



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, June 14, 2005**  
**Part A**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)  
[English]

### ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of orders in council recently made by the government.

\* \* \*

• (1005)

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I am also pleased to table, in both official languages, the government's response to four petitions.

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## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Health. The committee recommends that the federal government appoint the Auditor General to provide external performance audits on certain health related government foundations.

STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

The committee is calling on the Department of Justice and the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development to table legislation based on the comprehensive recommendations of the pay equity task force no later than October and that the legislation be referred to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee has requested a comprehensive government response.

[Translation]

FINANCE

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourteenth report of the Standing Committee on Finance on Bill C-48, an act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments. The committee agreed on Monday, June 13, 2005 to report it with amendments.

[English]

I want to thank all the members who worked diligently and expeditiously on the clause by clause last night so the House could get the bill passed and we can get out of here for the summer.

[Translation]

HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills Development, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, entitled "Accessibility for All".

[English]

Accessibility must be a right and not a privilege. This is the report that I have presented here today and this is what it signifies in the lives of persons with disabilities, regardless of the severity. It is important to remember that we are all temporarily able-bodied so this report will have a far-reaching impact on all Canadians.

I would like to congratulate and thank the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River, chair of the Subcommittee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and other members who worked so diligently. The views of witnesses who came before the committee are reflected in the many recommendations, some of which call for more thorough monitoring, review, coordination and improvement of systems in federal buildings, including the parliamentary precinct.

[Translation]

I also want to thank my colleagues from the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills Development, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

*Routine Proceedings*

•(1010)

[English]

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, presented on Wednesday, May 11, be concurred in.

The fifth report deals with the appointment of John Reid, who is the current Information Commissioner of Canada, and asks that his appointment be extended by an additional year, effective July 1, 2005. The recommendation would not preclude Parliament from further extending the appointment after the one year extension.

This is a very important motion and that is why I want to speak to it. Right now, as everyone in the House and probably every Canadian knows, we are experiencing a time of great political turbulence and instability and we need someone who is as experienced as Mr. Reid to continue on in his role as Information Commissioner.

Mr. Reid has served with great distinction over the past seven years in this capacity. Furthermore, it is not without precedent that we can, if we wish, extend his term of office. We have already seen that the Governor General had an extension of one year to her term. Basically, the reason for that extension was again due to the political instability in which we currently find ourselves. It is certainly appropriate that the House and Parliament at least consider the extension of Commissioner Reid in his current capacity.

I want to speak for a moment or two to the capabilities of Mr. Reid because, quite frankly, as I mentioned a few moments ago, he has served with great distinction. Mr. Reid, as most people in the House would know and I hope most Canadians recognize, has served in many capacities throughout his career. He has been a parliamentarian. He was a member of the former Trudeau cabinet. He was first elected to Parliament in 1965, stayed as an elected member of Parliament through six consecutive elections and finally left this House in 1984.

However it was during his term of office that I think it really speaks to his capabilities and qualifications as Information Commissioner.

During his time in office in the mid-seventies when he was parliamentary secretary to Privy Council, he initiated a review of information practices, such as what was acceptable and what should be extended in terms of information and access to information, that all Canadians could receive.

In fact, because of Mr. Reid's fine work, eventually in 1983 the House introduced the first Access to Information Act by Minister Francis Fox. John Reid was instrumental in bringing that legislation to the floor of the House and eventually it became the law of the land.

That was the genesis, I suppose, of Mr. Reid's involvement with access to information. Subsequent to that, he was eventually appointed Information Commissioner seven years ago. Since that time he has again served the House and Parliament extremely well. His experience and his knowledge are such that I feel it would be

remiss of the House to let a man of that quality go when we know we will be bringing down changes to the Access to Information Act itself.

The Access to Information Act is now 22 years old. The justice minister has promised to table new legislation before the House. It needs to be updated and amendments to that 22 year old act are needed.

The justice minister stated that by now he would already have tabled new legislation. Unfortunately, that did not happen. He forwarded and tabled a discussion paper instead. However the justice minister continues to assure the House that he will be tabling new legislation.

•(1015)

If we are to take the justice minister at his word and he does introduce new legislation to amend the Access to Information Act, we will need Mr. Reid to assist in the transition. This is a 22-year-old act that is in dire need of changes. It is paramount that we update the act.

We on the access to information committee recognize that. When I say "we", I mean all opposition members on the committee voted in favour of extending the appointment of Mr. Reid for another year. The only members of the committee who opposed the motion to extend Mr. Reid's appointment were the members of the Liberal Party of Canada.

It is fascinating to me, when a former Liberal cabinet minister, someone who served for six consecutive elections and for close to 20 years in this place with great distinction, that members of his own party would be the only ones on the access to information committee to oppose his extension for one year.

We all have to ask ourselves why the Liberal members of the committee oppose such an extension. It cannot be because of his qualifications. He has served this Parliament well for seven years. It cannot be because of lack of experience. He probably has more experience as a parliamentary officer than anyone else. In addition, he has extensive experience in the field of access to information. His lack of experience just does not hold true. It has to be something else.

The only thing I can think of is that Mr. Reid has categorically stated that what he would like to see in new access to information legislation would be the increased level of information that would be available to all Canadians upon request.

Mr. Reid has stated that if his vision of a new act comes into being, we could probably safely say that incidents, such as the sponsorship scandal, would not have happened in the first place. Individuals, whether they be members of this place, members of the media or individual Canadians, would have the ability to receive information from government departments that would have triggered the fact that the sponsorship scandal was in full bloom.

*Routine Proceedings*

However the Liberal members of the committee have stated that they do not want to see Mr. Reid's term extended. The only conclusion I can draw from that is that the Liberals do not want more accountability and transparency. They do not want Canadians, members of the media or parliamentarians to have the ability to find out what they have been doing behind closed doors. I have to say that if that is the reason it is absolutely shameful.

We have a situation in the country right now where Canadians have been outraged, with good reason, at what they have found out during the Gomery commission about the sponsorship scandal. We should all be working on behalf of Canadians to put into place processes and procedures that prevent that type of action from ever occurring again.

With the sponsorship scandal we have seen the literal theft of taxpayer money that was ultimately put back into a political party for clearly political purposes. No Canadian and no parliamentarian should stand for that. We should, as a body of parliamentarians, come together and state what can we do to ensure this never takes place.

In fact, as we all know and every Canadian knows, Justice Gomery has been charged with the responsibility of trying to get to the bottom of the sponsorship scandal and then recommending processes that will prevent that type of action from ever happening again.

Every member of this House from time to time have stated that they believe in what Justice Gomery is doing and agree with his mandate. Therefore one has to wonder why, when we have an individual like John Reid, the current Information Commissioner, who wishes to put in processes to strengthen the recommendations that we will be hearing from Justice Gomery to prevent things like the sponsorship scandal from ever happening again, members of the Liberal Party of Canada on the committee are opposed to extending his appointment.

• (1020)

Perhaps the Liberals do not want Canadians to have access to relative information. Perhaps the Liberals do not want parliamentarians to have access to information that could perhaps stop actions, like the sponsorship program, from occurring again. Perhaps, and I think this is probably closer to the mark, the Liberals did not want ordinary Canadians to have access to information at the cabinet level. Perhaps the Liberal Party is doing things in cabinet, having discussions in cabinet and perhaps there are cabinet documents that it does not want ordinary Canadians to see.

Why is there this need for secrecy? I think Canadians can draw their own conclusions but I would have to say that any parliamentarian who is fearful of Canadians, members of the media or some of his or her colleagues examining what he or she has done in the House or behind closed doors, he or she must have something to hide.

If the government is absolutely committed to what it says about openness and transparency in government, then it should be welcoming the extension of Mr. Reid's appointment. The Liberals should be encouraging all parliamentarians on their side of the House to extend Mr. Reid's contract for at least one more year but

that is not the case. All we see from the Liberal side of the committee room is the rejection of Mr. Reid with no apparent reason.

**An hon. member:** Because he does his job.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Perhaps that is the reason, that he does his job and he does it well.

Again, we find certain members on the Liberal side of the House who oppose his extension. They oppose an individual who has served in his position with distinction and who will, if he has his way, bring procedures into the Access to Information Act that will strengthen the act.

This is a situation where once again we see members on the opposite side of the House saying one thing and doing another. All they are doing, in my opinion, is giving lip service to the fact that they want more openness and transparency in government while their actions are doing everything but that.

In my estimation we cannot allow this to happen. I would love to hear one good reason why Mr. Reid's contract should not be extended but the Liberals have not given one. All they are saying is that they oppose it, which is absolutely shameful.

Mr. Reid is not a Conservative by background nor is he a Bloc member or an NDP member. He is not only a Liberal but he was a former cabinet minister in the Trudeau era. He served the House and Canadians for close to 20 years as a Liberal and yet the Liberal members do not want him to remain as Information Commissioner. They have no good reason. All they want is him removed or his contract not to be extended.

To the point of belabouring this topic, let us go back to what Mr. Reid has done and why the Liberals do not want him to remain in this position. Mr. Reid has stated for the record, without equivocation, that he wants to strengthen the Access to Information Act to make it more transparent and easier for all members of the Canadian public, parliamentarians and members of the media to gain information and access to information from the government side of the House.

If there are situations that occurred that precipitated in a sponsorship scandal, Mr. Reid wants to ensure that all Canadians would be able to access the information on those transgressions as they were occurring. Right now we do not have that. Mr. Reid would like all Canadians to have access to every funding arm of government in terms of getting information. Currently they cannot do that.

• (1025)

How can the government members stand in the House day after day and say they believe in accountability, transparency and openness? They agree, or at least they say they agree, with the mandate of Justice Gomery when in practice they do exactly the opposite. I think that is absolutely shameful. When we say one thing, we have to act as if we mean what we say. In other words, we can talk the talk but we have to walk the walk. This government does nothing like that. I think it is absolutely shameful.

*Routine Proceedings*

Again, I urge any member on the Liberal side to stand in the House or even at committee and make one argument for why Mr. Reid's extension should not take place. The Liberals have failed to do that. I encourage all members today to put forward that argument. I encourage them to tell me whether it was his lack of experience that prevented them from endorsing Mr. Reid's extension. Was it the fact that he did not have knowledge of the department? Of course not.

Once again, this is a man whose actions in the mid-1970s resulted in the first Access to Information Act being presented in the House in 1983 and who, upon his appointment as Information Commissioner seven years ago, has done nothing but perform his duties admirably, with distinction and, to his credit, in a non-partisan, impartial manner. That is why those Liberal members do not want to see him reappointed.

**An hon. member:** They want a partisan hack.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** They want a Liberal lapdog in that position.

When the new Access to Information Act is introduced in the House, the members opposite want someone appointed to that position who has no prior knowledge or experience so they can lead the new information commissioner by the nose, with a ring in the nose, and tell that person what to do and what not to do. They do not want somebody who is impartial. They do not want somebody who knows what cabinet confidentiality is all about.

How can we allow this to happen? How can any Canadian allow this to happen?

In the last year we have seen information come out of the Gomery commission that pertains to the largest political scandal in Canadian history. All I have heard from members opposite are these comments: this was a rogue group of politicians; it did not reflect on the Liberals; we want to get to the bottom of this; we are mad as hell and we will not stop until we get all of the answers. How can they say that?

How can Liberals stand in the House with any credibility and state to the Canadian public that they actually want to get to the bottom of this incident when exactly the type of legislation Mr. Reid is proposing that we introduce would prevent this from happening? They should be endorsing Mr. Reid's appointment or reappointment and yet they are not.

I see members opposite chuckling, because they know that once again they are pulling a fast one on the Canadian public. They think this is humorous. They think this is funny. This is serious business. I am absolutely offended by members who think they can get away with another one.

Eventually the Canadian public will understand what those members opposite are all about. They are about trying to suppress information rather than letting Canadians access information. This is something that all Canadians and parliamentarians in the House should absolutely reject with every fibre and ounce of strength they have.

Eventually this motion will come to the floor of the House; at least I am hoping that it will. I am convinced that all members on this side of the House and members of the New Democratic Party will endorse Mr. Reid's reappointment for one year. I can say right now

without fear of retribution that we will see members opposite rejecting or attempting to reject the appointment of Mr. Reid. This is a government that has lost all credibility and should have lost all confidence of the Canadian public when it comes time to talk about things like transparency and accountability.

• (1030)

Let me conclude by saying that while the members have talked the talk, again they have not walked the walk. If members opposite are serious about transparency, accountability and openness in government, I invite them to stand in their places today and join with me in asking for the immediate extension for John Reid as Information Commissioner of this Parliament.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do very much agree with one thing the member said, which is that Mr. Reid has served admirably and with distinction.

It was a seven year appointment. The appointment is coming due. Members may not have realized that the rules in this place changed. As past chair and now vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, I will note that in all committees we have had new powers to review all appointments. Indeed, every standing committee now has a majority of opposition members on it, so that when the review comes up they will have an opportunity to make sure there is an appointee once Mr. Reid's seven year term expires.

Mr. Reid was appointed by the government. He has excellent credentials and he has done an extremely good job on behalf of Canadians, but to extend for a year is tokenism, somewhat, and in fact this is not even Mr. Reid's wish.

I would also remind the member that we had an all party committee on the Access to Information Act and that indeed it will be a matter to be addressed by the House. I think the members participating in that all party ad hoc committee on the Access to Information Act did a total review of it, led by our former colleague, John Bryden. There are important improvements that can be made and there was consensus, and there will be consensus as we move forward.

I had hoped to be able to speak to this motion. I would simply like to ask the member if he is confident about the process that has been established, since this Parliament began, for the full review by committees of appointees such as the new chairman and CEO of Canada Post, which our committee has done. Also, there was the appointment last Parliament of the new Privacy Commissioner, which our committee also did.

Is he confident that in the process parliamentarians will be able to review the appointees, whether it be for the Access to Information Office or any other officer of Parliament? Indeed, the rules cover any director of any agency or board that has funding directly or indirectly from the government. Is he confident that appointees will be subject to parliamentary review, a review for which in each committee the opposition has the majority?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, I am on the access to information committee. Let me remind the hon. member that all opposition members of that committee unanimously endorsed the extension for Mr. Reid for one more year with a proviso that the extension could go beyond one year.

The member also states that Mr. Reid does not want this. That is absolutely not true. Mr. Reid has been consulted and has said that if asked he would gladly serve in that capacity for another year. To suggest that Mr. Reid does not want to continue in that capacity is absolutely false.

Again, I would point out to the hon. member that we have discussed this at committee extensively. Once again, for the record, all members of the committee except the Liberals agreed unanimously to extend Mr. Reid's contract by one year.

As I mentioned in my opening address, a precedent has been set, because this government, without consultation or with very little consultation, determined to extend the contract of the Governor General by one year, because, as the Liberals put it, of the political instability of the current government. They felt that having some continuity in that position would actually strengthen the confidence that all Canadians have in what might be a short term government.

Mr. Reid's purview is such that he would be the one responsible for overseeing the transition of this new act that may be coming forth. I must say, because I see the member for Winnipeg Centre entering the House, that—

•(1035)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** I remind the hon. member that he is not to refer to members being here or not. All members are in the House.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I withdraw the last comment.

Let me rephrase this. At committee, at one point in the not too distant past, the Minister of Justice had committed to the member for Winnipeg Centre that there would be a new access to information act presented at committee. In fact, there was no such act. There was only a discussion paper. This is one more example of how this government does not want Canadians to have access to information. We must reappoint Mr. Reid.

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing forward this motion, and I thank all opposition colleagues on the committee for such a critical motion. I find it ironic that with a government that has brought forward a whistleblower protection act as one of the earliest pieces of legislation in this minority Parliament, it is the Conservative Party that is standing here today protecting and advancing a tough defender of access to information, a true whistleblower on the misdeeds and the shroud of secrecy that surround this Liberal government.

Access to information is such a vital part of opposition parliamentarians being able to do their job. Perhaps that government over there does not want a strong opposition. It just wants us to roll over and play dead, but no, we need to be able to do our job well. Canadians expect us to hold this government to account. That is why they elected us as opposition members of Parliament.

As a kid, I was always warned whatever one does secret is ultimately going to come to light. That is why it is important to have a motion like this coming forward. What this government has done in secret for 12 years needs to come to light. It is not just the sponsorship scandal that I am talking about. I am sure there are all kinds of scandals waiting to be uncovered. That is why the Liberals do not support the extension for this Information Commissioner.

Ultimately what really sticks with me is that this current Prime Minister was supposed to be a champion of transparency and openness. That is what he kept telling people on his nine year climb to power as he stepped over Liberal body after Liberal body to become the Prime Minister.

My question is simple. I look to my colleague. Why is this Liberal government so afraid of extending the term of this tough Information Commissioner for even one year? Does it not want a tough whistleblower constructively criticizing its lust for secrecy and its tendency for cover-up?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, in answer to my hon. colleague's question, I referred in my opening comments to the fact that the only conclusion I can draw as to why the Liberals do not want to see the extension of Mr. Reid is that there is more corruption and they are trying to cover it up.

They do not want someone who knows the political process, who knows the system and who knows cabinet. They do not want someone like that in this role, because, let us face it, if these new tough rules get implemented then he would be able to uncover the corruption that undoubtedly lies just below the surface with that government.

The Liberals have had 12 years of corruption and have the audacity to stand in this House and say that while they agree that Mr. Reid has served his position well and with distinction, they just do not think it is really within the rules to extend his contract for one more year.

I do not know how they believe that Canadians will swallow this line. All the Liberals are trying to do is bring someone in who does not have the knowledge, the experience and the political background to uncover the dirt and the corruption. They want someone that they can use as a lapdog. They do not want to get to the truth. They do not want to uncover their own corruption. That is why they are opposing the extension for Mr. Reid.

•(1040)

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals do not want to reappoint Mr. Reid because they do not like what he advocates, but we know that indicative of any totalitarian regime is the control of information. It is central to the functioning of any dictatorship.

Previously, I talked to the Auditor General about this. She said that there are limits to laws and rules and policy directives, but they just get ignored. What is needed in addition is a culture of transparency.

*Routine Proceedings*

I want the member to talk about what this current move by the government reveals about its character. We see its love of secrecy and its record of undermining the access to information law. We have seen its failure to expand resources to actually implement the law. The central element, which is basic to all of democracy, is openness and transparency, public access and the public's right to know.

Can he explain in plain terms what the Liberal move means to the average voter? Why should the average voter care about us arguing about access to information?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, in plain terms, why Canadians should be concerned is that the shroud of secrecy the government has perpetrated on the Canadian public for the last 12 years is reprehensible.

The sponsorship scandal never would have been uncovered had it not been for the Auditor General. Liberals do not want more transparency and more openness in government. If there were, then all the facts of every Liberal theft and corruption would come to the public's eye. They do not want more openness in government because they are afraid of what the political ramifications would be to that party if the public were able to find out how they have served themselves rather than than Canadians for the last 12 years.

Liberals do not want someone who will be tough. They do not want somebody who will ensure that Canadians have access to all information on what they consider to be their own government purview.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I was a bit surprised this morning to learn the subject of today's debate.

[*English*]

A few weeks ago in the committee which I have the honour to chair, a number of Conservative MPs created a spectacle by complaining that they were not getting what they judged to be a sufficient number of opposition days. At that time, the committee decided it would report the issue to the House in its 35th report. The Conservatives then argued that not only did they need more opposition days, but they wanted them right away because they wanted to debate opposition issues.

Today is one of those days. Instead of debating their own opposition day, in which they should indicate their perceived failings in the way the government administers the business of the nation, opposition members have decided to filibuster by discussing a concurrence motion in a committee report. I guess they have been unable to find anything wrong with the government.

They claim that is not the case, but I challenge them to this. The next time they have an opposition day, what would happen if a Liberal moved concurrence in a committee report thereby displacing their opposition day? Presumably this would be perfectly okay because after all that is what they are doing to themselves. If they are doing this to themselves, presumably somebody else doing it to them would be similarly correct. Otherwise why would they be doing it now?

You are truly objective in the Chair, Mr. Speaker, and non-partisan so you have probably fairly evaluated at this point the fact that the Conservative opposition does not know what it is doing, at least this morning. I will let others decide about other occasions. Clearly this morning those members do not want to debate their own opposition day.

What is the purpose of an opposition day? It is historically and constitutionally a process by which the Sovereign is not granted supply until the grievances of the people have been heard. That is very clear in our rules. The grievances of the people are manifested, in parliamentary terms, by way of opposition days and listening to the debates. Once all opposition days are exhausted, we vote on supply, which we will be doing tonight. Once we start with the supply bill, there is no more debate on the bill because debate was held prior to the bill's introduction on the floor of the House. That is the way the process works.

Today we were supposed to listen to the grievances of the people as manifested by the opposition days. This morning opposition members are saying that they have no grievance. They do not want to debate the grievance they said they had when they tabled their opposition motions. That itself is very indecisive on the part of the opposition. They cannot make up their minds what they want to grieve because they have tabled half a dozen opposition motions. They then have to decide whether one of them has any legitimacy for debate in the House of Commons.

I guess this morning they looked at the list of their so-called grievances and concluded that none of them had any merit. Having done that, the only thing left for them to do was to move concurrence in a committee report. Concurrence in the committee report in question has to do with reappointing an officer of the House, not a government official.

• (1045)

[*Translation*]

We are talking, here about the hon. John Reid, who is the Information Commissioner of Canada. I am somewhat familiar with Mr. Reid's file because I was the one who moved the motion a few years ago that he be appointed to this position. At that time, another candidate had expressed interest but he failed to receive the unanimous support of the House. Mr. Reid had not officially submitted his name. Some members of the House, even some members of the opposition, suggested that the government consider appointing or officially submitting his name as a candidate, if he was interested. He was. The hon. John Reid, a former minister, expressed interest in this appointment. Prior to this, he had co-sponsored the Access to Information Act. He was well known in the field and continues to be today, since his appointment. In my opinion, he has done an excellent job.

John Reid's name was put forward for this position. He appeared before a parliamentary committee, and his appointment was approved by a unanimous vote in the House, as we all recall. This happened during the previous Parliament, some five years ago, I believe.

Today, some members feel Mr. Reid ought to be reappointed. I do not know if this is possible under the rules. He is certainly highly competent. The government will decide whether it wants to propose him again as a candidate.

A parliamentary committee is of course absolutely free to congratulate an officer of Parliament on his work. This is evidently what the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics concluded in tabling its fifth report. That is all very well and I have no objection to the process or to the fact that the committee made that statement, and that it is submitted to this House.

What I do have trouble with is that the opposition made such a fuss a few weeks ago about not having its quota of opposition days. In fact, the committee I have the honour to chair was asked to table a report in this House setting out this shortcoming. Today those same members who were demanding their opposition days are in the process of holding a filibuster on the opposition day they themselves asked for. I just do not get it.

I have been in this House for some time, and I find this parliamentary strategy a bit hard to understand. Normally, MPs, particularly those in opposition, consider these opposition days something sacred in a way. They are, to some extent, because they are part of our constitutional conventions to which I have already referred, which require that the grievances of the people must be heard before we vote on supply.

That is what we are doing, or at least what we should be doing today. The members opposite have the opportunity to debate this or that government policy, be it agriculture, foreign affairs or what have you. They have a chance to say that it is not to their liking and that the policy should contain more of this or less of that. They can fault the government for not having done as much as it ought to in connection with this or that issue, or for having done too much in connection with some other. These subjects of debate are totally legitimate. That is why we are here. That is the reason the opposition itself raised in demanding that the 35th report be tabled.

I will summarize that report, on the off chance that some members may have forgotten some points in the text.

●(1050)

The 35th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which I have the honour of chairing, need I point out, said:

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(a)(iii), the Committee has considered a change to the Standing Orders.

The Committee recommends that Standing Order 81(10) be amended by adding the following:

(d) For the Supply period ending no later than June 23, 2005—

That is the supply period ending this evening, the deadline being June 23. So we will decide tonight, and this is the last opposition day.

—if the government has not designated any of the remaining six allotted days so that an opposition motion can be considered—

This is oddly like what could have happened today, had the opposition chosen to exercise its mandate. According to the Constitution, the opposition must want, by definition, to make the grievances known. The leader of the opposition calls himself the

### *Routine Proceedings*

leader of the government in waiting. So, the leader of the opposition wants, rightly or wrongly—this time, I think, wrongly—to replace the Prime Minister. To do so, he must explain to the Canadian public as forcefully as he can, why his ideas are better than those of the government, using the opposition days.

That is not at all what is happening. That is not at all what the opposition is trying to do this morning.

I will continue to read this motion because I know the hon. members find it interesting:

—that May 19, 2005 shall be so designated—

What they wanted the other day was to get as many opposition days possible as quickly as possible. They did not want to miss out on any before the end. However, we are now coming to the end and the opposition finds, believe it or not, they have one opposition day too many. They no longer want it.

I have a question for the New Democrats. If they were offered an additional opposition day, would they take it? I think they would. There are, no doubt, issues the New Democrats would want to raise in this House if they had an extra opposition day. I am sure of it. How is it that the New Democrats would have an issue to raise and the Conservatives seem not to? Do they not have any more matters to address, nothing more to do or to ask? They feel the government is doing a good enough job that there is no need to question it during the last day reserved for that purpose. As a parliamentary strategy, it is nothing to write home about.

I will continue to read the motion from the report I tabled on behalf of the committee that I chair:

—the vote shall not be deferred beyond the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on that day.

According to the opposition members, it was so urgent to have opposition days that the vote could not even be deferred until the next day. They had to have as many opposition days as possible as soon as possible and the votes had to be held the very same evening, such was their need to denounce the government.

●(1055)

[English]

Now what do we have? The opposition has a day left over. It ran out of things to ask the government. It put a number of motions on the order paper for supply. It should only be putting one in any event. That was the intent of the first modernization report which I chaired, but that is another matter. Then it looked at all of them and guessed that none were legitimate. None of these so-called grievances were worthwhile raising, so the opposition moved concurrence in a committee report instead of debating an opposition day motion on the last opposition day and the last opportunity that we have to do so before the summer adjournment.

*Routine Proceedings*

Therefore, I ask all my colleagues sitting on this side of the House, is this what an opposition party should be doing? I know my colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River sat with me in opposition. When we were in opposition, and I was there for a long time, we never ran out of things to ask Brian Mulroney. We never ran out of subjects to raise on opposition days. We know of course that when the Conservatives were in government, they had a number of shortcomings.

Given all the shortcomings that the Conservatives had at the time, we had lots of things to ask of them on the floor of the House. We never ran out of subjects to ask. We never filibustered our own opposition day in order not to get to orders of the day because we wanted to debate our opposition day motion. We wanted to keep the Prime Minister of the day accountable. First, because that particular government had many shortcomings; and second, we saw it as our duty as a government in waiting because that is what we were. We waited very patiently, particularly from 1988 to 1993, as my colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River will recognize, and then in 1993 having duly waited as the government in waiting, we became the government.

Why did we become the government? It was because the previous government was not very good. As a matter of fact, it was bad. We held it accountable which was our duty and then the Liberals were elected. That is what happened in 1993.

The spectacle we have before us is an opposition day with the opposition having run out of subjects to ask the government. It is filibustering its own opposition day to avoid holding the government accountable. If that makes sense, I guess I will have to eat my hat.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (British Columbia Southern Interior, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the truly frightening part about the diatribe of the hon. member is that he actually believes some of what he said. That is really frightening. Basically, he has stood up and said that it is the opposition's job to oppose the things being done by the government. Heaven knows the government makes that very easy for us by doing so much wrong.

However, that is exactly what we are doing. He says that we should be on our opposition day motion. We would very much like to get to that. If the Liberals were honourable people, they would rise right now and support—

• (1100)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** Order, please. The hon. member of course knows that all members are honourable.

**Mr. Jim Gouk:** I apologize for that, Mr. Speaker. I was referring to the party as a whole and not any of the individuals. I was talking collectively.

We have a situation now where we have a Privacy Commissioner who helps make Parliament work, who helps the opposition and the people of Canada by giving us access to the kind of wrongdoings the government is involved in.

I can understand why the hon. member would not want to give us the opportunity to extend the job of one of the few appointees who is actually doing the job. It must have been a great shock to the Liberals when they appointed someone, given their usual track record of appointing hacks who just do whatever they are told, their

typical lap dogs, and are now finding they have someone who actually does the job.

Why does the hon. member think that the opposition is not doing its job by opposing the very thing the government is doing by trying to replace someone who is doing their job? The government is ignoring the recommendations of the committee by turning around and saying that it does not want to do what the committee recommended.

If the hon. member can answer that and if his party was honourable, did the right thing and agreed to follow what the committee has recommended, we would be happy to get on to our opposition motion of the day.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is mistaken insofar as how the rules work for these appointments. Let me go back a little bit to the history prior to the modernization of committees.

Prior to modernization, some order in council appointments for officers of Parliament were debatable, some were simply by order in council, others were debatable and votable by one House, and others were debatable and votable by both houses. It was a mishmash. No two were the same, so we unanimously agreed to a rule change at the time.

I invite the hon. member to confer with some of his own colleagues who worked very hard on this. We made them all uniform and we said that we would appoint all officers of Parliament. There would be a possible review by committee, if that is what the members wanted. Then when the candidate's name appears before the House, it would carry by a majority vote. For all the appointments, it involves a vote in both houses, the ones that are in legislation anyway. There is one exception, which is the Chief Electoral Officer. That is voted on only in the House of Commons, but in the case of removal, both houses have to vote.

Getting back to the case at hand, the appointments are non-debatable and votable right away. That is the way the process works. Because it involves an officer of Parliament, the threshold of approval is very high. It is not in the rules, but if I were appointed privacy commissioner or something like that, and I am not running for this or any other position for that matter because I am retiring, the threshold would be very high. We would not want to be an officer of the House unless we knew that all parties, or at least a critical mass of them in the House, thought that we were able to do the job. Otherwise, it would be very complicated to do. It is the same for the new Ethics Commissioner and all the others.

That is how the process works. It is not just a matter of the government choosing someone to its liking and imposing that person on the House. In modern times, that would be very difficult to do.

In the case that we have here, the person was a Liberal MP, a Liberal cabinet minister, and the enthusiasm was generated largely by opposition members. The person has now served his term. I have no idea whether the government will propose him again, but I consider Mr. Reid as having been an excellent commissioner. That is how the process works.

*Routine Proceedings*

I have explained it now to the hon. member. Perhaps we can do the opposition day motion, if the opposition has any grievances at all, which it probably does not.

• (1105)

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is an incredible spectacle. We have just witnessed the hon. member standing up pretending he is the defender of opposition days.

The government prevented our parliamentary privilege and right to have opposition days. Why? Because it did not want us to bring forward a motion of non-confidence on a supply day until it had time to buy off enough votes to sustain itself.

That is the most shameful thing I have heard. How can the Liberals say that we are standing here doing something that offends the hon. member when the Liberals were the ones who prevented us, and all opposition members, from bringing forward our opposition day motions? The hon. member should be ashamed of himself. That is my comment.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, that may be his comment, but it is factually incorrect. Unless the opposition days are exhausted, the hon. member will be familiar with the fact that the government cannot bring in the supply days, so obviously the government has to produce the number of opposition days necessary in order to arrive at these votes. That is obvious, and the hon. member knows that I am sure. That is the way it works.

Now if the hon. member is arguing that he wanted an opposition day on a particular day, an opposition day is a government order. A government order is set by the government and it is of course announced on the floor of the House by the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons. I held that position previously for some seven and a half years. I designated a number of opposition days in my time. I changed a number of days.

No opposition day officially exists until the day starts. The minister introduces an informal calendar, which he produces for the benefit of members. It did not even exist until I became House leader. Following this, the minister designates an actual day on the Thursday prior, and the minister can reverse the designation any day, even when that occurs. I have done that countless times as well.

The hon. member has not listened to the answer. Maybe that is why he is asking these questions.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the real reason John Reid is not being renewed is because he has a record of exposing Liberal tricks, balderdash and eventually Liberal corruption.

I remember when he came before the government operations committee and exposed the numerous loopholes which the government tried to hide in its so-called whistleblower protection act. Those loopholes, had they been in place during the time the Liberal Party was stealing Canadian tax dollars through the sponsorship scandal, would have covered up the scandal for as many as 20 years. They were exposed by one man, by John Reid.

I remember the Liberal members who were in the committee room at that time. They looked him in the eye with great anger and disappointment. They realized that he was not going to be a lapdog

to them. I see some of those members and the same sort of contempt that they have on their faces today is how they looked at John Reid that day. I knew they were coming for John Reid after that moment.

I knew they were furious that he was doing his job as Information Commissioner and that he was exposing Liberal tricks and corruption. Were it not for John Reid's testimony that day, those Liberal tricks would never have been exposed and that whistleblower bill would have become a full instrument to cover up Liberal corruption. That is the real reason the government is trying to assassinate an officer of the House.

Why will the member not stand up in the House of Commons and admit that is what he and his party are trying to do?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, that was a pretty sad spectacle if I ever saw one.

First, I never said that John Reid was not to be reappointed. I have no idea whether it is even possible to have a second mandate for a commissioner because none has ever been granted. The government will decide whether it offers a candidacy. That is the way the process works. Maybe the member should look at his computer because he is not listening to the answer, not that it would make much difference.

Second, he referred to something about 20 years. I have been here 21 years and half of that time were Conservative years. The country was in deficit and going into debt. Almost every week a minister would resign under that regime. Ministers of finance had no credibility. The popularity of the government was about my shoe size. We all remember those Conservative days. We know that it is the same Conservative Party that went down about 10 percentage points in one year. No matter how one splices that, it cannot look different because that is how it is.

Everyone knows they are trying to get out of the mess they got themselves into this morning by failing to produce an opposition day. They are trying to splice that together again, but the last splice did not work and this one will not either.

• (1110)

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as difficult as it is to follow a gifted orator and journeyman member of Parliament like the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, I would like to begin by complimenting my colleagues on the opposition benches for giving us the opportunity, on a day for their opposition day motion, to debate not one but two pressing issues. Contrary to what my colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell says about not using opposition days well, in actual fact they have turned one issue into two and have given Canadians the opportunity in the twilight days of this Parliament to debate the issue that I feel is paramount, and that is access to information.

Let me begin by saying that freedom of information is the oxygen that democracy breathes. There is no greater champion in our country on the issue of freedom of information than our outgoing Information Commissioner, the hon. John Reid, who has valiantly tried in the last seven years to break down the barriers to open government and true access to information.

*Routine Proceedings*

I would be remiss not to recognize and pay tribute as well to another long-standing champion on this issue who is no longer with us, John Bryden, a former member of Parliament. In his final days as an MP he was with the Conservative Party. He dedicated his entire career toward trying to open up Canadian government to freedom of information so citizens could access the inner workings of the governments that represent them.

Like many Canadians, I look to the senior statesman in Canadian journalism in many ways, Hugh Winsor, for inspiration and comment. He has an article in today's *Globe and Mail* and the headline reads, "A major government irritant is bowing out". That sums it up. This is why John Reid is leaving us. He has been a major irritant to the Government of Canada because he has been forthright and honest about his dogged pursuit of changing the access to information rules.

I will not read what Mr. Winsor has to say but I recommend strongly that other people have a serious look at this. He makes the point quite clearly about what happened to Mr. Reid.

There were predictable turning points in Mr. Reid's career. One of them, as my colleague from the Conservatives pointed out, was his presentation to the government operations committee. It was not viewed very favourably when he pointed out glaring loopholes that had been built in to what the government tried to call whistleblowing legislation. It was really more like an act to protect ministers from whistleblowers, which is what Mr. Reid exposed, and that was not viewed too favourably.

I think the thing that was really the turning point in Mr. Reid's career, and my colleagues may agree, was he backed an access request to see former Prime Minister Chrétien's daily agendas. They may have shown how much time he was spending at the Royal Ottawa golf club. He also backed an access request, which he deemed to be appropriate, calling for the daily briefings for Art Eggleton when he was the minister of national defence.

The Privy Council Office attempted to block Mr. Reid's scope by filing 25 applications in the Federal Court for judicial review of his rulings. In other words, Mr. Reid saw it to be absolutely fitting and appropriate that we should have public access to the former prime minister's daily itineraries and Mr. Eggleton's briefing notices.

The PCO clammed up in this culture of secrecy that dominates Ottawa today. It went to ground, threw up the barriers and started filing what we would call in the private sector slap suits. In other words, it filed 25 court appeals for judicial review to silence this issue. It lost all of them. Mr. Reid was found to be absolutely accurate. His interpretation of the access to information laws was correct, and the government should release this information. To this day it has refused. We have not seen those agendas. This is a graphic illustration of what is wrong with the freedom of information laws in our country.

•(1115)

The laws exist on paper, but it is like the bill of rights in third world countries where it looks good on paper but the proof is in the pudding. To this day we are still waiting for these things. Even though Mr. Reid won all 25 applications in the federal court, the

government is still not coughing up the documents and the commissioner has had to go back to the federal court.

Mr. Reid's career has been seven years of frustration. After focusing attention on the need for reform and trying to enforce the laws as they are, it has been nothing but headaches.

We will be very sorry to see him go. We very much regret what I view to be a binding recommendation of a newly created access to information, privacy and ethics committee. A House of Commons standing committee recommended that Mr. Reid's term of office be extended for one year. Partly because of the sensitive nature of the work the committee is doing and the point that we have reached in terms of trying to achieve access to information, for the purposes of continuity, the committee feels it is critical that the same information officer maintain his office for one more year.

We have noticed a worrisome trend. The Government of Canada has ignored the recommendations of House of Commons standing committees. I am sure we could parrot off four or five recent examples where the standing committees have very clearly given direction to government to take a certain route and they have been ignored, completely contrary to the Prime Minister's commitment to do something about the democratic deficit.

Sunlight is a powerful disinfectant and some of us view freedom of information laws as the sunlight of politics. Freedom of information laws are the natural enemy to a culture of secrecy that has allowed corruption to flourish in the country. It is hard to overstate what a central role freedom of information plays in our culture.

The House of Commons justice committee referred to Canada's Access to Information Act as holding a similar significance to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Supreme Court recently referred to our Access to Information Act as quasi-constitutional. That is what we are playing with here. These are fundamental rights that are the cornerstone of any western democracy, yet they are being trampled on, ignored and trivialized by the experience, certainly in the past seven years when Mr. Reid has been our access to information officer.

Too clearly, many senior officials in Ottawa subscribe to the views of Sir Humphrey in the British comedy *Yes, Minister* when he said to his boss, "You can have good government or you can have open government, but Mr. Prime Minister, you cannot have both". We do not want to reduce ourselves to the level of a sitcom here, but we are approaching that point in our treatment of access to information laws. While transparency and accountability are the buzzwords of the day in Ottawa, in practice there are many who resist them and who spend their every waking moment trying to find ways to confound people's right to know, their right to access to information. Very few government insiders are fans of the public's right to know. That is the fundamental problem that we have.

*Routine Proceedings*

When members of the public submit access to information requests, too often government officials undermine the intent of the act by imposing unreasonable delays, or performing inadequate searches, or charging outlandish fees or fees that constitute a barrier to getting that access to information, or in the larger policy level, by opposing the expansion of the act so it might apply to more activities of government. That is where my interest comes in.

It is hard for me to understand, for instance, why only 49 of 246 crown agencies and corporations are subject to the act. Why can I get easy access to information on the Atlantic Pilotage Authority and not on Canada Post or VIA Rail?

