums for rental properties; and by providing more leeway to borrowers in terms of cash flow, cash advances and conditions of repayment.

To allow more Canadians to obtain residential mortgage credit, the CMHC continues to improve its guidelines and to develop new mortgage insurance products. In recent years, it has introduced insurance for loan-to-value ratio refinancing loans provided to occupant-owners, and for mortgage guaranteed lines of credit, to provide Canadians with more flexibility in managing their finances.

To assist more buyers, the CMHC has also introduced a new product, thus enlarging the sources of funds permitted to form the down payment. CMHC has also improved its policies to allow self-employed Canadian workers and people buying a second home to obtain mortgage loans with a high loan-to-value ratio more easily than in the past.

[English]

The CMHC has established a track record of helping to make housing more affordable and accessible for all Canadians in every corner of the country. As all members of the House will know, in recent years Canada has experienced an extremely strong, healthy housing market thanks to the good finances and the well run government of this Prime Minister. That is why we should reject the private member's bill before us today, unless of course the Speaker rules it out of order at third reading, which I suspect he will.

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-363. I am always pleased to be in the House at the same time as the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell because he is such a great presenter. He never misses a chance to ensure that in his speech he manages to give the government some credit for jobs that are done actually by people who are at arm's length from the government.

Private Members' Business

I would like to congratulate the management of the CMHC who has been able to operate that institution despite the bad management of the government. Hats off to the CMHC and thumbs down to the Liberal Government of Canada. That applies in many jurisdictions across this country, in provinces and cities, that manage to operate in a fiscally sound with responsible manner despite the bad management of the Government of Canada.

While Bill C-363, an act to amend the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation with regard to distributing surplus profits from its insurance fund, is a noble bill, my party cannot support it because we think the direction of the CMHC to get into the social housing market is actually a little misguided. We do not believe the CMHC should be directing its surplus funding into the social housing market because it would take the planning by government departments, which are responsible for social housing, out of the picture. It would allow the CMHC to simply turn over surplus funding to social housing programs without having to bring that to Parliament.

I do not think social housing needs should be met by profits generated from the CMHC, particularly profits realized from the CMHC insurance fees. Funds for social housing investments of various types should originate from federal budgets and be appropriated by Parliament giving parliamentarians the right to vote on expenditures as opposed to making the expenditures a statutory requirement. The mortgage fund of course should be operated on a sound commercial basis in accordance with sound actuarial practices, and premiums should be set accordingly.

I noticed my hon. friend made some very nice points, one being that the CMHC had reduced its mortgage premium of 30% about two years ago and that it has another 15% premium reduction on rental development. That is a good thing because what it is doing is operating the CMHC insurance fund using prudence and taking the responsibility to pass those surpluses on to the users of the fund, the people who apply to CMHC to enable them to buy a house with little or no down payment where normally they would not be able to do that.

It is rather coincidental that I am speaking on this today because my son and his new bride who live in Calgary just bought their first house. Without the CMHC and the provisions that were made available to them they would not have been able to buy that house. Hurray for the CMHC again.

• (1400)

I have to do some comparisons. When CMHC applies surpluses to the lowering of premiums, it could teach a lesson to the EI people. It could also teach a lesson to the government. The government should take an example from CMHC and see how it has applied surpluses to a lower premium. If only it would understand that this is the proper way to do things, it might apply reductions to the EI premiums at both the employer and the employee level to bring the premiums down to a level that actually relates to the money needed to sustain EI as well as maintain a rainy day fund in case of a downturn in the economy.

Instead, the government has not done that. Over the past 12 years, because it has refused to lower premiums in the EI program, it has amassed a \$40-some billion surplus which did was not returned to

the payers of the premium. That \$40 billion disappeared into the general revenue of the Liberal government.

Despite calls from every party in the House, working Canadians and employers across the country, the government is still maintaining an abnormally high premium rate and an abnormally high surplus. That is far above the rainy day fund needed in case of an economic downturn. It refuses to acknowledge that the people who are paying the bill deserve to have a break on premiums.

After all these years we, the Bloc and the NDP have been talking about it, but the Liberals in their arrogance and in their desire to have this pot of cash at their fingertips so that they can feed it out to their political whims, have ignored that.

Bill C-363 would impact on general revenues by reducing CMHC profits. It would go into social housing. That is not the place that these surpluses should go. Social housing is part of another department of the government and is accountable to Parliament. That is how it should be. Potentially, by passing this bill, it could easily allow for higher than necessary insurance premiums. That would be unfortunate and it is certainly not what we want in Canada.

CMHC would be allowed to make social housing policy decisions without the input of parliamentarians. It would have the potential to utilize higher than necessary premiums for purposes other than insurance risks. Let us be clear. CMHC has a mandate. It has worked very well, as was indicated by my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, and certainly, members of the Bloc know that CMHC is an organization that is capable of generating excess revenue from its operations.

It appears to be prudently run with good management. But what is not realized is that the money should be returned in the form of lower premiums which would be even more help to young people such as my son and my daughter-in-law to enable them to buy their first house.

I spoke about the example that CMHC is setting by returning surplus funds into lower premiums. That is the thing to do. I would just mention again that the Liberals should take a lesson from the way CMHC has been responsible in recognizing who is providing the income to it, the premium payers. If the EI people would recognize that too, and recognize that by keeping artificially high premiums they are in fact decreasing the opportunity for the creation of new jobs, decreasing the opportunity for businesses to have the money to expand and create new jobs, and they are in a way putting blockades on the economy taking some leaps ahead.

• (1405)

We are going to oppose this bill because, while it is a noble thought, it simply does not work with the mandate or the successful operation of CMHC. I am sure that Parliament will see that Bill C-363 is not a bill that we must pass into legislation at this time.