● (1120)

In the last Parliament I was proud to second a private member's bill, Bill C-462, which was put forward by my former colleague, Mr. John Bryden. In that bill, John Bryden for 10 years tried to break the barriers within his own party, his own ruling government, to introduce meaningful amendments to the Access to Information Act. Being a former journalist, Mr. Bryden had firsthand knowledge of the barriers that are in place.

When Mr. Bryden was not re-elected in the last election I took over his bill and introduced an identical bill, in fact word for word, under my own name, Bill C-201.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pat Martin:** I thank hon. members for their recognition but it was not my bill. It was a composite effort from all members of Parliament who are interested in this issue. Many on the Liberal side and the opposition side sat on a special subcommittee that Mr. Bryden put together for that very reason.

I think it is significant to note that Bill C-201 was the first bill, government or private, introduced in the 38th Parliament, which is why it is numbered Bill C-201. I think that is fitting because it is the single most important thing we could do to improve government.

If we had passed no other piece of legislation in this 38th Parliament, Canada would have been a better place had we passed Bill C-201. I say that without any hesitation. I do not say that to pat myself on the back. It is simply the conclusion that I have come to the more I study how critically important freedom of information is. We should not use that term lightly. We should reflect on the weight of those words. Freedom of information is a cornerstone of any western democracy.

In anticipation of speaking I was looking at some notes and reading something a history professor had to say. He states, "Secrecy has been the default rule of government for centuries. Revolutions in England in 1688 and in France in 1789 slowly overturned the absolute rule of monarchs and ushered in the right to free speech and the legislative process of law-making was open to public scrutiny. But within the bowels of the bureaucracy secrecy was still very much the rule and remains so to this day".

This was stated by the author of *Blacked Out: Government Secrecy in the Information Age* which is to be published this year. He goes on to state, "As modern governments expanded their operations and reach, government clerks evolved into bureaucrats with extraordinary new powers to shape the content of government

policy and secrecy became the rule of the day. Secrecy became the new absolute power".

That is a worrisome thought.

In the last couple of weeks I am sure we all noticed a survey, the results of which were on the front pages of 45 newspapers across the country. It was sponsored by the Canadian Association of Journalists and the Canadian Newspaper Association and was entitled "Access denied".

These journalists conducted a comprehensive survey of every municipal, provincial and the federal government to find out just how easy it is to get access to information under the current regime that exists. Guess where the federal government ranked in their survey? There is no big surprise here. It ranked dead last.

I believe the Province of Alberta ranked first, where 93% of all access to information requests were fulfilled to the satisfaction of the applicant. They were not always completely filled but they were filled to the satisfaction of the applicant unless there were reasonable grounds, such as national security or personal privacy, that the information could not be shared.

Manitoba, I am proud to say, my home province, ranked second, where 88% of all applications for information were filled to the satisfaction of the applicant.

Guess where the federal government wound up on that survey? Twenty-five percent of all access to information requests were filled to the satisfaction of the applicant. That is less than one-quarter.

Open government can and does exist. Two of the most successful provincial governments in the country have no problem living up to the principles of open government.

● (1125)

The federal government, however, is slammed shut with access denied. We do not have the right to know, no matter what it says on paper. Notwithstanding the fact that we have an officer of Parliament charged with the enforcement of the Access to Information Act, we cannot get that information. It is like giving people directions and then telling them that they cannot get there from here. Well we cannot get the information that we deserve as Canadian taxpayers in this particular regime.

Mr. John Reid, Canada's outgoing Information Commissioner, made a very poignant statement recently when he said:

In one way or another, all the checks and balances designed to limit abuses of government power are dependent upon there being access by outsiders to governments' insider information.

A public service which holds tight to a culture of secrecy is a public service ripe for abuse.

We have graphic evidence of that before us daily in the House of Commons. We could spend all of our time chasing what the government likes to call "rogue bureaucrats", or trying to plug the random ad hoc examples of abuse when we are lucky enough to stumble across them, or we could go to the root of the problem and wipe the slate clean. We could shine the disinfectant of sunlight on this culture of corruption that exists. If it is a powerful disinfectant, we could expose this and let the free democracy in which we live do its job to cleanse corruption from our system.

*Routine Proceedings*

We have an example of how we might do that, which has been lovingly crafted by my former colleague, John Bryden, into Bill C-201. Let me give a bit of the sad history of what happened to Bill C-201 and where it is languishing today.

Not only was I the first one to table a bill in Parliament, government or private member, on the very first day that I could, a bill that had broad cross party support from all of the parties in the House of Commons, but then, by the greatest of good fortune, my name was drawn in the private members' lottery as the fourth bill to be debated in this 38th Parliament.

The government found itself with a real problem. The Liberals had a minority government, they had a bill they were deathly afraid of and they had a private member with an opportunity to debate the bill in four day's time. They sent out emissaries to approach me and, very wisely, chose one of the Liberals who I have great admiration and respect for, the current Minister of Justice, to be the emissary.

The minister told me that the government had every intention of introducing all the things I was calling for in my bill and that if I would withdraw my bill, take it off the Order Paper, agree not to have it debated in the House and subsequently passed, the government would introduce comparable legislation at least as good if not better in this session of Parliament. That was the commitment made.

Having not just fallen off the turnip truck, I wanted to have that confirmed so I pressed for specifics and details. I received, "Yes, this will be in there; yes, the crown corporations will be there; yes, cabinet confidences within reason will be in there; yes, all of the good things that were crafted laboriously over a decade in Bill C-201 will be included in government legislation and it will be prioritized to be in this session of Parliament".

That was in October 2004. We now find ourselves in June 2005. The months started ticking by. Department of Justice officials produced bill after bill but we are still waiting for access to information legislation which was supposed to be priority number one.

Six months later, at the access to information committee, with great fanfare and pomp and circumstance, the Minister of Justice tabled at that committee, not a bill, but a discussion paper so we could begin the process of trying to analyze and determine if research is necessary to find out if there might be a problem with the Access to Information Act. What an absolute travesty, a breach of trust, a breach of promise and a clear violation of the commitment that was made to me to produce access to information legislation.

• (1130)

The government has no interest in open government. It is a government more along the lines of Sir Humphrey of *Yes, Minister*. It believes we can have good government and open government but not both. That is the empirical evidence we have to deal with. What other conclusion can we draw?

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the member on bringing forth the Bryden bill again and I understand his frustration with the Minister of Justice. However he did not tell the rest of the story.

I also happen to be on the privacy and ethics committee and I heard the minister say that the government would not be introducing the bill, that it would study the issue first and who knows what. I then heard the leader of the Conservative Party, Stephen Harper, come out and say that it would be its—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** The hon. member of course remembers that he is not to use names.

**Mr. David Tilson:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

The leader of the official opposition then came out with the Conservative Party's policy on the topic of information. What happens then is that the Minister of Justice comes out and says that the government will introduce a bill in the fall. One minute he says that he will introduce the bill, the next minute he says that he will study it and then, in response to the leader of the official opposition, he says that he will introduce a bill in the fall.

I do not often compliment the Liberal government and I certainly do not compliment past Liberal members, but I will compliment Mr. Reid, a former Liberal minister, who has done an outstanding job. He has been on the commission for about a third of its life and has done an admirable job and is most competent.

It appears we will be having an election sometime in the near future. It appears that unless Minister Cotler changes his mind again, we will have a bill. It appears—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** The hon. member of course remembers that what applies on the left side also applies to the right side.

**Mr. David Tilson:** You have corrected me twice, Mr. Speaker, and I do apologize for that.

The Minister of Justice then said that he will introduce a bill in the fall on this subject.

We know we are going to have new legislation and it appears that we will have an election in the very near future. We know the whole issue of access to information is a mess. The member for Winnipeg Centre gave statistics on the federal record for access to information. We know that the Canadian Newspaper Association gave the federal government an F on access to information as far as a grade.

My question to the member for Winnipeg Centre is: Do we have any choice? We have a most competent commissioner, we have a messy situation, we have an election coming and we have a bill that appears will be introduced by the government. I do not see how we have any choice.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of my colleague who is the chair of the access to information, privacy and ethics committee. I do feel that the only hope of steering this issue through at this time is if we maintain the continuity of the expertise that exists on this subject as developed by this information officer over his tenure of seven years. I think it would be very difficult for anyone else to pick up where this information officer left off.

*Routine Proceedings*

What I find really frustrating, and I know my colleague shares my frustration, is that had I not been duped into dropping my bill, Bill C-201 would be law today. It would be one of those rare things where a private member's bill would have succeeded all the way and passed, and Canada would be a better place today had we allowed that bill.

I know it is jaded of me to assume this but I fear that the issue has more to do with political advantage than with actual merits of the argument in that the government would love to go into the next federal election saying that if it is elected it will introduce new access to information legislation. Whereas the truth is that when elected it did everything it could to stifle access to information legislation. It is one of those things that it is saving for the election campaign. It wants to be able to say that if Canadians want meaningful access to information law they had better re-elect another Liberal government because it is the only one that will deliver on it.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The evidence contradicts any such story but that seems to be the motivation here. As a result, another year will go by without freedom of information legislation.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I can understand the frustration of my colleague from Winnipeg Centre. However, I want him to explain to me how the Liberal representatives were able to pull the wool over his eyes, when he himself had the opportunity, I believe, to introduce the first private member's bill. He had the opportunity to introduce the bill amended by Mr. Bryden. For the benefit of those listening, I must explain that there is a draw to determine the order in which MPs can introduce a private member's bill. The member for Winnipeg Centre had this opportunity.

I can understand his frustration. However, I want him to try to explain to us how the Liberal representatives—who told him not to introduce this bill under the pretext that they were going to introduce something similar—were able to pull the wool over his eyes. I want to better understand this.

[*English*]

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question is an obvious one that comes to mind.

If a person really is sincere about an issue and not about the political gain, then the person will pass the puck to the one best able to put the puck in the net. We all know that a bill introduced by government is more likely to succeed all the way through the Senate to royal assent than a private member's bill which would hit obstacles all the way.

Because I have great trust and admiration for the Liberal member of Parliament who came to me and made this commitment, I believed him. I trusted him and had confidence in him that he was sincere. As an added bonus, it freed up my private member's slot and allowed me to put forward another bill that I am very committed to, which is bankruptcy protection for workers in the event of bankruptcy. That is the logic. I am trying to answer as honestly as I can.

I trusted the member that he would introduce a government bill because he made that commitment not once, but twice in great detail. It gave me the opportunity to introduce another bill that I am very passionate about and that is protection of employees' wages and pensions in the event of bankruptcy.

I hope that answers my colleague's question.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member to be an advocate of accountability around this place. He has been a breath of fresh air in the House of Commons and in committees.

We were sitting in the same committee meeting when John Reid testified. I remember his testimony to be one of the most brilliant interventions I have witnessed in my short time here. I have not been here long, but I recall that intervention. It was very carefully laid out. He explained how the current whistleblower law that the Liberals have introduced would actually do more to cover up corruption than it would to expose it. He laid out his case in meticulous and legalistic detail.

I recall how angry the Liberal members on that committee were that day. They were absolutely furious that someone would expose these loopholes in their bill. I remember at that very moment thinking to myself that the Liberals were going to go for his job. I knew it at that moment. His willingness to be independent and outspoken in defence of freedom of information and in defence of accountability would mean he would pay a very serious price. We are now seeing those predictions come true.

I ask this question with a degree of sadness. I fundamentally believe that the government succeeds in corrupting the process of freedom of information. It will put a blanket over all of the corruption that goes on in government and prevent the light of day from ever shining on it. All of that Liberal fraud, Liberal corruption and Liberal bribery that we have learned about through the sponsorship scandal and the Gomery commission could be suppressed. It all came out because of access to information in the first place.

If the Liberal government succeeds in covering it over by corrupting the freedom of information process, scandals like the sponsorship affair will never reach the public eye. Had the Liberals succeeded in covering up the information process, we would never have known that ad scam had occurred. It might still be ongoing today.

I wonder if the hon. member is as concerned as I am at the deep-seated implications that may genuinely flow from the government's attempt to corrupt the freedom of information process. Is he as concerned as I am that this could lead to greater Liberal theft, greater Liberal fraud, and even greater Liberal bribery? Does he share those concerns?

• (1140)

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague too has rapidly earned a reputation as being a champion of the issue of accountability and transparency. I look to him for many years of exposing on behalf of Canadians everything that is wrong about this place.

*Routine Proceedings*

To answer his question briefly, I can only restate that one cannot overstate what a central place freedom of information holds in our society. The Supreme Court of Canada calls access to information quasi-constitutional. It is one of those fundamental rights and freedoms that a free western society enjoys. We apparently do not appreciate what we have because we have let it go lax. We have let it slide to the point where one can no longer honestly say that Canadians enjoy the right to know and the right to access to information, because the evidence would speak otherwise.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak today on the motion by the Conservative Party. This motion seeks to extend John Reid's term as the Information Commissioner of Canada by one year. It is an even greater pleasure since there is a story behind the government's decision not to renew this commissioner's contract. This is what I want to talk about.

Obviously, I could quote from the commissioner's annual reports; I could quote statements from the newspapers and so on, but I will leave that to other colleagues who will be speaking. Instead, I want to focus on the Liberal government's decision. We must not forget that the commissioner, John Reid, is a former Liberal minister. So this decision affects the Liberal family. That is the real issue. The Liberal family has had a serious problem since the revelations made at the Gomery commission and since the Bloc Québécois, among others, decided to shed light in the House on what will probably be considered the biggest scandal in the history of Canada and Quebec. This scandal is a direct attack on Quebec.

The problem is that the government is stuck with a promise. Indeed, in the election campaign, the Prime Minister said he would be more transparent. It is all very well to write about transparency and to want to table bills. My colleague from Winnipeg Centre found out the hard way about the Liberals' style of governing. He had a very good private member's bill. He had the opportunity to table it at first reading, to amend the Access to Information Act, to have it apply to all crown corporations so that more quasi-governmental organizations could be brought under the commissioner's sway. However, the Liberal Party decided to introduce a framework for action rather than legislation, as it gave it time. That is the problem. The Liberal Party needs time to try to forget this scandal.

Why are they going after the information commissioner directly? Because this commissioner is getting more and more requests in order to unscramble the impact of this scandal. That is the commissioner's problem.

I am a member of the committee. Since the revelations of the Gomery commission and of the Auditor General, the commissioner has reported an overwhelming number of requests received by his office. Quite rightly, the people are asking questions about things they have seen. They are asking for documents. Journalists are too. So there are a lot of requests, and work is backed up.

The government, the Liberal Party itself, is governing with public money, as we have seen. We will see what the Gomery commission decides. This government does not want us to discover anything else. So it is restricting the means of the information commissioner.

Believe it or not, the information commissioner currently has a backlog of over 2,000 requests. Work is a year and a half behind. All the Liberals can find to do is change the commissioner. Obviously, communications would be simpler if the government said the commissioner was not doing the work, which explained why so many files were late. The officials at the Privy Council told us in committee that perhaps better organization within the office of the information commissioner would result in a saving. In the end, it is quite simple. Too many requests have been made to the office of the information commissioner because of corruption among the Liberals.

They also say they are transparent and have a limited budget. The commissioner was given an 18-month supplemental budget. However, the requests continue to flow in at a rate 25% to 30% higher than previous years. From year to year, since 2002-2003, there has been a 25% increase in requests for access to information. Individuals, some MPs and journalists are making the requests. Many individuals are requesting documents. They want to know about the things they hear coming out of some government departments.

• (1145)

They want to have the documents. There is a greater demand not because of the governance of the Canadian government, but simply because of the Liberal corruption. We were told flat out that there is no end in sight to the requests. Individuals feel their opinions on politicians are under attack. They no longer trust them. They want to have certain documents in their own possession and are requesting certain information. They are right to do so.

The only way for us, the politicians, to all come out of this as winners, is for citizens to regain their trust in government, ask questions and request information. The commissioner should have a bigger budget for this.

But no, the governing Liberal Party has decided there is no advantage in having individuals, journalists or even MPs know more. The Liberals are limiting the work of the commissioner. They are not giving him the necessary budget. They know the needs are increasing, but they claim the commissioner might not be doing his job properly, that he is mismanaging his commission and that he should reorganize it.

So the decision is made not to renew his mandate and to instead appoint someone else, in hopes that the new commissioner will do better. That is insulting to the intelligence of the members of this House. Someone new, who does not know the ropes, is going to come along and fix everything right away. The same thing will happen as with Privacy Commissioner Stoddart. She has been trying for two years to get the privacy commissioner's office back on its feet after the mammoth waste by Mr. Radwanski. She has not yet managed to do so. The restructuring has been going on for two years.

*Routine Proceedings*

So if we change the commissioner, the processing of requests will slow down even more. This may suit the Liberal Party of Canada, which wants to slow them down at least until the next election is over. Then if they do not like the outcome, and are still in a minority in this House, they will want to slow things down.

That is the purpose of my speech: to try to get the Liberals to see some sense, and tell them to quit messing around with the system, to quit using public funds for their Liberal partisan politicking. The information commissioner must be allowed to act. This commissioner wanted to distance himself from everything Liberal, to establish his independence, and now the Liberals will not accept Commissioner Reid's having become independent and anxious to keep his distance from the Liberal machine and the Liberal political organization. He has got the message that the public want responses to their requests for information, want the documents they are asking for, and want an independent commissioner to respond and make them feel secure.

This will be totally to the advantage of parliamentarians, which is why the Bloc Québécois is going to support the Conservative motion to allow the commissioner to continue his work. They are asking for another year. As far as I am concerned, his mandate should be renewed from year to year, so that he can make public everything the public has suspicions about in connection with Liberal Party corruption. That is the reality. His task, in our opinion, is not only to answer requests from MPs, from Bloc Québécois members or their research staff, but also to provide documents readily to journalists.

We want a new bill. As the member for Winnipeg Centre is requesting, we want a new bill quickly to amend the Access to Information Act to permit all crown corporations and quasi-governmental agencies—the whole machine and everything financed by the federal government—to be subject to access to information. That way, when the public decides that something is perhaps not functioning in the system, it can be readily fixed.

The Liberal Party is not capable of doing that. If the federal government is to be fixed up, everyone will have to be involved. The Liberal members, who are up to their necks in corruption, will not manage it on their own. We must not forget that they lack the capability and the intelligence. We have seen that and will see it in Judge Gomery's report. Still, people have to join together, try to reveal everything possible on this subject and call for information in order to get all the facts. Every attempt and anything that has to do with any kind of corruption has to be made public. At that point, slowly but surely, we will manage to straighten out this federal government.

We remind the House that this has been a major effort by the Bloc. We were the ones who began the cleanup here in the Canadian government. It is time people stopped thinking we only oppose. We have proved it. We are showing the people of Canada how the federal government treats Quebec. This is one more reason for Quebecers to think that, some day, perhaps, they would do better to govern themselves in their own country, rather than in this land of corruption.

● (1150)

This will not be because we did not try to open the gates and clean out the Augean stable that the federal government has become. That is what we are doing. I think that it can be done with the help of all the citizens. For starters, they should be entitled to quick answers to their questions.

The only body that should remain neutral and allow the citizens to submit their requests and the important questions they are asking about how the government is managed is the office of the information commissioner. It is his job to provide quick answers to the citizens. He should have all the staff he needs to ask any department or quasi-governmental agency to answer the questions asked by citizens, members of Parliament, journalists and all. This must be done quickly so that no government is ever allowed, as the Liberal party of Canada was, to use government money and all the powers and operations of state to promote its own party. We in Quebec will take a very harsh view of this. We already do in view of all the corruption at the very foundations of the Liberal party. This is a very important effort in which citizens can become involved through access to information.

All too often, access to information is taken too lightly. The federal government is a huge apparatus and always expanding. Since 2000, it has grown by 37%. It is not an apparatus that tends to shrink; it always tends to expand. One need only look at the bills introduced in the House: departments are split to create two new ones and new departments are created in all the provinces.

The tendency of the federal Liberal government is to expand the machinery of state. And the larger it gets, the less manageable it becomes. Everyone knows that, except the Liberal party of Canada. In spite of everything, it continues to expand the federal machinery so that public servants will be present all over Canada. It probably aspires to be the biggest employer of all; that is one choice. The difficulty is that, meanwhile, the people's real problems, issues such as health, education and poverty, are not being solved.

That is the reality. Money is spent to establish a presence, raise the government's profile, and have public servants give answers to the people. But in the meantime, men and women are in dire poverty and the health system is suffering. The decision handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada last week was harsh reality for the Liberal Party.

They have been cutting transfers to the provinces since 1996, when the current Prime Minister was Minister of Finance. Now the highest court in the land states that the health care system can no longer cope; it is falling apart on all sides; and there will be a two-tier health system. That is directly related to the cuts made by the Liberal Party of Canada. It is that simple. It was the cuts in transfer payments that forced the provinces to react by making cuts in health care.

Now, in the view of the court, the government cannot continue like this because everyone is entitled to care. Health care is part of our rights and freedoms. So if someone has the money to pay for private care, a private parallel system must be allowed to exist. That is a two-tier health system.

*Routine Proceedings*

I am very curious to see how the Quebec health minister will deal with this. He will try to say that it does not exist, when in reality it does. That is the harsh truth. And all because the federal Liberal government cut the transfers to the provinces in 1996.

It should be remembered that when the system was established back in 1960, the federal government paid 50% of the costs; by 1996, it was only paying 12%. This rate is going back up to 25% under the agreement signed by the provincial premiers. But last week, the Supreme Court said that the damage had been done. The health system is in bad shape. Under Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, citizens have a right to demand care. The Supreme Court decided to say that this was correct—and all because the federal Liberal government decided to cut the transfers to the provinces in 1996.

That makes citizens, men and women, Quebeckers most importantly and all Canadians increasingly critical of the federal government. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are more access to information requests regarding everything having to do with the federal government.

• (1155)

The Gomery commission, in the wake of the sponsorship scandal, is one such example. The gun registry scandal is another, which gobbled up vast sums of money. Some people do not believe it but the initial cost of the gun registry was set at \$2 million, although it has cost \$2 billion. The problem is that the Liberal Party has not suffered too much as a result since people refuse to believe it could say that the registry would cost \$2 million and have it end up costing \$2 billion. Liberal or not, Canadians and Quebeckers do not understand this. They all believe that this is not possible. But it is possible, here, in Canada. The Liberals said it would cost \$2 million, but it has cost \$2 billion. That is the reality.

More and more people are realizing this, asking questions and demanding answers from the Information Commissioner. This figure is so high that some people cannot believe it. Clearly, the Liberal Party has benefited. This took place in 2003, 2004 and 2005 in Canada. It has completely lost control of the program, which will cost a fortune. Supplementary estimates for this registry have been tabled every fall for the past four years, and next fall will be no different.

Why did the government lose control? Because it is too big. The ministers responsible—both past and present—were perhaps unable to run this program. That is the reality. It is a big machine and running it requires competent people. Sometimes, particularly when it comes to the Liberal Party, the best people are not chosen or the least bad are picked. That is how the Liberals govern. The Liberals will have to live with the consequences. We will be waiting for them in the next federal election campaign. We will be there in order to call them to order and defend, once again, the interests of Quebeckers.

For the interests of Quebeckers would be better defended by extending the contract of Information Commissioner John Reid. Even though he is a former Liberal minister, it would be better if he kept his position. Mr. Reid was a straight shooter. He was always able to tell it like it is in committee and in his annual reports. I sincerely believe that he truly wants to answer every question and to

take part in drafting a new bill to make all governmental and para-governmental bodies accountable to the information commissioner.

When we take on such a major reform and try to resolve the 18-month backlog of requests caused by understaffing, it is not the time to bring in beginners, but the time to keep experienced people in place. What is more, Mr. Reid wants to eliminate the backlog and stay on top of the 25% increase in requests. As I was saying, he was quite clear in committee that there was no end in sight to the requests that have been made since the sponsorship scandal.

Mr. Reid is aware of the problem caused by the volume of requests. What he needs is more money in order to hire more staff. He also needs new legislation to make all governmental and para-governmental agencies—Via Rail, Canada Post, or whatever—accountable to the information commissioner.

In the sponsorship scandal, these agencies spent taxpayers' money. They do have their own cash flows, which is what makes them para-governmental. However, these agencies were able—with no questions asked and without having to answer to anyone—to get away with spending money, buying advertising, waving the Canadian flag just about everywhere, all in the name of national unity. At the end of the day, their only purpose is to provide services. The purpose of Via Rail is to get passengers to their destination as quickly as possible, while the purpose of Canada Post is to deliver mail as quickly as possible.

For these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will support the request of the Conservative Party to renew Mr. Reid's contract.

• (1200)

[*English*]

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my hon. colleague for being an active member on the access to information committee.

It appears quite obvious to me and perhaps every member on this side of the House that what the Liberals are attempting to do, by the refusal to extend the contract of Mr. Reid, is to actually stifle and control information. That is an extremely dangerous thing to have happen in any democracy.

We have seen empirical evidence not only by this action but by other actions. We have heard the member for Winnipeg Centre talk about how he was hoodwinked into not tabling a private member's bill on access to information. We now see the attempt by the government not to extend the contract of a very competent Information Commissioner, despite the overwhelming support from opposition members.

The only conclusion I can draw is that the Liberals are trying to control the flow of information and the access to information. That is probably one of the most dangerous situations that any democracy can see. I would like to hear my hon. colleague's comments on that to see whether or not he shares the concerns that I have just outlined.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. He is also a significant contributor in committee.

*Routine Proceedings*

He is absolutely right. What is even more serious is that the Prime Minister promised to govern with greater transparency. One more example of the Liberal habit of talking out of both sides of their mouth. They want to be more transparent, yet they also want to limit the Information Commissioner's budgets so he cannot process requests from the public.

Because the commissioner was insistent, the government eventually conceded. In fact, he continued to pressure the government by saying that new legislation was needed, as well as more resources. Let me assure you, neither the mechanism nor the machinery is transparent. The commissioner made several recommendations, but the government decided not to renew his contract. Yet he was the most credible person for getting through this crisis.

There is a great deal more work at access to information, because of the Liberal sponsorship scandal. That is the message the commissioner wanted to leave us with. My colleague got that clearly. The Liberal Party—not the Government of Canada—is trying to do away with the best tools for resolving the crisis, in the name of transparency.

I have a great deal of trouble understanding the Prime Minister. He sends out this message of transparency, but then ends up not giving the access to information commissioner sufficient resources. As a result, requests pile up year after year, until there is now an 18-month backlog. More than 2,000 requests have accumulated, but the situation is being allowed to continue.

This is not being done because it is the best way to provide Canada with good governance, but rather because it is the best way of extricating the Liberal Party from this scandal of its own making, which has resulted in even more access to information requests. The commissioner has made no attempt to hide this. When I asked whether he had had more requests since the Auditor General started reporting on the sponsorship scandal, he answered that yes, there was clearly an increase of between 25% and 35% yearly. He has to live with this, but he does not like it. I understand, neither do I.

[English]

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know why the opposition wishes to convert the issue of the expiry of Mr. Reid's appointment to other political issues, but the hon. member in his remarks referred to the applications being made to Mr. Reid. In fact, applications for access to information are made under the existing statute to the departments involved. All of the departments have bureaucracies created and managed to provide the information that is requested under the terms of the act. All of that is going on. It is not like we are reinventing access to information here.

The hon. member has personalized this, in the sense that Mr. Reid has become the focus of the whole access to information exercise. I would like to ask him to consider whether or not we should be distinguishing between the person and the office.

Mr. Reid's appointment is expiring. It was a seven year appointment. It was intended to be a lengthy appointment. That is what the statute provides for, to give sufficient time for the appointee to get into the office, to bring about good management, and to work through more than one Parliament. That is what Mr. Reid has done in an exemplary fashion.

For some reason the opposition wants to extend it for a year. The opposition has not really explained why it would want to extend an appointment for just one year. A reappointment might be rational, but extending it for one year might not. It is not clear to me, so I would ask the hon. member to focus on the issue here of extension.

The hon. member also referred to extending a contract. This is not a contract. This is a seven year appointment by the government for Parliament. It is not a simple contract that can be extended. Could I ask the hon. member to address those two issues?

• (1210)

[Translation]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Scarborough—Rouge River for his question. I am a little surprised to hear this from him. I recognize his intellectual rigour, but I can see that when his Liberal partisanship rises to the surface, he loses some of it. That is troubling.

He was present at all the meetings when the commissioner came and told us that there was a work overload in his office, since the sponsorship scandal among other things, and he needed more money. Now the hon. member cannot understand why Parliament is being asked to reappoint the commissioner. It is simple. We feel that he is the person most suited to do this work. We do not understand how someone new, more junior, could take over in mid crisis.

We are responsible, as members of Parliament, for making recommendations to the House of Commons regarding access to information and the other committees. I thought that this would have been obvious, even for him. But when Liberal partisanship enters the scene, I can understand that he loses a bit of his intellectual rigour and would prefer, for political reasons, that Mr. Reid was not there because of all the reports he has issued that were very hard on the government.

We think, on the other hand, that he is probably—and increasingly so—the person most suited to handle this office. I should say in passing that this is one office in which the citizens must have confidence. This is where they direct their requests for information. I agree that each department provides the answers. I understand what my hon. friend is trying to say. However, it is still the Information Commissioner who oversees it all, who makes the requests and who ensures that all the answers are given and that in the end, everything that is on file has been turned over to the taxpayer, the journalist, or the member of Parliament who made the application.

I cannot really understand, therefore, why they are saying now that the commissioner's appointment should not be renewed. Maybe the hon. member is wondering why we want another year. If he wanted to suggest renewing the appointment for seven years, I think that he would have the unanimous support of the members of this House. If he wanted to renew the appointment for seven years, it would not be a problem. I think that he would only need to ask. If this were the purpose, it would be fine. Maybe he can make a suggestion to us during the day. We will be pleased to agree.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this concurrence motion of the committee report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. The report recommends the extension of the term of the Information Commissioner for one more year.

Before I get into my comments, I want to know why the words “corruption,” “bribery,” “scandals,” “cover-up,” “culture of secrecy” and all these other terms have been used by the opposition members so frequently. This is to let members know that as long as those terms are not directed at an individual member or to a member of the other place, the rules of this place allow that to happen.

It is unfortunate. Those statements that are made in this place are the same statements that they could not walk outside the door and say in public without being subject to prosecution under the laws of Canada. It is in my view a very unfortunate circumstance where members of Parliament will use the protection of this place to say things that they would not otherwise say outside.

The Access to Information Act came into force in the early eighties. It is an act that has not been substantively changed since that time. I do not think that there is any member in this place that would suggest that it does not need to have a thorough review by Parliament. The public and all stakeholders, including those who are currently exempt from the act and who may be coming under the purview of the act, would have an opportunity to have input as to why there may be exemptions. There are a number of exemptions now.

I would like to briefly outline the purpose of the current Access to Information Act. It states:

The purpose of this Act is to extend the present laws of Canada to provide a right of access to information in records under the control of a government institution in accordance with the principles that government information should be available to the public, that necessary exceptions to the right of access should be limited and specific and that decisions on the disclosure of government information should be reviewed independently of government.

There have been some suggestions made here. As a matter of fact, when I walked outside the chamber and greeted members of the public, they said they had heard about this debate going on. They said they heard that we were firing the Information Commissioner.

It is amazing, depending on the words that people use, because it appears to be something that indeed is not. The fact is that the Information Commissioner is an officer of Parliament, as are the Auditor General, the Privacy Commissioner, and the Official Languages Commissioner. All of these positions are special officers of Parliament.

These officers are appointed for certain terms, a stated number of years. They cannot be simply taken out of that position for some administrative reason or other. They have total independence. I think members would agree that the current Auditor General has often been in a position where she has been very critical of certain things that happened within the administration of government. That position cannot be suspended and the Auditor General taken out of the role.

In fact, to get rid of an officer of Parliament requires a debate in the House and a vote by both chambers. It is an extremely important process. These are very important positions in terms of the support to the governance of Canada.

There can be no question that once someone has been honoured to be appointed to one of these positions that their credentials and abilities go totally unquestioned.

• (1215)

We have had an incident where an officer of Parliament was found to have done some things which were inappropriate. He ultimately resigned from this place without there being a vote on it. I want to make it very clear that as far as I can hear from the commentary of members in this place and from other stakeholders, as it were, Mr. Reid, whose term comes due this month, has performed his duties admirably and with distinction. That is not in question.

If the situation arises where there is an officer of Parliament whose term is coming due and there is no specific provisions within the act for an extension, there could be reappointment for another full term. I do not believe that has happened before. It is a very significant commitment for someone in his or her career. Certainly, the people who take on these roles as officers of Parliament have very distinguished careers elsewhere. Whether it be in politics, or as in the Auditor General's case, in the professional accounting field, they have earned high recognition in their field of endeavour and, to their credit, the accolades of their peers for excellence.

When an officer of Parliament is appointed and knowing the process that we now go through, there is no question about the merit of that individual.

There is another aspect to be considered here. An officer of Parliament's position is coming due and there is this instantaneous motion to extend it for a year, right at the time when the appointment is to expire. The timing of this smacks of disingenuousness.

I do not think members will be surprised to know that a recruitment for replacements for this position has been ongoing for some time. The process to get to a short list and to enter the formal process of the appointment of the new commissioner is well advanced.

Why is it that right at the point the process is to move forward, there is a suggestion that we had better extend the appointment for a year? I question the timing. It is very peculiar and unusual for this to happen, because there has been a commitment that an election would be called in this place within 30 days of the tabling of the final report of the Gomery commission.

Depending on the timing of various things, it is very likely that somewhere around the end of this calendar year, an election will be called. It means that between now and then it is quite unlikely that anything could reasonably happen with regard to changes in the Access to Information Act. It is also quite unlikely that the House would have an opportunity to have input into the development of legislation and as well, to have it go through the normal legislative process within six to nine months in any event, if there was full cooperation, but I can say that there are some very important discussions and debates to be held on this.

*Routine Proceedings*

In my view, it would appear that the earliest a bill could be dealt with on this very, very important matter would be at least another year to two years to get it through all stages. That means should there be an extension of the current commissioner's appointment, he may very well be in that position for the next year, but he would not likely be involved to any great extent in shepherding any legislation through this place.

Maybe the motion should have been a renewal of the commissioner's position as an officer of Parliament for another term under the prescribed form. It is not to say that there is not other candidates who, given their current roles in life, may wish to make a commitment for a significant period of time.

● (1220)

Those kinds of things do not fit into everybody's plans, whether it be their professional or their family plans. It is an important responsibility. It means they have to reside here in Ottawa. A significant commitment has to be made.

I want to pay tribute to John Bryden, our former colleague from Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, a riding name that the chair occupants often had difficulty remembering. Mr. Bryden took a lead role in this place for 10 years. I was part of that. He started an ad hoc committee which was internal to our caucus for some time. We opened it up and it became a formal ad hoc task force with representation from all parties in the House. Substantial witnesses, including Mr. Reid, spent a lot of time with us. I must admit that some of his insights were excellent but I did not agree with all of them. It would be a very boring world if everybody agreed on all things.

One of the aspects he thought would be useful to pursue was to combine two officers of Parliament. He wanted to combine the Privacy Commissioner's office and the Access to Information office which deal in very similar domains. There was some disagreement or maybe no consensus as to whether or not combining these two officers of Parliament would be a useful thing to do.

The Access to Information Act is no small act. In the format which I printed it, it is some 26 pages long and includes a number of important sections.

It lays out for instance who can have access to government records. Every Canadian citizen has the opportunity. Any permanent resident within the meaning of the laws of Canada shall have the right and on request be given access to any record under the control of a government institution. There are some exemptions. This was the area in which John Bryden was interested. We are talking about crown corporations and other agencies, et cetera, and I will get to that in a moment.

A request for access to a record under the act can be made in writing to the government institution that has control of the record, and it shall provide sufficient detail to enable an experienced employee of the institution with a reasonable effort to identify the record or the necessary information.

The member for the Bloc may have misspoken when he referred to requests for information going to the commissioner. The role of the Access to Information Commissioner is not to receive communications from Canadian citizens and then start looking for

things. There are rules. They exist at virtually every level of government. An individual has to request information directly from the agency, board, department or institution. Within every one of those departments, agencies or institutions, et cetera, there are designated personnel who are required to keep abreast of developments with regard to these matters and to ensure that the provisions of the act are followed.

There are timelines. There is a nominal cost for any request. One request was over one million pages long. I do not know what a Canadian citizen would want with a million pages of documents, but there was a cost and that citizen had to bear the additional cost for the excessive number of pages.

● (1225)

Within the act there are some exemptions. The current act states that the head of a government institution shall refuse to disclose any record requested under this act that contains information that was obtained in confidence from—and now we have third party information—the government of a foreign state or an institution thereof; an international organization of states or an institution thereof; the government of a province or an institution thereof; a municipal or regional government; or an aboriginal government.

There are certain types of information that are protected or are exemptions, but the institution itself may be subject to other appropriate requests for information.

I do not intend to go through the current act. There is an understanding in this place and I think there is a consensus that there are some important amendments for consideration that should be made with regard to the Access to Information Act. Indeed, we have a responsibility as parliamentarians to ensure that legislation remains at current levels. Former member of Parliament John Bryden worked tirelessly to champion these changes or a review of the act. He even rewrote the entire act himself and tabled it as private member's Bill C-462 in the last session of Parliament.

I looked at a speech that Mr. Bryden gave in that Parliament. I thought it would be useful to show the commitment of the former Liberal member of Parliament who worked so diligently for all those years. In his speech of February 24, 2004, he said:

Let me give members a sense of what is the problem. Right now, under the current Access to Information Act, out of 246 crown agencies and corporations, only 49 are covered by the Access to Information Act.

This is very significant. Out of 246 only 49 are covered, which means that almost 200 are not subject to the act. We have to ask ourselves why.

Mr. Bryden is one of the reasons we were motivated to set up the ad hoc committee and to consult with Mr. Reid and others about what we could do. He gave an example. The Atlantic Pilotage Authority is subject to the act. He gave as examples the Bank of Canada, Canada Post and VIA Rail which are not subject to the Access to Information Act.

*Routine Proceedings*

One could ask if it is important that the Canadian public have access to the Bank of Canada to request copies of certain information. Members should understand that certain things will be exempt. It is going to take some time to deal with these, but in the meantime it is not to say that the government has not been doing anything.

Two things have happened. First was the establishment of a standing committee responsible for access to information. It is an important committee and it is doing good work. The other is with regard to the whistleblowing legislation. That legislation is ready to go through clause by clause study next week. We are close now. Under that legislation there will be broad authorities of all agencies and crown employees throughout the government. Virtually anyone who gets paid by the Government of Canada will have an opportunity to go to an independent commissioner to bring information or knowledge to deal with some of the issues that members have raised in their speeches.

That is an important move forward. The Access to Information Act is a little step further. We are now talking about the Canadian public, citizens and landed residents to have access to information within these various institutions. It is a very important debate.

I think the member for raising this issue. I am not sure whether or not a modest extension is the most appropriate way to go, but it has been an interesting debate. I hope that as a consequence of this there will be a renewed interest by all members to ensure that we have a good plan to update the Access to Information Act.

• (1230)

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for my hon. colleague regarding something which has been mentioned on a couple of occasions. We have heard members opposite state as one of the reasons for opposition that we are talking about an extension of one year, that this is a seven year appointment and perhaps if we were talking about a reappointment of the commissioner, that would be a different story.

I think every member of the opposition agrees that Mr. Reid is an unqualified success in his role as Information Commissioner. Would the member opposite confirm that the government would agree, should Mr. Reid be willing, to reappoint Mr. Reid for another seven year term? Yes or no?

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, as a backbencher I do not have that authority, but I am aware that because this appointment was coming due the process has been ongoing to identify possible nominees to be reviewed in the process.

The member's premise is that the current commissioner is a good commissioner, so why not keep him? I think the commissioner has something to say about it. I personally know what his situation is relative to reappointment for another seven years.

Denis Desautels was an excellent auditor general, one of the most revered for his work and his service to Parliament, so why did we not reappoint him as well? The answer is that there are many very honourable and capable people to do these jobs. The commitment that must be made for these very important jobs is a very serious matter and takes into account not only people's personal willingness

and the ability to do it but also their family, health and all other comprehensive situations.

I will simply say that this is not a decision for parliamentarians to make unilaterally. This takes some consultation. That consultation should have started a year ago.

• (1235)

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the appointment for one year, it is not a novel idea. The government extended the Governor General's term for a period of time.

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** She is not an officer of Parliament.

**Mr. David Tilson:** I understand that. The member for Mississauga South says that she is not an officer of Parliament, but she is appointed by the government.

The member clearly pointed out in his speech that the access to information legislation is badly outdated and badly administered. The Information Commissioner has talked in the access to information committee about how he was blocked each way, how he was underfunded and understaffed and all kinds of things.

Clearly the legislation cries out for change. The Minister of Justice has indicated that he was prepared to introduce legislation in the fall, so something has to be done over the summer to get ready for this. We know there is going to be an election soon. Perhaps not, but it appears that in the next 12 months there will be an election, and maybe sooner.

The last speaker, the member from the Bloc Québécois, said that all the government is doing is delaying things. That is all it is doing.

My question is similar to the question that was just asked. Why will you not appoint a most qualified man who is up to snuff on how this is going to happen in the near future? A lot is going to be happening with respect to information. Why will you not appoint a very experienced and qualified man to lead this process?

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would remind all hon. members to address their comments to the Chair.

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my comments to the House, I have a great deal of respect for Mr. Reid. I have no problem with Mr. Reid being with us for another year, but I think it is important for the members to understand that there is an established process of appointment for a term certain and that this has come forward in a fashion which is somewhat unusual.

I do not think the earth will stop if Mr. Reid is extended for another year, but that is not going to solve the issue. The real issue is that we continue to have the best possible people available in the positions of officers of Parliament and that we take advantage of all opportunities to ensure that the related legislation is up to date. As I said, I have no problem with the extension for Mr. Reid and I do not know if anybody else does; Mr. Reid is an honourable person and I do not think there is any reason to have.

*Routine Proceedings*

Let us make sure that the process we take is not piecemeal. This has come forward. There has to be a strategic logic to this, reflecting the fact that it is not members of Parliament who are going to be deciding on behalf of these people. There has to be a process to make sure there is transparency in who is in the position, along with some accountability.

We have had the case of Mr. Radwanski, who in fact left in disgrace because there were certain problems that did not come out. We need to deal with this. I think we have by the setting up of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. I think we have also dealt with it with regard to the proposed whistleblowing legislation. I am quite happy in principle, but I want to make sure that the process is not sidetracked in terms of the important work that has been set up by Parliament.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the real reason why that member and the Liberal Party oppose extending Mr. Reid's work is that they recognize that Mr. Reid has done an exemplary job of exposing Liberal attempts to cover up corruption.

The hon. member was there when Mr. Reid came before the government operations committee to expose how the current Liberal whistleblower bill could have covered up the sponsorship scandal for 20 years because of provisions embedded deeply in that bill. He made indisputable legal arguments to show how the Liberals were using the bill as an attempt to cover up corruption.

I remember that this particular hon. member, this Liberal member, was fuming mad with his presentation. He was furious that this officer of Parliament would dare expose this Liberal trick. I remember that at that very moment I thought, "They are going to come for Mr. Reid and they are going to take him out because he spoke up against a Liberal trick that the government wanted to sneak through the legislative process very quietly".

Now that Liberal member is acting as a bodyguard for Liberal corruption once again, as he does in committee on a regular basis. The member has said that he does not have a problem with extending the term. Why will he not then vote in favour of the motion to extend Mr. Reid's term? If he is really telling the truth when he says he supports the extension of Mr. Reid's term, why will he not vote for the motion which would do that?

• (1240)

**Mr. Paul Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, first I want to remind the hon. member that when Mr. Reid appeared before the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates I was in the chair for that meeting and did not speak. As for him suggesting that I was furious when I did not even speak, I will say that the member has misled the House and the member has been, I believe, an embarrassment to this place. He owes the House an apology.

The member has asked and I will repeat: I have stated in my comments that I personally have no problem with extending Mr. Reid's appointment, but I also understand that as an officer of Parliament there is a process in place. There in fact is a recruitment process that has been going on for some time. That also has to be respected. There is a process in place.

I would say again, also with regard to Mr. Reid's testimony before that particular committee, that ultimately it was found that Mr. Reid was in fact incorrect and no changes will be made to the legislation as he recommended.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today and address the concurrence motion brought forward by the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

The motion states:

That the appointment of John Reid, the Information Commissioner of Canada, be extended by an additional term of one year, effective July 1, 2005. This recommendation would not preclude Parliament from further extending the appointment after the one year extension.

There are many reasons why this government should adhere to the directive expressed in this motion. The most important reason, which I believe we will see quite clearly when we vote on this motion later, is that it is the will of both a sizable majority in Parliament and at least three of the parties present.

In a minority Parliament this is no small matter because, as we have seen already, the Liberal government does not command the full confidence of this House and needs to learn to swallow its pride and work with the other parties in the best interests of the nation.

First, the nation's best interests include providing as much stability as we can at a time of instability in this Parliament. It is not the time to change horses if we can possibly avoid it. In this regard, I note that the House agreed recently, in a spirit of cooperation, to extend the term of office of the Governor General for a year.

Second, the government must accept that the appointment of the Information Commissioner is not like most of the other appointments the governor in council makes. The Information Commissioner is an officer of Parliament and such an appointment must be approved by Parliament. MPs and senators have a much greater direct interest in appointing someone in whom we can have full confidence as an officer of Parliament.

The third reason the government should support Mr. Reid continuing as he has with his job is his curriculum vitae. He is without question the best qualified individual to fill this important role. Who else can bring to the job seven years' experience as commissioner, along with his cabinet and government experience? As a general rule, it makes sense to hire the best qualified individual for the job.

A fourth and related point is that of Mr. Reid's many accomplishments in his first seven years in this office. His latest annual report recounts some of the battles he has fought against this government, battles he has won. As a lawyer, I am impressed by his dogged determination to resolve what are thorny legal questions regarding the proper administration of the act and the exercise of his proper powers under the act.

I ask members to listen to Mr. Reid's description of these battles from his report:

For virtually all but one of the past seven years, the government and former Prime Minister Chrétien engaged in numerous legal challenges to the jurisdiction and powers of the Information Commissioner.

*Routine Proceedings*

According to the Information Commissioner, there has never been “an organization of government that has been so viciously attacked” as his office by this Liberal administration.

Another reason he should be retained is that Mr. Reid spurred on the creation in this Parliament of the new Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, of which I am privileged to be a founding member.

As well, he is responsible for reducing the backlog of requests and substantially lowering the waiting times that existed before he took office.

It is quite a record of accomplishment. I believe Mr. Reid has created the kind of legacy with his work that is likely to benefit all Canadians in the future. It is my hope that he will be given the opportunity to continue with his reforms.

However, if the government refuses to reappoint Mr. Reid, then we are left in a quandary. His term runs out on June 30. The act is clear about what happens if the office becomes vacant on July 1. Subsection 54(4) of the Access to Information Act states:

In the event of the absence or incapacity of the Information Commissioner, or if the office of Information Commissioner is vacant, the Governor in Council may appoint another qualified person to hold office instead of the Commissioner for a term not exceeding six months...

This means that the government may well be appointing a temporary commissioner to head the office at a time of turmoil and instability. Such a commissioner would lack the approval, and perhaps the support, of the Parliament he or she is supposed to work with. That may also mean lacking the moral authority to hold this government accountable for its continued attempts to veil the administration deeper in secrecy.

Of course, the apparent refusal of this government to reappoint Mr. Reid should highlight for everyone the culture of secrecy and distrust the Liberal government is mired in.

● (1245)

In his appearances before our committee and in question period, the justice minister has demonstrated time and again his disregard for the principles of access to information. If this Parliament were to follow the minister's misguided approach to revising the act, we would be preventing even more information from being made available to the public. In fact, as I have pointed out in the House already, if his proposals for reform were followed just a few years ago, the sponsorship scandal, the biggest government scandal in Canadian history, would never have been exposed.

Perhaps some Liberals on that side of the House would prefer that the sponsorship scandal were never exposed. Perhaps it is embarrassing and inconvenient for some members across the way, even though they were not personally involved with the malfeasance of fellow party members. Yet better that some members be embarrassed than other members be allowed to pillage the treasury with impunity.

I did not come in here today to criticize the weak and even dangerous proposals of the justice minister without offering a better solution.

The Liberal sponsorship scandal has done untold damage to the institution of Parliament, to the federal government and to all politicians. It has bred cynicism and distrust and has undermined the confidence that the general public has in their national leadership. We need to restore public trust and confidence and we can only do that over time by offering good government, government with integrity that is both accountable and transparent.

Our party has been hard at work examining ways to make our federal government more transparent by increasing the public's access to all sorts of government information. Transparency in government helps ensure that improper practices such as the money laundering of the sponsorship scandal are exposed. Even better, transparency in government discourages criminal or unethical activity from happening in the first place.

Here are five actions a Conservative government would take.

First, we would expand the Access to Information Act to cover all crown corporations, all officers of Parliament, all foundations and all organizations that spend taxpayer dollars or perform public functions.

Second, we would establish a cabinet confidence exclusion which would be subject to review by the Information Commissioner.

Third, we would establish a duty on public officials to create records necessary to document their actions and decisions, something that is lacking at present.

Fourth, we would provide a general public interest override for all exemptions in order that the public interest should come before the secrecy of government.

Finally, we would make all exemptions discretionary and subject to an injury test.

Of course we will make other changes to increase accountability in government as well, including increasing the powers of the Auditor General and the Ethics Commissioner, increasing protection for whistleblowers and cleaning up our campaign finance laws.

The Liberal track record on transparency and accountability is very poor at present. I would encourage the government to avoid making it worse by failing to maintain in office one of the few individuals this Parliament has confidence in, listen to the will of Parliament and reappoint John Reid as Information Commissioner.

● (1250)

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale for his comments with respect to this important motion to reappoint John Reid for a year as the Information Commissioner.

As commissioner, he has personally advocated for reform of this act, this legislation, since his annual report in 1998. In yesterday's *Globe and Mail*, Hugh Winsor aptly described him as one of the most persistent thorns in the government's side.

*Routine Proceedings*

Does the member think this is the real reason why the government is not prepared to appoint a very competent individual who has proven his way to deal with information, not only as a member of this Parliament but as Information Commissioner for the past seven years?

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's service on the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics as the interim chair. He is doing an outstanding job.

I think the real reason behind why the Liberal government does not want to reappoint Mr. Reid is because he has done an outstanding job of exposing the waste and corruption that exists in this Liberal government. That point was made earlier today and I tried to make it in my speech.

As my colleague from Nepean—Carleton mentioned earlier, the Liberals do not trust this commissioner any longer to do their will or their bidding as a lapdog. They have lost their confidence in his ability to continue to toe the Liberal line that all is good and well in the access to information regime.

That is simply not the case. I draw attention to the comments that were made by the Liberal member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell in his speech earlier today on this motion. We heard his diatribe about how the opposition parties were not using their opposition days to their full effect.

That member does not appreciate or respect the right of Canadians to hold the government accountable through the office of the Information Commissioner. In fact, he suggested that it was wasting time to debate a motion that would call upon the government to reappoint an experienced information commissioner who had done a good job of exposing the Liberal government.

The member wonders why the opposition parties would consider it important to debate the appointment of someone he calls "an extremely competent person" or someone who has "done an excellent job". He is someone his government is refusing to reappoint because he has been too effective in exposing the government's waste and corruption.

The member blundered on ad nauseam about the fact that the Liberals had manipulated the process of his appointment. We have heard from another of his colleagues that now there has been a long extended process of hiring someone else.

I do not understand why the Liberal government would have gone to such efforts to replace somebody who has done such an excellent job, somebody it admits is doing an outstanding job. Is it because he was exposing the very things that they were trying to cover-up?

• (1255)

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I noted the hon. member across the way responded with great fury once again to my earlier question. I pointed out that he was at the committee listening to the testimony of Information Commissioner Reid. The Information Commissioner exposed Liberal tricks and Liberal loopholes hidden in the whistleblower law. That hon. member across the way was so furious that an officer of the House would go to lengths such as these to expose Liberal tricks he could hardly even speak. In fact, the member across the way stood in the

House and acknowledged that he could not speak he was so angry. He could not even say a word.

I said at that moment to myself that the Liberals would come for John Reid's job because he did something rather remarkable. He exposed loopholes in a law that the Liberals were trying to pass off as a whistleblower law, loopholes that would have seen a sponsorship scandal that was covered up for as long as 20 years.

Those loopholes in the law would have prevented journalists and others from filing access to information requests, the kind of which were used to expose the sponsorship scandal to the Auditor General in the first place. In other words, this loophole would have made it against the law for people to inform the Auditor General and others of potential scandals.

The government wanted to sneak it in so it could never be caught again the next time it engaged in a scandal of this kind. John Reid stopped the Liberals. Now they are coming for his blood. They are coming for his job. They want him out of office.

Would the member comment on the shady motives of the government with respect to firing this honourable, decent man, Commissioner Reid?

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Nepean—Carleton talks about his experience at a committee. My experience at the access to information and privacy committee was very similar.

When the justice minister was making his proposals for amendments to the Access to Information Act, I took the time to review the document. It was a lengthy document, probably 30 or 40 pages. About halfway through the document, I noticed one sentence at the top of a particular page. If it had been adopted by the House, it would have done exactly what the hon. member said. It would have prevented the sponsorship scandal from ever being exposed.

The sentence basically stated that if consultants were hired by a minister of the Crown, that information would be excluded from access to information requests. Yet I draw to the attention of the House that it was that kind of information which tipped off the Auditor General several years ago. That is when she began her investigation on what has become known as the sponsorship scandal. If that little sentence had been adopted in law, as proposed by the Liberal Minister of Justice, those kinds of sponsorship scandals or other possible corruptions, which perhaps are going on as we speak, would never have come to public light. That is how the Liberals play the game.

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard some statements today describing the furor that erupted from the Liberal side of the committee when Commissioner Reid outlined his findings. It so angered them when he brought these loopholes to light. He showed the witnesses and members of the committee what the Liberals were trying to sneak through. They were angry over what Commission Reid had done.

*Supply*

Does the hon. member see a parallel to the anger that we saw from the Liberals when the Auditor General brought to light the sordid facts of the sponsorship scandal? What did we see the Liberals do then? We saw them slash her budget. We saw them take direct vengeance on an officer of the House when she exposed Liberal wrongdoing, Liberal corruption and the sleazy details of cash in envelopes being passed over the table. Now we see them doing the same thing to the Information Commissioner.

Does the hon. member see a parallel in what is going on here with the pettiness that happened to the Auditor General when she brought those sorts of facts to light?

• (1300)

**Mr. Russ Hiebert:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for drawing such a stark and obviously apparent example of another situation where the Liberals got caught red-handed and reacted in a like manner in the sense that they tried to limit the power of the Auditor General by cutting her budget to investigate the government's corruption. That is a great analogy.

We have the Information Commissioner and the Auditor General, both responsible for investigating government corruption, both getting information and catching the Liberals red-handed and then both being attacked by the very government that they are supposed to investigate for doing such a good job. How is that for a reward?

People do what they are supposed to do. They expose Liberal corruption. What do the Liberals do? They do not thank them. They do not give them a gold watch or a plaque. They cut their budget or they try to fire them. This is the level of contempt that the Liberal government has for people whose job it is to expose corruption.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** At the request of the chief opposition whip, a recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred until tomorrow at 5:30 p.m.

**PETITIONS****MARRIAGE**

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today signed by a number of Canadians, including from my own riding of Mississauga South, on the subject matter of marriage.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that fundamental matters of social policy should be decided by elected members of Parliament and not by the unelected judiciary, and that it is Parliament's responsibility to define marriage.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures, including the invocation of section 33 of the charter, also known as the notwithstanding clause, to preserve and protect the current definition of marriage as being the legal union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

**YOUNG OFFENDERS**

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a number of petitions signed by the good people of Winnipeg Centre and more specifically the people in the area of Weston and Brooklands in my riding of Winnipeg Centre.

The petitioners point out that juvenile gang activity is a serious problem in their area. They are calling upon Parliament to enforce the current provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act more vigorously and to amend the act, so that youths 14 years of age and over may be charged as adults and that parents be held accountable for the criminal activities of their children aged 12 and under.

\* \* \*

• (1305)

**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 ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

**SUPPLY****OPPOSITION MOTION—CHILD CARE**

**The Deputy Speaker:** Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending June 23, 2005, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill.

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Ms. Rona Ambrose (Edmonton—Spruce Grove, CPC)** moved:

That the government recognize that its current child care proposals creates a two-tier child care system because: (a) the government ignores the fact that each province is unique and faces different challenges with regard to assisting families in finding and providing child care; and (b) that the federal government is discriminating against families who choose to stay at home or find care outside of a publicly funded system or work shift-work, or who are on a low income

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Nepean—Carleton.

I rise today to speak to a motion that we believe will help rectify a wrong. This wrong occurred when the Liberal government decided to finally implement a promise that was in the works for over a decade.

Shortly after the last federal election campaign, the Minister of Social Development announced that the government would ignore the wishes of parents, families, and frankly our nation's children. The government decided that in the name of some, it was easier to leave out most.

The day care plan that is currently being implemented by the government is unfortunately two tier in nature. There is one tier for those who can actually access the Liberal program and another tier for those who are left, which are the majority, to fend for themselves. In contrast, the Conservative Party of Canada plan is universal. We believe in choice, we believe in equality, and we want to treat all families equally.

The Conservative Party of Canada strongly believes that any child care plan must benefit all children. It must be universal. It must especially benefit those who need our help the most. Whether a child's parents are shift workers, live in rural regions, or live on a low income, it is both the duty and an obligation of the government to look after them. We on this side of the House have not forgotten that.

We have watched the minister put together a patchwork child care plan. We are already witnessing some of the pitfalls of this approach. Instead of the promised national plan, we have numerous side agreements between the federal government and provincial governments that are neither equitable nor equal among our federation.

The Conservative Party of Canada is offering a universal and enhanced child care policy that would be inclusive as opposed to exclusive. Our approach, and we sincerely hope that by passing today's motion we can begin to go down that road, is one that would provide choice and recognizes the needs of parents in the 21st century.

By finding ways to get the much needed money into the hands of parents, they will become financially empowered. This debate is about empowering parents, families, and other essential caregivers, and financially empowering all families equally.

The government should have explored other innovative policies, as the Conservative Party has done, such as providing tax incentives for businesses and employers to build child care facilities on-site instead of relying on an existing framework that frankly needs new ideas in order to be sustainable. As a government we should explore long, low tax solutions as opposed to always relying on high spend alternatives.

### Supply

The greatest travesty with this program, and I have mentioned this before, is that it discriminates against those who actually may need it the most. There is no flexibility or financial support for stay at home parents. Stay at home parents will be paying into this system, but because they choose an alternative to institutionalized day care, they will have no access to the Liberal child care program or financial support.

There is no flexibility or support for shift workers. The Liberal child care program is designed for families with parents who work 9 to 5. Parents who work the graveyard shift or any other odd hours will be unable to access this child care program. What will a waitress who works shift work do for child care? Why are his or her choices not as deserving of much needed financial support from the government?

This program offers no flexibility or support for rural communities. The Liberal child care program is designed for families who live in cities because the infrastructure is just not there to provide the service in rural areas. Some child care experts have suggested that the \$7 per day system found in Quebec be used as a model throughout Canada. However, there are those falling between the cracks in the Quebec model as well.

Even though many believe that those families with a higher income should perhaps pay more for child care, and that subsidized day care should be available only to low and middle income families, the Quebec experience has actually demonstrated that it is often families with the higher income who are benefiting from the subsidized spaces.

Critics also argue that the Quebec experience indicates that federal figures concerning the cost of the program may not be accurate. In Quebec alone, it costs \$1.1 billion per year to subsidize 234,000 spaces, and there are 33,000 Quebec children on wait lists right now.

Canadians must therefore question whether or not \$5 billion over the next five years will be enough to create a child care program across the country, and whether the program will end up costing taxpayers a great deal more than originally anticipated.

● (1310)

The provinces were also asking for some flexibility. I remember the comments of Premier Lord from New Brunswick. He said:

We should truly meet the needs of children in New Brunswick and not just get caught up in one-size-fits-all that everything's about day care. Everything is not just about day care.

I have received countless letters, emails and phone calls from concerned parents regarding the child care issue. Parents such as Kate Tennier, the founder of an organization called Advocates for Childcare Choice, are asking quite simply for choice. Ms. Tennier stated in a recent *Globe and Mail* article:

—Advocates for Childcare Choice, along with other groups across Canada, believes parents must retain decision-making power in how their children are cared for. We believe choice must be the cornerstone on which any new child-care deal is predicated.

### Supply

And the vast majority of middle-class families have no real choice, either, as they are hampered by a regressive child-care tax policy that the government has shown no indication of changing. The new program will severely limit choices; with tax dollars directed to the universal daycare model, parents will not receive equal funding for their own choices.

Those of us in the choice movement are tired of being portrayed as working against the common good of children and society. We find the government's social engineering to be regressive. The rhetoric that charges that a vote against universal daycare is a vote against children doesn't apply to us. We are just asking that the billions of dollars about to be allocated for child care in Canada be given to parents, so they can secure the kind of care and early-learning experiences they believe their children need and deserve.

Ms. Tennier and other members for Advocates for Childcare Choice are not alone. A survey released by the Vanier Institute found in general that Canadians felt that day care was their least favourite option for child care. As well, 90% of working mothers and 84% of working fathers would prefer to work part time if they could afford it.

In addition, a 2002 strategic council survey found that 76% of respondents across Canada stated that they would prefer to have a parent stay at home with their children rather than have them in some other form of care if money was not the consideration.

Rather than heed the voices of concerned parents, the Minister of Social Development has chosen to ignore them. In fact, he has made light of their concerns stating in a previous supply day motion on child care in the House of Commons:

As parents we all feel guilty about the time we are not spending with our kids. However, if we asked the same group of people or any group of people if they would like to lose weight, 90% would say yes. If we asked them if they would like ice cream once a week and chocolate twice a day, about the same percentage would say the same.

The Minister of Social Development has chosen to listen only to those who share his views on child care and disregard the legitimate voices of concerned parents. The future of our society rests upon the shoulders of those who are too young to even realize it. For that reason we must create the conditions for our young to succeed and flourish while preparing them for all the challenges and obstacles that lay ahead.

The Conservative Party of Canada has clearly recognized the importance of early child care. We want all Canadians to be treated equally and all choices to be respected. I sincerely hope that all hon. members will join me in supporting this motion.

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am having a difficult time understanding, even though we have debated this issue many times, what the hon. member means by choice.

We are giving Canadians a national system of early learning and child care, not babysitting as the opposition has stated, and not only day care but early learning. We are doing that in collaboration with our provincial colleagues. There are five provinces in fact which have already signed an agreement in principle.

The hon. member talked as if money was not a consideration. Unfortunately, money is a consideration for many low income and middle income families across this country. That is why we feel we must have a universal system in order to give children a good start in life.

My children were privileged. They had the benefit of their mother at home and they had the benefit of their grandmother, and also an early learning and day care centre. I have had that experience as a woman, one who chose to work. In general, the women that I speak to, and the groups which the minister and our department have consulted with, feel very strongly about giving the right choice.

The only choice that the opposition has given is a tax break of \$400 which does not even buy half a space, as far as I know, either in Toronto or Montreal. But the hon. member and her party have also said that they will honour the agreements in principle. What is really the Conservative policy? Is it going to honour the agreements in principle that have already been signed or is it going to scrap the whole thing and only provide the band-aid solution it provides to every problem in this country, a tax break?

• (1315)

**Ms. Rona Ambrose:** Mr. Speaker, when I refer to what parents are saying, I refer back to many of the polls and surveys that have been done that indicate that almost 100% of working parents have said they would like a choice if money was not a consideration. What we are pointing to is the choice factor. Parents who are working would like the choice of whether or not to work or stay home part time if they would like. Right now they do not feel that choice is financially empowered.

That then leads into equitable and universal policy. Our policy is universal because we would financially empower all parents equally. That is the difference. The Liberal plan would only financially empower a parent to make one choice. We are financially empowering parents to make any choice they think is best suited not only for their children but for their communities and their families. I hope that explains it a little better.

Yes, our policy in the last election surrounded a tax credit. As everyone knows, we have released a policy that is much more enhanced and much more comprehensive. Part of that includes cash subsidies that go directly to parents, in addition to a comprehensive tax regime and policy, tax reforms that will help families to better meet their child care needs and in other areas of family.

In addition to that, we also have a comprehensive package on tax incentives that work with employers and workplaces to create more infrastructure, which is the other challenge the government is not acknowledging and has absolutely no innovative policy to address.

[Translation]

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party has initiated a debate on a very important motion, one that is important to Quebec families.

I am not surprised by the route proposed today, but I am a bit surprised by the inability to recognize that a child care program—we will not talk about a national child care program but rather about child care programs that could be created in the different provinces—is essential. If we want an inclusive program, families need to have choices.

In order to have a real choice, the idea is not to not have national child care. Not having child care is not a real choice. Perhaps we can discuss the \$5 million over five years. This amount is insufficient. I agree with the member; it is not enough.

However, at the same time, we have to bring the debate into the 21st century. If we want to do that, we must also realize that, for thousands and thousands of families, child care is essential so that women can work.

We saw, in Quebec, the creation of a child care system that cost us \$500 million. That was the amount set aside to set up the child care program. Now, it is \$1.7 billion. People have really taken to it. The need is clear. We needed a child care system. Not allowing such a program in the other provinces means denying thousands of women access to a child care system.

I want the member to reconsider her vision of a child care program so that it would be an inclusive program and not an national child care program. It is not an inclusive system if we talk about having the provinces adopt a national program.

● (1320)

[English]

**Ms. Rona Ambrose:** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to address the member's misconception of our policy. I think it is very important for the member to recognize that the Conservative Party supports all forms of day care, which is why we talk about choice. We support any parent's choice to use formal day care but we also support the choice of using informal day care if it meets the needs of the family. The bottom line is that we think parents are the ones who should be making that decision.

I would like to point out to the hon. member that the proposal by the Liberals is far from universal. It only increases regulated subsidized day care spaces from 7% to 10%. This is only a 3% increase. In our estimation this does not even begin to scratch the surface of the child care challenges in this country.

As in Quebec and every other province, we think we need to offer innovative policies and options for parents so that we can actually address the true challenges in the child care arena. We are coming up with a universal program that will offer options and choices for parents to actually meet these challenges head on.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to speak in the House today in support of a motion that stands for the principles of parental choice and responsibility.

Right now the Minister of Social Development has proposed a \$10 billion to \$13 billion day care scheme that will mean higher taxes for families and, thus, fewer choices for parents.

Where do I get those numbers, \$10 billion to \$13 billion? They come from the supporters of the minister's program. They say consistently that in order to finance a massive day care scheme of the size and scope that the minister proposes, one would need to spend 1% of GDP.

Our national GDP at this time is in the neighbourhood of \$1.3 trillion, meaning that 1% is \$13 billion. The minister has tried to tell this House that he can finance his day care scheme with \$1 billion a year, meaning there is at least a \$9 billion gap in his day care

### Supply

scheme. The program will actually cost \$10 billion to \$13 billion and he has allotted \$1 billion.

Therefore we ask how this \$9 billion to \$12 billion black hole will be filled. We know the answer to that question. It will be filled through higher taxes on working families and, thus, fewer choices for working parents.

When parents have fewer dollars left in their pockets, they can afford less choice. There are fewer options available to them when their financial positions are constrained. To impose a \$13 billion tax obligation on working families and on parents would dramatically diminish the scope of child care options available to those families and to those parents.

I am proud to support a different policy that takes dollars and puts them directly in the pockets of the millions of child care experts who already exist. Their names are mom and dad. We believe in mom and dad. We believe in parents and we believe that no one loves the nation's children more than the people who gave them birth. It is they who ought to have the right to decide what is in the best interests of their children.

The social development minister would take dollars out of their pockets through higher taxes to finance a \$13 billion day care scheme that those parents do not want. How do I know they do not want it? I know because the left leaning Vanier Institute, which conducted probably the farthest-reaching and broadest public opinion research of parents, told us so.

In fact, the number one choice among parents for child care options was to have one parent stay in the home. This choice was particularly popular among the female respondents to the scientifically conducted survey but there were a number of other options: having a family member provide child care throughout the day; having neighbourhood-based care; or having a church, synagogue or mosque provide the care throughout the day. All of these options found some support among parents but the option that the minister proposes finished fifth. It was one of the least popular options.

It is his position that we ought to take \$10 billion to \$13 billion out of the pockets of parents and taxpayers and put all of those dollars into the option that parents favour the least.

On this side of the House, we understand that the child care choice is not the minister's choice and it is not the Prime Minister's choice, but we have the humility to admit that it is not our choice either. It is not my choice or hers or his. It is not a choice for any politician. It is a choice for parents.

● (1325)

We will take those child care dollars and give them directly to parents because we have faith in their ability to do their jobs. We have faith in the love they have for their kids and their desire to see them grow and prosper.

### *Supply*

Many of my constituents were deeply offended when they heard the minister refer to stay at home parents as being providers of mediocre child care and when he said that the desire of a young parent to stay at home and raise the kids was about as frivolous as wanting ice cream once a week or chocolate twice a day. That is exactly what he said before this House. He would be welcome to stand at any time and prove me wrong but those words are burned forever into the records of this House and they have done serious harm to parents who found them deeply offensive.

I think this debate will provide the minister with an opportunity to apologize for those very offensive and harmful words. It will also provide him with the opportunity to change course: to admit that his \$13 billion day care scheme is unaffordable; to admit that it cannot be financed and will mean higher taxes and therefore fewer choices for parents; to renounce the whole idea and decide to put the dollars in the pockets of parents themselves instead. That would be a real act of humility but it would go a long way to restoring faith in this place.

I want to move on to some of the discussions that we have had in our party. A lot of young families are represented on this side of the House. We have a lot of young parents, some young mothers, and they have put forward some excellent ideas that are supported widely by the young families in my constituency. For example, how about a cash subsidy for parents directly? Let us send them a child care cheque so they can be helped with the daily child care costs they face. They can choose day care if they wish but if they decide to keep a parent in the home, that option would be supported as well.

Once again, that is not a choice for a politician to make. That is a choice for a parent. We on this side of the House understand that child care is not federal jurisdiction nor is it provincial jurisdiction either. It is parental jurisdiction.

The minister said that his plan includes choice, his government's choice. His government will choose how child care dollars are spent and, thus, the system has choice.

What he does not understand is that it is not his choice how to raise other people's kids. It is not his choice how to spend other people's money. However his \$13 billion day care scheme takes other people's money and spends it on raising other people's kids. That runs contrary to basic respect of family jurisdiction, of the family unit.

Finally, he says that it is impractical to expect that parents' dreams of having one parent stay in the home and take care of the kids will ever be realized again. He says that is an old-fashioned idea, even though it is an idea that I understand his family used. I congratulate him for doing so. However he says that it is old-fashioned, that it cannot be done and, while parents are telling us that is what they want, that it just cannot happen. He says that statistics show that it does not happen. To whatever extent those statistics may or may not be true, it is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Government policy has made it impossible for parents to make the sacrifice of staying in the home. A much higher rate of taxation is imposed on a single income family than on a dual income family. If he really wanted to enhance child care options he would bring in income splitting, allowing parents to divide their income so that a single income family earning \$60,000 would be taxed the same as a

dual income family earning \$30,000 each, meaning there would be tax fairness for those people who made the choice of keeping one parent in the home. That is a hopeful idea but it is the kind of idea that can inspire family life, rebuild communities and build a new sense of hope that one generation can pass on all the best to the next.

I would like to work with the minister to accomplish that. I hope he will stand in this House today and announce that we can get started today.

● (1330)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a subject matter on which I have done a fair bit of work over my career. We heard the member's last comment about the taxation burden on people. I want to try to dispel the notion by this question.

The member suggested that the tax burden of someone making \$60,000 a year is greater than two persons each making \$30,000 a year. Under our progressive system of taxation that is absolutely correct. The question is not whether or not \$60,000 has the same tax burden as two persons each earning \$30,000. We have to look at a family.

We look at a family and if one spouse is making \$60,000 and the other is perhaps making \$30,000, the question is not whether or not somehow we get \$60,000 versus two at \$30,000. It is whether or not someone gives up that \$30,000 a year job to stay at home and care for their children, if that is the person's choice. Comparing two \$30,000 a year incomes to a \$60,000 a year income really is not a very good argument.

I want to ask the member about how we get money into the hands of families so that they can provide care for their children in the fashion that they wish. All families are different. I do not think we could put very many families into the same pigeonhole.

We have what is called the Canada child tax benefit and the national child benefit. Both of these programs provide, based on the number of children and their ages, right up to age 18, direct moneys on a monthly basis to families.

There is one difference from what the Conservatives are proposing. There is an income test. There is a means test. There is a certain level of income beyond which the amounts are reduced. The reason is that it is important for us to make sure that those in most need get the greatest amount of money.

The Conservative plan basically suggests that a tax credit be given to all regardless of their income, and it basically dilutes the amount that anyone gets. It gets down to the lowest common denominator and has nothing to do with a person's ability to meet those demands.

I would ask the member whether or not he would concur that there should be a means test for any kind of a benefit to the extent that it is delivered in a way, for instance, that the Conservatives suggest, so that the most needy in our society have the supports they need for their children.

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:** Mr. Speaker, no, I do not. I believe that all families regardless of income should have some support for child care in those crucial early years. I believe that those dollars should go directly into the pockets of parents. Instead of sending the dollars to bureaucrats and public sector unions, we would give the dollars directly to parents.

It is interesting that the member asked a question about dollars allocated. The member did not mention anything about this, but I wonder what he thinks about the fact that in Quebec where the day care system is up and running, workers are going on strike. They are putting parents in a position of peril. Their position is being jeopardized. Those parents have come to rely on the system to take care of their children every day. They are paying for it through their taxes. Now it will not even be provided because the day care workers are going on strike.

Can we expect these kinds of strikes to occur nation wide? Can we expect nationwide day care strikes where parents have committed their children to attend a day care throughout the day? The parents rely on that service being there. A strike could suddenly be called and the parents would be left with no option, even though they had been forced to pay for the service through their taxes.

Those are the kinds of massive hurdles that will present themselves in this bureaucratic scheme.

I note also that the government member did not explain where the \$13 billion will come from for the government day care scheme. Will it come from higher taxes? Will it require cuts to health care? Will it require cuts to old age security at a time when the baby boomers are moving into a higher age group? Where will this \$13 billion come from?

Why is it that even though he has been questioned almost 10 times in the House of Commons, the minister continues to refuse to answer how much his day care scheme will really cost? He wants to keep it secret. He wants us to pursue a program that he admitted this weekend might never be able to work.

● (1335)

**Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak about the government's policies on families and early learning and child care.

All of these policies and programs emerge from the understanding that at the very centre of every child's life is his or her relationship with his or her parents. The centrality of this relationship has always been the case and it always will be.

Recognizing that a fair, vibrant and productive society requires investment in our children, the Government of Canada has put in place a comprehensive set of policies and programs to assist parents and to support and enhance the range of families' choices. It is into this context that the government's commitment of \$5 billion over five years for early learning and child care fits and should be understood.

The Canada child tax benefit and the national child benefit supplement provide assistance for low income families. These benefits have been described as the most important social program

### *Supply*

since the introduction of medicare. They help more than 3.5 million families meet the cost of raising their children.

In 2002-03 the Government of Canada's total annual assistance to families with children through the Canada child tax benefit and the national child benefit was \$7.76 billion. That number is projected to reach \$10 billion by 2007.

Maternity and parental benefits are offered through the employment insurance program. Five years ago these benefits were extended to provide replacement income for up to one year while a parent stays home with their new baby or newly adopted child.

In 2003, 86.4% of women with children under a year old and with insurable earnings received maternity and/or parental benefits. These benefits are also becoming increasingly attractive to men. In 2003 about 11% of men with children under a year old either claimed or intended to claim parental benefits.

These benefits can make an immense difference to these families. They create an opportunity for parents to spend time with their child during the child's first days of life and spend time with each other to help create the habits of parenthood, the joys of family. When parents return to work, they return with a feeling and a memory with the growing instinct of family and with the growing desire for family life.

To ensure that parents who take time out from full time work to raise their young children do not experience reduced pensions later on in their lives, the Canada pension plan has a child rearing dropout provision. All of this is to encourage and not to discourage the development of this important early parent-child bond.

[*Translation*]

In order to provide families with a handicapped child with financial assistance, the Government of Canada has introduced certain targeted measures such as the new child disability benefit and other tax initiatives.

We are also helping to improve and expand early childhood education programs via joint initiatives with the provinces and territories. Under the 2003 multilateral framework on early learning and child care, the Government of Canada is transferring \$1.05 billion to the provinces and territories over five years to help them improve and expand their programs and services. By 2007-08, this commitment will represent \$350 million annually.

● (1340)

[*English*]

One year ago we decided to do more. We decided the time had come to build on the important work of many dedicated people. We made a commitment to develop a system of early learning and child care in every province and territory in the country. One year ago the members opposite were not talking about building early learning and child care in this country. I am glad that early learning and child care has risen to the top of the national agenda. It is time.

### *Supply*

As I said earlier, at the centre of a child's life is the relationship with his or her parents. That has always been the case and will always be the case. The lives of families can and do change over time. The challenge for a child to develop and learn to his or her fullest potential remains the same.

Early learning and child care is not, was never intended to be and never will be the only answer to a child's development, just as elementary school and high school are not understood as the only answer to learning and education. Simply put, early learning and child care is a tool, one of many for a child's development and for parents to use as they see fit.

As I have said on many occasions, as the members opposite know, early learning and child care is the way we live in this country. Seventy per cent of parents with children under the age of six are both in the workforce. The great majority of those kids are in child care of some form, but not in a form that is good enough. Only 20% are in regulated care and not in a form that reflects the importance of learning and development in a child's early years; not in a form that utilizes best the opportunities of all those hours of a day, days of a week, weeks of a year, years of a life, all the possibilities. This time is this an opportunity to be realized or an opportunity missed? We want to make this time work.

One year ago in this country early learning and child care was nowhere near that. Outside Quebec none of the other provinces or territories had the capacity or had as a priority to build an important ambitious system. The party opposite had no interest.

In last year's election, the Liberal platform commitment was for \$5 billion over five years to help build a system of early learning and child care across the country. We were on our way. Then for a few weeks not long ago, when it appeared the opposition might not pass the budget bill, it seemed we might not be. The stakes were enormous. As the executive director of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada said, "We are so close. I just can't imagine being this close again. I feel I have been waiting my entire professional life for this moment. If it slips away, I don't know how I will carry on".