• (1410)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today and have an opportunity to speak in support of this bill on behalf of the NDP. I would like to congratulate my colleague, the housing critic, the member for Beauport—Limoilou. He has done a terrific work on this bill. It is a very good bill.

Private Members' Business

I want to make a comment because he made a point of mentioning that yesterday in the House, the minister responsible for housing, in response to a question from a Liberal member about co-op housing, went after the member from the Bloc and implied that somehow he had never asked a question or had never done any work. I want to attest to the fact that the member is well known for his dedicated work, both in the community before he became a member of Parliament and certainly since he became a member of Parliament, in fighting for co-op housing.

I too was very surprised as to what on earth the minister was up to there. Maybe he was a bit defensive about the pressure that he has been under from a number of us to move on this and get co-op housing moving again. I would like to thank the member for the work that he has done because he has certainly made a huge contribution to that.

We are supporting this bill. It is an important bill because it brings to light what many in the housing community have known for many years and have been quite shocked that CMHC is rolling in dough. It has so much money it does not know what to do with it. When the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell says that CMHC has helped millions of Canadians, that might be true, but what is also true is that CMHC is also hoarding millions of dollars and it is going into general revenue.

Frankly, I have some difficulty understanding the position of the Conservative Party in saying that it does not support this bill because somehow Parliament will not have oversight of what happens to that money. We have no oversight or influence now. It is far better that the surplus from CMHC should be rededicated and reinvested into providing housing for Canadians. It seems to me that this is the logical and fiscally responsible position to take.

I do not know what the Conservative Party position is other than that it just does not like social housing. It does not want to see that investment. I thought its opposition to this bill was incredibly weak, but enough said about that. I am going to focus on why this bill should be adopted.

There are many housing advocates in this country who have done an incredible job. Groups like the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada and the National Housing and Homelessness Network have drawn to our attention day in and day out the plight of millions of Canadians and hundreds of thousands of families who are without appropriate, affordable, safe, secure and accessible housing in this country.

In fact, the Minister of Housing has been telling groups across the country that something like 1.7 million households, not people, in this country are in need of affordable and social housing. We certainly have a huge issue and a huge problem.

It is quite incredible that in a country as wealthy as Canada, we still have people sleeping on the streets. We still have families that every day do not know if they are going to be evicted, if they will be able to pay the month's rent or if their kids will go hungry. Every day we have people desperately looking for secure and affordable housing.

In a country as wealthy as Canada, it is a shame. It has been noted by the UN, in an international report, our lack of compliance with international conventions on that score.

The need has been demonstrated. However, the problem has not been our inability to pay for the housing that is needed. That is not the issue here. It is not a lack of capacity to produce the revenue that would be required for a national housing program to meet the needs of 1.7 million households, or what is often being called the 1% solution.

The National Housing and Homelessness Network and people like Michael Shapcott, Cathy Crowe and Linda Mix and other organizations across the country, like FRAPRU in Quebec, have fought so hard to get a commitment for 1% of the federal budget for housing.

● (1415)

It is not a lack of financial capacity that is the problem. What has been lacking is a political commitment to carry through a national housing program which ensures that the provinces, the territories and certainly our first nations communities see that those housing units are delivered.

In fact, the 1% solution for housing talks about the \$2 billion that is required annually. Here we have already been told, as a result of this bill and the accumulated surpluses in CMHC, that it is sitting on a surplus of \$3.4 billion. Some federal funds were already committed in the national framework agreement. Bill C-48 commits an additional \$1.6 billion for affordable housing initiatives.

Therefore, the financial capacity is there. By zeroing in on these surpluses at CMHC and saying that they must be reinvested in a fiscally and socially responsible way, what better way to build housing, with good jobs? That creates a very good investment in our economy.

If we did that, the first priority for that reinvestment should be to give back to co-ops in this country the section 95 subsidies they have lost and have been fighting to get back as a result of their mortgages rolling over.

What a scandal that when a co-op happened to get a rollover on its mortgage it also lost the subsidy which allowed it to ensure that its housing co-operative had a mix of incomes and that low income people could be in that housing co-op. The co-ops have been a great Canadian success story, but this Liberal government has been committed to driving that success story into the grave by ensuring that low income families are evicted from housing co-ops because the co-ops have not had the subsidy.

The co-ops are candidate number one for reinvestment from the CMHC surplus. Let us make sure that the co-ops are able to get those subsidies back. So far the housing minister has said he will do it only from this point on, but we want to see those subsidies retroactive at least to the beginning of the year. As a result of this debate today, I call on the minister, as many of us have, to go back and do this properly and make sure that those section 95 subsidies are available for co-operatives across this country so that the success story of housing co-ops in Canada continues.

Private Members' Business

A second priority for the CMHC surplus reinvestment could be to make true the goal of the 3,300 units that are required across the north for the Inuit people. The Nunavut Housing Corporation has identified a severe housing crisis in the north. It has the highest housing costs in Canada. It has the most severe overcrowding anywhere in this country. It has people living through very harsh winters with very inadequate shelter.

Thirty-three hundred units is not a huge issue in terms of the financial investment required, but has anything happened? Has that plan been delivered? No, and again because of a lack of political commitment by this government.

Again, I want to say that a priority for the reinvestment of these surplus funds or other moneys that exist within that department should be to meet the goals of the 10-year housing plan of the Nunavut Housing Corporation to ensure that housing is built in that part of the country, because people are desperate.

In my own community of east Vancouver, we have always struggled to meet the housing needs of people. There are many people who are living in inadequate single-room occupancies. There are many people who are paying way too much money for rent every month. This surplus from CMHC could be a positive contributing factor to solving the housing crisis in this country.

I would urge members of this House to not tie this up in technical knots, to not find excuses why it cannot be done, but to see this as a legitimate and proper reinvestment of CMHC surpluses to go back into that very critical high priority of meeting our housing needs in Canada.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Vancouver East for her speech. She made it with conviction and above all with common sense. Unfortunately, understanding common sense is beyond the grasp of the party in power, the Liberal Party. So, we should listen carefully to the wise words of the member for Vancouver East.