We kept going. We signed several bilateral agreements with the provinces. The first one was in Winnipeg. The Prime Minister, the premier of Manitoba and the Manitoba minister for social services were there. The room was jammed. Every person who was there had inside them that quote, but there was also an agreement. We were on our way. The event was a celebration. In Regina, Hamilton, Gander and Halifax, it was the same, because Canadians, provincial and territorial governments want an early learning and child care system in every province and territory in the country. They know how important it is. They know that this is an opportunity too important to miss.

To provide a context, what the \$5 billion over five years represents is a 48% increase in what all governments are currently spending on child care in this country. By the third year, midway through this five year program, what it will mean for the province of British Columbia is a 105% increase; for Alberta, 121%; for Saskatchewan, 95%; for Manitoba, 48%; and for Ontario, 69%. Even for Quebec, with all the money it put in, it is a 21% increase. It will mean for New

Brunswick, 132%; Nova Scotia, 90%; P.E.I., 85%; Newfoundland and Labrador, 130%.

● (1345)

These agreements set out: the overarching national vision, principles and goals for early learning and child care; clear and measurable objectives; funding levels and eligible areas for investment; strong accountability through public reporting; a commitment to collaborate with each other on information, knowledge and best practices; and a commitment on the part of provinces and territories to develop an action plan in consultation with citizens and stakeholders for the period of federal funding.

These are the common elements, but we also recognize that every province and territory is unique. We recognize that in each province and territory early learning and child care is in a different stage of development. They have different immediate priorities. Their needs and circumstances may vary, so in addition to a common set of principles and parameters, we have also built in the flexibility to allow provinces and territories to meet the requirements of their citizens.

There is great flexibility in an early learning and child care system because the scale is so small and the system so much still evolving. The Government of Canada comes to agreement with the provinces and territories on the principles, expectations, understandings and accountabilities. The provinces and territories decide on how best to meet those obligations, with the flexibility to find different answers for rural areas and big cities and the flexibility to meet the circumstances of linguistic minorities, off hours or specific needs.

This is not an elementary school. This does not require a core of 150 students and millions of dollars for a building to make everything work. Nor is early learning and child care an all or nothing. It is not something for eight hours a day, five days a week, 50 weeks a year, or nothing. Even most stay at home parents want some time in the week for their children to have other experiences with other kids in other places. Early learning and child care can be two mornings a week or a day a week, for parents and kids as they see fit.

We want parents to have real choice. We want them to have the chance to choose quality, affordability and availability. We did not build schools by putting money into parents' pockets and asking parents to get together, if they wished, to put some of that money into a pot to build a school and hire some teachers.

We did not build hospitals or roads that way either. We decided that schools, hospitals and roads were important enough to enough people and were important enough to our present and future society that we put the public money directly toward them. This is what we are doing with early learning and child care.

Choice also means understanding the reality around us. The majority of Canadian women and men do not have university degrees. The great majority do not have professional degrees. They make modest incomes. For them, not working outside the home is not a choice. For them, no child care is not a choice. The only choice they might have, but too rarely, the choice they desperately seek for their kids, is good affordable child care. For them and for the great majority of Canadians, that is the only choice they might have.

Choice is not having nothing to buy. Choice is not waiting for a bus that has a \$2.50 fare and having 10¢ in our pockets. Choice is not too many mediocre or non-existent child care spaces in too many parts of the country. Choice is not knocking on an \$8,000 a year child care door, on average, with \$320 in our pockets.

Choice is making available to all parents who want it, urban and rural, rich, middle income and poor, in every province and territory in the country, good, affordable, available early learning and child care. That is the choice we are looking to provide.

No one program ever offers an answer for everything. Nothing does. The health system does not. The education system does not. Even if we would like them to do more, doing what they do matters and matters a lot. We are a lot better off because of them. And we will be a lot better off for an early learning and child care system in every province and territory in this country.

• (1350)

[Translation]

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the effort by the new Minister of Social Development to implement a child care network. However, I take issue with the fact that he does not recognize that early childhood development, which also includes child care centres and families, is a provincial jurisdiction.

I will ask him a question outside oral question period. Quite often we do not have enough time to say what we want then. The minister now has the time to answer properly.

During the last election campaign, several of the minister's colleagues were very clear about this government's commitment to respect provincial jurisdictions.

When a journalist asked whether he would respect provincial jurisdictions, the Prime Minister responded, "Absolutely". We know all about his famous "absolutely". In other words, the answer was "yes". We know full well that the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs was also asked something similar. She said that the provinces could do as they wished with the specific agreement that faithfully represents the priorities of the provinces, with no strings attached. The Minister of Canadian Heritage also said something along the same lines. That makes three ministers who promised to make payments to Quebec with no strings attached.

### Supply

Will the Minister of Social Development say the same thing these three ministers did during the election campaign? These promises were made. The quotes in various papers can be used as proof of their promises to respect the provinces, Quebec especially, since this is a Quebec issue. Will the minister give the same answer to this same question?

[English]

**Hon. Ken Dryden:** Mr. Speaker, as I have said to the hon. member and to the House on many occasions, we certainly recognize the jurisdiction of the provinces in the area of early learning and child care.

We also respect the work done and the efforts and commitment made by the government and the people of Quebec in terms of Quebec's early learning and child care system. As has been mentioned by others, that is to a level of somewhere around \$1.5 billion, which is much more than anybody else in the country spends on early learning and child care.

We also respect the fact that when one takes a step like that in the right direction, with the kind of ambition with which the government and people took that step, it is a step that is to be acknowledged, recognized, understood, applauded and in no way penalized. Really, all I can say to the member beyond that is that all of those things are part of our understanding as we continue our discussions and negotiations with the government of Quebec.

• (1355)

**Mr. Jim Gouk (British Columbia Southern Interior, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the minister's little Liberal cradle to grave diatribe. I would like to ask him about this, particularly as it affects the people in my constituency. I have a riding that has 19 official communities, the largest of which has 8,000 people. Several have less than 1,000. These are official communities.

I would like to know a number of things. First, does he really believe that rich socialites should be able to drop their kids off for free while in essence being subsidized by taxpaying Canadians where one family member stays at home to raise their kids because they think that is of value?

Next, what is he going to do for shift workers who need help but who would get nothing unless there is an around the clock type of centre available?

Last, particularly as it relates to my riding, what kind of service or help are hard-pressed people going to get when they live in communities of less than 1,000? Does the government really think it is going to put in tens of thousands of day care centres around this country, including in these small communities in my riding?

**Hon. Ken Dryden:** Mr. Speaker, as I alluded to briefly earlier, this program will represent to the hon. member's province of British Columbia at the midway point of those five years a 105% increase in what is currently being spent by all levels of government on early learning and child care.

*S. O. 31*

As the hon. member knows and as I have pointed out before, decisions as to how all of this will get implemented are decisions of the provinces and the territories. We set the principles, but the provinces and the territories make the decisions on its implementation.

A 105% increase in early learning and child care represents a remarkable new opportunity for the province of British Columbia to find ways of delivering early learning and child care to those small communities the hon. member represents. That is a huge development and a huge change in what is currently the situation in his particular riding.

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, everybody in the House knows that we in the NDP are committed to a national child care program rooted in principles and legislation, with sufficient funds to make sure that everybody across this country can access it.

When we look at what is happening out there at this point, with some money rolled out and a number of bilateral agreements, it makes this program a national program. What research is the minister using to support his insistence on it being open to both for profit and not for profit delivery systems? When can we see legislation tabled in the House to frame this important new national program?

**Hon. Ken Dryden:** Mr. Speaker, I have had discussions with the hon. member on this issue. In terms of his question about the national quality of this particular program, with individual provincial and territorial agreements, as I have said to him and to others in the past, the right analogy for me on this is the way in which education works in this country. Education is provincial jurisdiction. There is an education system in the province of Ontario. There is one in the province of British Columbia. There is one in Saskatchewan.

Each province and territory has its own education system, but what Canadians have come to understand with the system of education in each province is a certain level of expectation and understanding of what an education system is across the country: what is there and what is not there, what should be assumed and what should not be, and what one would normally have because it is available in other provinces.

Briefly in terms of for profit and not for profit, as the hon. member knows, in every province and territory in this country early learning and child care is currently being delivered by both systems, not for profit and for profit. This is happening not just in Canada but in western Europe as well, where the early learning and child care systems are much more advanced. Both systems are in play as well.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

### CANADIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK

**Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Madeline Boscoe, executive director of the Canadian Women's Health Network located in Winnipeg and one

of Canada's foremost leaders in the field of health promotion for women and girls.

Whether it is as a health care provider or a project manager, an intervenor at the Supreme Court, an author and editor or a participant in various national and international conferences, Ms. Boscoe is one of Canada's chief proponents for healthy women and notably, for women who are in low income and marginalized positions.

Last week the University of Ottawa paid tribute to Ms. Boscoe, bestowing upon her the degree of "doctor of the university". I believe the Chancellor most eloquently summed up what Madeline Boscoe is all about when he decreed:

I think I speak for many Canadians—women and men—when I say thank goodness that Madeline Boscoe is out there, talking about these issues, and making such an important difference in the world.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Boscoe and thanking her for her tireless efforts.

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### CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the residents of Oxford county for their generosity and commitment to cancer support and research.

The Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life is drawing huge numbers in Tillsonburg, Woodstock and Ingersoll. Over 3,200 people in these three communities are participating, including over 200 survivors in each city.

The Relay for Life is a result of months of planning and is made possible through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and the generosity of many sponsors. Oxford's generosity has resulted in a Golden Baton award for the highest fundraising per capita.

I would like to congratulate all those who participated in Tillsonburg and to wish the very best to those who will be participating in Woodstock and Ingersoll.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers, sponsors and participants who made this relay possible. Congratulations, Oxford.

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### CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in this statement, the sixth in my series exploring whether the courts are protecting our children, I want to bring another case to the attention of the House.

A 40-year-old man named Randall Weber kept a collection of over 600 photos of child pornography on his family computer, easily accessible to his wife and three children. The photos contained horrendous images of real children as young as two years old being sexually abused in various degrading and disgusting ways. He even shared these photos with hundreds of others via the Internet.

Ontario Justice Roy Bogusky sentenced this man to a 14-month conditional sentence. What a sad joke. At least the Crown appealed the sentence. However, the Court of Appeal Justices Catzman, Feldman and Gillese dismissed the Crown's appeal.

Rulings like this are not protecting our children from anything. I ask the House, when will Canada's courts start taking the protection of our children seriously?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### CANADA STEAMSHIP LINES

**Mr. Réal Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while our shipbuilding industry is experiencing difficulties, Canada Steamship Lines, which belongs to the Prime Minister's family, has decided to have two new ships built in China.

Despite Canada Steamship Lines' claims, the shipyard in Lévis is very capable of doing the job. Unfortunately, the lack of a marine policy undermines its competitiveness against aggressive competitors such as the Chinese shipyards. In any case, CSL did not invite that shipyard to tender.

Canada Steamship Lines registers its branches in tax havens, to avoid paying taxes here. Its ships fly flags of convenience to circumvent environmental, labour and marine safety laws. Now, it is abandoning our shipyards.

Instead of implementing a marine policy worthy of the name, the Prime Minister is contributing to the decline of our shipyards. This speaks volumes about the true interests of the Prime Minister and his family.

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[English]

#### COLE HARBOUR HERITAGE FARM MUSEUM

**Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, recently I was delighted to visit the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum in my riding.

In 1973, faced with rapid urban expansion and the threat of losing touch with its rural past, residents founded the Cole Harbour Rural Heritage Society. Their goal was to record and preserve what they could of the area's agricultural and natural heritage.

Later, the Farm Museum was established, a museum that continues to rely on community support for maintenance and operations. With the help of volunteers, this community museum has grown to include a comprehensive collection of local farm and personal artifacts, as well as local archival material, including oral history tapes and over 1,000 photographs, a resource library, heritage plants and more.

I want to congratulate the many volunteers who over the years sustained and built the museum, people like the recent Order of Canada recipient Mike Eaton and the late Rosemary Eaton, Millie Richardson, current chair and vice-chair of the board, Judith Tulloch and Jill Hogg, as well as Elizabeth Corser, the executive director.

I encourage everybody to visit and support the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum.

S. O. 31

●(1405)

#### PERTH—WELLINGTON

**Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it promises to be a very exciting summer this year in my riding of Perth—Wellington.

On May 30, I was very pleased to attend the opening performance for the 53rd season at Stratford Festival of Canada. The entire group at Stratford work very hard each year to offer fans a great experience in theatre.

Later in June I will be at the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame in St. Marys. I have come to look forward to this event that each year celebrates athletic achievement, community activism and Canadian heritage.

Beginning July 27, the Stratford Summer Music Festival will bring together musicians from across Canada and around the world as they salute the centennials of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

A short drive along the highway and visitors may be entertained by another group of skilled actors at the Drayton Festival.

If this is not enough, we also look forward to hosting the International Plowing Match at Listowel, September 20 to 24.

Perth—Wellington offers something for everyone.

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#### ARNIE HAKALA

**Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Arnie Hakala, a journalist for the *North Bay Nugget* who passed away Friday, just 22 days shy of his 65th birthday.

Arnie was a veteran journalist who personified the profession for more than 40 years. His career began in 1962 in Kapuskasing and his newspaper trail went from Timmins, the Port Arthur News Chronicle, the Canadian Press in Toronto, the *Hamilton Spectator*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Oshawa Times* and the *North Bay Nugget*.

Arnie was set to retire from the *Nugget* on July 29, but was determined to continue to write as a freelance journalist. In his final column he wrote the evening before he passed away, he said:

I have no intention of putting my feet up. I love what I do and there are still stories that have never been written.

Arnie Hakala was a tough reporter but he wore his heart on his sleeve. He had a special way of making those around him feel important and he lived his life through his readers and the people he wrote about.

Arnie Hakala will be missed dearly.

*S. O. 31*

[*Translation*]

### SOFTWOOD LUMBER

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the launching of an aquaponic ecological farm producing trout and lettuce, the construction of a positive pressure vertical wind tunnel, and a study on the revitalization of the village nucleus: such are the projects designed to help the softwood lumber industry, which the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec was boasting about in this House, on June 10.

These projects, while very interesting for the communities, are not related to the softwood lumber industry, or to the workers affected, who have been left to fend for themselves by the Liberal government in Ottawa.

The federal government must provide direct support to the industry and it must change the employment insurance rules for affected workers. A true assistance plan must also be put in place to help the industry assume legal costs that are now in excess of \$350 million, and include loan guarantees for the companies affected.

The type of programs developed by the Liberals will not save the Quebec and Canadian softwood lumber industry. Action is urgently needed.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

**Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a former Charlottetown mayor, George MacDonald, who recently received the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' highest honour.

George MacDonald was added to the FCM's roll of honour during the annual meeting in St. John's, which brought together over 2,500 delegates from across Canada.

The roll of honour pays tribute to FCM's officers and officials who have served municipal government in Canada with distinction and dedication. Mr. MacDonald has had a long and distinguished career in civic politics in Charlottetown serving five terms as a city councillor and two terms as Charlottetown's mayor.

He is only the third Prince Edward Islander to receive this honour and joins only 56 other Canadians in this achievement.

Congratulations to George MacDonald on this tremendous honour.

\* \* \*

### FRASER RIVER BIRD HABITAT

**Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a steady erosion of the bird habitat at the mouth of B.C.'s Fraser River.

The river's estuary is an international crossroad of bird migration routes from 20 countries and three continents. Five million waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds migrate through the estuary. Up to 180,000 ducks and geese fly into the Fraser Delta in a single

day. Its coastal lowlands and marshes provide critical feeding opportunities.

However, in the face of growing development, current lands protected in the Alaskan National Wildlife Area and Reifel Bird Sanctuary are inadequate. Naturalists say that 1,400 hectares are needed to ensure the migratory pathway is maintained.

The federal government must buy threatened land and expand the wildlife area and sanctuary to ensure a sustainable future for the estuary. Instead of taking the lead and bringing together all stakeholders, the Liberal government says that it will do nothing until other parties buy in.

\* \* \*

●(1410)

### OPEN DOORS 2005

**Hon. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage residents of Etobicoke—Lakeshore to participate in Open Doors 2005. Open Doors is a wonderful opportunity for older Ontarians and their families to explore the various long term care facilities and residences that operate in the Etobicoke—Lakeshore community and throughout the province of Ontario.

Choosing a future residence is a very personal matter and this is an opportunity to ensure seniors of a potential residence that meets their specific needs.

This Saturday numerous long term care facilities and retirement homes will host seniors and their families in order to have them become familiar with the residences' amenities, staff and atmosphere.

I urge everyone considering retirement to take advantage of visiting some of our local long term residences such as the Versa Care Centre in Rexdale, the Highbourne Lifecare Centre and Lakeshore Lodge.

Congratulations to the sponsors and volunteers for—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Halifax.

\* \* \*

### THE BUDGET

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, despite Conservative obstruction, Bill C-48, the NDP's better balanced budget bill, is back in the House for third and final reading. What is the Conservative contribution to delivering much needed investments in every region of our country so far? To delete all the clauses of the bill.

Conservative MPs, including from Nova Scotia, are asking the House not to invest in lower tuition fees in post-secondary education, not to invest in affordable housing, not to invest in public transit or cleaner air, not to invest half a billion dollars more in international aid, despite their own members' voting at the foreign affairs committee to support an NDP motion to increase Canada's ODA to 0.7% of our GDP. What hypocrisy.

*Oral Questions*

Canadians deserve better. Canadians elected a minority Parliament. I am proud to be part of a caucus that has worked relentlessly to make this Parliament work and to deliver the investments Canadians need. It is past time for the official opposition in the same spirit to stop the huffing and puffing, get to work and deliver Bill C-48 to Canadians.

\* \* \*

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today as we speak, the state of North Dakota is moving forward to divert water from Devils Lake into the Red River, Lake Manitoba, Lake Winnipeg and beyond to Hudson Bay. It will jeopardize the health of Lake Winnipeg and the Manitoba ecosystems.

Once the outlet is opened, there will be a great risk of ecological and economic damage to Manitoba by polluting our waters, not to mention violating international law.

Devils Lake contains high levels of salt, phosphorous and other contaminants and is home to fish parasites which will affect our freshwater resources by introducing foreign marine species and bacteria.

The House is urging the federal government to take immediate action to resolve this issue by referring it to the International Joint Commission and to convince the U.S. administration and the U.S. Senate to make an IJC referral immediately.

These water issues in Manitoba are heating up and the Canadian government is not living up to its responsibilities.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS AWARENESS MONTH**

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is spina bifida month.

In Quebec, one baby in a thousand is born with this condition, for which there is no cure as yet.

Spina bifida is a Latin term meaning “open spine”. It refers to a birth defect, the causes of which are still unknown. Spinal damage is irreversible and permanent.

Spina bifida may be accompanied by hydrocephalus, which is an excessive buildup of spinal fluid in the brain. This can result in limited mobility.

The Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Quebec provides information and promotes the use of folic acid, which, if taken during pregnancy, can prevent this condition.

I commend the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Quebec for their devotion to this cause.

●(1415)

*[English]***CANADIAN FORCES**

**Mr. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today the defence committee rejected the appointment of the government's preferred choice for the new Canadian Forces ombudsman. The ombudsman is supposed to represent the individual against the organization, but based on his career history, committee members felt the government's selection of Yves Côté seemed an inappropriate choice.

No doubt Mr. Côté is a competent lawyer; however, he has a long history of defending the government and many of its branches and organizations. Committee members felt Mr. Côté was not predisposed to making a successful switch to defend the individual against the system.

If history repeats itself, and I am sure it will, the Liberal government will again ignore recommendations of one of its committees and appoint its preferred choice. I urge the government to make the right decision for our men and women in uniform and respect the committee's decision to reject Mr. Côté.

\* \* \*

**POLICE YOUTH CORPS**

**Mr. Ken Boshcoff (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to rise today to congratulate the Thunder Bay Police Youth Corps on its 12th anniversary.

The Thunder Bay Police Youth Corps was created in 1994 with the vision of enhancing the experience of local youth with law enforcement organizations and the community. The youth corps is a non-profit, fully volunteer organization with a chain of command that mirrors the Thunder Bay police service.

The cadets, aged 13 to 19, are introduced to many aspects of a police officer's job, including fingerprinting, radio procedures and parade drill. Their motto of “Lead By Example” is not just a motto but a way of life for anyone involved with the youth corps, which is one of the few remaining police youth corps in Canada.

Please join me in congratulating Commanding Officer Charles Meeking and his fellow officers, the board of directors and the cadets of the Thunder Bay Police Youth Corps.

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**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[Translation]***SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we now know that the government concluded a secret agreement that would allow Jean Chrétien to prevent Justice Gomery from completing his task. The government's secret agreement puts Justice Gomery “in an extremely difficult position”, to quote his own lawyer.

Knowing that this undermines the work of Justice Gomery, why did the Prime Minister authorize this secret agreement?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there was no secret agreement or secret anything. There was an exchange of correspondence between lawyers, that is all.

We have supported the work of Justice Gomery right from the start and we will continue to support it. I must say that Justice Gomery is not partial, and we will defend him against any allegations to the contrary. Furthermore, we will oppose any attempt to delay the report.

[*English*]

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago the Prime Minister did not tell the House the whole truth about the existence of this correspondence. Yesterday and today he again misleads the House about the nature of that deal. Contrary to what he is claiming, Justice Gomery himself says that the secret deal deliberately undermines his work. His lawyer said, “To have...the outstanding possibility that Mr. Chrétien may renew his application...is, simply put, unacceptable”.

Once again, knowing that this exchange of letters, whatever the Prime Minister wants to call the deal, would undermine Justice Gomery, why did the Prime Minister agree to it?

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there was no secret deal. There was no pact and as they say “*Honni soit qui mal y pense*”. There was no deal and there was no accord.

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister said the deal was not secret, but when we asked about it, we could not get straightforward answers here in the House of Commons. Yesterday and again today the Prime Minister and the government claim they support the work of Judge Gomery, that he is impartial, and that they stand behind him ferociously.

Can the Prime Minister show us that letter and tell us where anywhere in that letter Justice Gomery is defended?

• (1420)

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I defended Judge Gomery in this House yesterday. The government and I have defended Mr. Justice Gomery every single day in this House when he has been attacked by the Leader of the Opposition.

Let me make it unequivocally clear. Judge Gomery has acted impartially and there should be no delay in the issuance of his report. We will defend Judge Gomery against any allegations to the contrary.

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again it is an interesting defence, so I will give the Prime Minister this challenge.

Will he stand in the House right now, say that he withdraws the support in the arrangement he made with Mr. Chrétien, and will he assist Justice Gomery in having this application withdrawn for good? Will the Prime Minister do that?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me simply read from the letter: “The Attorney General's principal position in the memorandum was that Mr. Chrétien's allegation of bias was without merit and that Mr. Chrétien's right to procedural fairness had at all times been respected”.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that is the letter.

Justice Gomery says the government's recent position of leaving the door open for a potential challenge to his final report puts a cloud over him and places him in an extremely difficult position. Justice Gomery is now going to court to get a definitive dismissal of Mr. Chrétien's challenge. Protecting Justice Gomery's integrity and the guarantee of a final report are extremely important to Canadians.

Will the government support Justice Gomery in his fight to protect the integrity and the timeliness of the report, or is the Prime Minister again just setting up an election escape hatch?

**Hon. Scott Brison (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services has the floor. He is going to answer, apparently.

**Hon. Scott Brison:** Mr. Speaker, the government's view was expressed by counsel. That view was that we did not want to see any delay in Justice Gomery's report and that in fact, if there were going to be any action by Mr. Chrétien that would allege bias, it would be preferable to have that action after Justice Gomery provided his report to Canadians.

Justice Gomery wants to deal with this issue in the short term. We respect Justice Gomery's position and support him in that position because we continue to support the work of Justice Gomery. We believe he is doing important work and positive work on behalf of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said yesterday in the House that sending a letter to Jean Chrétien's lawyer was quite normal. In a letter dated June 6, which the Prime Minister had in hand yesterday, the lawyer for Justice Gomery said that the guarantee to Jean Chrétien that he could mount another challenge in order to get the judge's head puts the judge in an “extremely difficult position”. Those are his words.

Will the Prime Minister acknowledge that, despite his claim, the guarantee made to Jean Chrétien is no minor matter, as it could interfere with Justice Gomery's work?

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there was no guarantee, nor secret deal nor agreement, as I have said. *Honni soit qui mal y pense!*—Evil to him who evil thinks. We have supported Justice Gomery and will continue to do so. We have blocked all attempts to delay the commission and we will oppose any similar ones that may arise.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a proverb that would suit better: “When you lie long enough, the lie becomes the truth.” That is more like it.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe:** The civility of the other side is apparent.

If a letter was sent, it was not because the parties had nothing to say to one another. A letter was sent. So, I am asking the Prime Minister, who, since the time of the sponsorships, has done everything to see nothing, why he did not tell us yesterday that he had a letter dated June 6, which said exactly the opposite to what he claimed. Why did he hide things from the House, as is his wont—

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the leader of the Bloc does not like my saying: “Evil to him who evil thinks.”, but I will repeat it because there was no agreement, no secret, period.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Justice Gomery feels it is essential that the doubt cast on his objectivity by Jean Chrétien be immediately dispelled. He has therefore instructed his counsel to file a motion with the Federal Court as soon as possible.

How could the government claim again yesterday that it supports Justice Gomery when a letter dated June 6 from Justice Gomery's own counsel, which the government had in its possession yesterday, says the opposite, namely that the position taken by the government regarding Justice Gomery is placing him in an extremely difficult situation?

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have shown and will continue to show support for Justice Gomery against any allegations of lack of objectivity on his part, because we have every confidence in the Gomery commission.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, all the government had to do yesterday was to reveal the substance of the letter it had in its possession. It also had Justice Gomery's opinion about being placed in an extremely difficult situation by the government's deal. Come on, enough is enough.

The Minister of Justice can say whatever he wants, but facts are facts. Justice Gomery himself said that his efforts were seriously hindered by the position taken by the government and he has taken steps to get out of that situation.

Why did the government try, yesterday, to hide the existence of that letter, the malaise that prevailed and the problems it has created for Justice Gomery?

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have not hidden anything. Everything is public. There has been an exchange of letters between lawyers. There is nothing to hide.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister.

Canada Day is approaching and yet Canada Day is the day that North Dakota, in a perverse sense of what it means to be a neighbour, has decided to turn on the tap of the Devils Lake diversion.

#### Oral Questions

The Prime Minister has talked to George Bush. When does he expect to hear back from the White House as to whether or not we are going to celebrate Canada Day from here on in as the day the United States chose to ignore the boundary waters treaty?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about the seriousness of this situation. There is also no doubt that the actions being taken by North Dakota are simply unacceptable.

I have raised this with the President and, as the hon. member ought to know, we are in constant negotiations now with the Americans. I am not in a position to say when those negotiations will conclude, but let me tell the House that we will leave no stone unturned in solving this problem.

\* \* \*

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on another environmental issue, the Canadian Medical Association has released a study which says that there are 5,800 premature deaths a year in this country as a result of smog.

My question is for the Prime Minister or the Minister of the Environment. Does the government not think that it is time for some real action on this? We have had 12 years of talking about voluntary this and voluntary that. Does the government not think it is time for mandatory emissions standards, a strong Kyoto plan, and doing something about smog because people are dying? People are dying. Let us get some action from the government.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue and if the strong regulations had not been put in place for the clean air 10 year agenda, the situation would be much worse today.

We have been able to reduce mercury emissions by 90%. New sulphur and diesel regulations have been established that will reduce and eliminate emissions by 97% for 2006. We have also established very strong regulations that will reduce emissions from buses by 95%. We are acting very seriously in addressing a very serious problem.

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[Translation]

#### SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, the government misled the House by denying the existence of a secret arrangement with Jean Chrétien. Yesterday, the Prime Minister misled the House about the contents of this arrangement. He incorrectly said that the letter read, and I quote, “We fiercely oppose anything that could delay the report”.

Why did the Prime Minister mislead the House yet again?

• (1430)

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, ultimately, the problem has to do with the question. There was no secret agreement and there was no secret deal, period.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said that in the letter, which two weeks ago did not exist according to the government, it stated, "We opposed ferociously anything that could delay the Gomery report". I have the letter here and I have read it several times. I cannot find a single word of opposition to Jean Chrétien's effort to put a cloud over the head of Judge Gomery.

Perhaps the Prime Minister could stand up with his copy of the letter and cite where it says that the government ferociously opposes the effort to put a cloud over Judge Gomery. Where is it? Will he cite from the letter?

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, conspiracy is in the mouth of the speaker. There is no sense here of any conspiracy. We can stretch it all we want. There is no pact. There is no secret accord. There is only support for the Gomery commission. If we have to, we will continue to repeat it. That is the situation.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***CHILD CARE**

**Ms. Rona Ambrose (Edmonton—Spruce Grove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec's child care network is still on strike, which is making life very difficult for Quebec parents.

Why is this government insisting on implementing such a vulnerable model across Canada?

*[English]*

**Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what does one say to a question like that?

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister of Social Development has the floor and I cannot hear a word he is saying. There seems to be a lot of assistance coming from my left to help the minister but I cannot hear the minister. We want to hear the minister.

**Hon. Ken Dryden:** Mr. Speaker, what we are looking to do is to try to create an early learning and child care system in every province and territory in this country. The closest analogy would be an education system where the jurisdiction is in the provinces. The provinces in instances such as that, and ones like the hon. member cited, those things can happen. They happen as part of the relationship between the provincial government and the education system.

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Rona Ambrose (Edmonton—Spruce Grove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec created its child care program six years ago. Last week on television, we saw parents lining up in the streets, some for over 24 hours, in order to get a spot.

Is this model for child care, which the Liberals want to adopt, not just a waiting list system?

*[English]*

**Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said in the House many times before, the Quebec

system is an inspiration. It is what has inspired early learning and child care development across the country.

The problems in the province of Quebec are mostly problems of ambition. However, it is much better to have problems of ambition than problems of a lack of ambition.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***TAPED CONVERSATIONS**

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on May 31, the Prime Minister was very clear about the taping affair: an offer was solicited. This was stated in this House and can be read in the official report of the Debates of the House of Commons.

Since we have this tangible proof that the Prime Minister was aware that a criminal offence might have been committed, what remains to be determined is when he was informed of it.

I will again ask the Prime Minister: When was he informed that the Conservative member had approached his chief of staff? Was it during the negotiations or after they were all over?

• (1435)

*[English]*

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as has been repeated in this House, the member for Newton—North Delta wanted to cross the floor. The Prime Minister said that no offer was made and no offer was in fact made.

I understand that the Bloc has contacted the RCMP and I understand that the member wants to conduct his own investigation on the floor of the House of Commons. However, if he has actually written to the RCMP and if he does in fact have more information that he can share with the RCMP, I would encourage him to do exactly that.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government has said on numerous occasions that anyone with information on the taping affair should contact the RCMP. We therefore filed a complaint with the RCMP based on what the Prime Minister told us here in this House.

The Prime Minister knew before the rest of us that a criminal offence had possibly been committed. Why was he so remiss in his duty and complicit in the matter by not alerting the RCMP? Why does the Prime Minister not want to reply?

*[English]*

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister knew was that the member for Newton—North Delta wanted to cross the floor. What the Prime Minister said was that no offer was to be made and no offer was made.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government house leader has been saying for several days that there was an insistent request on the part of a given member but that there were no offers made to encourage him to cross the floor. Setting aside for the moment whether or not offers were made by the government, there would appear to have been a criminal offence committed from the moment someone allegedly sought out an offer in exchange for selling his vote to the government.

When did the Prime Minister know that the member had made that request?

[English]

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again I am getting the same question and to that question I would suggest that if there is additional information, the Bloc should provide that to the RCMP.

Rather than conduct an investigation on the floor of the House of Commons, the Bloc members should follow up on their letter. If they have more information, I would suggest they provide that information to the RCMP.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said too much, and now he is not willing to be accountable for his actions. This is just like the sponsorship scandal. The Prime Minister wanted to see nothing and hear nothing, and to let things just happen, without anyone being able to pin anything on him.

This is my question for him: a criminal offence may have been committed. We want to know when he was informed of it.

[English]

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, whether a crime has been committed or not is really the domain of the people doing the investigation. The Bloc has indicated in the House that it has sent a letter to the RCMP to determine whether an investigation is required.

The Bloc has the opportunity to let the RCMP do the work that it has asked the RCMP to do. If it has further information, it should provide that information.

\* \* \*

**CHILD CARE**

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Development is not willing to listen to constructive criticism of his day care scheme. He is refusing to meet with Kids First and other groups that are in favour of choice in child care. He will not even take a phone call. He refuses to consider families who are left out of his plan. He refuses to hear about innovative alternatives to institutional day care.

Why does the minister believe he knows better than everyone else?

**Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since last July, I have travelled across the country many times. I have been coast to coast and almost to coast. Everywhere I

go I listen to people talk about their lives and how they have lived their lives. I listen to them talk about the challenges of having children and the goals, the ambitions and the hopes they have for their children. I listen to them talk about what they have, what they would like to have and what they are missing.

One of the things they would like to have is the choice of good, affordable, available early learning and child care.

• (1440)

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has an obligation to consider all options before spending billions of dollars but he refuses. He has an obligation to discuss policy options with all Canadians but he refuses. He has an obligation to consider the true cost of his day care scheme but he refuses. He talks about opening the minds of children and exposing them to all the world has to offer.

Why is he not following his own advice?

**Hon. Ken Dryden (Minister of Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the hon. member, in just about everything she said, is wrong. She was wrong yesterday and she is wrong today. At a certain point one would have to assume that she is purposely wrong.

What we are trying to do is create a national early learning and child care system that will be there for all parents and for all children, a system that has ambitions of early learning, a system that will be there for rural areas, remote areas and urban areas, not \$320 a year for the lowest income.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, he is so new to this place and yet so arrogant. It is amazing.

Yesterday the finance minister had the nerve to blame the private sector for Canada's sagging productivity. Canada has some of the highest tax rates on capital investment in the world, which the finance minister is responsible for. Businesses are drowning in red ink, which his government is responsible for.

If the minister wants to blame someone for sagging productivity why does he not look in the mirror?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman would do better in his research than just to depend on newspaper clippings. He might have attended the speech and heard the whole recitation.

Productivity is Canada's 21st century challenge. It is our prime economic priority. In government and in the private sector, we both have very important and urgent work to do to enhance productivity.

For example, we have to work on a stronger economic union, regulatory efficiency, innovation and commercialization. Indeed, the private sector needs to increase its investment in research and development.

We lead in public sector investment. We trail in private sector investment.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister is not doing his job. One of the keys to productivity growth and more and better jobs is low taxes for businesses on important things, like investment in technology and equipment, but Canada has some of the highest taxes in the world on those things.

Unfortunately for workers and entrepreneurs, the minister caved in and produced a gimme-gimme budget for his friends in the NDP.

When will he admit that he sacrificed Canadian productivity to buy the approval of the most anti-business, anti-job creation party in the country, the NDP?

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the ovation from the other side. I would point out that I will make no such admission because in fact the honourable gentleman is wrong in his allegation.

I have said that on the government's part we need to improve regulatory efficiency and have a stronger economic union. We have to work on infrastructure, education, skills, innovation and commercialization, as well as competitive taxes.

On the private sector side, we do have to pick up the rate of investment in research and development. We have moved from being number six to number one in the G-7 in publicly financed research and development, but we still lag behind on the private sector side.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PUBLIC TRANSIT**

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Infrastructure and Communities recently announced the allocation of \$800 million for public transit.

Across Canada, mayors are counting on this funding to build better transit systems in their communities. But this funding, along with the \$5 billion gas tax commitment to municipalities, cannot flow until the budget passes. Mayors are unanimous: they need this funding now.

The fact is that the budget implementation bill has been amended by the Standing Committee on Finance and introduced in the House. Are the Conservatives and the Bloc listening to their communities?

**Hon. John Godfrey (Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, sadly, last night, the Conservatives and Bloc combined forces to remove all the relevant clauses from budget Bill C-48 at committee.

The Leader of the Opposition claims that his party is just as committed to the new deal as we are. How can he say that, and then turn around and instruct his party—as the Bloc has also done—to take the \$800 million earmarked for public transit out of the budget bill? This is funding that cities need now.

• (1445)

[English]

**MAHER ARAR INQUIRY**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the senior RCMP superintendent in charge of the national security investigation that led to the Maher Arar fiasco has called for his evidence to be now heard in uncensored form in public before the Arar public inquiry.

It is time for the government to set aside its security paranoia and its claim that the security investigation is open-ended.

When will the government lift the veil of secrecy and let the truth telling begin? Why not start with RCMP superintendent Michel Cabana's public testimony?

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The question here is what can be released publicly.

All information has been made available to Justice O'Connor. What has to be considered here is that Mr. Justice O'Connor will hear arguments later this week on this question and therefore it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

\* \* \*

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** It is unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. The government likes to hide information from everybody.

During the 1960s, under Conservative and Liberal governments, we found that agent orange was sprayed upon unsuspecting civilian and military personnel.

Now we hear that agent purple, a carcinogen three times more lethal, was also used against unsuspecting military and civilian workers.

My question for the Minister of National Defence is quite clear. Instead of having to file freedom of information requests, will you now release all the information you have on these two agents that have been—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore, I am sure, hardly needs reminding that he must address his questions to the Chair. He is fully conversant with that rule.

The hon. Minister of National Defence.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue. It is one where we are seeking the best we can to get as much information as we can into the hands of those who can help them to reconstruct what happened a long time ago.

These were herbicides that were used widely by other authorities throughout the province. They were herbicides that were used in accordance with industrial and commercial standards at the time and there was no belief there was any risk to humans.

*Oral Questions*

We are now doing our best to make sure that all those who were exposed can get the best information and work with Veterans Affairs Canada for any disability pensions they are entitled to. We will continue to do that. It is laborious, it is time consuming, but we are committed to getting to the bottom of this so people can be—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our Canadian veterans have served this country proudly through two world wars, Korea, and in peacekeeping roles throughout the world. They put their lives on the line for us and then have to defend themselves against their own government.

The chemical testing program in Suffield and Ottawa is a prime example of this. Now we have the spraying of CFB Gagetown with agent orange.

Are we going to have another long, drawn out process where elderly and sick veterans are put through the wringer in order to be awarded compensation?

**Hon. Albina Guarnieri (Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at Veterans Affairs Canada we have an agenda of care, as the hon. member well knows. We have established a review committee to ensure that our programs deliver for our veterans.

The member knows that there is a longstanding policy of assisting our veterans in terms of getting their—

**An hon. member:** What's the deadline?

**Hon. Albina Guarnieri:** Mr. Speaker, no one is ever denied a pension at veterans affairs for being late. No information is ever denied for a veteran to advance his or her case—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, routinely veterans have been turned down for benefits because they could not prove their disability was related to their service in the armed forces. Retired Brigadier General Gordon Sellar and his wife, Gloria, are a prime example. It took a pitched battle with veterans affairs that lasted 15 years before he won his award.

Would the veterans affairs minister commit to a review of all applications from veterans who are suffering from illnesses known to be related to agent orange and agent purple and ensure that they are compensated properly and without delay?

• (1450)

**Hon. Albina Guarnieri (Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the veteran member knows that I cannot talk about individual cases. The veteran member obviously did not listen to my answer when I stated that we have in fact established a review committee to review cases related to agent orange and agent purple.

No amount of irresponsible rhetoric from the other side will advance the cases. I invite the member to work with me to advance veterans' cases.

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister suggests there is a compensation plan for our military personnel exposed to agent orange.

However, the minister has never once mentioned the non-military personnel exposed to the same chemicals, the private contractors, civilian employees and the residents of the towns and villages bordering the base. What compensation plan do these people fall under?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly, what we are trying to do at this time is to get as much information as we possible can.

If the hon. member has been reading the press from his own province, it is clear that these same herbicides were being sprayed by provincial governments all over their own provinces.

What we have to ascertain first is who came into contact with these herbicides and under what conditions. Then we can move forward with figuring out how we can compensate them. Let us get the facts first. Let us work with the facts instead of a lot of rumours under which the hon. member wants to operate.

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is code language for doing nothing. The Liberals did the same thing on the hepatitis C file. The opposition had to pound the government for 12 years simply for it to recognize all victims of hepatitis C. That is the same language the government used on this file.

The government knows the facts. When is it going to act and compensate all victims, not just some?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that question comes from a party that was in power for eight years 12 years ago, closer to the time of the Vietnam war, closer to the events that took place, and which did absolutely nothing to find out about it, did nothing to compensate anybody, did nothing to find any facts. To say now 45 years later, "You guys figure it all out", the Conservatives should have fixed it up 15 years ago when they were in power and could have done it. That is my answer.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we learn that, in the 1960s, Canada invited the American army here to test a very toxic defoliant, agent orange. It was used in the Vietnam war and continues to have terrible effects on the health of generations of Vietnamese. The tests were secret.

I ask the Minister of National Defence how he justifies the government of the day allowing the American army to use a site in Canada to test poisons.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have just said to the other member, all the herbicides used at the time were commercial and industrial products used by many. As the press has said recently, the Government of New Brunswick used the same type of thing.

What we are trying to do today is uncover the facts and look at the type of compensation we could offer those affected. I promise the members of the House that this is just what the government will do.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada also tested a number of defoliants, including agent purple, three times as toxic as agent orange. Members of the military were exposed to it, along with their families and local residents.

Why is the government not, first, acknowledging its responsibility, second, assessing the consequences of the use of these products and, finally, helping the victims, both military and civilian?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have just said that all these products were used by various governments, individuals and commercial agents throughout Canada. At the time, the products were accepted by industry.

We are trying today to reconstruct the facts. We will find the causal relations and will offer compensation to those affected. But first we have to uncover the facts. That is what we are doing.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

[English]

**MEDICINAL MARIJUANA**

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government-run marijuana grow op in a base metal mine in Flin Flon, Manitoba has been a bust. The government has spent millions on pot; however, the pot crop has little medicinal value and may be corrupted by mine contaminants.

Will the minister shut down the operation, or will taxpayers continue to be shafted?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the medicinal marijuana program is being constantly monitored. This program was started based on compassionate need for those who are in pain. We continue to monitor the program and we believe it is working well.

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, just like tobacco, marijuana has serious health effects. Ironically, the government fights tobacco smoking, yet encourages marijuana smoking.

There is a new safe alternative for medical marijuana users. It is a cannabis spray called Sativex. With the introduction of Sativex, will the government reconsider its marijuana policy?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said, the medicinal marijuana program has been brought into effect because it meets the medicinal needs for patients under the care of qualified doctors and medical practitioners in the country. This program is well run. Obviously, always there are growing pains, as we may have had with the marijuana program, and I understand that we continue to monitor it.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AEROSPACE INDUSTRY**

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

I must admit that I was surprised when the Quebec minister of economic development, innovation and export trade said at Le

Bourget that the Government of Canada was not necessarily concerned about aerospace policy and that Quebec should even develop its own policy.

Can the Minister of Industry set the record straight and give us proof that the government is indeed concerned about the aerospace industry and that, as minister, he intends to take very concrete action to prove that we have an aerospace policy in Canada?

[English]

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question because I too was very puzzled when I read the comments in a media clipping. After all, it was this government under this Prime Minister that established the Canadian aerospace council.

We are planning, developing and working hard. All of the members of the industry from across the country are developing an aerospace strategy for all of Canada. We have made major investments in the province of Quebec in aerospace. My hon. colleague from Quebec is a member of the Canadian aerospace council and he chose not to attend the last meeting.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, recently a military couple, after first being denied service, were extra billed by the Ontario government to treat their born in Canada infant daughter. They were told they would have to make special arrangements to register their child for Ontario health insurance.

Why does the Minister of Health refuse to defend the Canada Health Act on behalf of Canada's armed forces?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the specific facts of the case. As the hon. member knows, members of our forces are in the province of Ontario. When they go to a hospital or seek care outside of the facilities which we provide within the medical care of the forces, the forces pay the Ontario government for those very services. That is the way it is done and that is the way it is managed.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, ever since the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence told the soldiers to expect to be reimbursed for the Ontario health premium through their post living differential, they have been asking, "Where is the money?"

Why are soldiers still waiting to be compensated for a tax which even the minister himself told the House is unfair?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I totally agree that the tax is unfair. I have raised it with the minister of health for the province of Ontario. The fact of the matter is we are also advised that the tax is perfectly legal and the province of Ontario has the right to levy it. We are not going to tell our officers and our soldiers not to obey the law of Ontario. They have to pay taxes in the province of Ontario.

What we are seeking to do is work with the province of Ontario to make sure we get the best health coverage for our armed forces at an appropriate price and it is not fair for them to be taxed twice when we pay for it. I agree with that, but it is still legal and we have to deal with that situation.

• (1500)

[Translation]

**Mr. Guy Côté (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, despite my speech on June 7 in this House, the Minister of Defence continues to make reassuring statements about the water contamination in the town of Shannon. Yet, a troubling rate of cancer around the military base is being reported. This situation is reminiscent of the way the government handled the agent orange issue in the 1960s.

How can the Minister of Defence claim that he is working with the community of Shannon, when he refuses to release the preliminary report that the Department of Defence has had since February?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have answered questions about Shannon many times. We have transferred millions of dollars to the town of Shannon. We have provided homes with safe drinking water. We are working together with the community to determine the source of the contamination. Some of it is coming from our base, but some of it is also coming from industrial sites in the region.

We are working closely with the community. First we have to determine the facts in order to establish responsibility. Nonetheless, we are being responsible. We have already provided funding and have taken action. We are continuing to act together with the community.

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#### CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

During her visit to the annual Banff Television Festival in Alberta, the minister said that the Canadian Television Fund would again be given a \$100 million envelope over the next year. She announced her intention to merge the Canadian Television Fund and Telefilm Canada boards of directors.

Can the minister tell us how these initiatives will revitalize Canadian television production and can she explain what direction she intends to give the Canadian Television Fund?

**Hon. Liza Frulla (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last Sunday in Banff, we announced \$100 million in funding for 2006-07. This funding will allow all the creators and producers to plan and have greater stability.

#### Speaker's Ruling

As far as the Canadian Television Fund governance is concerned, we also announced that we want to have one board of directors instead of two, with Telefilm as an administrative arm. Telefilm would be mandated by the board of directors on a contractual basis with the television board.

[English]

**The Speaker:** That concludes question period for today, but the Chair has notice of a point of order arising from question period from the hon. member for Calgary Southeast.

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#### POINTS OF ORDER

##### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during question period the right hon. Prime Minister cited directly from a document which he described as a letter. I would ask that the Prime Minister table that document.

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that the letter the hon. Prime Minister was quoting from is in just one official language. We would like to translate it into the other official language in order to table that letter in this House, as the hon. member has requested.

**Mr. Jason Kenney:** Mr. Speaker, I would seek the unanimous consent of the House to accept the document in the one official language.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** I am afraid the hon. member is going to have to exhibit his usual patience.

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I hope you will take whatever measures are necessary to make sure that it loses nothing in the translation.

**The Speaker:** I am sure the hon. member appreciates the fact that the Chair normally has little to do with translation; rulings, yes, but not translation.

##### ADMISSIBILITY OF ORAL QUESTIONS—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now prepared to rule on the points of order raised by the hon. member for Mississauga South concerning remarks made during the question periods of Friday, June 3, 2005, and Monday, June 6, 2005, by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton about the awarding of government contracts involving a member of the other place.

I would like to thank the hon. member for raising this matter. I also wish to thank the hon. Minister for Public Works and Government Services, the hon. deputy leader of the government in the House, the hon. House leader of the official opposition, the hon. deputy House leader of the official opposition, and the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton for their comments.

*Speaker's Ruling*

In his initial intervention, the hon. member for Mississauga South stated that, in the preamble of a question posed by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton during question period on June 3, 2005, the member had 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.

The hon. member for Mississauga South suggested that the member's questions should have been ruled out of order. He also asked that the Deputy Speaker look at the evidence from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates of June 2, 2005, which he claimed showed that the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton was fully aware that the statements he made in his preambles were incorrect.

In commenting on this point of order, the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton stated that the remarks in his preambles had been based on the testimony of the hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services before the standing committee where, he claimed, the minister had admitted that section 14 of the Parliament of Canada Act had been contravened by a member of the other place.

The Deputy Speaker stated that in his opinion the first question had been in order. However, he expressed concern about the hon. member's supplementary question in that it may have impugned the motives or questioned the integrity of members of this House or members of the other place. He undertook to review the supplementary question and return to the House if necessary.

On June 6, 2005, the hon. member for Mississauga South rose on a point of order following question period to protest that the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton had again asked questions which directly or indirectly attacked a member of the other place. He requested once again that I look at the transcripts of the proceedings of the standing committee.

Following interventions by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton and the hon. Minister of Public Works and Government Services, I informed the House that I did not think the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton had contravened any Standing Order in his question. I also urged the members to meet and discuss the matter and I asked all hon. members to show restraint in phrasing questions and answers. Nonetheless, I also undertook to look into the matter and report back to the House. I am now ready to deal with both complaints.

• (1505)

[*Translation*]

In examining these points of order, I have reviewed the questions that were asked during both question periods and I have reviewed the transcripts of the June 2, 2005 meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Mississauga South argued that the questions posed by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton contradicted the evidence given in the committee and that the member deliberately continued to impugn the motives of a member of the other place. The Chair has, of course, now looked at the *Debates* and at the committee evidence in dispute.

As your Speaker, I am mindful that it is a wise and longstanding practice of my predecessors not to be drawn into debate. It appears that a dispute over interpretation of events is indeed what we have here, and that is a matter of debate. I suggested when this objection was raised with me that “if the members got together and looked at the transcript and figured out what language was used, it might temper the questions and the answers in future which would make it easier for all hon. members, not just the Speaker”.

Having now had an opportunity to review all the evidence, I realize this suggestion can only be helpful when members' exchanges are made in good faith, in the interests of bringing the facts of the situation to light. The suggestion falls on deaf ears when such exchanges are instead a continual and arguably disingenuous repetition of selected quotations. This sort of exchange does little to raise the level of debate or enlighten the House.

[*Translation*]

In the circumstances, then, as I have noted in the past, when the House is faced with two different interpretations of events, it is not up to the Speaker to determine which is correct.

[*English*]

However, I have also reviewed the supplementary question put by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton on June 3. His suggestion that the contract in question was “a dirty deal” impugns motives and is indeed out of order.

I also want to take this opportunity to remind all hon. members that Standing Order 18 prohibits disrespectful reflections on members of this place as well as on members of the other place. As is stated at page 522 of Marleau and Montpetit:

References to Senate debates and proceedings are discouraged and it is out of order to question a Senator's integrity, honesty or character. This “prevents fruitless arguments between Members of two distinct bodies who are unable to reply to each other, and guards against recrimination and offensive language in the absence of the other party.”

In addition, the House will note that while the remarks on June 6 may not have contravened the Standing Orders, they did lead to disorder in the House. That is unacceptable under our practice.

In conclusion, I would like to comment on the remarks made by the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton, who indicated in his intervention on the point of order that he had prior consultations with the Clerk of the House about his questions. I would like to caution the hon. member for Nepean—Carleton, and indeed all hon. members, to refrain from referring to private consultations they may have had with the Chair or the Table.

Ultimately, such consultations are intended to assist members, not to prejudge a future situation. For example, in judging the language that an hon. member might use, the Chair must be guided not just by vocabulary. A myriad of factors must be considered: context and tone, circumstances and the reaction of the House. The very same words that will be intended and heard as a witticism in one instance may be seen as a grave insult in other circumstances. The Chair and the Table try to be helpful to all hon. members, but an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality works both ways.

Finally, let me just say that the right of members to seek information from the government and the right to hold the ministry accountable are recognized as two of the fundamental principles of parliamentary government, principally exercised through the asking of questions in the House. The importance of question period in our system is undeniable. However, all hon. members must walk a fine line between holding the government and its members to account and attacks on the conduct of individuals, including those who are members of the other place.

Canadians will judge all of us and the House of Commons as a whole on what they see of us on television and how they see us working. I would urge all hon. members to remember that in all their exchanges in the House but especially in question period.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1510)

[Translation]

### SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—CHILD CARE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today we have an opportunity to respond to the Conservative Party motion, which reads as follows:

That the government recognize that its current child care proposals create a two-tier child care system because: (a) the government ignores the fact that each province is unique and faces different challenges with regard to assisting families in finding and providing child care; and (b) the federal government is discriminating against families who choose to stay at home or find care outside of a publicly funded system or work shift-work, or who are on a low income.

What the Conservative Party is proposing today is to not establish a public child care system. This is a very dangerous direction to take. The Conservative Party is also criticizing the national child care program that the new Minister of Social Development wants to implement.

We are opposed to the political line of the Conservative Party because it overlooks a number of realities. A Conservative member did attempt this morning to set out her party's vision of the support that should be provided to child care centres. The Conservative Party wants us to recognize the needs of low income families and to give them some elbow room.

Does the Conservative Party think that it is being realistic? Without a structured child care system, many parents will have no alternative. That is why Quebec has put in place a structured day care system, with professional educators. This system was established back in 1997 in Quebec and very rapidly generated enthusiasm for a system capable of meeting diverse needs.

Granted, this system does not meet every need, but we have to recognize that Quebec has nearly 179,000 day care spaces. There are therefore many spaces available for the children of working parents. There is much talk of responding to this century's new reality. More often than not, this reality includes two working parents. Many parents who cannot afford to spend \$25 a day on day care cannot

### Supply

enter the labour force. This was the reality in Quebec. Parents did not waste any time registering their children to ensure they would have a space. The 200,000-space target has not yet been achieved, but hopefully it will be achieved by 2006.

As for the families with children aged 0 to 5, Quebec proceeded by making choices. The youngest, those under 1 year of age, will be the last ones accepted by the early child care centres. Our approach was by age group, so as to allow the greatest number of children to have access, since we could not offer all these spaces.

The Liberal government has set itself too big a task. The Bloc Québécois might make this criticism: this money does not take into consideration the needs presented by all provinces nor the related conditions. We know that the federal government has a tendency to be extremely centralist and to impose blanket conditions on all provinces. Our fear is that the realities of the different provinces will not be taken into consideration.

• (1515)

Quebec has therefore asked that there be no strings attached. I would also like to raise another possible criticism. Since 1997, when families take advantage of \$5 child care, they no longer have access to tax credits. As a result, there has been \$1 billion in the federal government coffers since 1997.

So it is obvious that the great gift we are being offered by the federal government is its desire to impose conditions on Quebec. That does not hold water. Quebec has in fact bought most of its gift with its own money, by not getting tax credits back from the federal government. At the same time, the federal government wants to impose its criteria and conditions on the Government of Quebec. Besides, we ought to have been paid for having provided the federal government with this application of a child care system.

Beginning in 1997, it was a very ambitious project. The minister responsible for this file for the Government of Quebec was Ms. Marois under the leadership of Mr. Bouchard, who was the premier at the time. An economic summit had been held in Quebec and all the social and economic stakeholders contributed to the thought process resulting in this policy to introduce a day care system. Families were also asked to contribute—actually they sit on many boards—so that they could be asked for advice and recommendations on what a day care system should be in the CPEs, or early years centres.

We do not agree at all with the path that the Conservative Party is indicating to us today. It would be a mess insofar as support for families is concerned, for mothers and fathers who want to return to the work force or keep their job after having children.

The Government of Quebec's objective was to help women return to the work force. The provinces will be able to decide what they want to do in order to receive the money from the federal government. Insofar as Quebec is concerned, there is no doubt that the day care system, the CPEs and family day care are meeting a real need.

### Supply

If we were to opt for what the Conservative Party is offering today, it would be tremendously expensive for all taxpayers. Economists have made criticisms to this effect in the *Toronto Star*. For the guidance of the Conservative party, I would like to remind them of this.

They mentioned some surveys to the effect that all families would prefer to have contributions so that they could stay at home and take care of their children rather than joining the work force. The families were supposedly not really given a choice. Instituting a policy like this to help families that want to stay home and take care of their children would be less expensive.

I have contrary opinions from two critics who argued against the Conservative Party's vision. Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky, who are economists at the University of Toronto, sounded their warnings about this view of things.

They say that the Conservative Party's new policy plank on child care is likely to be confused, facing all directions at once. The authors show why the Conservative Party's proposal would not work and would even be more costly than a public day care system. They have reservations, therefore, about this day care policy of the Conservative Party of Canada.

They say the Conservative Party has never found it easy to come up with a policy on child care. They say as well that the Conservative party's new policy would go off in all directions.

• (1520)

So, subsidizing stay at home parents is not the solution, according to the two authors. The cost would be far too high. They even talk of costly losses for the economy. Some \$83 billion a year would be given to parents staying home full time during their children's preschool years. It would cost billions of dollars.

If this option were chosen, what would happen to the other parents, who want to return to the labour market and keep their jobs? There would be no solution for them.

Should one parent want to stay home for a while, but return to the job market later, and there are no spots in the day care system, then what happens? The system is very costly. In Quebec it has already cost \$1.7 billion to set it up. What will happen to the other provinces that do not seem to be in a hurry to implement this child care system?

It has to be said: setting up a child care system is the responsibility of the provinces. That will be the issue for all the provinces. Will they decide to put a day care system in place with minimal support from the federal government? There will be a lot of pressure for the provinces to contribute more than the federal government is offering.

It is offering \$5 billion over five years, at best. In the case of Quebec, then, it means some \$100 million. Very little—over five years—compared with Quebec's investment of some \$1.7 billion for the current fiscal year.

It would mean significant losses for the economy. If the Conservative Party proposal of parents remaining at home full time during their children's preschool years, the cost would be far greater

than a system comparable to what exists in Quebec. This one is high quality.

There was also the issue of the objectives regarding the set up of child care system supervised by trained personnel. It would enable children from disadvantaged situations to mix with children from elsewhere in different surroundings in order to prepare them for school and improve their performance. Thus, these children could be stimulated through the environment created in a child care facility.

That is what the Conservative Party rejected. It is unrealistic to think that a supervised child care system can be maintained in a family setting or in early childhood centres at the same time that parents are enabled to stay home to care for their children.

Quebec has adopted an integrated policy. Not only does it have \$7 child care, it has other policies to help families, such as the parental leave program, too. The Quebec government designed and implemented this initiative. Maternity leave is among the many other initiatives that the Quebec government wants to implement in order to help families.

As a result, we can offer other, realistic solutions to parents who want to work. This does not mean that the system cannot be improved or that other benefits should not be included. For example, some parents have atypical jobs and work in the evening. The previous Quebec government wanted to provide services to more people. We started by providing services for older children, and then we opened them to children aged 0 to 1 year. That way, more children could be served.

The Quebec government wanted to structure its low-cost child care services in such a way as to help the people eligible for these services, instead of leaving them no choice but to pay \$25 per child per day.

• (1525)

The Conservative Party has criticized the adoption of this system. It would prefer to help women who want to stay at home get paid for taking care of their children. However, adopting such an initiative would deprive the public of all other programs. The provincial governments would no longer have any funds to contribute to other programs that could help families facing different realities.

Another criticism is that this system is designed for urban centres and not rural regions, and that the Quebec model leaves a number of families hanging. In Quebec, we are trying to consider all these realities. That is why we are also offering home-based child care, which is more flexible. This kind of child care can be organized anywhere, since it is more flexible, and puts more importance on proximity to the child care centre.

Is the program the Conservative party is offering today inclusive? In my view and in the view of a number of observers, it is false to claim that this would be a more inclusive system. It would be better, of course, to recognize the needs of all families, but on the other hand, there would not be a day care system for the other families. It is said that the money would go into the parents' pockets. But the objective of the \$7 day care program—which actually cost \$5 at the time of the Parti Québécois government but was increased by \$2 under the Liberal Party of Quebec—was also to provide a stimulating environment for children, a more proactive arrangement based on preschool learning. That cannot be forgotten. That is one of the objectives of the early childhood centres and family centres. The teachers are trained to provide this environment for children. We must therefore keep this objective in mind and not lose sight of it. The Quebec model can certainly be improved, although it has tried to respond to all the various realities.

If we meet the Conservative Party's objective of some level of universality, how could we offer a universal program when all the money for the program would just go into the parents' pockets? In addition, how could the system be quantified or described? I am not saying that it would be impossible to do so for the families that want it. But it is much easier to follow the measurable changes in the children in an early childhood centre.

Five billion dollars is not enough. The Liberal Party may have a laudable objective, but they will not be able to achieve it. Pressure will also be put on the provinces. In the meantime, they will not be dealing with the fiscal imbalance.

The new Minister of Social Development is practising infringement on provincial jurisdictions by imposing rigid conditions that fail to take the differing realities of the provinces into account. Instead of talking about provincial jurisdictions, the government talks about the uniqueness of each province. Maybe it is less appealing.

Just today I asked the Minister of Social Development to answer the same question that was asked of three ministers in his government during the election campaign. In response to a question asked by a journalist or in an interview, they said that there would not be any conditions attached to this new program. The minister, for his part, answered that there would not be any penalties and the particularities of the provinces would be respected. Well, the Bloc Québécois demands more than that from the Liberal government. It wants an answer to the following question: Will there be conditions attached to this new program from the Liberal Party of Canada?

• (1530)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member. I have had the pleasure and the honour of working with her on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills Development, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. I know we share the same opinions on creation of a system, but not where the national level is concerned. That is understandable, however. I come from the province of Quebec, where we already have a system in place, and I think she made it clear what that system was and what its benefits were for Quebec families and children.

### *Supply*

I would like her to give a bit more detail on two points. First of all, since we are a national government, we have a national vision. She does not share that opinion, but it is nevertheless our responsibility to sit down and negotiate with the provinces. We are in the process of negotiating with Quebec and I feel that these negotiations must be respected and must continue.

Second, I would like to know whether she shares the opinion of our Conservative colleagues who presented this motion: that this is a terrible hodge-podge. Before there was just a subsidy for families, but now it is more than that. They want to respect the agreements we have already signed and perhaps also to introduce some funding for families. But I do not think that it is for families like the families in need that I know, for example the single women who need to work in order to lift their families out of poverty. They need an efficient child care system and that is precisely what is available in Quebec. Quebec makes available a system that is relatively inexpensive, one that can provide children with learning and give parents the means of lifting their families out of poverty.

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who sits with me on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills Development, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. In effect, the committee monitors two departments.

I will begin with the first question. Of course, negotiations can be allowed to continue. However, we have been waiting seven months. During the election campaign, we were told there would be no conditions attached to money for day care services. So, there is cause for concern.

Why is the government taking so long, when they know that five agreements have been signed outside Quebec? Perhaps the provinces agreed to the federal government's conditions.

During the election campaign, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the former Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Prime Minister told us there would be no conditions. In addition, on the eve of the election, in response to a question from a CBC journalist, the Prime Minister said there were absolutely no conditions attached to child care services. However, when they won the elections, it was a different kettle of fish.

The request is simply for there to be no conditions. That is not so hard. They should be able to sign the agreement with Quebec, without conditions. I am sure that this is the stumbling block in the negotiations with the federal government. Our role as the opposition is to remind the government of its commitments to Quebec.

As regards the second question, we cannot support the Conservative Party today, because it makes no provision for supervised and stimulating child care services. However, I have no criticism of women who want to stay home to care for their children or those who do not qualify. That is not what we are saying. That is not what I said. However, there is a need for a child care service to supervise children lacking a family setting where they can be cared for while their parents work.

### Supply

Those were very creditable objectives. The Liberal government in office is drawing on Quebec's day care policy, which the OECD has praised. Without this structure in the provinces, there would be no choices to offer families.

We know that this is a very expensive plan, an \$83 billion one. This does not come from me, but from economists who reviewed the proposal put forward by the Conservative Party and sharply criticized the implementation of such a policy. Indeed, it would not suit every family in Canada, in the absence of other alternatives.

There is already a shortfall. Other provinces are sadly lagging behind in providing this service to parents who are both working, as this is often the reality in many families. This service is not provided to single parents, men or women. And yet, they should be able to say, "I am going to work feeling that my child is in a safe environment, because I have decided to join the labour force". Or should they say, "I have no one around me who can take over and offer to take care of my children"?

As I said, I am not labelling the person who might decide to stay at home to look after her children, if she can do it. As parents, we are well aware that we should ensure that our children behave properly. What we are talking about today is something different. I do not believe this solution would be fair to many parents who are in the labour force or would like to go back to school. A \$7 a day system is not expensive, considering that \$25 a day is too expensive for those who want to join the labour force. That was no incentive to re-entering the labour force. Moreover, in Quebec, services are provided free to underprivileged families.

• (1535)

[English]

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the child care program in Quebec is certainly the one that everyone is focused on at the moment. As she said, it is quite expensive, but if we are going to have good child care there is a cost. As many economists have said recently, for every \$1 invested in early childhood development, we get \$2 in return later on down the road.

I want to raise an issue that is at the forefront in Quebec at the moment and ask her what thoughts she might have on it. It concerns the program in Quebec that is delivering care to 186,000 children at \$7 a day. The province has now cut \$40 million from that budget. Those of us who have been looking at child care and understand the research know that quality in child care comes with paying our workers well. There is the issue of pay equity and it is causing some labour strife in Quebec.

I am wondering what comments the member might have about that and how that plays out in terms of the high quality of child care that now exists in that province.

• (1540)

[Translation]

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon:** Mr. Speaker, I will answer this question without criticizing the choices made by the current government. There are political players in Quebec who can take care of that.

This brings us back to another debate, the one on the fiscal imbalance. There is certainly pressure on the provinces to provide social programs to various clients. We know full well that less and

less funding is available to the provinces. The Government of Quebec is even starting to accumulate debt. Ontario is having the same problem.

In spite of all that, the government does not want to address the fiscal imbalance. Yet, we are going to end up in this type of situation precisely because the provinces do not have enough money to contribute to social programs. I respect what has happened, but a \$40 million cut to a system that is praised by a number of international observers, including OECD, is disastrous. This system brings many families out of poverty. With lower child care fees, they are able to put their children in care and find work outside the home.

As long as we do not address the fiscal imbalance, we will come up short and not have enough money, as is the case with health. My colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot worked on the Subcommittee on Fiscal Imbalance. In reality, a number of policies could be implemented by the federal government to better support the provinces and prevent them from having to make these types of cuts.

We are politicians with a deep social awareness. We are rooted in our communities. The federal government's attitude leaves something to be desired. It is accumulating surpluses that will reach as high as \$166 billion by 2010, because of the EI fund in particular. This money could have been used to support the provinces. Unfortunately, the federal government has missed the mark many times.

I am responding, in part, to my colleague's questions. Nevertheless, I cannot say that these cuts will result in better pay equity or better structure for child care providers. Again, just look at who is failing to support the Government of Quebec.

[English]

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the opportunity today to put a few thoughts again on the record with regard to a national child care program and to say at the outset that we in the New Democratic Party disagree profoundly with the motion put forward today by the Conservatives.

We have been clear from the very beginning that we need a national child care program that is worth its salt and that actually will deliver on the principles that so many people have worked on based on research from many jurisdictions in the world. We need a national child care program that will provide a quality product for which we can all be proud and one we will speak to in the same tone as we speak today as Canadians to our health care system and our education system.

However we need to dissect the very simple approach offered by the Conservative Party in the previous federal election and over the last year, and in fact coming to the House for the second time in a matter of a month for debate.

The Conservatives' program of tax deductions for parents and their suggestion that it would somehow provide choice is actually the opposite of what would happen. Their program would not produce choice. It would limit choice. All of the experts, if we believe the experts, the research and the experience in Quebec, say that simply giving tax deductions to families does not create one new child care space. If we do not produce child care spaces, then the families in rural parts of the country, in small communities and in remote parts of the country, have no possibility of experiencing quality child care and quality early development for their children.

What the Conservatives are proposing today by way of this motion is to actually pay parents to stay home. We know that parents are already making choices and they want the government to support them in their choices. They want the opportunity to put their children in quality, safe, developmental child care spaces so they can be secure in the fact that they are taking advantage of every possibility to have their children grow, develop and become contributing citizens.

The motion today is a scheme to pay parents to stay at home but it will not create choice.

The program put forward by the government in consultation with provincial premiers goes a lot further to actually achieving a national child care program than what we are addressing here today but it does have some serious flaws. We question the government's commitment to really putting in place a program that lives up to its definition of national.

For the moment I want to focus for a second on the offering of the Conservatives. They have asked the government to cost out its program, and I agree with that. The government should be willing to tell us what it will cost and where the money will come from and it should be willing to put in place a mechanism of accountability on this. However the Conservatives did not do any analysis at all of their own proposal.

• (1545)

I know the figures I put forward here this afternoon will be a bit out there in terms of the extreme case scenario if what the Conservatives propose actually happens, but nevertheless we have to think about that and we have to understand how that might play out.

The idea of paying stay at home parents, at the centre of the Conservative child care policy, was recently trashed by two reputable University of Toronto economists, Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky.

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Toronto and reputable in one sentence?

**Mr. Tony Martin:** The Conservative member, who I expect wants to get some votes out of Toronto in the next election if he hopes to be the government, has just made a very derogatory remark about Toronto not being very reputable. I am sure he will have a chance later to share with us what he means when he says that Toronto is not very reputable.

The \$2,000 tax deduction from the Tory platform, about \$600 to \$800 per child for a typical family, ignores the reality that paying parents to stay at home is much more expensive. If a large number of parents take up the offer to stay at home, social costs will be

### *Supply*

astronomical. We would have to pay them at least the rate of maternity and parental benefits, currently 55% of their regular pay up to \$413 per week. Those benefits, which now cover the first year of a child's life, cost about \$2.7 billion a year. If we were to multiply that by six to cover all preschool years, this would cost more than \$16 billion per year. Pretty soon we will be talking real money here for the Conservatives. This is what their proposal could eventually cost the economy of Canada.

Maternity and parental benefits cover only about 60% of all parents with newborns. I would hope that they would want to cover all parents. I do not think they would want to leave out families in Saskatchewan, in northern Ontario or in Prince Edward Island, but to cover all families it would cost \$27 billion per year.

We are now talking \$27 billion plus \$16 billion. Pretty soon, as I said, we will be talking money that will allow people to understand what the real cost of the Conservative program would be.

We are also talking about the loss of billions of dollars in lost production. With the cost of families' lost income it will cost the government substantial amounts of current and future tax revenues. In the long run this would cost the economy about \$83 billion per year. Taking the \$83 billion per year and adding on to that another \$27 billion per year, we are talking \$110 billion a year. Add on top of that \$16 billion and it is outrageous.

The proposal that the Conservatives are putting forward here today in terms of an alternative to the Liberals' national early childhood learning program, which we are supporting although we do not believe they have spelled it out clearly enough, is outrageous. It is something on which one would have to really think long and hard if we were actually serious about it and wanted to support it, which goes to my critique of everything that they have brought forward today. It is all very simplistic, ideological and has no real depth to it. When we begin to analyze it, as Mr. Krashinsky and Mr. Cleveland did, we begin to see how really out of whack it is and how outrageous and expensive it would be to all of us, to our economy, to our society, to families and to children.

Let us look for a second at the economics of child care, which again I do not think the Conservatives really fully understand because they cannot get out of this ideological box that they are in, which has them wanting us to go back to a *Leave It To Beaver* time in our history when perhaps families could afford to have a parent at home looking after the children.

What the Conservatives fail to be willing to recognize is that a huge majority of parents have chosen to both work because of the economy and because women in particular have found their way in life to get educated. We as a society have to understand and appreciate the gift that is there and the contribution women can make.

### Supply

●(1550)

Families are making different choices and in making those choices they want the government to work with them to ensure their children are looked after in a way that reflects the quality they themselves would have given if a different choice had been made.

Let us look at the economics of this issue, which is really not rocket science but actually rather simple. This information is being put out by some reputable economists from, I dare say, Toronto. The economists say that for every \$1 spent on child care there is a \$2 economic benefit. That means for every dollar we invest in a child's early development, later on, in terms of the child's success in school and then in the workplace, we will see a \$2 return on that \$1 investment.

The child care community is clearly asking for this. We have to decide whether we want to spend 1% of our GDP on child care, which is not out of whack with what is going on in many places in the world today. We are talking somewhere between \$10 billion and \$15 billion a year. However on that 1% investment we would get a return of \$20 billion to \$30 billion down the road. Compare that to the over \$100 billion that would be taken out of the economy through the motion proposed by the Conservatives. Two dollars for every \$1 invested would increase tax revenues and decrease social, education and health costs.

Charles Coffee, vice-president of the Royal Bank of Canada, said:

A child's brain development in the first six years of life sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health. High-quality early childhood education produces long-term positive outcomes and cost-savings that include improved school performance, reduced special education placement, lower school dropout rates, and increased lifelong earning potential.

That was not me talking nor was it the NDP caucus. That was Charles Coffee, vice-president of the Royal Bank, and a very well respected economist. He also said:

Employers increasingly find that the availability of good early childhood programs is critical to the recruitment and retention of parent employees.

It's estimated that work-life conflicts cost Canadian organizations roughly \$2.7 billion in lost time due to work absences.

Charles Coffee is a very well respected member of the Order of Canada and does a lot of work in communities across this country.

If some members here have difficulty with Charles Coffee, for whatever reason, then let me tell them what David Dodge, Governor of the Bank of Canada, had to say about this. He said:

While parents, along with some psychologists, sociologists and public health experts, have long intuitively understood the importance of early childhood development, it is really only over the last quarter century or so that scientists, physicians and social scientists have come to recognize the crucial role played by ECD. The literature clearly shows that intervention to improve maternal and infant health, to support parenting, and to provide early childhood education is effective in improving readiness to learn at age six, thus raising the efficiency of primary schooling as a tool of human capital formation.

I think it is clear that if we understand some of the research that has been done on this, if we understand some of the economists and their analysis of what the Conservatives are putting forward, and if we listen to what these economists are saying about the benefit of investing money in early learning and child care, we will see that the country, if it is going to be competitive in the global economy, needs to have a first class national child care program.

We need a first class national child care program that will take root in every province and in every region of the country and one that is based on the best research and is rooted in the principles that the child care community has developed over the last 20 or 30 years in this country, which is quality, universality, developmental and accessibility.

●(1555)

The program, if it is to roll out effectively and if we are to hold whatever government is in place accountable for the expenditure of money required to do that, will need to be framed in legislation. Therefore, we will be pushing the government to move in that direction and we will be critical of it when it does not, which I hope to speak to very briefly this afternoon.

A critique of the Conservative proposal is that it is a bit bogus to pit stay at home parents against a national child care strategy. I do not think there is anyone on any side of the House who does not believe that parents give quality care to their children, and they should be given opportunity to make that choice. However, to pit parents who choose to stay at home against parents who choose to go into the workforce and in doing that their attempt to find quality child care is to be disingenuous if nothing else.

Already we are doing things to recognize the contribution that families make to the upbringing of children. In our tax system there is a spousal exemption. There also is the child care expense deduction which is not for stay at home parents. It is for unregulated child care.

The national child benefit is key. This only goes to working parents. Again, I would invite the Conservatives, if they are really concerned about low and modest income families, to stand up with me and demand the government in Ottawa and the provincial governments stop the clawback of the national child tax benefit supplement.

This is a program of significant money, over \$1,000 per child, that is supposed to go to the most at risk and vulnerable of our children. However, because parents are not participating in the workforce, that money is clawed back. Therefore, money that could have gone to helping parents in the low and modest income levels who choose to stay home and look after the children is being clawed back by the government.

If the Conservatives are truly sincere and interested in doing something for modest and low income families in the interest of looking after children and reducing child poverty, which a national child care program will go a long way to doing as well, they should stand with me and join the fight to stop the clawback of the national child tax benefit.

There are a number of things that are being done to improve the lot of families and parents who choose to stay home. We can always do more. We can increase the national child tax benefit. We can find ways to support families who make those choices, but not at the cost and expense of putting in place a national child care program and funding it so it works. We should be enhancing all those supports for families and children.

What should Liberals do to confront this very real challenge? What should they do to confront the challenge that has been put before them by the Conservatives, the child care community and ourselves? They should move away more aggressively than they are at the moment and truly put in place a national program.

I asked the minister earlier what defined a national program for him and he had no answer. If one wants to look at it, he has a series of bilateral agreements now. He has \$5 billion in a budget that is yet to be passed. He is working with us as New Democrats to see if we cannot get that money through the system and to the provinces that need it.

• (1600)

However, the kind of hesitancy or lack of confidence that we see in the government and in the minister and his staff indicates that something is lacking in the commitment to truly impose and provide a national child care program.

We want a national child care program that is based on the best research. We want a national child care program that is rooted in legislation and that is adequately funded. Anything short of that just will not cut it. It will not provide the kind of program that we know is possible, particularly when we look at what we have done with health care and education.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Côté (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, child care is something extremely important to me. Among other things, I was a member of the board of administration of an early childhood centre in Pont-Rouge for seven years. My wife is an early childhood educator. So, obviously, I have a special interest in today's debate.

There has been much talk in this debate about choices made by parents and their participation. In Quebec, there are currently about 1,000 early childhood centres, the CPEs. Each centre is run by a board, the majority of whose members are parents. On average, there are around ten parents per centre. So that means there are 10,000 parents who are directly involved in selecting educational programs and services for their children.

I do not know what the member thinks about this, but is this not a good example of parents making choices in the best interests of their children?

• (1605)

[*English*]

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, the Quebec government is providing 186,000 children with quality child care for \$7 a day. That is a truly remarkable investment. We need to commend it for that. I believe it was brought in by the Parti Québécois at the time and Pauline Marois, who is now seeking the leadership of that party. They rooted that. It is a community based, volunteer, not for profit approach.

I would be remiss if I did not give kudos or credit to some degree to the government of the day and to the Minister of Social Development. The first two agreements that he signed with provinces in this evolving national child care program was with Manitoba and Saskatchewan. We were pleased to see in the agreements a commitment to a not for profit delivery mechanism.

### *Supply*

Absolutely, Quebec has done some marvellous things and we should find ways to repeat that across the country.

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would commend the hon. member. I thank him because he has been out there campaigning for a national early leaning and child care system. He is very supportive of the initiative of the government and we appreciate that.

I want him to elaborate a little on the economic benefits. It is important for Canadians to understand the economic benefits. Her Majesty's official opposition is constantly referring to economic benefits. However, when we look at the proposals it has put forth, my question would be this, and I am hoping to have an opportunity to ask it of the next speaker on the other side. How do we keep a balanced budget? How do members opposite align that with their fiscally responsible rhetoric, while at the same time look at a system that will cost millions of dollars, according to the type of proposal they have made?