I also want to thank and congratulate the hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou for introducing this bill, for the clarity and conviction of his comments and also for his competent work on the issue of housing. Defending the poorest in our society and particularly the most poorly housed is not something new for him. He knows housing matters very well and he fights for housing not only with courage but also with skill. I can say that the hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou is an example that the government members across the way should follow.

The concerns expressed by the member do not seem to be those of the government. In fact, the government seems to be working against the social concerns that are expressed in the bill we are debating today.

A famous person once said, "You can judge a society by the way it treats its seniors and its youth". Another one said that one can judge a government by its capacity to be compassionate and understanding and, more importantly, its capacity to manage the country's finances and to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth.

This bill deals with a concern that we in the Bloc Québécois have, one which I feel our colleague from Vancouver East shares, and that is to have a bill that is fair to all segments of our society. To be able to find decent housing is part of the blueprint for society that is needed.

Where respect for human dignity is concerned, three basic needs have to be met: food, shelter and clothing. In whatever order you put them, these three things basically ensure that a person is protected. In that respect, we can say that the Liberal government has failed miserably in terms of its responsibility to provide these three essentials to protect human dignity.

Through employment insurance restrictions, among other things, this policy has impoverished families. Some people can barely afford the shelter, food and clothing they need. There is a lack of vision and foresight surrounding the industrial policy. We see in particular what is happening with the clothing industry policy, especially with the textiles. Unfortunately, housing is no exception. It is the third essential need which must be met.

Two people who are now part of the government were outraged about the policies on social housing adopted by the Mulroney government in the 1990s. They are the present Minister of Labour and Housing and the present Prime Minister.

• (1425)

In 1990, they criticized Mr. Mulroney's policies by saying that when he was in the opposition, he had the same position they were now defending and he had come to the same conclusions. But when the Liberals were elected, they did nothing to remedy the situation. In fact, they made it worse.

Here is what the present Prime Minister and the present Minister of Labour and Housing used to say to denounce the increase in the number of households in dire need of housing.

Canada is presently confronted with a major housing crisis [...] The availability and cost of housing as well as the issue of homelessness is raising a great deal of concern across Canada. In our country, it is unacceptable for 1.3 million households to have to live in mediocre housing—

This is what my colleague from Beauport—Limoilou was referring to earlier.

In 1990, the present Prime Minister and the present Minister of Labour and Housing, now in charge of social housing, also said:

These are the official numbers: but the depths of despair resulting from the housing crisis in Canada affect many more families and individuals than are reflected in these numbers [...] The Mulroney government has cut housing programs and budgets. It has dumped its responsibilities—

That is not a common word in French. It is not I who has used that word. It is in the text. I do not know what he meant by that.

— its responsibilities onto the provinces without giving them the corresponding financial means. And it has been insensitive to the dire needs of thousands of Canadian households.

While this was being said, there were 1.3 million poorly housed families in Canada. There are now 1.7 million, 450,000 of which are in Quebec. This is 400,000 more poorly housed families in Canada.

How did they achieve that? They really did the job. They made cuts, not only in one part of the program, but in the whole program, between 1990 and 2001, which is what led us to this situation.

A Quebec author once wrote that members of Parliament are like carpets, we have to beat them to get them clean. Back in those days, Canadians did “beat” the Mulroney government, thinking that the next government would restore things. But it was not the case. This party was not clean, even when it first came in. It made cuts. The rule saying that a 3% vacancy rate is necessary in order to ensure a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet the people's needs just disappeared. In most of the big cities, the rate is not even 1%.

Private Members' Business

Is my time up already, Mr. Speaker? I was supposed to have until 2:30.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

It being 2:28 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, June 6, at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:28 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. CHUCK STRAHL