The hon. member made a few remarks, but I would ask him to repeat some of the remarks about the economic benefits. I think this is very important for low income families.

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. The economic benefits are overwhelming when we consider them.

Employers increasingly find that the availability of good early childhood programs is critical to the recruitment and retention of parent employees. It is estimated that work/life conflicts cost Canadian organizations roughly \$2.7 billion in lost time due to work absences.

There is a \$2 return for every dollar invested in early childhood programs in increased tax revenues and decreased social, educational and health costs, not to speak of the contribution that we make to the economy of a community when we pay child care workers adequately.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to ask the member for Sault Ste. Marie a couple of questions. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate him for the incredible devotion he has had to the introduction of a comprehensive, universal, accessible, quality, not for profit child care system in our country. He took up the challenge given to him by our leader, the member for Toronto—Danforth, from day one. He was literally out across the country last summer almost immediately after the election. If we end up with the kind of child care system we need, his contribution will have had a great deal to do with it.

My question concerns the motion before us today, brought forward by the Conservative Party and specifically by the member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove. Given the lack of substance behind this, she feigns concern about any possibility of there being a two tier system for child care.

### Supply

The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie has poured his heart and soul into this issue. He has done this not just on an emotional level but on a very substantive level. My question for his is this. Is it not the case that we end up with a two tier system when the Liberal government of the day refuses to commit to a not for profit system? Surprisingly the member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove has said that her concern is about the possible creation of a two tier child care system. However, she then goes on to argue the case for championing those who want care outside a publicly funded system. It seems to me that is exactly how we end with a two tier system.

Could the member comment specifically on the hazards in the proposal before us alternatively by the Conservative Party?

• (1610)

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely correct. It is not only the proposal put forward by the Conservative Party, but if we go down the road the Liberals suggest, which is to open this to for profit as well as not for profit, we will end up with two tier as well. That is what we are seeing under the stewardship of the government in our health care system, two tier health care.

We have to become very serious about where we want to invest our money if we want the best return for our families, children and communities. If we continue down the road, as suggested by the Conservatives by way of this resolution, that is exactly what we will have. We will have no child care in small, remote, northern and rural communities across the country. The for profit private sector child care will not go where there is no profit to be made.

Therefore, it behooves us all to focus and ensure that whatever child care program we bring in, it is a national program. It will be if we become the government or have greater influence after the next election. We have to ensure that it is truly a national program based on the best research available and on the principles enunciated by the child care community and rooted in legislation and adequately funded.

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I do not doubt the sincerity of the member's intention to honestly try to help families, particularly working families with children who have to juggle various things in their lives. The trouble I have is the idea of a national day care program is widely denounced by many groups and the vast majority of parents because it is a one size fits all program. It is denounced because it does not offer choice for families.

The program does not allow choices for parents who work shifts. Perhaps parents will decide for a period of time to work opposite shifts. One parent will work the night shift and the other will work the day shift so they can provide care for their children. It is a government run, government regulated day care and if parents do not fit into that paradigm, they are out in the cold. Their tax dollars will still be collected to support that and they will still have to find their own child care options, so they will pay twice. They will pay to support the child care option that does not work for them and they will have to pay out of their own pockets for their choice of child care or forgo the income to stay at home. Could the member comment on that?

He also mentioned that no one in the House believed that parents did not provide high quality child care. That is incorrect. The

minister himself stood in the House, and it is in *Hansard*, and said that his program would offer families higher quality day care than parents could provide themselves. That is a slap in the face of parents who think they are qualified to take care of their own children. There is at least one person in the House who believes parents cannot give quality day care, and that is the minister.

**Mr. Tony Martin:** Mr. Speaker, let me say in defence of the minister, I have been here every time we have had this debate. I have listened to the minister on several occasions. I never heard him say that.

Certainly, the Conservatives would lead Canadians to believe that this is what he believes, but it is not. I know from having met with the minister and hearing him speak in public that this is not what he believes. It is certainly not what we believe. I believe it is not what anyone in this place believes. Then again, it is more in keeping with the rhetoric of the Conservative Party members over there who put out these preposterous statements and truths as they see it.

I would like to know if the member would not mind giving me a list of those people who have denounced a national child care program. I do not know who they are. I have heard from individuals across the country who I believe, if we did any research, would be connected to the Conservative Party and who have phoned, written or faxed their opinion. I have not heard from any reputable organization from across this country denouncing the national child care program.

As a matter of fact, most of the organizations that I have talked to, and I have listed a number of economists here this afternoon, are suggesting that for every \$1 invested in child care there is \$2 returned and that it is a good investment.

• (1615)

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member said that he had never heard of anyone ever denouncing the child care program. I have here an article in today's *Calgary Sun* quoting extensively from the Kids First Parent Association doing that very thing. I would seek unanimous consent to table this article.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to table the article?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Niagara West—Glanbrook. It is a pleasure to speak today to the motion brought forward by my colleague from Edmonton and the Conservative Party critic on child care.

This motion, along with the Conservative Party policy on child care, demonstrates that a forward looking and inclusive universal plan is possible. Unfortunately, the Minister of Social Development is not willing to accept that improvements can be made to his day care scheme. Unfortunately, he has attempted to close debate on this issue in favour of his top down institutional scheme.

The Conservative Party has listened to Canadians and has brought forward a policy that leaves no one behind. It respects provincial jurisdiction, encourages choice in types of child care parents can accept, and freely allows for cultural, linguistic, religious and social input. The Conservative policy is not a close minded, one size fits all ministerial order.

Today's media has reported what we have known on this side of the House for a long time. The Minister of Social Development is determined to institute his two tier day care scheme at all costs.

He refuses to meet with informed experts who may have constructive improvements to his policy. He refuses to explain what the 9 out of 10 children who cannot access this program can do instead. Where will they go? He refuses to explain how his plan would not fall victim to the problems of the Quebec model he plans to emulate.

He refuses to explain how low income families with part time workers would benefit. He refuses to explain how self-employed or contract employees would benefit. He refuses to explain how universal access would work for rural families. He refuses to explain how shift workers would have a choice under his rules.

He refuses to explain how parents who want to raise their children in minority, social, linguistic, cultural and religious environments would be accommodated fairly. He refuses to discuss the tens of billions of dollars his program would end up costing. Even worse, he refuses to back up what he does say with facts, research and evidence.

I have received numerous letters on this issue, mainly from people feeling frustrated that the minister is not listening to them.

Here is a letter the minister received today from Paul Holmes in Victoria, and I was copied on it. Once the minister notices that the letter is not singing praises about his policy, he probably will not read the whole thing. So, I will read it instead:

You were a hero of mine when I was growing up! I still have at least a dozen (of your) hockey cards in my collection. If I knew back then that you would one day be the man responsible for ruining 7 years of planning for my wife and I, I would have felt differently.

As a father-to-be (in about 7 weeks), I am experiencing all the usual anxiety. But on top of this, I am one part alarmed and two parts saddened by the proposed National Daycare Program.

My wife and I both run our own small business, and, although business is stable, our combined household income definitely falls somewhere toward the low end of middle-class.

Because we are both self-employed, we receive no EI benefits for maternity or paternity care—we must survive this time on our own savings.

We made the decision long ago to delay having any children until we could afford to have one of us care for our child at home during the early years. We are now both in our 30s, and decided the time has finally arrived.

I respect those who choose to put their children into daycare (or those who have no choice), but we diligently planned and knew the sacrifices we would have to make to take care of our child at home. Or, at least we thought we knew the sacrifices we would have to make!

We make no qualms about paying our fair share of taxes on our soon-to-be reduced household income, and we have accepted that we will be losing an entire income for the sake of caring for our child. But now, thanks to your proposal, we must pay for other people's child care, too!

• (1620)

When the costs skyrocket for this program, which you admitted is inevitable in a television interview, our taxes must also go up.

### Supply

And when our taxes go up, we will be on such a thin edge already, that we will almost certainly be forced to enter our child in daycare. All this, despite our years of planning to care for our child at home! I hope you can empathize with me on some level. Do you understand just how totally disheartening this is?

The facts are simple: if you do not introduce this program, we will have a choice for our child care; if you proceed, you will almost certainly take our choice away. If you are keen on helping parents, as you claim your proposal is intended to do, why not simply reduce taxes for all parents? This would certainly help us, and it would help parents who have their children in daycare, too.

At the very least, if you must do something, please do something that has a neutral effect on us and other parents who choose to care for their children at home! Is it too much to ask for the government to not hurt our new family by destroying everything we have planned for?

The second letter came from Jean Howell in Victoria and it states:

Dear Minister,

I was privileged to receive a copy of Paul Holmes' fine letter. I wish to add two very important points from the point of view of a retired lady who took five years out of her teaching career to raise four children to school entering age and who paid for her own mother's helpers once they were all duly enrolled.

My current pensions are reduced by over \$500 per month in terms of 2004 dollars which is when I retired. They would have been reduced even further had I not purchased some of the time with more of my taxable income. This purchase resulted in a reduction of joint family income over a second five year period. In total, our family decision to have four children resulted in 10 years of productive losses with absolutely no tax relief other than the fact that I had no taxable income for five of the years while my husband was sole support.

I am also pleased to see that copies of these letters are going to [Ms. Carol Skelton]. I believe that her caucus members have put together a very comprehensive plan for taxpayers and parents that would give much greater freedom to parents to choose a way in which their children's future is planned.

I strongly urge you, Minister Dryden, to look at the ideas in these two letters and to listen to the ideas coming from the critic in the Conservative caucus. I know that your hockey training was to watch for the puck and stop the puck. I believe this is a time for you to let in some of the pucks.

On the issue of daycare, Minister Dryden, it is time to see—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I remind the hon. member that she cannot use in a quote a minister's name. I let it go once or twice, but it is obviously a habit of this letter writer. I would ask the member to insert "the Minister of Social Development" instead.

**Mrs. Carol Skelton:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize.

On the issue of daycare, [hon. Minister of Social Development], it is time to see the ideas coming from the opposition team and let at least the daycare ones through.

The frustration in these letters is evident. As I said before, there are numerous letters just like this. The minister knows this. Most of the letters were addressed to him and simply copied to me.

If the minister did read them, why is he ignoring them? In the responses that I have seen, if they used the word "taxes" once, he refers them off to the Minister of Finance. Is he too scared to answer or does he simply not have the answers? The minister should be willing to defend his program while at the same time be willing to change it. This is a delicate balance we have not seen from him since he arrived here last year.

### Supply

Canadians have overwhelmingly said they do not want a two tier day care program like the Liberals are proposing. Parents have said they want to choose a child care arrangement that works best for their families. They have diverse needs and want diverse choices. One size fits all policies are not the solution. They never have been and never will be. Provinces have consistently said they need the freedom to make arrangements to address their specific needs.

Canadians do not want to abandon rural residents like the Liberals do. Canadians want to respect shift workers, part time workers and low income workers. It is time for the minister to open his mind to constructive and innovative solutions that will benefit all Canadian families.

• (1625)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think we have heard anything new, but just what has always been the rhetoric coming from the other side in terms of tax breaks. I think it has been made very clear by other members in the House today that this is not a solution in setting up a system. It is not a solution in terms of having choices.

As many letters as the hon. member has read, I can read many others that have been sent to Social Development Canada asking for an early learning and child care system.

I did not hear anything in the hon. member's speech about how that party is going to continue to say it will be fiscally responsible and at the same time pay for the tax breaks it is going to give to all families, according to what it says, although it talks in terms of an elitist approach to tax cuts and at the higher level of two working parents at \$50,000. Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps she would like to enlighten Canadians who are listening on exactly what she means by tax breaks and also what she means by other initiatives. I have not heard anything in terms of the other initiatives.

Other members said earlier that they are going to respect the agreements in principle that the government has signed. Five of those agreements have been signed with the provinces. The Conservatives are going to give tax breaks. They are also going to allow for day care centres in churches and all sorts of other structures. That cost has not been tabulated by the hon. members.

I would like the member to let Canadians know what the cost is. At the same time, as long as they are spending this money, how are they going to keep a balanced budget, as we have done for eight consecutive years?

**Mrs. Carol Skelton:** Mr. Speaker, for the parliamentary secretary and the government sitting over there, as the member said earlier, we will respect the agreements that she and the Liberals have signed with the provinces. When the time comes, Canadians will see our policies, how they will be costed out and how we will prove the economists' words and what they say about it.

There are a lot of assumptions from the other parties about what our policies are, but the whole issue is what the government is doing and how the Minister of Social Development is accounting for all that he has done.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to ask a question or two of the member for

Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar. I listened carefully to what she said. I have not been in the House for all of the debate on this issue, but I did hear the comments made by the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle and I have read the article he referred to.

There is one thing that distresses me a great deal when all is said and done. When I try to make sense out of the position of the Conservative Party, I am very distressed at the extent to which there is a grotesque misrepresentation of what is proposed in the way of a national child care program.

To say, as is asserted in this article that was referred to as a real expression of what the Conservative Party supports, that this proposal is one size fits all and accessible only to a few families, that it is a plan that only supports one choice and is a nine to five institutional day care, is just dead wrong. It is purely inaccurate.

I would like to ask the member to comment. How does it serve the need for a comprehensive child care system that has flexibility, that respects the different needs, rural and urban and in terms of shift workers and so on, to misrepresent what the potential is of the programs being put forward?

Second, and very briefly, why is it that Conservative members when they speak to the child care issue almost never acknowledge the extremely valuable early childhood enrichment experiences that come to children and families on top of in home care, on top of direct parental care? I do not want to say "never", but I have never heard in all their pronouncements the acknowledgement of the definite benefits to our children of being involved in early childhood—

• (1630)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.

**Mrs. Carol Skelton:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. member to go back and read from *Hansard* the statement by our leader on the first supply day motion we had on child care, when he spoke about how he and his wife chose child care for their two children, how they used it and how beneficial they found it.

I would like to talk about raising my own children and about my own family situation.

My daughter needed child care and had to find a young woman who could come and live with her, because she was a shift worker. She could not get child care or a day care program for her daughters at that time. I also look at my son, who is disabled and who is looking after their two daughters. He and his family cannot afford to use day care where they live. They do not have any help to get child care. I have another son whose wife stayed home to look after their daughter until she went to school. I have watched them struggle. I was very fortunate in being able to stay home to look after my children.

I see wonderful child care facilities and fantastic workers, and I have visited them and talked with them, but I look at our diverse country of Canada and I do not see anything but a one size fits all program coming from the Government of Canada at this moment.

*Supply*

**Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I stand before the House today somewhat concerned and saddened. I am saddened by the fact that this government and previous Liberal governments have continued to undermine and erode the very social fabric that has made Canada the great country that it is today.

The social fabric I am referring to is the family and the importance of the family in Canadian society. I find it disturbing, no, reprehensible, that this government continues to undermine the family as a unit, and also how this government continues to dismantle the things that family stands for, whether it is Bill C-38 and in its infinite wisdom changing the definition of marriage, or now, through its social engineering of having the state raise our children for us.

As Canadians we should be saddened and concerned by the road of moral decay that this government continues to take us down. We must be diligent in standing up for what is right for the family.

We must be wary of the Liberal government's hidden agenda when it comes to undermining the family. Let me give some specifics on how this government has discriminated against the family through its hidden agenda.

First is taxation. This government attempts to buy the Canadian public by going on spending sprees with taxpayers' money, yet it continues to discriminate against families in how families are taxed. For example, if families were allowed to split their income, then maybe more of their tax dollars and indeed more options would be made available to those who choose to stay home and raise their children.

At the heart of this issue is the right of a mother and a father to choose. Day care in Canada should be about the ability to choose, not about a two tier child care system as proposed by this Liberal government, not about a program run by a scandal plagued government that has never in its life run a program on time or on budget.

Government bureaucracies such as the proposed national child care program simply do not work. They certainly do not work nearly as well as the nurturing love of a mother and a father.

This arrogant government would have us believe that it is better suited or has more ability than a mother and a father to raise their own children. This is absolute nonsense. It is insulting to parents. Who does the government think it is and why does it assume that it knows best?

An article entitled "Mothering is Crucial to Child Development" talks about national day care:

It's not that the world hasn't experienced the disaster that a national day care system can bring to a nation. The Soviet Union, under communism, required all mothers to join the paid workforce with all children placed in state-operated child care. The USSR became a dysfunctional society for many reasons as evidenced by its high rate of crime, alcoholism, divorce, abortions, extremely low birth rate, etc. One of the reasons for this tragic dysfunction was cited by former Soviet Premier, Mikhail Gorbachev, in his book *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (1987), in which he claimed the dysfunction was due, in part, to the separation of children from their mothers in their early years, by placing them in the state-operated child care facilities. This, he claimed, was a major contributing factor for the breakdown of Russian society.

While this proposed plan would not force parents to put their children in the proposed government operated child care system, the increased taxation resulting from the establishment of this system will make home care for children a diminishing option for parents.

What most parents would like is choice or more options. Why is this government so set against options for parents? Whether it is institutional day care, home care provided by the mother or father, or home care provided by another family member, parents should have the right to choose.

When I was born, my mother had a very successful career out of her home. She made the choice to take time to raise her children and to be with the kids as they were growing up. She chose to stay home while she raised her three children. As a family we could not afford it anymore than most of the working families today can, but it was a choice that my parents made freely.

My wife's parents also chose to stay home and raise their children. My mother-in-law, an accomplished artist, chose to stay at home and raise her four sons and one daughter. She also made sacrifices, not because she had to but because she chose to.

My wife is a successful businesswoman. She made the decision, as many of our generation did, to raise a family and continue to have a career. When we decided to have children, what was important to us was to have our family around us helping us with this very important task of raising, caring and nurturing our kids. We wanted the influence of our parents, not an institutional system, and we were very fortunate to have that option available to us. There are many parents today who would like to have that option available to them.

● (1635)

Grandparents are an integral part of every family. Unfortunately there are many families today who do not have their own grandparents available to them, but that does not mean this option is not available.

As our population continues to age, many seniors looking for opportunities to earn some extra income make great child care providers. Of course many of them do not have the institutional education that professional day care workers are required to have today. However, that does not make them any less effective. These individuals are the wisdom keepers who, through their determination, perseverance and dedication to family values built this country and made it what it is today.

Day care providers are not the only ones who can provide an educational environment for our children. Parents should also be given the right to choose.

Let me tell the House about the Langleys. Sandra and David are friends of ours who decided to home school their children. They receive no monetary compensation for what they do. As a matter of fact, they have made financial sacrifices to do what they do. Both Sandra and David are professionals with successful careers. As their children came along, they decided that one of them would stay at home to participate in raising and educating their children.

### Supply

Let me give the House another example of a family who has made financial sacrifices to choose the opportunity to stay at home and educate their children. The Koolsbergen family not only decided to provide their own day care, but they wanted to home school their kids as well and have done so very successfully. Their oldest son has just completed his first year in university as an A student.

The Liberal government plan is intolerant of the Langleys and the Koolsbergens and other families like them. The minister of social engineering says that parents are not capable of educating their own children and that only professionals can. That may be one option, but it is not the only option.

As stated in an editorial in the *National Post* on October 26, 2004:

Instinctive, loving interactions between parents and their children are the best way to ensure healthy mental and physical childhood outcomes. These are things that cannot be taught at a teachers' college.... Parents should have a wide range of options in regard to their children's care and education. Our priority should be to preserve existing options - whether provided by the free market or social networks - not to shut infants into one-size-fits-all programs.

The government is misleading the public about day care. The government does not have a plan, has never had a plan, and will never be able to carry out a plan that is fair, equitable and affordable to all people in this country. The Liberals are creating a two tier day care system in this country, one tier for the Liberal plan and one tier for the rest of us who are forced to fend for ourselves. Money for some, nothing for most.

This two tier child care system does not respect the needs of the majority of parents. If we are going to talk about the government getting involved in the lives of our children, choice still needs to be the primary consideration.

The Liberals are not being honest about the cost of this program. They have committed \$5 billion over five years, but less than \$1 billion will flow in the first year, and the actual cost will be much more than \$5 billion. The people who are going to get stuck with the bill will sadly be the taxpayers. We are the ones who will end up paying for a system that will only increase the number of subsidized, regulated day care spaces from 7% to 10%. That is right, \$5 billion-plus to increase spaces from 7% to 10%.

When the question was asked of the minister of social engineering about the long term cost of child care, his response was, "You really don't know. In fact, you don't need to know because the future is going to decide it". It sounds to me like the minister does not care because it will not end up being his problem, it will be somebody else's. It will be another government's problem for another day. In other words, the government does not mind making the financial commitments today that my kids, my constituents' kids and their generation will have to be financially responsible for tomorrow.

It would seem that not only does the government have a hidden agenda on this program, it has a hidden agenda in the actual cost as well. Tens of billions of taxpayers' dollars a year, but the saddest part is the lack of trust the Liberals put in parents, the lack of trust to give parents a real choice on how they would like to have their children raised.

This day care program will not give any options to those who do not fit in the rigid one system fits all proposed by the government. Shift workers, stay at home parents, or those living in rural ridings

like Niagara West—Glanbrook will not be able to access this program, but they will sure get an opportunity to pay for it. Just like those who choose to send their children to Christian schools, they will be forced to pay for one system without enjoying the benefits of another.

If we are going to talk about the government getting involved in our lives, choice still needs to be the primary consideration. The Conservative Party supports choice for parents. The Conservative Party recognizes that parents are in the best position to determine how to care for and educate their children. The Conservative plan is universal and equitable. The Conservative plan will give cash subsidies directly to parents. The Conservative plan will allow parents to make their own child care choices. The Conservative Party will treat all parents and families equally.

● (1640)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Perth—Wellington should be very careful in terms of putting words into the minister's mouth. He never said that parents are incapable. He never said that. It was quite the opposite.

As far as a hidden agenda goes, let us talk about the hidden agenda of the members opposite. I asked a very important question. I asked the hon. member who spoke before the member for Perth—Wellington, who is the critic, to tell us exactly what that party is offering. Is it tax cuts? Is it agreements in principle with the provinces? Is it other measures?

Let me tell the hon. member what the government has provided to support families with children. The Canadian child tax benefit is a tax-free monthly payment which helps over 80% of families. The child disability benefit and the Canada pension plan provide income support for low income families supporting children with disabilities. There is the eligible dependent amount for single, divorced, separated or widowed parents without children. There is the parental leave that we introduced. I could go on. Actually, I will be making those remarks in my speech to follow.

We have no hidden agenda, but I will ask the hon. member the same thing I have been asking since this morning. What is it that the Conservatives are actually providing as a choice? All we have heard is a tax break. That tax break breaks down to \$400 for someone who chooses to work, or has to work in the case of a single mother who wants to get out of poverty, and who actually wants an early learning and child care program.

I have done all three, as I said earlier. I have stayed home with my children. I have had a grandparent take care of them. I have also placed them in an early learning and child care centre. No one on this side of the House objects to giving families the choice to actually stay home and take care of their children. We have actually given them some benefits.

I am asking the hon. member, what will his party do to balance the budget and at the same time offer tax cuts?

**Mr. Dean Allison:** Mr. Speaker, it is good to see that the Liberals are finally getting it, that choice is what we have been talking about for some time.

The question I have is about this \$10 billion black hole. We already know the Liberals have no idea how it will be paid for or who will be paying for it and how the system will be rolled out. It has been fairly misleading. The \$5 billion is really just seed money to get started. Quite frankly, the \$1 billion that I talked about, less than that, will not cover anything in the first year.

Once again I go back to what I said during my speech. We believe parents should have a choice. If parents wish to bring in local care providers, whether it be a neighbour down the street, an elderly woman, or whether they would like to have their mother or their mother-in-law involved, that is a choice they should have.

They should also have the benefit, whether it be a tax break or a tax incentive, as a result of not having a chance necessarily to be involved in a national day care program. Those options will not be available to everybody, depending on where they live.

• (1645)

[Translation]

**Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in reaction to what my Conservative friend had to say. In Quebec, as everyone knows, the day care system offers various ways of caring for children. There are facilities that bring together a number of children and there are also home-based child care agencies that have been developing for about 20 years in Quebec.

For children, the day care centres are places for socialization, early detection of problems, and prevention as well. The system of centres is an instrument with which Quebec, as a community, provides adequate service for children while also meeting the needs of parents. As my friend from Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier said, there are 1,000 day cares involving between 10,000 and 15,000 parents in Quebec, thanks to major participation from the province of Quebec.

I also wanted to highlight the home child care agencies, which are part of Quebec's day care system. They can be found in communities and can also be adapted to the needs of the parents. They are not big facilities, simply parents who care for children at home, but they are supervised by professionals.

I asked myself the following question. When there are parents who have difficulty accessing child care services, the home child care agencies can meet their needs, a little like school boards vis-à-vis schools. Should individual private schools be developed for parents who, at some time, cannot let their children to go to school? In the same way, day cares are part of a public system. I find the discourse of my Conservative friend somewhat annoying in this regard.

[English]

**Mr. Dean Allison:** Mr. Speaker, when we look at rural ridings or ridings that do not have access to major centres, there still needs to be choice and I do not believe that one size fits all for everyone.

We understand there is a day care system in place and that is great, that is fine. People need those as options. What we have been talking about is one size does not fit all. The member mentioned that there are different options in Quebec. We are proposing the different options, but we should still allow options for families. There are family members who want to look after their kids. We should not

*Supply*

deny them that right and that opportunity. They should not be forced into another system.

[Translation]

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, investing in children and families is one of the best ways to improve Canada's social and economic fabric.

The Government of Canada knows that, and this is why it has developed a national early learning and child care strategy that will meet the needs of our families and their children.

Because each family is unique, our strategy provides a real choice that respects the various priorities and circumstances of Canadian families.

[English]

The motion before us suggests that the government's plan to support early learning and child care in Canada somehow creates a two tier system, which is a myth created by the other side.

The member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove believes that the federal government's approach to child care and early learning ignores the unique characteristics and challenges of each province with respect to families. The member contends that the federal government is somehow discriminating against certain types of families. Before I address these misconceptions, I would like to put the early learning and child care framework into context.

Over the past few years, the Government of Canada has taken action on several fronts to support families and children. I am still waiting for an answer from the other side as to what exactly the Conservatives are going to do to support families and children and keep their fiscally responsible attitude.

Low income families need more support. In fact the Government of Canada has already introduced the Canada child tax benefit and the national child benefit supplement. This is helping more than 3.5 million low income families with the cost of raising their children. This will rise to \$10 billion. The Government of Canada has also added a child rearing dropout provision to the Canada pension plan. This ensures parents who take time out from full time work to raise their young children do not experience reduced pensions later in life.

Furthermore, families who are raising a child with disabilities face extra costs. For that reason the Government of Canada has introduced measures such as the new child disability benefit and other tax based initiatives.

Working with the provinces and territories, the Government of Canada is also helping to improve and expand a range of early childhood development programs. In addition, it is expanding the Understanding the Early Years initiative to at least 100 more communities across the country. This will help provide communities with the information they need to ensure their children are ready to learn when they start their education.

*Supply*

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

All these programs are important, because they validate the critical role that parents play with their children. Contrary to what members opposite are claiming, we do value the role that parents play with their young children.

Despite all the benefits provided by these initiatives and incentives, we must do more for families and children. We must also recognize that the needs of families and their children continue to evolve.

Canadian mothers have traditionally played an essential role in terms of meeting the emotional and intellectual needs of their young children, and they continue to do so. However, the fact is that, today, in Canada, seven women out of ten who have preschool age children are members of the workforce. In other words, there are 1.4 million children under the age of six whose mothers work outside the home. Yet, we have regulated child care spaces for less than 20% of them.

I think it is very important to take these numbers into consideration, but the other side is not doing that.

Canada must do more. Studies clearly indicate that early learning programs are essential for children to achieve success. Not only do they facilitate children's emotional and intellectual development, but they also enable many parents to work if they choose to do so.

[*English*]

I want to emphasize this point. Many low income families struggle to make ends meet because they only have one income. Providing families with better and more affordable child care options will give parents, who choose greater flexibility and opportunities, to find and keep work which will in turn help raise their standard of living.

There are other economic arguments that are worth mentioning. I think certain members in the House have mentioned them during today's debate. When a family does not have adequate child care, parents must often leave work early or arrive late to care for their child. In addition to creating stress in the parents' lives, lack of adequate child care also undermines the productivity of their employers.

Small wonder the research shows investing in services for young children and their families, including children in middle income families, generates impressive dividends. For every dollar invested our income gains between at least \$2 through increased tax revenues and decreased social, education and health costs. This point has been debated today.

[*Translation*]

For all these social and economic reasons, we must invest in early learning and child care. In doing so, we will be meeting the needs of Canadians who have clearly expressed their views on this issue. Ninety percent of Canadians believe that the primary role of child care is to promote development. Ninety percent agree that the federal government must help the provinces and territories provide affordable, quality child care.

The Government of Canada is responding to the concerns of Canadians. In 2003, the federal, provincial and territorial govern-

ments signed an agreement on early learning and child care. Over five years, the Government of Canada will transfer more than \$1 billion to the provinces and territories to help them improve and expand their programs and services in this crucial area. Down the road, this will represent over \$350 million a year.

However, even this significant investment is not enough. Our children's future requires a more comprehensive approach. This is why, in the October 2004 throne speech, the Government of Canada made a commitment to work with the provinces and territories to put in place a national early learning and child care program. The federal government confirmed, in its 2005 budget, that it will invest \$5 billion more over five years in this initiative.

• (1655)

[*English*]

Over the past several months the Minister of Social Development has been working with his provincial and territorial counterparts to develop a national vision for this national system based on four key principles: quality, universal inclusiveness, accessibility and developmental.

These agreements in principle will set out the overarching national vision, principles and goals for early learning and child care. Clear and measurable objectives, eligible areas for investment and funding levels, strong accountability measures, a commitment to work together and to share knowledge and best practices, and a provincial and territorial commitment to develop an action plan for the new funding in consultation with citizens and stakeholders by December of this year.

In recent weeks the minister has signed such agreements in principle with his counterparts in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia to help these provinces develop quality early learning and child care. The minister believes we will finalize similar agreements with other provinces and territories soon.

I want to repeat what the minister said in the House. He said that for British Columbia it will be a 105% increase, for Alberta it will be a 121% increase, for Saskatchewan it will be a 95% increase, for New Brunswick it will be a 132% increase and for Nova Scotia it will be a 90% increase. I could go on and talk about how many more spaces will increase because of the initiative of the federal government.

[*Translation*]

The enthusiasm shown by the five participating provinces for this national initiative speaks volumes. But for no obvious reason, the hon. member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove and her party believe that, with this system, the Government of Canada is imposing its will on the provinces and territories.

The motion before us accuses the government of ignoring the unique needs of the various provinces and territories in terms of child care. It is suggesting that the government is discriminating against low income families and shift workers.

Allow me to correct these misrepresentations made by the party opposite.

[*English*]

The Government of Canada recognizes that early learning and child care within each province and territory is at a different stage of development. Each jurisdiction has varying needs and circumstances. That is why these agreements in principle give provincial and territorial governments the flexibility to enhance early learning and child care as they see fit.

Our national framework recognizes that the provinces and territories rely on a mix of profit and non-profit regulated services. It allows them to continue to define their own priorities so long as their choices meet the so-called QUAD principles: quality, universally inclusive, accessible and developmental.

[*Translation*]

The government is not trying to impose a single mentality on its partners. On the contrary, the national framework, which puts emphasis on choice, recognizes that each province and territory has unique needs and priorities. Contrary to what the motion before us states, the government does take into account that each province is unique and faces different challenges.

Furthermore, the government does not discriminate against any families. With this national framework, there will be programs and services to respond to the various needs and choices of families with young children, whether they live in rural or urban settings, and whether they need child care services from 9 to 5 or from 5 to 9. This flexibility exists; it is up to the provinces to decide.

The new initiative will include a variety of support measures for regulated care centres, nursery schools, child welfare services and preschools. This initiative is already very advanced in my province, in Quebec.

These programs will be suited to the unique needs of rural and urban communities. This will mean more part-time spaces, flexible hours for parents who work shifts, assistance for low income families and programs that meet various cultural or linguistic needs.

In fact, I had the opportunity of attending the opening of a day care centre in my riding of Ahuntsic, with the Minister of Social Development. The children will come from all the cultural communities, and the educators speak a number of languages. I had this experience myself with my youngest, who attended a Greek community day care in Montreal, where the children learn three languages: French, Greek and English.

• (1700)

[*English*]

Again, the federal government is not pitting one type of family against another and it is not that one vision of a family is better than another. We on this side believe there are various types of families and they each have the right to choose, as the hon. members on the other side have said, and we are giving them the real choice.

On the contrary, the government has developed a framework for child care and early learning that respects the unique characteristics of the Canadian family in all its many forms.

### *Supply*

Let me give two examples that illustrate how the agreement allows provinces to meet the particular needs of their own communities.

I must repeat that hon. members on the other side have said that they will respect the agreements in principle. Now that an agreement in principle is in place, Ontario is moving forward with its best start plan, which emphasizes children's readiness to learn. It will expand programs for children in junior and senior kindergarten throughout the province. This will ultimately provide a full day of early learning and care experiences at an affordable cost.

For its part, Manitoba will make investments to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of early learning and child care. This will take the form of increasing the number of child care spaces, enhancing subsidies and improving wages and training opportunities for child care workers.

The Government of Canada did not impose these priorities on Ontario or on Manitoba. The provinces developed their own priorities within the agreement in principle that will meet the needs of families and their respective communities. This is exactly how other agreements in principle will operate: on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation, and with the best interests of our families and children in mind.

I would like to end on a personal note. As I said earlier, as the mother of two children, I understand the challenges of parenting and the competing demands of a professional life and home life. My children were one and a half and three and a half when I arrived here. I also appreciate the desire of every parent to want the best for their children. I did and I am sure every single member in the House does also.

[*Translation*]

I am convinced that the Government of Canada's strategy in early learning and child care is a good thing for our country. I believe that it taps into the desire of all levels of government to do their best for Canadian families without losing sight of the fact that it is the parents in the end who decide how they want to raise their children. I repeat—or maybe I should say it in English—the parents decide how they want to raise their children. We have always respected that, despite what the opposition says.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos:** They are good at criticizing, but not listening.

That is what has to be remembered—the concept of choice. That is the difference. Our national framework on early learning and child care gives the provinces and territories the opportunity to choose how to assume their responsibilities to parents and children. It gives parents greater flexibility and more options in the ways they provide emotional and intellectual stimulation for their children.

*Supply**[English]*

For all those reasons I cannot support the motion tabled by the hon. member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove. She is not providing a real choice, as I said in my remarks. There is no question that a truly effective system of early learning and child care for every province and territory will not happen overnight. We have accepted that. It will take time and a sustained commitment to develop but I believe that the national framework for early learning and child care provides a solid foundation for this to happen. That is what we are looking at and that is why the minister keeps referring to the way we set up both the health care system and the education system in Canada.

The Government of Canada, the provinces, the territories and Canadian families share a vision. It is a vision, not a tax cut that we are providing and a common desire to help meet the needs of our families and children. I invite opposition members to join us in making this vision a reality for all Canadians.

• (1705)

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I hear a little bit of contradiction going on. First, we heard members from the parties on the other side of the House say that they have not heard any criticism of their plan from any group or concerned Canadians.

There are thousands of parents and dozens of groups that are adamantly opposed to this one size fits all approach. The difference is that they are being very vocal about it but the government is ignoring them. Unless a group is a government funded child advocacy group, unless one is a bureaucrat or a Liberal special interest group, funding will not be available from the government nor will it listen.

I believe the member talked about 1.4 million Canadians in the country. We heard the minister in question period today say that it would cost \$8,000 per child for a year's worth of babysitting. Here we have, by accident, revealed the real hidden cost for Canadian taxpayers, which is that it will cost about \$11 billion to fully implement the Liberal babysitting program.

Could the member tell us whether this amount has been verified by the minister or is she going to contradict her own minister on the actual total cost for that program?

I have a final question for the member. Why does she want parents paying twice? Parents who do not choose this one size fits all approach, who want to either forgo some income and stay at home with their child or use a relative, why should they have to pay day care twice, once for the choice that they believe is best for their family and once for the Liberals' big government scheme?

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos:** Madam Speaker, I would remind the hon. member that we are not talking about a babysitting service. The Conservatives keep talking about a babysitting service but we are actually talking about a national early learning and child care system. They keep denying that they always call it babysitting. They are talking about babysitting in very many ways but we are not going to go there.

As far as the cost goes, we have put on the table, with the provinces, \$5 billion and we are putting it on the table by keeping

our fiscal obligations to Canadians, something which the other side, after various questions today, did not answer. How will they keep a balanced budget? We have had eight consecutive balanced budgets and we still are able to put \$5 billion down for an early learning and child care system.

As far as choice goes, I think in my remarks I said that there were families who receive certain tax benefits. I do not have the time now to repeat them because I think there are other questions members want to ask but let us not forget the national tax child benefit that is in fact income tested, something they will not do when they give out tax break to families. It helps low income families.

I have in fact listened to all the groups. I have listened to them locally in my own riding. The reality is, and we can debate the statistics, but the majority, now 72% if not higher, of two working parent families are looking forward to an early learning and child care system so they can take advantage of a system that in the province of Quebec costs \$7.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Ahuntsic for dispelling some of the myths that keep being perpetrated by the Conservative members. If I thought they were as ignorant of the facts as their rhetoric suggests, then I would be forced to conclude that there are huge numbers of people out there in a total panic about what it is the government has in mind.

However, it is very important that the member for Ahuntsic has dispelled some of the myths and made it clear that the government's program is about choice. We are not just talking about a conceptual level. We are now talking about five agreements that have been entered into. That means there are eight more to go, one hopes, between the federal government and provinces. They will spell out that there is no thought about one size fits all. It is preposterous to keep making that claim, as we have heard here this afternoon again from the Conservative benches. This is a series of state operated child care centres. The Conservatives also use the word babysitting besides, which is really quite telling.

The member for Ahuntsic has said, and I know this to be true, that she is a working parent. She remained in the home at one time with pre-school children, worked outside the home with her children cared for in home by grandparents, and worked outside the home with children in child care centres. It is those kinds of options that in fact are available.

When we made those choices, those of us who are over the age of 40, there was no child tax benefit program and no parental leave. The options are increasing and to pretend that is not the case is simply ridiculous.

My question for the member relates to what I think is a regrettable omission on the government's part, and that is to specify that this is going to be operated on a not for profit basis. The universality is about the inclusion of children of varying needs with all types of requirements, but it is also meant to be universal so that it would be available to every child in order to ensure the best use of the available resources that go into non profit.

*Supply*

The question arises about what happens to those who are operating now on a commercial child care basis. I think for those that are community based and have some parental board involvement, it is very important to make a transition in order to operate on a not for profit basis.

However, I wonder if the member could address what is felt by a lot of people to be an unfortunate shortcoming and shortsighted aspect of this program that can yet be remedied.

• (1710)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos:** Madam Speaker, we stated that these agreements are agreements with the provinces. The provinces will be administering these programs and we are putting the money down. When we are talking about the for profit sector, we are talking about regulated child care.

If I were to use my home province of Quebec as an example, the profit and the non profit exist side by side, but they are regulated. The underlying principles are respected in the province of Quebec. The bottom line, if I may say so to the hon. member, is that there is universality, accessibility, and inclusiveness. That is what we are looking for in terms of establishing a national system of early learning and child care.

**Hon. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I, too, was amazed at the remarks about day care and babysitting. I have been in this House a long time and it is extraordinary that such views are still held here, given the changes in the nature of our society in the last 20 years. As the member said, over 70% of the families now have two parents working.

Had members of the opposition been here in the 19th century, soon after Confederation, when this place and similar places like it across the country were debating whether education should be compulsory and debating the cost of a few years of elementary school education, they would have probably argued against it. Then later when people were debating in this place and others whether high school education should become universal or whether it should be an option and that some parents should go one place and some kids should go nowhere, these same members would have been arguing against a Canada-wide system just as they are doing now.

Society has changed and we are trying to react to it, just as it did in those years long ago when elementary school education, high school education and later on post-secondary education were being introduced. Does my colleague not think that the Government of Canada should take the lead on these matters?

• (1715)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos:** Madam Speaker, the brief answer is yes. However, I also want to commend the hon. member because I know how many years he and I and others on this side of the House have actually worked toward arriving to today to have a national early learning and child care system. Let us not forget our agreements with the provinces prior to these agreements in terms of early learning and child care.

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Fundy Royal.

The Prime Minister recently suggested that the new national child care program will help to define us as Canadians. As a result, should we not take great care to ensure that the program reflects the values of Canadians, that it actually works for Canadians?

Unfortunately, the national child care program being proposed by the federal government is deeply flawed. We all understand the reality facing hard working Canadian families today. Unlike previous generations who had the option of having one parent stay home with a child, the majority of families either by necessity or choice have both parents working full time. As a result, these families face child care challenges that were not an issue for those previous generations.

How the state will respond to this new reality has been an issue of considerable debate. However, one aspect that should not be up for debate is the issue of choice. We must ensure that parents have choices and options in determining the best child care for their child.

I am happy to state that the Conservative Party supports freedom of choice for parents on child care. Our party realizes that parents, not the federal government, are in the best position to decide how to care for and educate their children.

Regrettably, that is not the position of the federal government. The Liberal plan for child care is a one size fits all bureaucratic model with little to no knowledge of the different needs of working families across this vast country. There is no acknowledgement of the needs of rural communities, shift workers or stay at home parents.

Will working families living in rural communities, like the towns in my constituency of Blackstrap, Outlook or Viscount, have the same access to the national child care program as those in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. We know the answer to that.

The Liberal Party's vision for child care is designed primarily for urban centres and will generally exclude families living in rural Canada where no day care facilities exist even though their hard earned tax dollars will fund the program.

How will shift workers benefit from a national child care program? The Liberal plan is centred on outdated notions of a 9 to 5 work day, increasingly at odds with the realities of the modern workplace. Political commentator Paula Simons stated that if we work evenings, weekends or early mornings, if we work long hours or odd shifts, day care is not a viable option. She said that in our 24/7 corporate culture, where at least 30% of Canadians do shift work, that means day care, no matter how cheap we make it, no matter how many spaces we create, can never be a universal solution.

How will the Liberal child care program help these Canadians? We know the answer to that too. It will not. What about a family where one parent has decided to stay at home with the child? What message is the federal government sending to these families when it says that it is going to spend public money to support child care in Canada, but the parents of that child will not qualify because they chose to stay at home? They made the wrong choice.

*Supply*

It is demeaning and insulting to the 47% of families with children between six months and five years who have at least one stay at home parent according to a Statistics Canada study.

In fact, I asked some of the more zealous advocates of a national child care program to be a little more sensitive when speaking about the deeply personal choices stay at home parents have made. For instance, the member for Beaches—East York, speaking in the House on a prior occasion, suggested that stay at home parents were merely capable of providing lesser child minding and not true child care for their children.

For those families who have sacrificed a few of life's luxuries and indeed even necessities to spend time with their own child in those precious early years, it is a little deeper than simple child minding.

I am not sure how someone cannot see why a mother of her first child would think that her child would be better served bonding with her than spending time with a child psychologist or a child development worker. I understand and indeed most Canadians also do too. According to the Vanier Institute family study, 9 out of 10 Canadians feel that in a two parent situation, ideally one parent should stay home to raise the children.

• (1720)

Yet, stay at home parents, along with those in rural Canada and shift workers, who will not have access to the Liberal day care plan by choice, opportunity or necessity, will subsidize this program. What is the government member's response to this? A shrug of the shoulders. According to the Minister of Social Development, this is all to be expected because we really do not know and in fact, we do not need to know because the future is going to be decided.

Canada's national child care system which, according to the Prime Minister, will define this country will never truly meet the needs of all Canadians as presently constructed. That much we do know.

Another troubling aspect of the Liberal approach is the manner in which the federal government has reacted to provinces that have a different concept of child care. Some provinces have suggested that they do not want to focus exclusively on institutional child care.

For instance, when New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord suggested that his province may utilize portions of the federal child care funding to provide enough support to make a difference to stay at home parents to provide for their children, the Minister of Social Development threatened that New Brunswick would never see any child care funding unless these alleged hardline demands were abandoned. He said that if that is an area of priority for that province, then that is an area it can act on in its own way.

Maybe the Minister of Social Development should discuss his concept of federalism with the Minister of Transport. When the member for Outremont followed the announcement of a newly improved parental leave program for his home province, allowing Quebec to run the program in a manner which it deemed best for its citizens, he said that it showed that we can be flexible and that there was no need to have a wall to wall solution.

Why is the national child care program any different? Why does the concept of federalism, as stated clearly by the minister's colleague, not extend to child care options for provinces like New

Brunswick? Why does he not want a wall to wall solution imposed on the provinces? I strongly urge the Minister of Social Development to heed the advice of the member for Outremont and be more flexible in recognizing the fact that each province is unique and faces different challenges in assisting the child care needs of working families.

According to a Statistics Canada report, the percentage of Canadian children cared for nationally in day care centres is 25%, while 34% are cared for by a non-relative, like a babysitter or a nanny. However, those numbers are dramatically different in my home province of Saskatchewan, where 54% of children are cared for by a non-relative and only 10% are cared for in day care centres. To simply impose upon Saskatchewan, or any province, a program that is not flexible and adaptable to its own special circumstances will not result in the intended consequences.

Different provinces have different child care needs. Different Canadians have different child care needs. There is no one size fits all wall to wall solution. Consequently, when we discuss child care, we need to broaden our scope beyond the realm of institutionalized child care and seek approaches to give working families more choices, not fewer.

That is why I believe the Conservative Party's proposal is the right direction. It puts freedom in the hands of working families with direct cash subsidies and allows them the choice of formal child care, day homes, relatives, nannies or stay at home parenting.

Depending on what they believe is the right choice for their particular circumstance, there is nothing more personal than the choice families make about the care of their child. Should we not ensure that the choices available are not restricted for Canadian families?

• (1725)

**Hon. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I keep hearing the expression "one size fits all". I am not sure what my colleague or her colleagues mean by this.

We are in a Confederation which, goodness knows, is a long way from Ottawa dictating to anybody. We are in a field of public policy where we are negotiating agreements with different provinces. Each of those provinces has its own individuality, its own economy, its own culture, and its own sociology. The same goes for the three territories. They are all very different. We are negotiating all these different agreements with them, so where is this one size fits all thing? What is it that we are actually talking about?

*Supply*

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich:** Madam Speaker, the best way to help the member understand this is to compare it with our school systems. We have such a variation of types of schools. We have home schooling, Catholic schools, public schools, Christian schools, hockey schools, et cetera. Some have uniforms and some do not. They try to apply universality of good quality education and accessibility. The provinces do try to fund them, they find out they cannot. Therefore, they close the rural schools and try to fund the schools in the bigger centres. Then we have the rural kids having to be bused to the schools.

I am curious as to how it would work with universal child care. I can see the way our school system is being handled by our provincial counterparts. They do a very poor job.

The universal health care system is supposed to be accessible and universal, and I do not see that working very well either. I do not know how the government will do with a national child care program.

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, child care and early learning advocates place the cost of fully implementing the national child care plan at somewhere between \$10 billion and \$12 billion per year. I know this because I sat with the Windsor and District Labour Council recently. The Canadian Auto Workers plan is a minimum \$10 billion per year.

The Minister of Social Development, however, has embarked on a plan concealing the true cost to Canadian families who will pay the taxes to support the fully implemented plan. He is only offering \$1 billion per year or what he calls a drop in the bucket.

This is a \$9 billion to \$11 billion per year black hole over five years. There is a shortfall of \$45 billion to \$55 billion, a cost that will be borne down the road by taxpayers when the government decides to spring the full plan on taxpayers.

How will a hidden cost of that magnitude be covered? Will it be covered by higher taxes, fewer programs and cutting spending in other areas or will the government have to borrow the money and drive us back into deficit to do it?

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich:** Madam Speaker, that is a very good question. Our province usually cuts programs. As I said, hospitals and schools are closed, all the things that are very important and close to the citizens. This is how governments usually fund programs.

I do not see how this is possible or affordable, watching the circumstance in Quebec right now. It will be very interesting to find out how it will handle its program right now. Child care workers will possibly go on strike because of pay equity differences, so then there are even more phenomenal and unseen costs. I am sure the government has not factored in any of the labour issues yet.

**Mr. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today on behalf of my constituents from Fundy Royal to speak to a very important issue. At this time I would like to commend the member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove. She has shown tremendous leadership on this file in offering what is a great, inclusive and encompassing alternative to what is a pretty draconian and invasive approach offered up by the Liberals and which will set us back quite a bit.

The Liberals have approached this issue with a big brother knows best kind of thinking. It is an idea that is fundamentally unfair to Canadians from coast to coast. It ignores parents who should be free, irrespective of any government interference, to make their own choices on how they raise their children. That would be pretty self-evident. Nowhere is more evident what parents would prefer, which is to be treated equally and for the government not to pick winners and losers in child care, than in my home province of New Brunswick right now.

As members know, negotiations have taken place and deals have been struck on child care, province by province. My province had some ideas. One was to treat all parents equally. That is an idea I support.

Many parents in my riding of Fundy Royal live in the rural parts of the riding. Parents leave for work in the morning or maybe in the evening on a night shift. They do not work nine to five necessarily. Some of them take their children to day care. Others take them to a trusted friend, someone who cares for children in their own home. Others perhaps take them to a private day care centre or perhaps one parent will stay at home with their children.

All those are legitimate choices that parents make. All those decisions are made. In New Brunswick, 33% of the parents stay at home with their children in the early years. About 35% place their children in someone else's home, a non-relative or a relative. Just over 20% of parents have their children in day care. There is a diversity of approaches that is consistent with our country. We live in a diverse country and I live in a diverse province. There are diverse approaches to how parents deal with child care.

However, the Minister of Social Development is proposing a system that only certain parents get to take advantage of, a system that penalizes those who choose to stay at home with their children, or who choose to have a grandparent or a friend care for their pre-school children. That is fundamentally unfair on many levels.

For one, imagine a scenario in my riding where one of the parents works an evening shift and does not have child care available, so they have a sitter. Maybe they make a meagre income. They are paying high taxes like the rest of us and they also are paying for someone to watch their children. Now we are asking them to pay to watch other people's children. That is the minister's system. Instead of benefiting all Canadians equally, we are picking winners and we are picking losers.

Last month the Prime Minister jumped ahead of the gun a bit. He was planning to fly into Saint John for a photo op. Officials in New Brunswick said simply that they wanted the ability to steer some of this money toward families who chose other ways of dealing with child care.

*Supply*

•(1730)

The minister's response to this was completely arrogant and completely out of touch. It illustrates big brother knows best. It illustrates all the reasons why people do not want this kind of program, the idea of some bureaucrat in Ottawa deciding how we in New Brunswick will raise our children. He said, "New Brunswick would never see any of its funding until it backed off its demands". What were its demands? That all parents would be treated equally.

It varies from province to province, but in my province it means ignoring the child care choices of 80% of the parents. Is this any way to deal with federal-provincial relations? I do not think so. To bait provinces and then strong-arm them into conforming with the Minister of Social Development's utopian idea of what child care should be in our country will not work.

I guess in his way of thinking we need a child care program of ever expanding size. He will not contemplate what it will ever cost. It is one size fits all and it is a giant nanny state approach to child care.

The minister of family and community services for my home province of New Brunswick stated this. I think it is pretty telling in this debate. He said:

What works for daycare in downtown Toronto is not necessarily what will work in rural New Brunswick. That is why we need to ensure that agreement is flexible enough to meet the needs of New Brunswickers.

I agree with him 100%. Why would we not seek that flexibility?

As I mentioned, it results in a doubling of the burden on parents who choose other alternatives for child care. They have to pay twice and that is unfair. Middle class and poor working Canadians may be subsidizing families that have a much higher income. I fail to see how that is fair or equitable or desirable in our country.

Quebec has made its choice. New Brunswick has a choice. Every province has its own choice. Right now we know there is the potential in Quebec of a strike by child care workers. The minister today in question period said that the Quebec model was his inspiration. There are inherent dangers in a model where there is the potential, because of labour unrest, that families do not receive child care.

These ideas sometimes sound good. The minister says that it is \$5 billion, and the government will provide child care without looking at the details. It reminds me of something we are going to be voting on tonight.

Tonight we will vote on funding on the firearms registry. Ten years ago another minister, eager to implement his utopian vision on the country, said "This program will cost \$2 million". We know tonight that we will vote on \$64 million just to augment this fiscal year. They are 1,000 times over budget on that program.

If Canadians are a little concerned or I am a little skeptical about the Liberal math that says this will somehow to be achieved with \$5 billion, we can see why history would tell us that we may want to take a second look at what the minister is saying.

I have every reason to believe that this Liberal plan will unduly and unfairly tax Canadians and certainly parents. It will result in a

blow to bureaucracy that does not serve the interest of Canadian families.

This is in stark contrast to the approach advocated by the Conservative Party. We would treat families equally. We would respect the jurisdiction of provinces. We would respect that different families and parents make different choices on how they will care for their children. In a recent survey, we know parents indicated that institutionalized day care was their last choice.

I ask members to consider the situation in New Brunswick, to consider all families and not just some of them. I ask them to respect Canadians' choices for child care and respect the rights of parents to raise their children as they see fit.

•(1735)

**Hon. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to what my colleague had to say when he was talking about child care choices in New Brunswick. I think he said that 68% of parents have some form of child care. I think that later he increased that to 80%, but I may have missed it. He said that these are the choices of the people of New Brunswick. He gave some figures, saying that said 20% were doing one thing, 30% were doing another and 40% were doing something else.

I suggest to him that those are not actually the choices of the people of New Brunswick but simply what the people of New Brunswick are doing now. Some of them have the ability to choose to have sophisticated quality child care outside their home, and some choose to have sophisticated quality child care in the home. That is because they actually have the money, but other people cannot do that.

There are people who would choose those options if they had the money. Instead, they ask a relative or someone else to look after the children while they are working. By the way, I understand it. I have been through some of these things myself. They do not pick that. They need the choice. They need to be able to make the choice. They need to be able to say yes, they can have quality child care for their children, or they can decide not to.

The member talks about choice and this potential strike in Quebec. There are strikes and the risk of strikes in our elementary and high school systems all the time. Apart from a very small percentage of people, it does not mean that people opt to take their children out of the schools. It does not mean that at all.

There is a percentage who have the choice of home schooling, and I agree with it. They espouse and love home schooling. These are families who agree to educate their own children, still in the present day, but the vast majority of people support the public school systems across this country.

*Supply*

I suggest to the member that he ask the people he quoted who do not have quality child care about this. If he were to ask them if they would like quality child care associated with the elementary school down the road, for example, for their children every day when both parents go to work, they would all say yes.

• (1740)

**Mr. Rob Moore:** Madam Speaker, this is the kind of thinking that concerns people. This is promoting another boondoggle.

As for “sophisticated quality”, what is that supposed to mean? We are talking about preschool children. Does that mean that if two year olds are cared for by their grandparents it does not pass the member's litmus test of sophisticated quality? Does it suggest that if a parent decides that “for a couple of years I choose to stay with my child” it is not sophisticated? Is that perhaps not sophisticated enough for the minister? The minister clearly feels he knows best and that all children have to be raised, through the minister, by these bureaucrats throughout the country.

I agree that parents need more resources. That is why my party would give all parents more resources and not leave them with some conclusion predetermined by the minister. We would give them the choice. We would give them the resources to make their own choices in child care. That is fair and equitable.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I was very interested in the comments by my friend and the previous speaker about the percentages, with New Brunswick being rural and very similar to my home province of Saskatchewan, and in the comments about the problems they have.

I have friends who, as I did, grew up on farms. The children are an integral part of the farm. One cannot separate family from farm.

I know that the situation is similar in New Brunswick. I believe that the hon. member has in his riding the majority of dairy farms in New Brunswick. I am very interested to hear how he would express the concerns of his constituents, in that the separation of family and taking children back and forth would disrupt the labour and pattern of the family farm. The work of the farm is very important. I would ask my hon. friend about how forcing families to make choices not of their own will by forcing their children into day care would disrupt the life of rural Canada.

• (1745)

**Mr. Rob Moore:** Madam Speaker, the member raises a great point when he says that this is an idea with maybe more of an urban twist to it than a rural twist. Let us recognize, for instance, that half of the population in New Brunswick is in rural areas.

The member is right. There are vast numbers of Canadians with different ways of doing things, which the minister refuses to acknowledge. The member has raised a legitimate example. We have to give all parents that choice by empowering them with the resources to make their own child care decisions. This is certainly a good example of one way in which our system would be much more helpful than what the minister is offering, which is a one size fits all system.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will start by saying that I am somewhat surprised at the Conservative motion.

Having reiterated the importance of respecting provincial and territorial jurisdictions, they are presenting a motion that goes in the opposite direction.

Speaking of convictions, we in the Bloc Québécois are absolutely convinced that provincial and territorial jurisdictions must be respected. The convictions of the Conservative Party are perhaps a bit more recent and a bit less deeply rooted. Perhaps the Conservatives have not grasped certain things fully.

The Conservative Party accepts a double dependency on the central government. Moreover, we have seen that in past weeks with its motion on the comprehensive national strategy on mental illness, mental health and heart disease. We then had a good idea of how disengaged from reality the Conservatives were. Once again this would have been encroachment on provincial jurisdiction, in this case health.

Although the Conservatives did succeed in getting one more motion through, with almost all parties voting in favour of it, the Bloc Québécois being the exception of course, they realized that their motion was absolutely pointless. They will in fact have no more money to fight those illnesses. Once again, great care must be paid when attempting to invite the central government to interfere in provincial jurisdictional areas.

Quebec has proven this with its system of child care centres. Regardless of what our friends may say about them, it is important to recognize the right of employees to unionize and to look out for their collective interests. No one can deny them that right, in my opinion. I am disappointed that the Conservatives brought that up earlier, trying to make people believe that child care services in Quebec are not quality services because the staff is unionized. I think that is absurd. The OECD has recognized the quality of Quebec's child care services and we must continue to support them.

I believe the Minister of Social Development is well-intentioned when he says he wants to implement a similar child care system across Canada. However, if the federal government does this, the provinces will face shortfalls. One government cannot pay for two tiers at the same time. In reality, it has the mandate to support provincial programs and, through the federal transfers, education, child care, health and all other matters under provincial jurisdiction. That is its duty. However, it cannot support the provinces and, simultaneously, implement the same kind of services it should be funding through transfer payments to the provinces. At some point, too many people will be working on this and there will not be enough funding for it. It is essential that we agree on how we want this government to operate, as long as the Bloc Québécois pays taxes and the other members of the House continue to defend the interests of their constituents.

### *Supply*

Quebec has proven that, when it comes to child care services, it is extremely important to remember that the problem is much broader. We need to make decisions that best reflect people's needs. The importance of early learning has been proven, since the foundation of a child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development is laid very early on. Not only is it unfortunate if children do not receive good quality services, but it may also mean that they do not necessarily have all the tools they deserve and need in order to develop normally.

Quebec has developed these tools, which have been recognized as being among the most effective and important. I want to talk a bit about this. Professors at the Université du Québec in Trois-Rivières conducted a study on the effects of preschool child care on child development.

● (1750)

The authors of that study, professors Palacio-Quintin and Coderre, concluded that:

The quality of the child care centre is a key factor in determining its impact on children's cognitive development. In this regard, the centres that perform well are those where there is proper employee training and a warm and positive teacher-child relationship.

Unfortunately, we cannot claim to have such services everywhere if we do not have very well defined parameters and structures to ensure that we provide exceptionally high quality services to our children.

As we know, the average is now 1.2 children per family. How can we ensure that this child, or this 1.2 child, can properly develop his or her sociability if he or she has no one else to interact with? We must absolutely give our children an opportunity to interact with other children, in an environment that is specifically designed for them, where they can grow, ask questions and also be children.

I only had two children. I now enjoy the company of my grandchildren to behave like a mother still, and in fact to act more like a child with them. Children imitate the behaviour that they see. This means that if a child does not have the opportunity to meet other children in his daily environment, he will imitate his parents' behaviour, instead of developing like a child. He will grow up and become responsible too quickly. Children must have the opportunity to live like children, which helps them develop while having fun in the process and gaining knowledge through the largest possible number of activities with the other children around them.

The two professors who did that study also found that attending a child care centre has a positive impact on cognitive development, and that the longer the child attends, the better his or her performance in this respect.

Again, I think the demonstration can always be made that what our children need are good child care services, with educators who have received proper training.

Of course there are mothers who will decide to stay at home to raise their children. There is nothing wrong with that. And there are fathers who will also choose to stay at home. With the new sharing of responsibilities, some men choose to stay at home instead of going into the work force. That is perfectly okay. I am sure that when

these people make these choices, they have thought carefully about their children's future and they do what is best for them.

However, as a society, we must set parameters and establish programs that will serve the majority of our children. We must be concerned with and take responsibility for the quality of services to our children.

I will continue on the effect of child care, as determined by our professors at the Université du Québec in Trois-Rivières. They also say that children who go to formal day care centres and early childhood centres perform better than those in home day care programs.

In the long term, children who have experience in a day care centre perform better in languages and mathematics in elementary school. That is important. We want our children to perform well and to be able to develop emotionally, socially and also with regard to their health. We must give them the opportunity to do so.

It is not always easy in our society. There are a lot of single mothers. Many low-income parents, seeking to rise above poverty, could not send their children to day care centres because they used to be very expensive. With the new system, these people are able to put their children in early learning child care programs that are much better than the services they could afford before.

● (1755)

It must always be kept in mind that our primary responsibility to our children is to ensure that they have a better future that will enable them to develop to their full potential at all levels. To ensure that they do, they must have the proper means available, and I am convinced that child care services are the best route.

I am aware, however, that some people do not have this option. They too must have choices. Better programs will not be the outcome of trying to transform social programs, which ought to be provincial and are becoming federal. On the contrary, it has been proven that most of the time developing federal programs turns them into programs of dependency where the funding does not keep coming and so, after a few years, people no longer know where to turn for funding when the program comes to an end. We have, unfortunately, seen that with the SCPI.

There are some very good organizations in my riding that used to deliver services to the homeless and disadvantaged. After three, five or ten years of existence, these agencies now find themselves forced to let staff go because the decision has been made that there is no more money to be invested in these programs. When people become dependent on a program, they do not know when it will come to an end. This is not a good way to do things. The provinces and territories must assume their responsibilities. The people who are in the front lines and most familiar with the community should also take some responsibility.

My colleague referred to the boards of the early childhood education centres. These are made up of parents who work together to ensure that their children have the best tools. That is how things operate, and how they should operate.

We all realize that the Conservatives most certainly did not propose this motion in bad faith. I do not doubt for one moment that they want children to have the best possible services. I do not doubt that.

Nonetheless, when you introduce a motion you have to be very careful about the possible consequences if it is passed. These consequences can be very harmful to other programs and the transfers to the provinces that allow them to meet their commitments to their constituents. I am talking about commitments in terms of education, health, child care services and parental leave. We make such commitments to our constituents because we believe in them, respect them and want what is best for them.

[*English*]

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I think it is fair to say that many Canadians and many members of the House are actually envious of Quebec's child care system. Quebec has led the way in developing a child care system. I have a very specific question that I am interested in asking the member because I am not as familiar as I would like to be with the details on how the system works.

I think it is recognized universally that there is a need for a flexible system, one that represents the diverse requirements and conditions in people's lives, in people's families, in people's communities and in their workplace demands. It has been pointed out by several people that there are situations in which the model of community based child care centres may not be as applicable or attainable, for example, in rural communities, in the north, in the far less populated areas.

I am wondering if the member could familiarize all of us with respect to how the Quebec child care model would address those varying needs. In other words, it would have to be recognized that on a per capita basis it would be more expensive to provide adequate child care in a very sparsely populated area, or in the north where there are heavier expenses, greater travel distances, or just smaller numbers of people requiring child care in certain communities.

I wonder if the member could enlighten us on that point. Also, I wonder whether the member has had an opportunity to determine how the federal government's vision on the national child care program it is putting before Canadians would actually work in that regard.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Speaker, to begin I will answer the second question.

I had the pleasure of being in Winnipeg during the meeting on child care services. I believe that is when the minister showed us that he was very serious about the child care services he wanted to provide. Now, I know there were limits to what he could do. He said we needed to start with four-year-olds and up.

Unfortunately, I think we need to start with younger children. I did not provide an illustration. We need to do a tour of Canada, like the minister did, to see if this is applicable in all the provinces of Canada.

### *Supply*

In Quebec, the service has been in place since 1997. We are still at the trial and error stage in some areas. For example, you know there is an exodus of families. Young people are leaving rural areas to go to the cities. The needs are certainly not as great in the smaller communities as in the larger ones. Nonetheless, we want to have equally good service in both places. The early childhood centres are a little smaller, but they welcome people the same way.

In certain parts of Quebec, people think nothing of driving 300 kilometres, leaving in the afternoon to visit friends for dinner. That is how it is in certain parts of Quebec. The North Shore is a case in point, and so is the Gaspé, where distances are great. More research remains to be done on this. Efforts must be made to ensure that good programs are in place. But the programs we have implemented so far are the best that could be had.

[*English*]

**Hon. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my colleague and I share a common vision on the importance of quality early childhood education. I can relate to almost everything she said. I particularly appreciated her point about the 1.2 children per family. She would be pleased to know that 2.0 children just left the gallery.

It makes an important point about socialization. I come from a family of five and my wife from a family of seven. We have four children. One of those children has three. Another two have two and one has one. The size of the family is getting smaller. The socialization aspect, particularly if it is a family with 1.2 children, is really quite difficult. Socialization is very important for children at an early age, and in a family as small as that, it makes it more important than it would have been some generations ago.

The member and I obviously disagree on the role of the federal government. With respect to the federal government one of my views is that the great strength of a Confederation is the possibility for experimentation. The Confederation is made up of a group of jurisdictions, each of which is independent and powerful in various ways and it can experiment.

Sometimes a part will do something well and sometimes it will do it badly. If something does not work out well in one region, the federal government can take note of that and can make sure the rest of the country does not follow through with it. Sometimes, very often, a jurisdiction will do something wonderfully well, which is what has happened in Quebec at this time. I believe the duty of the federal government in a Confederation is to see the quality that has been done in one region and to introduce that quality as far as is possible to the rest of the Confederation, not with a formula but to introduce it to them and give them the resources so they too can develop their early childhood development system, as it is in this case.

I know hypothetically perhaps my colleague would not agree that a federal government has the duty to take good things in Confederation and introduce them to the rest of the country.

*Supply*

•(1805)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Madam Speaker, this must come as a surprise to the hon. member. The government does have the duty to see and, having confirmed that these are the best services, hasten to take money and transfer it to provincial governments, to allow them to do the same.

I am puzzled. As my colleague said, in Quebec, we have the best day care services. Now, all the Minister of Social Development has to do is to transfer the money to Quebec.

As was so aptly pointed out—and the Prime Minister himself said so—there are no strings attached. No negotiations should therefore be necessary to get the money transferred. I wonder what is taking so long then. My concern is that this issue might be used for election purposes.

It is good that the central government gets to see what is going on in the provinces and territories, so that transfers can take place. But it has to transfer money at the same time as knowledge to the provinces, to allow them to implement similar programs.

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to add a few comments to the remarks of my colleague and ask her if she is concerned about the agreement between the federal and Quebec governments, which has still not been signed, while \$165 million should be returned to Quebec for the establishment of the cross Canada day care system.

Quebec has been waiting seven months. In the election, they told us there were no conditions attached to the money given back to Quebec. To win over the electorate, on the eve of an election, a number of ministers said that there would be no conditions. So, Quebec could do what it liked with its money when the time came to sign the agreement. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs had said that Quebec could use the money as it wished in investing in its family policy.

I ask my colleague whether the same scenario could occur on the eve of a sure election. Why are there five agreements with other provinces, while the government is still delaying signing with Quebec? When there is no condition, it seems to me not to be hard to sign. I would like to hear my colleague on this.

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. As I indicated earlier, I do have concerns in that regard. I find it unfortunate that our children are being held hostage. They are being used as bargaining chips for election purposes. That is sad. I am convinced that the issue is not the one that we think.

It was pretty much the same with the compassionate care leave. It took a few years after an election promise was made to get it. It would appear that reaching an agreement on child care will follow the same course. The same is true of child care. No agreement is being reached because the government knows that a plan will soon be developed and announced. That should be around August 10, as confirmed on television by the Quebec lieutenant.

Then, the government will have a plan to crisscross Quebec with and show off to Quebecers in order to win votes or gain the trust of

the public, once again. That is like the sponsorship scandal. I disagree with that.

I think that the government would be wise to sign and give Quebec the money now. It would show that no election purposes are involved. Our children are not bargaining chips for election purposes.

•(1810)

[*English*]

**Mr. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my wife Carrie and I have a six month old son, so I and my party are well aware of the challenges facing modern Canadian families today, juggling work, home and school. The government's day care plan will do very little to help working families in this country.

Excellent day care is very important to me and my fellow Conservatives and I am very much in favour of socially progressive programs that will help families to obtain excellent child care. However the government's program will not do that at all.

Before I continue, I would like to say that I am splitting my time with the member for Crowfoot.

The government's plan for child care is seriously flawed in four aspects. First, it is far too vague and contains few concrete, detailed and workable solutions. Key details, including how flexible the system can be, how to hold the provinces accountable for this money and how many child care spaces will be created, have yet to be determined.

Second, the plan calls for the program to be a joint federal-provincial program. Programs of this nature have had a history of cross-jurisdictional difficulties and interprovincial and federal squabbling.

The third problem with the plan is that it will take far too long to implement. For over a decade, Canadians have been promised that a plan would be implemented but nothing is yet in place. In the 1993 red book, in the 1997 red book, in the 2000 red book and in the 2004 red book the government promised child care for Canadians and, 12 years later, we still have no child care program in place. We have no solution for working Canadians.

The fourth aspect of the plan that is a problem is that it is a one size fits all plan. It leaves half of Canadian families out in the cold. In other words, half of Canadian families with children will have nothing under the plan. It fails to address the needs of rural areas. It fails to address those families where one parent stays at home. It fails to address those families who have shiftwork. It fails to provide choice. It is simply a two tier system, one for those families who have access to locally registered and licensed day care, and another for those who do not have locally accessible licensed child care or for those families who stay at home. It is a two tier system that leaves half of Canadian working families out in the cold.

*Supply*

The government's child care plan will do little in my riding of Wellington—Halton Hills. I will try to illustrate that to the House. According to a report done for the regional municipality of Halton, there are about 9,000 children aged 12 and under in Halton Hills and about 900 registered and licensed child care spaces out of a total of 4,500 child care spaces in Halton Hills for these 9,000 children.

In the other part of my riding in Wellington county, there are about 15,000 children aged 12 and under and about 500 licensed and registered day care spaces out of a total of about 7,000 child care spaces in Wellington county. This assumes an average workforce participation of about 50%.

The government's child care program will do little to help working families in Halton Hills or in Wellington county.

The government has announced \$5 billion over five years. Assuming \$1 billion per year for the program and assuming an average cost of about \$8,000 per child per year for day care, this would mean that \$5 billion over five years would provide for an additional 120,000 new subsidized day care spots nationally.

To break this down, this would mean about 400 spots in the average riding, assuming there are about 308 ridings. This would mean 400 new day care spots for Wellington county and Halton Hills out of a total of 13,500 existing day care spaces, which is an increase of 3%.

• (1815)

The government's program is wholly inadequate, is nowhere near universal and it does nothing to address the other 13,000, 14,000 or 15,000 children in those ridings who do not take advantage of subsidized or regulated licensed day care. It fails to address the needs of single income families where one parent stays at home. These parents get left behind in the government's system.

It also fails to address the needs of those parents, especially in rural areas. Many of these parents do not use licensed day care because they do not have access to it. They use local, unlicensed day care provided at a neighbour's home or at a relative's place down the road. These parents also get left behind in the government's day care program.

Clearly, the government's day care program will do little for those in Wellington county and little for those in the town of Halton Hills. These families will be left out in the cold.

We in the Conservative Party proposed a plan in the last election that truly addressed and addresses the needs of working families. In the last election we proposed providing families with a \$2,000 per year tax deduction for each child under the age of 16. The taxes refunded could be spent as deemed appropriate by the parents. In the case of a dual income family, the money might be spent on day care, either in a for profit or a not for profit centre.

In other cases, for example where one parents stays at home, the money might be spent on clothes, on education or other sundries.

Our proposal avoids the difficulties of federal-provincial programs, provides for flexibility in both meeting the needs of urban and rural areas, allows for profit and not for profit participation, lets parents decide what is in the best interests of their children and, most

important, is straightforward to implement. I believe it is the best way for us to help families obtain excellent child care. I also believe that parental choice is important because different families have different needs and different communities have different solutions.

In addition, I believe that the government should play a bigger role in the regulation of child care spaces. The safety and well-being of children is at all times paramount. I believe that all professional child care providers should be properly qualified and certified to a minimum national standard.

I am confident that our solution, the one that we proposed in the last election, is the only solution that takes into account the varying needs and situations in all communities and the one that properly serves all Canadian families whether they be single income, dual income or otherwise.

The government's plan for child care is seriously flawed. It is too vague and contains few concrete, unworkable and detailed solutions.

It is a joint federal-provincial program. These programs have had a history of cross-jurisdictional difficulties and end up with federal-provincial wrangling over money in future years.

The government has failed to act for 12 years on this issue. For over a decade Canadians have been promised a solution to their child care needs: in 1993 in the red book, in 1997 in the red book, in 2000 in the red book, in 2004 in the red book.

The government's plan is flawed because it is a one size fits all solution that leaves half of the 6 million children in this country under the age of 12 out in the cold. It does nothing for them.

It fails to address the issue in rural areas. It fails to address those families where one parent stays at home. It fails to address those families who work shift work. It fails to address choice. It creates a two tier system, one for those families that can afford and have access to licensed, regulated day care, and another for those families who do not and simply leaves them out in the cold.

I will be supporting the opposition motion on child care that calls for the government to implement a truly national solution that takes into account the varying needs and situations in all communities, urban and rural, and one that properly serves all Canadian families, whether they be single income, dual income or otherwise.

• (1820)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have some comments I want to put it on the record since we are coming to the end of the debate. I believe it is this side of the House that is giving the real choices to parents, not a tax break that the other side of the House is actually proposing.

Let us put it on the record that it is only Her Majesty's official opposition that is opposed. Members of the Bloc and the NDP do support an early learning and child care system, perhaps in different ways in terms of the Bloc members.

### *Supply*

I want to put something on the record about stay at home parents because it has been falsely stated in the House that there is no support for stay at home parents. The government provides both income benefits and services for parents. The best examples I can give are the national child tax benefit and the national child benefit supplement.

Let me also reiterate that we have already signed agreements in principle with five provinces and that party has said that it will support those agreements.

Since the member believes that we are not offering choices, although our choice is \$5 billion over five years, what exactly is the member and his party offering? A tax break of 20%, if we do the analysis, for low income families will not help a single mother who chooses to work. Again, we are talking about choices. We are not saying that a parent should stay at home. We are talking about parents who choose to work.

We have studies that show that in 72% of two parent families, both parents are working and they are the ones who actually need to have those choices in various forms, not just in terms of a day care centre but it could also be a family run centre, as some of them are in Quebec.

What type of benefit are the Conservatives actually providing to all families, including those that choose to have working parents?

**Mr. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, what we will not be doing is rolling out a \$5 billion program over five years that only addresses the needs of half of the six million children in this country aged 12 and under. The government's program only addresses the needs of half of those children and leaves the other half out in the cold.

We as a party will roll out a program that will address the needs of all Canadian children across the country in a universal way. We will not be implementing any program that only addresses the needs of half of Canada's children.

Canada has three million children under the age of 6 and three million children under the age of 12, and the government's program only addresses the needs of half of them. It is a two tier system and the Liberals ought to be ashamed of it.

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos:** Madam Speaker, I will reiterate my question and again put on the record that what the Conservatives think we are doing is totally false.

I have asked the hon. member what his party is proposing. All I have heard is a tax break, which seems to be the band-aid solution that his party uses for most of the problems.

The reality is that 72% of the population in Canada are working parents who choose to work. I respect the fact that certain parents choose to stay at home. I also stayed at home for awhile when I had my first two children and I also had their grandmother take care of them when I went back to work.

I want to know what he is actually proposing. It is very easy to criticize but I have not heard a solid solution in terms of this problem.

**Mr. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, we will be putting money back into all parents' hands, regardless of where they live in the

country, whether it be in our large cities or in rural areas. What we will not be doing is taking money out of half of the parents' hands to put into a program that only benefits the other half.

• (1825)

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House and support this Conservative motion sponsored by the member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove. The motion calls upon the government to recognize that it is creating a two tier child care system which discriminates against families who choose to stay home or find care outside of a publicly funded system.

I rose in the House just a few short months ago to debate a similar motion put forward by our party. During that debate, I quoted from a report entitled "Canadian Attitudes on the Family", which I think is worth repeating again today. It stated:

—many Canadian parents feel trapped by economic pressures and are not able to make the sort of choices they would like for their families. Sometimes, of course, this is unavoidable. Economic reality has a way of interfering with our dreams...

Similarly, in February of this year, a Vanier Institute of the Family study on family aspirations found that the vast majority of mothers and fathers with preschool children would prefer to stay home and raise them, but if they cannot, their strong preference would be to have a partner or another family member look after their children rather than placing them in a formal day care centre.

The Vanier study complemented a Statistics Canada analysis, also released in February of this year, which found that in 2001 53% of Canadian children between the ages of six months and five years old were in some form of child care. That is up from 42% in 1995. About one in three children are being looked after by relatives, one in three by non-relatives in someone else's home, and the remaining one in three are being looked after in day care centres.

The Liberal government's \$5 billion investment in day care only supports the last one-third of children out of the 53%. It totally ignores the two-thirds of Canadian children who are receiving care from someone other than their parents. As pointed out by many of my colleagues today, the Liberal government is also ignoring those children whose parents work shifts and would be unable to enroll in one of these federally funded day care centres.

The Conservative Party of Canada is totally opposed to the Liberals' two tier child care system. The Conservative Party of Canada's plan is universal and equitable. We will give cash subsidies directly to parents so they can make their own child care choices. We will treat all parents, all families and all children equally. We will allow Canadian families to make the choices that would best serve their needs and the needs of their children.

During our last debate on this issue, in February, I pointed out that we were neglecting in this House and, for that matter, in this country, to recognize and address increasing health costs and decreasing productivity, of which our finance minister spoke in the media this past week. We also fail to recognize the collapsing social relationships due to workplace stress and our failure to achieve work-life balances.