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. MARCEL PROULX

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

HON. JEAN AUGUSTINE

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

HON. MAURIL BÉLANGER

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

MR. JAY HILL

HON. WALT LASTEWKA

HON. ROB NICHOLSON

HON. KAREN REDMAN

HON. TONY VALERI

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Thirty Eight Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Hon. Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Peterborough	Ontario	Lib.
Alcock, Hon. Reg, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	Lib.
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Rona	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Anderson, Hon. David	Victoria	British Columbia	Lib.
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	Quebec	BQ
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	Quebec	BQ
Augustine, Hon. Jean, Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Bakopanos, Hon. Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy)	Ahuntsic	Quebec	Lib.
Barnes, Hon. Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Batters, Dave	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Ontario	Lib.
Bélangier, Hon. Mauril, Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Quebec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn, Minister of State (Public Health)	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Quebec	BQ
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Quebec	BQ
Blaikie, Hon. Bill	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Quebec	BQ
Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Minister of State (Northern Develop- ment)	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Boire, Alain	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Quebec	BQ
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Quebec	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Quebec	BQ
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Quebec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boudria, Hon. Don	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	Lib.
Boulianne, Marc	Mégantic—L'Érable	Quebec	BQ
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Quebec	BQ
Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of State (Human Resources Development)	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Broadbent, Hon. Ed	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Quebec	BQ
Bulte, Hon. Sarmite, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	British Columbia	Ind.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Quebec	BQ
Carr, Gary	Halton	Ontario	Lib.
Carrie, Colin	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Quebec	BQ
Carroll, Hon. Aileen, Minister of International Cooperation	Barrie	Ontario	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	Lib.
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Chatters, David	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Chong, Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clavet, Roger	Louis-Hébert	Quebec	BQ
Cleary, Bernard	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Quebec	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Quebec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	Lib.
Côté, Guy	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Quebec	BQ
Cotler, Hon. Irwin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Mount Royal	Quebec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Quebec	BQ
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Hon. Roy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Day, Stockwell	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Quebec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Quebec	BQ
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Quebec	BQ
DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Simcoe North	Ontario	Lib.
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Minister of the Environment	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Quebec	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal, Minister of Health	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Drouin, Hon. Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Rural Communities)	Beauce	Quebec	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken, Minister of Social Development	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Quebec	BQ
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (Rural Development)	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Efford, Hon. R. John, Minister of Natural Resources	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Industry	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	Lib.
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade (Emerging Markets)	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Quebec	BQ
Finley, Diane	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Fletcher, Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Quebec	Lib.
Fontana, Hon. Joe, Minister of Labour and Housing	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Frulla, Hon. Liza, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women	Jeanne-Le Ber	Quebec	Lib.
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Quebec	BQ
Gagnon, Marcel	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Quebec	BQ
Gagnon, Sébastien	Jonquière—Alma	Quebec	BQ
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Galloway, Hon. Roger	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Quebec	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Godbout, Marc	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	Lib.
Godfrey, Hon. John, Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities)	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Finance	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gouk, Jim	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	CPC
Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of National Defence	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Grewal, Gurmant	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	CPC
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Quebec	BQ
Guergis, Helena	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Quebec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Harper, Hon. Stephen	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Harrison, Jeremy	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hearn, Loyola		Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	St. John's South—Mount Pearl South Surrey—White Rock— Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Jay	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hinton, Betty	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ianno, Hon. Tony, Minister of State (Families and Caregivers)	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Canada—U.S.)	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Quebec	Lib.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Kamp, Randy	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge— Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Kilgour, Hon. David	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont	Alberta	Ind.
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	Quebec	BQ
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel	Quebec	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Quebec	BQ
Lapierre, Hon. Jean, Minister of Transport	Outremont	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lapierre, Réal	Lévis—Bellechasse	Quebec	BQ
Lastewka, Hon. Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	St. Catharines	Ontario	Lib.
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Quebec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Quebec	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Quebec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eyou	Quebec	BQ
Longfield, Hon. Judi	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Quebec	BQ
Lukiwski, Tom	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Gary	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Peter	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Macklin, Hon. Paul Harold	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	Lib.
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Ontario	Lib.
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint- Charles	Quebec	BQ
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Martin, Hon. Keith, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Right Hon. Paul, Prime Minister	LaSalle—Émard	Quebec	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Revenue	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
McTeague, Hon. Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pickering—Scarborough East ..	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Quebec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Quebec	BQ
Menzies, Ted	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound ...	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, James	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Murphy, Hon. Shawn, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	Lib.
Neville, Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
O'Brien, Pat	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	Lib.
O'Connor, Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Bev	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Owen, Hon. Stephen, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport)	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Quebec	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Quebec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Denis	Brome—Missisquoi	Quebec	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	Ind.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Quebec	Lib.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Quebec	BQ
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Minister of International Trade	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Papineau	Quebec	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Quebec	BQ
Pickard, Hon. Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	Lib.
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Quebec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Poirier-Rivard, Denise	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant ..	Quebec	BQ
Powers, Russ	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	Lib.
Prentice, Jim	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ...	Ontario	CPC
Proulx, Marcel, Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Hull—Aylmer	Quebec	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Regan, Hon. Geoff, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Quebec	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Quebec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Quebec	BQ
Saada, Hon. Jacques, Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec and Minister responsible for the Francophonie	Brossard—La Prairie	Quebec	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	Quebec	BQ
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoy, Andy	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	Lib.
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Quebec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Scott, Hon. Andy, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Christian	Beauport—Limoilou	Quebec	BQ
Simard, Hon. Raymond, Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Skelton, Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Smith, David	Pontiac	Quebec	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Quebec	BQ
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Ontario	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Strahl, Chuck, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Stronach, Hon. Belinda, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and Minister responsible for Democratic Renewal	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	Lib.
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Quebec	BQ
Thibault, Hon. Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Vic	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Torsney, Hon. Paddy	Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Valeri, Hon. Tony, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	Lib.
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Ontario	Lib.
Van Loan, Peter	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Quebec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
White, Randy	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	New Brunswick	Lib.
VACANCY	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Thirty Eight Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Rona	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Chatters, David	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Harper, Hon. Stephen	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Kilgour, Hon. David	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Ind.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Edmonton Centre	Lib.
Menzies, Ted	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	CPC
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	CPC
Prentice, Jim	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CPC
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Anderson, Hon. David	Victoria	Lib.
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	Lib.
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	Ind.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Richmond	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Stockwell	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal, Minister of Health	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Industry	Vancouver Kingsway	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster—Coquitlam	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Gouk, Jim	British Columbia Southern Interior	CPC
Grewal, Gurmant	Newton—North Delta	CPC
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Jay	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Hinton, Betty	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Gary	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Moore, James	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Owen, Hon. Stephen, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport)	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
Strahl, Chuck, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
White, Randy	Abbotsford	CPC

MANITOBA (14)

Alcock, Hon. Reg, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Winnipeg South	Lib.
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	NDP
Fletcher, Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Simard, Hon. Raymond, Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Vic	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of State (Human Resources Development)	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
Savoy, Andy	Tobique—Mactaquac	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	Lib.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)

Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	CPC
Efford, Hon. R. John, Minister of Natural Resources	Avalon	Lib.
Hearn, Loyola	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	CPC
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
VACANCY	Labrador	

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Minister of State (Northern Development)	Western Arctic	Lib.
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Brison, Hon. Scott, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade (Emerging Markets)	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
MacKay, Peter	Central Nova	CPC
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	West Nova	Lib.

NUNAVUT (1)

Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Lib.
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ONTARIO (106)

Adams, Hon. Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Peterborough	Lib.
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Augustine, Hon. Jean, Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Bains, Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Barnes, Hon. Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril, Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official Languages and Associate Minister of National Defence	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn, Minister of State (Public Health)	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Lib.
Boudria, Hon. Don	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Lib.
Broadbent, Hon. Ed	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Bulte, Hon. Sarmite, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carr, Gary	Halton	Lib.
Carrie, Colin	Oshawa	CPC
Carroll, Hon. Aileen, Minister of International Cooperation	Barrie	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West—Nepean	Lib.
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Lib.
Chong, Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Lib.
Cullen, Hon. Roy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Etobicoke North	Lib.
DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Simcoe North	Lib.
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken, Minister of Social Development	York Centre	Lib.
Finley, Diane	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Fontana, Hon. Joe, Minister of Labour and Housing	London North Centre	Lib.
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Galloway, Hon. Roger	Simcoe—Lambton	Lib.
Godbout, Marc	Ottawa—Orléans	Lib.
Godfrey, Hon. John, Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities)	Don Valley West	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	CPC
Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of National Defence	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Helena	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Ianno, Hon. Tony, Minister of State (Families and Caregivers)	Trinity—Spadina	Lib.
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lastewka, Hon. Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	St. Catharines	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Longfield, Hon. Judi	Whitby—Oshawa	Lib.
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Macklin, Hon. Paul Harold	Northumberland—Quinte West	Lib.
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Sudbury	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Revenue	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Kitchener—Conestoga	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob	Niagara Falls	CPC
O'Brien, Pat	London—Fanshawe	Lib.
O'Connor, Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Bev	Durham	CPC
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga—Erindale	Ind.
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Minister of International Trade	Willowdale	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Lib.
Pickard, Hon. Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Powers, Russ	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	Lib.
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stronach, Hon. Belinda, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and Minister responsible for Democratic Renewal	Newmarket—Aurora	Lib.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Torsney, Hon. Paddy	Burlington	Lib.
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Lib.
Valeri, Hon. Tony, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Lib.
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Lib.
Van Loan, Peter	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Hon. Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (Rural Development)	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Egmont	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Charlottetown	Lib.

QUEBEC (75)

André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Bakopanos, Hon. Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy)	Ahuntsic	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Boire, Alain	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boulianne, Marc	Mégantic—L'Érable	BQ
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Clavet, Roger	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Cleary, Bernard	Louis-Saint-Laurent	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Guy	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	BQ
Cotler, Hon. Irwin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Minister of the Environment	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Drouin, Hon. Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Rural Communities)	Beauce	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Frulla, Hon. Liza, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women	Jeanne-Le Ber	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gagnon, Marcel	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Gagnon, Sébastien	Jonquière—Alma	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	BQ
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Jennings, Hon. Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Canada—U.S.)	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lapierre, Hon. Jean, Minister of Transport	Outremont	Lib.
Lapierre, Réal	Lévis—Bellechasse	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	BQ
Martin, Right Hon. Paul, Prime Minister	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Denis	Brome—Missisquoi	Lib.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Papineau	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Poirier-Rivard, Denise	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Proulx, Marcel, Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Saada, Hon. Jacques, Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec and Minister responsible for the Francophonie	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Simard, Christian	Beauport—Limoilou	BQ
Smith, David	Pontiac	Lib.
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Batters, Dave	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Finance	Wascana	Lib.
Harrison, Jeremy	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Skelton, Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Lynne	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Yukon	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of June 3, 2005 — 1st Session, 38th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Nancy Karetak-Lindell	Vice-Chairs:	Bernard Cleary Jeremy Harrison
Sue Barnes André Bellavance Gary Lunn	Pat Martin Jim Prentice	Carol Skelton David Smith	Lloyd St. Amand Roger Valley

(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott	Norman Doyle	Gerald Keddy	James Rajotte
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Dean Allison	Ken Epp	Ed Komarnicki	John Reynolds
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Rob Anders	Brian Fitzpatrick	Guy Lauzon	Gerry Ritz
David Anderson	Steven Fletcher	Marc Lemay	Andrew Scheer
Charlie Angus	Paul Forseth	Yvon Lévesque	Gary Schellenberger
Gérard Asselin	Hedy Fry	Tom Lukiwski	Werner Schmidt
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Dave Batters	Peter Goldring	Peter MacKay	Monte Solberg
Leon Benoit	Gary Goodyear	Dave MacKenzie	Kevin Sorenson
James Bezan	Jim Gouk	Inky Mark	Darrel Stinson
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Gord Brown	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Greg Thompson
Colin Carrie	Helena Guergis	Rob Merrifield	Myron Thompson
Bill Casey	Art Hanger	Larry Miller	David Tilson
Rick Casson	Stephen Harper	Bob Mills	Vic Toews
David Chatters	Richard Harris	James Moore	Bradley Trost
Michael Chong	Loyola Hearn	Rob Moore	Merv Tweed
Jean Crowder	Russ Hiebert	Rob Nicholson	Peter Van Loan
Nathan Cullen	Jay Hill	Gordon O'Connor	Maurice Vellacott
John Cummins	Betty Hinton	Deepak Obhrai	Mark Warawa
Rodger Cuzner	Charles Hubbard	Bev Oda	Jeff Watson
Stockwell Day	Rahim Jaffer	Brian Pallister	Randy White
Bev Desjarlais	Brian Jean	Charlie Penson	John Williams
Paul DeVillers	Dale Johnston	Pierre Poilievre	Lynne Yelich
Barry Devolin	Randy Kamp	Joe Preston	

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

David Chatters

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Ed Broadbent
Derek LeeNavdeep Bains
Marc Boulianne
Ken EppRuss Hiebert
Marlene JenningsMario Laframboise
Russ PowersDavid Tilson
Paul Zed

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 Colin Carrie
 Bill Casey
 Rick Casson
 Michael Chong
 Joe Comartin
 Paul Crête
 John Cummins
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 Barry Devolin
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 John Duncan
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 Gurmant Grewal
 Nina Grewal
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 Inky Mark
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 Rob Moore
 Anita Neville
 Rob Nicholson
 Gordon O'Connor
 Deepak Obhrai
 Bev Oda
 Brian Pallister
 Charlie Penson
 Pauline Picard
 Pierre Poilievre
 Jim Prentice
 Joe Preston
 James Rajotte

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 John Reynolds
 Lee Richardson
 Gerry Ritz
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 Bradley Trost
 Merv Tweed
 Peter Van Loan
 Maurice Vellacott
 Tom Wappel
 Mark Warawa
 Jeff Watson
 Randy White
 John Williams
 Lynne Yelich

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Chair:

Marlene Catterall

Vice-Chairs:

 Maka Kotto
 Gary Schellenberger

 Charlie Angus
 Gord Brown
 Sarmite Bulte

 Marc Lemay
 Deepak Obhrai

 Bev Oda
 Mario Silva

 Scott Simms
 David Smith

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 Jim Abbott
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 Leon Benoit
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 James Bezan
 Garry Breitkreuz
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 Bill Casey
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 Rodger Cuzner
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 Libby Davies
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 Inky Mark
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 James Moore
 Rob Moore
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 Brian Pallister
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 Pierre Poilievre
 Jim Prentice
 Joe Preston
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 Werner Schmidt
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 Monte Solberg
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 Darrel Stinson
 Peter Stoffer
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 Lui Temelkovski
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 Myron Thompson
 David Tilson
 Vic Toews
 Bradley Trost
 Merv Tweed
 Peter Van Loan
 Maurice Vellacott
 Mark Warawa
 Jeff Watson
 Randy White
 John Williams
 Lynne Yelich

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Chair:	Andrew Telegdi	Vice-Chairs:	Meili Faille Inky Mark	
Diane Ablonczy David Anderson Colleen Beaumier	Roger Clavet Hedy Fry	Rahim Jaffer Bill Siksay	Lui Temelkovski Merv Tweed	(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott	John Duncan	Daryl Kramp	Joe Preston
Dean Allison	Ken Epp	Francine Lalonde	James Rajotte
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Rob Anders	Brian Fitzpatrick	Jack Layton	John Reynolds
David Anderson	Steven Fletcher	Tom Lukiwski	Lee Richardson
Guy André	Raymonde Folco	Gary Lunn	Gerry Ritz
Jean Augustine	Paul Forseth	James Lunney	Andrew Scheer
Eleni Bakopanos	Cheryl Gallant	Peter MacKay	Gary Schellenberger
Dave Batters	Peter Goldring	Dave MacKenzie	Werner Schmidt
Don Bell	Gary Goodyear	Pat Martin	Mario Silva
Leon Benoit	Jim Gouk	Brian Masse	Carol Skelton
James Bezan	Gurmant Grewal	David McGuinty	Joy Smith
Diane Bourgeois	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Monte Solberg
Garry Breitkreuz	Art Hanger	Rob Merrifield	Kevin Sorenson
Gord Brown	Stephen Harper	Larry Miller	Darrel Stinson
Gary Carr	Richard Harris	Bob Mills	Belinda Stronach
Colin Carie	Jeremy Harrison	James Moore	Greg Thompson
Bill Casey	Loyola Hearn	Rob Moore	Myron Thompson
Rick Casson	Russ Hiebert	Anita Neville	David Tilson
David Chatters	Jay Hill	Rob Nicholson	Vic Toews
Michael Chong	Betty Hinton	Pat O'Brien	Bradley Trost
David Christopherson	Brian Jean	Gordon O'Connor	Peter Van Loan
Joe Comartin	Dale Johnston	Deepak Obhrai	Maurice Vellacott
John Cummins	Peter Julian	Bev Oda	Mark Warawa
Libby Davies	Randy Kamp	Brian Pallister	Judy Wasylcyia-Leis
Stockwell Day	Gerald Keddy	Charlie Penson	Jeff Watson
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Norman Doyle	Ed Komarnicki	Jim Prentice	Lynne Yelich
Claude Drouin			

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair:

Alan Tonks

Vice-Chairs:

 Bernard Bigras
Lee Richardson

 Nathan Cullen
Brian Jean
David McGuinty

 Bob Mills
Denis Paradis

 Yasmin Ratansi
Christian Simard

 Jeff Watson
Bryon Wilfert

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Associate Members

 Jim Abbott
Diane Ablonczy
Dean Allison
Rona Ambrose
Rob Anders
David Anderson
G rard Asselin
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Leon Benoit
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Ken Boshcoff
Marc Boulianne
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Gord Brown
Serge Cardin
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Rick Casson
Marlene Catterall
David Chatters
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Joe Comartin
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Gerry Ritz

 Pablo Rodriguez
Andy Savoy
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Andrew Scheer
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Werner Schmidt
Mario Silva
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Kevin Sorenson
Lloyd St. Amand
Darrel Stinson
Peter Stoffer
Belinda Stronach
Paul Szabo
Greg Thompson
Myron Thompson
David Tilson
Vic Toews
Bradley Trost
Merv Tweed
Roger Valley
Peter Van Loan
Maurice Vellacott
Mark Warawa
Randy White
John Williams
Lynne Yelich

FINANCE**Chair:** Massimo Pacetti**Vice-Chairs:**Yvan Loubier
Charlie Penson

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Dean Allison	Brian Fitzpatrick	Guy Lauzon	Michael Savage
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James Bezan	Gurmant Grewal	John Maloney	Joy Smith
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Garry Breitkreuz	Helena Guergis	David McGuinty	Brent St. Denis
Bonnie Brown	Art Hanger	Ted Menzies	Darrel Stinson
Gord Brown	Stephen Harper	Rob Merrifield	Belinda Stronach
Colin Carrie	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Paul Szabo
Bill Casey	Jeremy Harrison	Bob Mills	Robert Thibault
Rick Casson	Loyola Hearn	James Moore	Greg Thompson
David Chatters	Russ Hiebert	Rob Moore	Myron Thompson
Michael Chong	Jay Hill	Rob Nicholson	David Tilson
David Christopherson	Betty Hinton	Gordon O'Connor	Vic Toews
Jean Crowder	Rahim Jaffer	Deepak Obhrai	Bradley Trost
Roy Cullen	Brian Jean	Bev Oda	Merv Tweed
John Cummins	Marlene Jennings	Pierre Paquette	Peter Van Loan
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Stockwell Day	Peter Julian	Jim Prentice	Mark Warawa
Johanne Deschamps	Randy Kamp	Joe Preston	Jeff Watson
Bev Desjarlais	Gerald Keddy	James Rajotte	Randy White
Barry Devolin	Jason Kenney	Scott Reid	John Williams
Ruby Dhalla	Wajid Khan	John Reynolds	Borys Wrzesnewskyj
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John Duncan	Daryl Kramp	Gerry Ritz	

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISCAL IMBALANCE**Chair:** Yvan Loubier**Vice-Chair:**

Rona Ambrose	Don Bell	Guy Côté	Judy Wasylcia-Leis	(5)
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G�rard Asselin	Paul Forseth	Peter MacKay	Joy Smith
Dave Batters	Cheryl Gallant	Dave MacKenzie	Monte Solberg
Leon Benoit	Yvon Godin	Inky Mark	Kevin Sorenson
James Bezan	Peter Goldring	Ted Menzies	Caroline St-Hilaire
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Colin Carrie	Art Hanger	Rob Nicholson	David Tilson
Robert Carrier	Stephen Harper	Gordon O'Connor	Vic Toews
Bill Casey	Richard Harris	Deepak Obhrai	Bradley Trost
Rick Casson	Jeremy Harrison	Bev Oda	Merv Tweed
David Chatters	Russ Hiebert	Brian Pallister	Peter Van Loan
Michael Chong	Jay Hill	Charlie Penson	Maurice Vellacott
Paul Cr�te	Betty Hinton	Pierre Poilievre	Mark Warawa
Jean Crowder	Rahim Jaffer	Jim Prentice	Jeff Watson
Nathan Cullen	Brian Jean	Joe Preston	Randy White
Stockwell Day	Dale Johnston	James Rajotte	John Williams
Barry Devolin	Nancy Karetak-Lindell	Scott Reid	Lynne Yelich
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Diane Ablonczy	Odina Desrochers	Jason Kenney	John Reynolds
Dean Allison	Barry Devolin	Wajid Khan	Lee Richardson
Rob Anders	Ruby Dhalla	David Kilgour	Gerry Ritz
David Anderson	Norman Doyle	Ed Komarnicki	Pablo Rodriguez
David Anderson	John Duncan	Daryl Kramp	Anthony Rota
Guy André	Wayne Easter	Guy Lauzon	Michael Savage
Claude Bachand	Ken Epp	Jack Layton	Andy Savoy
Larry Bagnell	Mark Eyking	Tom Lukiwski	Andrew Scheer
Navdeep Bains	Diane Finley	Gary Lunn	Gary Schellenberger
Dave Batters	Brian Fitzpatrick	James Lunney	Werner Schmidt
Colleen Beaumier	Steven Fletcher	Peter MacKay	Mario Silva
Don Bell	Raymonde Folco	Dave MacKenzie	Carol Skelton
André Bellavance	Paul Forseth	John Maloney	Joy Smith
Leon Benoit	Cheryl Gallant	Inky Mark	Monte Solberg
Stéphane Bergeron	Marc Godbout	Keith Martin	Brent St. Denis
James Bezan	Peter Goldring	Brian Masse	Darrel Stinson
Raymond Bonin	Gary Goodyear	David McGuinty	Robert Thibault
Don Boudria	Jim Gouk	Rob Merrifield	Greg Thompson
Diane Bourgeois	Gurmant Grewal	Larry Miller	Myron Thompson
Garry Breitkreuz	Nina Grewal	Bob Mills	David Tilson
Ed Broadbent	Art Hanger	Maria Minna	Vic Toews
Bonnie Brown	Stephen Harper	James Moore	Alan Tonks
Gord Brown	Richard Harris	Rob Moore	Paddy Torsney
Sarmite Bulte	Jeremy Harrison	Anita Neville	Bradley Trost
John Cannis	Loyola Hearn	Rob Nicholson	Merv Tweed
Gary Carr	Russ Hiebert	Gordon O'Connor	Roger Valley
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Bill Casey	Betty Hinton	Bev Oda	Maurice Vellacott
Rick Casson	Mark Holland	Brian Pallister	Mark Warawa
Marlene Catterall	Rahim Jaffer	Denis Paradis	Jeff Watson
David Chatters	Brian Jean	Charlie Penson	Randy White
Michael Chong	Marlene Jennings	Pierre Poilievre	John Williams
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Denis Coderre	Peter Julian	Joe Preston	Lynne Yelich
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Brenda Chamberlain
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Ruby DhallaSteven Fletcher
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David Anderson	Brian Fitzpatrick	Carole Lavallée	Gerry Ritz
Dave Batters	Steven Fletcher	Judi Longfield	Andrew Scheer
Don Bell	Hedy Fry	Tom Lukiwski	Gary Schellenberger
Leon Benoit	Marcel Gagnon	Gary Lunn	Werner Schmidt
Stéphane Bergeron	Cheryl Gallant	James Lunney	Christian Simard
James Bezan	Marc Godbout	Lawrence MacAulay	Carol Skelton
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Colin Carrie	Art Hanger	Larry Miller	Myron Thompson
Bill Casey	Stephen Harper	Bob Mills	David Tilson
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David Chatters	Jeremy Harrison	Rob Moore	Bradley Trost
Michael Chong	Loyola Hearn	Anita Neville	Merv Tweed
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Rodger Cuzner	Dale Johnston	Charlie Penson	Randy White
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Stockwell Day	Susan Kadis	Jim Prentice	Lynne Yelich
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 Gord Brown
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Rona Ambrose	Cheryl Gallant	Tom Lukiwski	Andrew Scheer
Rob Anders	Peter Goldring	Gary Lunn	Gary Schellenberger
David Anderson	Gary Goodyear	James Lunney	Werner Schmidt
Jean Augustine	Jim Gouk	Peter MacKay	Bill Siksay
Dave Batters	Gurmant Grewal	Dave MacKenzie	Carol Skelton
Leon Benoit	Nina Grewal	Inky Mark	Joy Smith
James Bezan	Helena Guergis	David McGuinty	Monte Solberg
Bill Blaikie	Art Hanger	Ted Menzies	Kevin Sorenson
Gord Brown	Stephen Harper	Rob Merrifield	Lloyd St. Amand
Paule Brunelle	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Darrel Stinson
Colin Carrie	Jeremy Harrison	Bob Mills	Belinda Stronach
Bill Casey	Loyola Hearn	James Moore	Greg Thompson
Rick Casson	Russ Hiebert	Rob Moore	David Tilson
David Chatters	Jay Hill	Rob Nicholson	Paddy Torsney
Michael Chong	Betty Hinton	Gordon O'Connor	Bradley Trost
John Cummins	Rahim Jaffer	Deepak Obhrai	Merv Tweed
Libby Davies	Brian Jean	Bev Oda	Peter Van Loan
Stockwell Day	Marlene Jennings	Brian Pallister	Maurice Vellacott
Barry Devolin	Dale Johnston	Charlie Penson	Tom Wappel
Norman Doyle	Randy Kamp	Pierre Poilievre	Jeff Watson
John Duncan	Gerald Keddy	Jim Prentice	Randy White
Ken Epp	Jason Kenney	Joe Preston	John Williams
Diane Finley	Ed Komarnicki	James Rajotte	Lynne Yelich
Brian Fitzpatrick	Daryl Kramp	Scott Reid	Paul Zed

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOLICITATION LAWS

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Paule Brunelle	Hedy Fry	Art Hanger		(5)

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Joe Comartin	Roy Cullen	Peter MacKay	Tom Wappel	(7)

LIAISON

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Leon Benoit	Susan Kadis	Massimo Pacetti	Andrew Telegdi	(23)
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Marlene Catterall	John Maloney	Pablo Rodriguez	Maurice Vellacott	
David Chatters	Anita Neville	Brent St. Denis	Tom Wappel	
Raymonde Folco	Pat O'Brien	Paul Steckle	John Williams	
Gurmant Grewal				

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Bernard Bigras	Jim Gouk	Yvan Loubier	Lee Richardson
Garry Breitzkreuz	Nina Grewal	Richard Marceau	Gerry Ritz
Ed Broadbent	Monique Guay	Inky Mark	Benoît Sauvageau
Rick Casson	Michel Guimond	Pat Martin	Gary Schellenberger
Bernard Cleary	Jeremy Harrison	Réal Ménard	Werner Schmidt
Paul Crête	Mark Holland	Rob Merrifield	Kevin Sorenson
Jean Crowder	Dale Johnston	Lynn Myers	Caroline St-Hilaire
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Gurmant Grewal				

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Diane Ablonczy	Cheryl Gallant	Gary Lunn	Andrew Scheer
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Rob Anders	Jim Gouk	John Maloney	Scott Simms
David Anderson	Gurmant Grewal	Inky Mark	Carol Skelton
Dave Batters	Nina Grewal	Dan McTeague	Joy Smith
Leon Benoit	Helena Guergis	Ted Menzies	Monte Solberg
James Bezan	Art Hanger	Rob Merrifield	Kevin Sorenson
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Garry Breitkreuz	Richard Harris	Bob Mills	Darrel Stinson
Gord Brown	Jeremy Harrison	James Moore	Peter Stoffer
Colin Carrie	Loyola Hearn	Rob Moore	Belinda Stronach
Robert Carrier	Russ Hiebert	Anita Neville	Greg Thompson
Bill Casey	Jay Hill	Rob Nicholson	Myron Thompson
David Chatters	Rahim Jaffer	Deepak Obhrai	David Tilson
Michael Chong	Brian Jean	Bev Oda	Vic Toews
Roger Clavet	Dale Johnston	Brian Pallister	Bradley Trost
John Cummins	Peter Julian	Charlie Penson	Merv Tweed
Stockwell Day	Randy Kamp	Pierre Poilievre	Rose-Marie Ur
Barry Devolin	Gerald Keddy	Jim Prentice	Peter Van Loan
Norman Doyle	Jason Kenney	Joe Preston	Maurice Vellacott
John Duncan	Wajid Khan	Marcel Proulx	Mark Warawa
Ken Epp	Ed Komarnicki	James Rajotte	Jeff Watson
Diane Finley	Daryl Kramp	Scott Reid	Randy White
Brian Fitzpatrick	Francine Lalonde	John Reynolds	John Williams
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Rob Anders	Peter Goldring	Tom Lukiwski	Gary Schellenberger
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Dave Batters	Jim Gouk	James Lunney	Carol Skelton
Leon Benoit	Gurmant Grewal	Peter MacKay	Joy Smith
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Michael Chong	Betty Hinton	Gordon O'Connor	Merv Tweed
Joe Comartin	Rahim Jaffer	Deepak Obhrai	Peter Van Loan
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Rona Ambrose	Cheryl Gallant	James Lunney	Werner Schmidt
Rob Anders	Michel Gauthier	Peter MacKay	Mario Silva
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Dave Batters	Peter Goldring	Richard Marceau	Carol Skelton
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Gord Brown	Art Hanger	James Moore	Myron Thompson
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