We are failing to deal with the realities of work and life conflicts, which are having a huge impact on our country and our society. In a *National Post* article of March 10, Deborah Jones, a workplace consultant, said that we are going in a dangerous direction in Canada in terms of work hours and workloads affecting life and balance.

A Conference Board of Canada study found that the percentage of Canadians who reported moderate and high levels of stress as a result of work-family imbalance increased from 26.7% in 1989 to 46.2% in 1999. This work-family imbalance is costing employers billions of dollars in sick leave and lost working time, which again translates into decreased productivity for companies.

In 2003 Health Canada funded a study entitled "Work-Life Conflict in Canada in the New Millennium". It also found that high job stress has doubled and job satisfaction and employee loyalty have dropped. There is so much stress in the workplace. The government has come up with a plan that will address only a very small percentage.

• (1830)

My time is up, but I would encourage the government to take this plan back to the drawing board, recognizing that out of the 53% of Canadians with children under the age of five, this addresses only one-third of them. It is \$5 billion for one-third of 53%. The program is not going to work. It is big government and there are big failures in this program.

### *Supply*

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** It being 6:30 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

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 (Hon. Jean Augustine):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** The recorded division stands deferred until later this day at 10 p.m.

*[For continuation of proceedings see Part B]*



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CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, June 14, 2005  
(Part B)**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

*[Continuation of proceedings from Part A]*

\* \* \*

*[Translation]*

### MAIN ESTIMATES, 2005-06

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PRIVY COUNCIL

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (for the President of the Treasury Board)** moved:

Motion No. 1

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$125,413,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL — Department — Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, be concurred in.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate in favour of the motion to approve the budget of the Privy Council Office for 2005-06.

I find it unimaginable that anyone could be against passing the Privy Council Office budget and that some hon. members in the opposition intend to obstruct it. This shows a lack of understanding of how the Government of Canada works. Those who oppose passing this budget should take the time to learn more about the basic principles of public administration and government.

The Privy Council Office plays a central, not to say crucial, role in the planning and implementation of major government policies. As a central agency, the Privy Council Office conducts strategic analyses of complex issues and does a thorough review of proposals and government orders as they are presented.

That is what allows the Privy Council Office to advise the government on developing and implementing its policies. It is the central agency par excellence and ensures that the general policy objectives, as set by the government and by Parliament, are met.

One of the most important documents setting out the objectives of the government's policies and its plan of action for achieving them is the throne speech. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Privy Council Office and particularly the Clerk of the Privy Council are closely involved in preparing the throne speech as advisors to the government on the aims of its policies and its plan for implementing them, in close cooperation with the PMO.

It may rightly be said that the throne speech is the equivalent of a bible for the PCO, as for the whole of the government apparatus. It

reflects the government's vision of the type of Canada it hopes to build through the policies and programs contained therein.

There is another analogy, which perhaps better explains the link between the PCO and the throne speech. The throne speech becomes a sort of routing slip. It defines the government's legislative program and the commitments to be met. It is in this statement that the PCO and the rest of the government machine find their routing slip. The PCO ensures the work is carried out.

It will be remembered that the October 2004 throne speech dealt with a number of broad themes, namely a vigorous economy; the health of Canadians; children, caregivers and seniors; native Canadians; cities and communities; our environment; an influential role of pride in the world and governing with a common goal.

With your permission, I will describe some and, if time permits, each of them, bearing in mind that I do not have time here to mention all the objectives the government presented in each case. We have either accomplished or are on the way to accomplishing many more than what can be mentioned in a single speech.

What I want to get across to my colleagues opposite—in case some have not yet grasped it—is that the PCO was closely involved in defining each of these strategic objectives. It would be unrealistic to think that a government can successfully manage such a large range of problems without drawing on the PCO's functions of analysis, coordination and critical examination.

So I will start with a vigorous economy.

The current government is working to lower the debt-to-GDP ratio to 25% within 10 years, a goal it reiterated in the 2005 budget along with its ability to reach that goal.

We said that we would review the expenditures and reallocate the resources as needed. The 2005 budget confirmed that the expenditure review committee has identified nearly \$11 billion in cumulative savings over the next five years, which will be reinvested in core federal areas of responsibility.

The first part of our five-point economic strategy—building a highly skilled workforce, promoting learning in the workplace and updating labour market agreements—is on track, as the 2005 budgetary statement confirmed.

### Supply

•(1835)

We announced the implementation of an action plan on labour market integration of immigrants trained abroad. This plan allocates financial support to facilitate the foreign credential recognition process, provide immigrants with better language training and develop a portal so future immigrants can better prepare for their integration into Canada.

There is also the learning bond program—an innovative incentive to encourage low-income families to save for their children's education—funded with money set aside in the 2004 budget and which is supposed to begin on July 1. We also improved the program so as to introduce more people to the registered education saving plan and encourage low-income families to take advantage of it.

The second part of our five-point economic strategy is also progressing rapidly. The National Science Advisor was appointed to help universities, colleges and businesses renew their commitment to establishing a real national science program.

The third element of our five-point economic strategy, which deals with a smart regulatory system, was proposed by the External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation; it provides for a transparent and predictable regulatory system. Work in this area is being pursued at the cabinet committee responsible for domestic affairs. Bill C-19, to amend the Competition Act, has already been introduced in the House.

The fourth element, which is the reform of the equalization program, has led to the adoption of a new framework for equalization and territorial formula financing. Under that new framework, federal support will be increased by \$33 billion over the next 10 years. Legislation on the reform of the equalization program is currently before the House in the form of Bill C-24.

We promised a strategy for the north, a first in Canadian history, and we have started work on developing that strategy.

The fifth element includes the promotion of investment through the adoption of a sound monetary and fiscal policy and a competitive tax system.

The implementation of this sound monetary and fiscal policy has already been completed. The 2005 budgetary statement provides for balanced budgets through 2009-10. The 2004-05 fiscal year marked the completion of the five-year tax reduction plan totalling \$100 billion, which was announced in 2000. The 2005 budget contains measures to reduce the general corporate tax rate to 19% and to eliminate the corporate surtax.

Another aspect of the fifth element of our five-point economic strategy consists in building on the Smart Borders initiative to strengthen security in North America while facilitating the flow of goods and people across the border.

•(1840)

[English]

Let me turn now to the health of Canadians. Long before last week's Supreme Court decision, this government set out an ambitious, yet absolutely crucial, set of policy deliverables to ensure

that Canadians would have the timely and quality health care they deserve.

This complex set of policy goals includes: reduction in wait times; establishing a requirement for evidence based benchmarks; comparable indicators; clear targets; and transparent reporting. It also includes an increase in the number of doctors, nurses and other health professionals; improved access to home and community care services; improved access to safe and affordable drugs; setting goals and targets for improving the health status of Canadians; an annual report on the health status and health outcomes; the promotion of healthy living; enhancement of sports activities at both the community and competitive levels; and health protection. It also includes working with provincial and territorial partners on reforms and long term sustainability of the health system and on health promotion.

The cornerstone of our health care agenda is the government's commitment at last September's first ministers meeting of \$41.285 billion over 10 years. Budget 2005 will implement the first year of the funding commitments related to the 10 year plan to strengthen health care.

As regards reductions in wait times, budget 2005 provides \$15 million over four years for wait times initiatives. The provinces and territories are engaged with the federal government on developing a process for wait time reductions.

Budget 2005 also provides \$110 million over five years to improve the data collection and reporting of health performance information; \$75 million over five years to integrate internationally educated health care professionals; \$170 million over five years to help ensure the safety and effectiveness of drugs and other therapeutic products; \$300 million over five years to encourage healthy living, and prevent and control chronic disease; and finally, increased funding for Sports Canada to \$140 million annually.

This funding builds on the additional \$2 billion health care transfer to the provinces provided for in budget 2004 through Bill C-18.

The next theme in the government's agenda that I would like to address concerns children, caregivers and seniors. As members know, this government has placed very strong emphasis on children and the need for a national system of early learning and child care. We spent the day debating that.

Budget 2005 provides \$5 billion over five years to help build the foundations of such a national system. To date, we have signed bilateral accords to support the development of early learning and child care with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia.

We have concluded an agreement with the government of Quebec to enable that province to establish its own parental benefits plan, with the federal government providing a one time start-up fund of \$200 million and an annual premium reduction of approximately \$750 million for the government of Quebec to use toward its plan.

Let me turn to our commitment to improve tax based support for Canadians who care for aged or infirm relatives or those with severe disabilities. The overall commitment of the federal government is \$1 billion over five years. Budget 2005 is the first step toward a more comprehensive strategy to support unpaid caregiving.

Acting on the recommendations of the technical advisory committee on tax measures for persons with disabilities, budget 2005 proposes to increase tax relief for persons with disabilities by \$105 million in 2005-06, growing to \$120 million by 2009-10. In fact, with budget 2005 the government is acting on virtually all of the committee's recommendations.

It is important to note the impact of the reduced tax burden on low and modest income families which budget 2005 announced. By 2009 the amount that an individual can earn tax free will increase to at least \$10,000 and most of the benefit will go to those with low and modest incomes.

The Speech from the Throne committed the government to do more for Canada's seniors. Specifically, it committed the government to continue the new horizons program and explore other means of ensuring that we do not lose the talents and contributions that seniors make to our society.

● (1845)

In the February 2004 Speech from the Throne, the government announced a new deal for Canada's cities and communities. The government also established a new secretariat for cities and a new federal department of infrastructure and communities. We said we would make available a portion of the federal gas tax to municipalities to enable the containment of urban sprawl and to invest in new sustainable infrastructure projects in areas such as transit, roads, clean water and sewers.

Budget 2005 has \$5 billion over the next five years in gas tax revenue to be given to the cities and communities. It also adds new funding of \$300 million to green municipal funds. This builds on budget 2004 in which the goods and services taxes paid by municipalities were rebated entirely by the federal government

The Government of Canada has now signed gas tax revenue sharing agreements with three governments: British Columbia, Alberta and Yukon. Two more are anticipated before the end of this month. They are with the governments of Ontario and Quebec.

In addition, the government committed to move quickly to flow funds within existing infrastructure programs. Significant infrastructure investments have been announced. There is the \$1 billion funding package for the Toronto Transit Commission; \$500 million for the expansion of the Vancouver Convention Centre; and significant projects undertaken at major Canada-U.S. border crossings such as Windsor-Detroit.

We have reached agreements with Quebec on financially supporting Quebec municipalities with the challenges of renewing their infrastructure; with Ontario in support of improvements to Ottawa's public transit system, and of course with the expansion of the Congress Centre also in Ottawa; and with Prince Edward Island on infrastructure funds for P.E.I. communities.

### *Supply*

Other policy deliverables by the government to support and improve the quality of life in our cities and communities include the affordable housing initiative, the supporting communities partnership initiative for the homeless and the residential rehabilitation assistance program.

I may not have time to deal with the initiatives that we have taken on the environment and the numerous initiatives we have taken on Canada in the world.

I would like to provide an overview of the government's agenda as it relates to a role of pride and influence for Canada in the world. The government promised and released a comprehensive international policy statement which provided an updated and integrated approach to Canada's foreign policy objectives: trade and investment needs, defence requirements and the development assistance program.

One of the first actions of the government after the February 2004 Speech from the Throne was to develop and approve Canada's first ever national security policy. Considerable work has been undertaken since then in implementing the new security policy and a progress report on implementation to date will soon be released.

The government established a cabinet committee on security, public health and emergencies and has appointed a national security adviser to the Prime Minister. Separate legislation to create the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness has been passed and the new Canada Border Services Agency legislation is before Parliament.

We have taken steps to build a more sophisticated and informed relationship with the United States. As part of the new enhanced representation initiative, the new Washington secretariat has been established and has commenced operations. Other projects are under way to advance advocacy, support policy coherence and share information among all levels of government.

Earlier this spring the Prime Minister, President Bush and President Fox announced the security and prosperity partnership launching a series of negotiations among the three countries on key aspects of security, prosperity and quality of life for North Americans.

On the defence front, our chief policy deliverable was to invest more in our military. Budget 2005 provides \$12.8 billion in new money for defence over five years. It provides \$3.2 billion over five years to strengthen military operations by improving training and operational readiness, enhancing military medical care, addressing critical supplies and repair shortages, and repairing infrastructure.

We have promised investments in key capital equipment, for example, new armoured vehicles and replacements for the Sea King helicopters. Budget 2005 provides more than \$2.7 billion for new medium capacity helicopters, utility aircraft and military trucks.

### Supply

We are increasing regular forces by 5,000 and the reserves by 3,000, and training regional peacekeepers, such as in Africa for the African Union mission in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The February 2004 Speech from the Throne promised the creation of the Canada Corps to help young Canadians participate in international assistance; provide to developing nations Canadian expertise and experience in justice, in federalism, in pluralistic democracy; and to bring the best of Canadian values and experience to the world.

• (1850)

The new Canada Corps was mobilized successfully and effectively for monitoring the elections in Ukraine last December, which we all remember with great pride.

Budget 2005 commits to doubling aid to Africa by 2008-09 from its 2003-04 level. It also provides additional funding to combat disease in developing countries and \$3.4 billion over the next five years in increased international assistance. We are maintaining Canada's leadership role in the creation of a new international instrument on cultural diversity and continue to participate actively in a number of international organizations, be it the Commonwealth or the Francophonie.

This is not the complete list of the government's policy goals and the actions we have taken to achieve them. In each and every item that I have described to the members in this House, the Privy Council Office is right there helping to analyze and develop the policy, challenge any weakness, exert due diligence, bring together disparate parts from across the breadth of government, tie together the loose ends and manage the preparation of legislation and its follow-up.

In short, the Privy Council Office is engaged in all aspects of the cabinet's work in governing the country. Voting against the motion to support the approval of the Privy Council Office budget for fiscal year 2005-06 would cause considerable damage to the functioning of government as a result. It would most certainly be against the interests of all Canadians.

I therefore encourage and exhort all hon. members of the House to do the right thing and to vote in support of the motion. To do otherwise would be unconscionable. It is rather surprising that we would be confronted with a motion that would remove the entire funding for the Privy Council Office. It is a demonstration of a lack of understanding of how government functions.

In concluding my remarks, and I know I will have occasion to answer some questions if there are any, we definitely urge all members of the House to consider seriously the implications of not supporting this motion, which is central to the ability of government and Parliament to function.

**Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, what we have asked is to have \$1 million removed from the PCO.

I would like to have the minister's comments on this. We heard the government some months back say that the Gomery commission was "costing taxpayers \$80 million". It was Justice Gomery himself who

corrected the government's spin. He said that the entire Gomery commission would be less than \$32 million.

However, four government departments, Justice, Public Works, Treasury Board and the Privy Council Office, spent about \$40 million to "prepare witnesses". That is what we find troubling. How hard is it to tell someone to tell the truth? Why do they need to prepare witnesses if they want to truth to come out?

We asked that \$1 million removed when we learned that when the Gomery commission was created, the Prime Minister simultaneously created a war room inside the Privy Council to give him advice and spin to mitigate damage in the Gomery commission. That war room cost exactly \$1.068 million. Political parties set up war rooms, not governments.

It sounds a little like the gun registry. The commission only cost \$32 million but it cost \$40 million for four departments to spin and prepare witnesses for the Gomery commission. How can the minister possibly agree that this is a legitimate expenditure of taxpayer money, to spend \$40 million in four departments to prepare witnesses at the Gomery commission when they simply had to tell them to tell the truth?

• (1855)

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Madam Speaker, that shows the member opposite did not attend and perhaps did not even read the transcripts from the meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations at which I participated as a witness. If he had, he would know that the \$1 million, to which he has referred, is to fund the coordination sponsorship matter, which is a group of four people who do a number of functions in the Privy Council Office and none of them for the Prime Minister's Office. This \$1 million is funded over two years, which is about \$500,000 a year. The relationship there is not a direct one. It is through the Clerk of the Privy Council.

This group coordinated the provision of over 20 million pages of documentation in a timely manner to the Gomery commission from among five government departments. This is the same group that also prepared all government submissions and made sure they were submitted on time. It also made sure that government counsel was instructed.

This group helped to prepare witnesses in terms of their obligations and their rights to ensure that the process was expedited. I believe that the group prepared approximately 100 witnesses, all who were represented by government counsel.

This is the group that has monitored hearings, monitored the media, and has provided, as all departments provide to all ministers, question period material.

If the government had not set up this group, the opposition would be accusing the government of not doing its job, and rightfully so.

Every time we set up a commission inquiry, as we have from time to time, there is a coordinating group involved, not a war room as he described it. This group has to do the coordinating functions to ensure the inquiry, whatever it is, functions properly and is given the information it requires in a complete and timely manner.

*Supply*

To try to remove that from the budget of the Privy Council Office is also ludicrous, just as much as removing the entire budget would be, which is the motion that we had put to us.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Madam Speaker, it is interesting to note that the minister stated this money was spent, to quote his own words, “to prepare over 100 government witnesses”, and it was the Privy Council Office not the Prime Minister’s Office. I accept that. As we all know the PCO is cabinet.

Millions of dollars was spent preparing government witnesses. Why can these witnesses not just go to the commission and tell the truth? Why do they need to be prepared? Why do people need to prepare these witnesses? How difficult is it to tell 100 people that they are scheduled to be at the commission at say next Wednesday at 2 o’clock? Do they need to be briefed? Do the government need to control the message?

Are these 100 government witnesses? Maybe they are 100 Liberal witnesses. Maybe that is the problem. Maybe when one has cash in envelopes and cash in suitcases and people on payrolls, the witnesses need to be prepared to control the damage. Maybe that is what happens. Why can these people not just show up without being briefed, without being prepared, without being spun? Here are the lines, here are the message and this is what they want them to say.

I think rightfully so that this should be taken out of the Privy Council Office. This expenditure of taxpayer money is completely unacceptable if we truly want to get to the bottom of what comes out of the commission. It is time we heard the truth.

•(1900)

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Madam Speaker, they cannot handle the truth. Somebody else has said that. People who appear as witnesses in front of the Gomery commission, who are employees or were employees at the time, are represented by government counsel. That is the important distinction the member should keep in mind. It is the counsel that this coordinating unit in the PCO helped so they can do their work in terms of preparing the people they represent on the commission. That is perfectly normal.

He said that we should eliminate this from the budget. It is interesting to note that members opposite have not suggested that we eliminate the public money that is being sent to the Conservative Party of Canada because it too has counsel there, and we do not begrudge it that. That party did not ask to have that money cut or the money that the Bloc Québécois receives for its counsel. That is part and parcel of due process.

If those members are prepared to have due process for themselves, they should also be prepared to have due process for people who work for the Crown and who are called to testify in front of a commission. There is nothing sinister here. It is all above board. To insinuate things, as the member has done, is totally unjustified.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. We had the minister before our committee last week. Listening to him then and listening to him now I am reminded of an old folk song from the sixties. I forget who sang it, but *Turn! Turn! Turn!* except it is spin, spin, spin with these guys.

The minister stood and said that the million dollars that was spent inside the Privy Council was to prepare mostly Liberals as witnesses. They are the ones who committed these offences and have been charged. They appeared before the Gomery inquiry. The million dollars is clearly there, along with a lot of other money and I will talk about that later in my presentation, to prepare these witnesses for the inquiry.

They talk about how they want Justice Gomery to do his job. Then why is the government spending all this money to prevent these witnesses from giving Justice Gomery the information that would allow him to do his job? That is the real question.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Madam Speaker, the spin, spin, spin was by the Byrds, as are his comments. It is totally ludicrous for the member to stand in this House and say what he just did.

There are people here who are public servants who because of their work are called to appear in front of the commission. They have the right and obligation to go there, but they also have rights and obligations. If they are represented by counsel and counsel asks for information to be provided to them, then they must be provided that information.

It was the same with the witnesses who were called there and who were not public servants and not represented by counsel. They had counsel of their own, most of the time, not all, paid for by taxpayer money, as are the counsel for the Conservative Party of Canada and the Bloc Québécois. We do not begrudge them that. The commissioner recognized that they could have standing. It stands to reason that due process be followed.

To single out this group as some sort of an unsavoury way of helping the government and the Liberal Party is totally unacceptable and a total fabrication.

These four people have coordinated the provision of over 20 million pages of documentation to the Gomery inquiry in a timely manner, and they have been doing that for two years.

The members opposite would rather the government not do its job. When we have other commissions of inquiry, there has always been a coordinating group. Now they would suggest that we not have one and, therefore, impede the work. This dovetails quite well in their approach of undermining the commission, which is something they have been doing on and on. This is part and parcel of their strategy to undermine Justice Gomery’s work. We will not let them do that.

•(1905)

**Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a couple of quick responses to the last member who spoke. I want it to be very clear that it was not the Conservative Party that set up a war room or spin room spending millions of dollars of taxpayers’ money preparing witnesses, I would argue, inappropriately. That would be clearly a party problem.

As far as the 20,000 pages of testimony, let us remind ourselves that this was a Liberal Party scandal, not a Quebec scandal, not a Government of Canada scandal but a Liberal Party scandal. The Liberal Party could have come clean and told us the truth right from the beginning and saved us all of the pain we have had to go through the last year. We have had to drag it out of the government, kicking and screaming, one day at a time.

### Supply

I am pleased to rise to speak in favour of our notice of opposition. The intent of our motion is simple. We are asking the House of Commons to remove a small portion of the Privy Council budget, roughly equal to what the office has used for blatantly partisan purposes.

As the sponsorship scandal demonstrated, we should not be using taxpayers' money for partisan purposes. Nevertheless, that is what is happening with the PCO funded war room monitoring the Gomery inquiry. This hastily created spin bin operates out of the Privy Council Office. It has an annual budget of \$1,068,000 to monitor Justice Gomery on behalf of the federal government and provide advice to the Prime Minister's Office on how to mitigate the damaging testimony.

Liberals claim that they fully support Justice Gomery and have nothing to hide. If they have nothing to hide, why did they create a war room in the first place? The truth needs to be spoken, not spun.

Let us not forget that the PCO war room was created in February 2004. That is ironically the same time the Gomery commission was announced. From the very beginning the Liberals were working hard to ensure that Justice Gomery's message did not reach the ears of Canadians unfiltered.

This agency apparently is not only there for damage control but to prepare government witnesses. Preparing witnesses to do what? I am pretty sure it does not cost \$1 million to tell someone entering the court room to tell the truth and answer the questions or that this advice should be given to a witness. Millions of dollars are being spent to prepare and spin, I would submit, Liberal witnesses.

This Liberal war room also helps prepare questions and answers for question period. Again, this is a very poor investment if one reviews the facts. One million dollars is an awful lot of money to pay, so that the Minister of Public Works and Government Services can stand everyday and say, "Let the commission do its work".

I want to point out that it was the minister opposite who just suggested that we are trying to impede Justice Gomery from doing his work. Let us ensure that every Canadian knows that the Conservative Party has been fully supportive. It was not our former Prime Minister making applications to federal courts to have Justice Gomery removed and making secret deals with the current Prime Minister to reserve the right to bring forward more applications to do whatever.

The minister's non-answers are embarrassing enough. We certainly should not be spending money so that he can be reminded each day to keep saying nothing. For weeks and months we have received virtually no answers from government members when they are asked very direct questions. It is important to realize that these millions and millions of dollars of taxpayers' money funnelled to the Liberal Party is a Liberal Party scandal. Members know all the details on that side of the House. They have all the facts at their fingertips. They know all the players. It is all intertwined.

● (1910)

They could have chosen to come clean. The Prime Minister could have laid it all out on the table. Instead, we had to drag it out of the government kicking and screaming. The \$40 million in four departments to prepare witnesses is unacceptable. The amazing part

is that the government was spending \$40 million to prepare speakers and so on for the commission. What did it do? It decided to blame the commission itself for spending \$80 million.

It was Justice Gomery who had to put on the record the fact that the commission had spent roughly \$32 million on budget. It was the Liberals who were spending more than the commission itself just to prepare witnesses and doing some spin control. Some \$40 million was spent by the Department of Justice, Department of Public Works, the Treasury Board and Privy Council Office. The government claimed that this was for legal and administrative costs. Did it need \$40 million for photocopies?

How many lawyers does the government need to hire to do damage control and obscure the truth? More than any department the Gomery war room in the PCO is set up as a blatantly partisan war room. That is what parties do during elections. They set up war rooms to get their message out. Governments do not set up war rooms. They do not use taxpayers' money.

To add insult to injury, with the largest scandal in Canadian political history, the government's response is to take more taxpayers' money to do damage control and spin control. It is completely unbelievable. The Liberals will look at us stunned, yet the facts speak for themselves. They will shake their head and they will somehow blame us because that is what they do. It is always someone else's fault. Originally, it was Justice Gomery who was spending \$80 million on the commission, which was completely wrong.

Recently, the CBC broadcast a story discussing how the war rooms ran in the last election and how the truth can be obscured by them, and how they get their message out. That is exactly what is happening with the commission. I would suggest that the government has the responsibility to act on behalf of the people of Canada, not the Liberal Party of Canada. The Government of Canada is sent here to represent every single Canadian and not the Liberal Party.

That is what we are seeing after the Liberal Party stole millions and millions of dollars, stuffed it into suitcases and envelopes, and sprinkled it throughout ridings in Quebec. It is so fundamentally wrong. The Liberals believe they have an inherent right to stay there and govern after this type of behaviour. The Gomery war room is designed to assist the Liberal Party of Canada. Another million dollars of taxpayers' money wasted for partisan purposes.

The House needs to send a very clear message that this is not okay. It is not okay to spend \$1 million. The government will say that \$1 million is not a lot of money. It can waste that in just a matter of milliseconds around here. That is just pocket change. However, that is a lot of money to every single Canadian. If we were to begin adding up these partisan expenditures from one department to another, it would become hundreds of millions and eventually billions of dollars.

*Supply*

It is time that the government accepts the bad news from Justice Gomery. It is time that Liberals owned up to the facts that have come out from the numerous witnesses and all the evidence that has been submitted to Justice Gomery. It is time that the Liberals actually showed an example and got rid of the spin bin where millions more of taxpayers' money is being shuffled to control their messaging and do damage control. They would have a heck of a good start by removing this \$1 million from the Privy Council Office, even if it is only a symbolic gesture, so that Canadians can believe that they are actually going to do things differently.

• (1915)

They keep walking the talk; they should show us. They should demonstrate to Canadians that there is actually an ounce of sincerity and an ounce of honesty. They should demonstrate that by removing this million dollars that is clearly being used for blatant partisan purposes. They should do that before we get the Auditor General writing another damning report against this current corrupt Liberal government.

**Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for the great information he has given us, although I must admit that I heard the minister speaking earlier, when he appeared before the government operations committee that I am a member of, and at that time he informed us that there was \$40 million spent. When we pursued how that money was spent, we were told that there were 20 million photocopies of information that had to be produced. Well, by my mathematics, that means that each piece of photocopied paper cost \$2 a copy, which seems awfully excessive.

The other part that confuses me is why this war room needs someone like Ms. Menke, who is a former director of CSIS, to be the director. There are only four or five staff in that unit and apparently Ms. Menke is heading up that war room. I would like the member's opinion on that.

The minister mentioned that there were 20 million photocopies. By the way, these were all photocopied in the other departments. I am sure they were not copied in the PCO.

There is an article in the newspaper today that talks about lawyers for Jean Chrétien, Jean Pelletier and Alfonso Gagliano. The Gomery commission cost taxpayers more than a million dollars.

Let me just go through what it cost. Mr. Pelletier, the former Prime Minister's chief of staff, cost the public purse \$382,000 between September 2004 and January 2005. We are talking about four months there, roughly. Mr. Chrétien's lawyer, from the same firm, cost \$311,000 for services during the same period. Mr. Gagliano ran up a bill of \$401,000. That is in excess of a million dollars. Now other bills, obtained through the access to information request made by CPAC, include \$84,000 by lawyers for Chuck Guité. This money was spent to prepare the witnesses. How come there is supposed to be \$40 million, along with the photocopies, that was spent preparing witnesses? I am confused. I wonder if the member could shed some light on that.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the point. As we dive into this, we learn more. What has happened with this whole commission is really tragic: this money was funnelled into the Liberal Party of Canada. Quite rightfully, Canadians are just

sickened by it, almost to the point that they do not want to hear about it anymore because it just keeps going from bad to worse.

We hear about \$40 million to "prepare" government witnesses, but they have all been given their own lawyers and that means millions more. It just never ends. First of all, people were directly involved with siphoning off taxpayers' money and stuffing it into suitcases and sprinkling it throughout Quebec and now we are giving them more taxpayer money to defend themselves.

It does not end, and it is so fundamentally wrong. Let us imagine that the current Prime Minister had come along and acknowledged from day one that yes, he knew stuff was going on but it was a Liberal Party problem and so he just opened up the books and came clean. We all know that this is Liberal Party problem. Every donkey in the country knows that this is a Liberal Party problem.

The Liberals talk about the 20 million documents they had to photocopy for the commission. I have no doubt they did. I would be more interested in the ones they did not photocopy, the ones that made it to the shredders. I wonder about the 20 million they sent and the boxes. I wonder if they said, "There is a warehouse full of documents there. Those are not damaging to us. Let us photocopy them and send them". We know that a lot of documents made it to the shredders.

This is not the way a modern, civilized government should operate. It is even worse to see the current government continuing to try to defend itself, to prepare, to say that it is clean, when it is absolutely crystal clear that millions of dollars were shuffled into the Liberal Party

. Now the Liberals are trying to defend spending more money than the commission itself. The commission is at \$32 million, but they are at \$40 million and it is going up. They are racking up higher bills and spending more money than the commission itself just to try to prepare witnesses, to prepare them to tell the truth. There is something fundamentally wrong here.

• (1920)

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the 10 minutes I am allocated today I do want to talk about the opposition notice of motion, because technically it is not a motion but a notice of motion. It should trigger a motion from the President of the Treasury Board. That is what we are debating here tonight. We are talking about the more than \$1 million for the war room set up by the government in the Privy Council Office.

I am going to talk about more than that. I am going to talk about the Gomery inquiry itself. We have seen in media reports that it is going to cost \$80 million. In fact, the actual cost of the inquiry will be something like \$35 million. It is a lot of money, but it is money well spent to try to find a way to deal with this kind of thing and prevent it in the future, although in reality nothing will prevent it except a government with ethics. That is not going to happen with this Liberal government no matter what Gomery finds.

### *Supply*

What happened to the rest of the \$80 million? What we find is that the government has spent more money hiding and trying to keep things from Gomery than it has on the actual Gomery inquiry itself. It has spent more money covering and hiding the information than the actual Gomery inquiry is spending.

That is completely unacceptable, yet we heard the deputy House leader for the government, who appeared at our government operations and estimates committee on this issue, spinning the Liberal message very effectively. The Liberals are very good at this. In fact, they are masters at it. The Liberals are truly masters at taking reality and making it sound like the total opposite. Very few political parties in the world can do that. They are probably the best in the western world, but I do not think that is anything to be proud of.

It is really sad that the Liberals will take reality and spin it into something entirely different. It is not acceptable. They have done that for a lot of years. I want to start by talking about some of the things that they have spun in the past and that they have been caught at. I am not talking just about corruption, although there is so much corruption. It is widespread and it is deep.

I am going to talk about issues that affect every single Canadian in the country. First, before the 2000 election, the Prime Minister passed a budget. In the budget was \$100 billion of tax relief. That is what he claimed. That is what the Prime Minister claimed when he was finance minister.

That is a lot of tax relief, but I ask Canadians to look at their paycheques from 1999, 2001 and today and compare the taxes that are taken off their paycheques. Canadians will find that taxes are every bit as bad now and probably worse than they were back then.

So what the government said was one thing. It sounded good, and it won them an election, in fact, but the reality was totally different. Canadians found that out on their paycheques every single month. The Liberals said one thing but reality is another.

Let us talk about health care and how the Liberals say they are the saviours of health care. If we listen to the Prime Minister, the health minister and the others over on that side, we will hear that they are the saviours of health care.

Yet our health care system has collapsed to such an extent that the Supreme Court said that Canadians, Quebecers, should have the right to private health care because the public system is so bad that it cannot be counted on to deliver the health care Canadians need. That is what the Supreme Court ruled just last week.

The Liberals say they are the saviours of health care and they have been saying that while in government for 12 years. The reality is clearly something different.

As well, the long gun registry was going to make society safer. It was going to reduce crimes committed with guns. We all know that simply the opposite has happened.

On agriculture programs, the Liberals are pumping billions into farmers' pockets and saying that things are much better on the farm than they were in the past because of what the government has done. As a farmer, I know that it has never been worse on the farm. My neighbours know and farmers right across the country know.

What the Liberals say is one thing. The reality is an entirely different thing. They spin it and they spin it so well that it sounds believable, but the cruel, hard reality of what is going on in this country tells quite another story.

• (1925)

The Liberals say that sanctioning same sex marriage will somehow save the institution of marriage and the family. I have heard some of them say that. That is the way they have spun it. We all know that this is simply not the case. It is not true. It goes on and on.

The Liberals are going to legalize pot and it is going to make the problem better. They are going to legalize prostitution and it is going to make the problem better.

They are going to have government look after our kids because it can somehow do so better than the parents of this country. That is a disgusting idea, yet they spin it so it sounds good. They take away from parents the choice of looking after their kids in the way they want and choose. With the program they are proposing, it takes that choice away. They make it sound so good, but the reality is entirely different.

I cannot go through much more tonight. I have to talk about this war room and the over \$40 million the government has spent to cover up and keep information from the Gomery inquiry. That is a lot of money.

We have layers of corruption and wrongdoing, one stacked on top of the other. First of all, there is the corruption, the scandal itself. Of course we have learned a lot about this one particular scandal from the Gomery inquiry. That is not enough. The Liberals try to spin that. They will not admit to any wrongdoing. Only when they are caught do they set up the Gomery inquiry.

The Liberals got caught, they set up the inquiry, all this information comes out, and then what? They are going to be the people to clean it up. They were all involved in it, by their silence at least, I would suggest, but many of them were very closely involved in all this corruption. Yet they are going to be the ones to clean it up now. It makes no sense but that is the way they spin it. They are really good at that.

Now there is the million dollar war room. It is not a war room, the Liberals say. It is not to protect Liberals that have been caught cheating taxpayers out of their money. That is not what it is. To them it is just to help Gomery get the job done. The spin is marvellous.

I give them credit. I absolutely give the Liberal Party and the Liberal government credit for being the best in the western world at spinning truth into something else and making it look like reality, making it look believable. This is not something that Canadians are proud of. I do not think it is anything to be proud of at all, nor do most Canadians.

What we have now is unbelievable. The original \$100 million or so that is the topic of the Gomery commission was spent mostly by Liberal friends in ways that clearly were wrong, and they have been caught. Then the Liberals spend another \$40 million or more in keeping the information from Gomery. Yet the public works minister stands in the House every day saying, "Let Gomery do his work". I am tired of hearing him say that every day: "Let Justice Gomery do his job".

If the Liberals are sincere about that, then why are they spending more money to prevent Justice Gomery from doing his job than they are giving Gomery to allow him to do his job? That is the reality of what is happening here. It is disturbing but it is sad. It hurts us all. It hurts every single member of Parliament.

If it hurts every member of Parliament, it hurts democracy in this country. What is sad is the level that democracy in the House has been brought down to because of the government. Its most recent tactic is to say that somehow the Conservatives or the Bloc are involved. Actually, I do not think they have tried the Conservatives yet, but they are certainly saying that the Bloc is involved in this, so everybody is crooked and it is okay. That is a disgusting defence.

I realize that my time is up. I would be happy to answer any questions, but quite frankly I do not think anything else needs to be said on this issue. The Canadian public is very much aware of what has gone on, except that we of course discover new information every day and it is just as disturbing as the information was when this scandal was originally uncovered.

• (1930)

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard spin but this is not even good spin. I am trying to figure out what it is exactly that the member wants.

I was at committee when members opposite talked about a war room. It is not a war room. It is a coordinating committee to ensure everyone gives the paper forward.

It is kind of sad. This government called the inquiry because we wanted to get to the bottom of it. Yes, it is costly, but the only way we can clean it up is to air it.

I am angry about this. Are members opposite trying to tell us that Mr. Gomery has not done his job and has not received the information he was looking for? That is not my impression and I think Canadians across the country know we have been cooperating. To be honest, members opposite would not have heard all the things they have if we had not been cooperating. I say to the member that we want to get to the bottom of this. Is it cheap? No. However we are not a lynch mob.

I went to committee today. We want to condemn people. We want to be like a lynch mob. We want to decide who is guilty and who is not. I thought we lived in a democracy. Yes, bad things happen, but we have to make sure that proper legal steps are taken. Yes, we may not like it, but even the worse criminal has the right to a defence, and it is very important that happens.

### *Supply*

We cannot impugn motives to members in the House or in the other House. I think it is wrong. I would ask that member to stop the spin and stop impugning motives to honest, hardworking members and especially an honest, hardworking public service.

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, we have heard a little more spin.

I can understand, and I mean it sincerely, why a member might stand up and say that. It is because of the situation that her party has got itself into. When it is the Liberal Party and current members of government that are behind this corruption what else can those members do? I understand why they continue to perpetuate the spin but it still does not change reality.

As I was saying before, the spin is one thing but reality is quite another. The member said some things that really do not stand up to the test of accuracy. They are less than accurate. We are not really allowed to go beyond that in the House. The member has to know that.

If the member does not like the cost of the Gomery inquiry, then her party should not have been involved in the corruption in the first place. That is the way to prevent it. Even more than that, why did the Liberals not just admit to what they had done wrong? Why did they not say that the Liberal Party has been involved in a wrong activity and they will clean it up? However they did not say that. They hid it for more than a year and then finally, when the Auditor General put out her report and there was no denying it any more, only then did they say that they would be the ones to clean it up.

It is more spin but the Liberals are good at it. I give them credit. I am not nearly as good at spinning messages as members of the government but I hope I never am. However I can say that the Conservative Party of Canada will never be involved in activities like the Liberal Party has been involved. I will have no part of it and my colleagues will have no part of it.

• (1935)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on the notice of opposition by our Conservative colleagues. I think that it arises out of some wholly legitimate and valid intentions and concerns. The government has struck a commission of inquiry into the partisan use of public funds and it is absolutely necessary that we get to the bottom of it.

The more things move along, however, the more we realize that the government has in a rather hidden way, rather under the table, set some benchmarks, some guardrails to keep things from going off the tracks for it and for this commission. We are certainly aware of that sort of Privy Council war room which was apparently set up to coach the witnesses, channel media messages, fine tune them, all of course in the government's favour.

Is there not a danger of things going off the rails again and of more partisan use of public funds? The question certainly arises.

### Supply

We also got wind of the possibility of a secret agreement between the attorneys for former Prime Minister Chrétien and the government's attorneys. It would appear that the agreement was more or less along these lines: the Chrétien attorneys would agree to withdraw the legal proceedings questioning the credibility and impartiality of Justice Gomery, while still retaining the possibility of being able to come back to it later. The government attorneys are saying, "If by any chance you decided to come back to that later, we will have no objections."

The danger, after the Prime Minister promised the nation, cross his heart, that he would call an election 30 days at most after the tabling of the final report of the Gomery inquiry, is that now this secret pact might end up releasing the PM from this solemn promise to Canadians, and most particularly to Quebeckers.

Needless to say, those who still have an axe to grind and who wanted to have their say in an election, are the people of Quebec. The Liberals' sneaky tricks on May 19 deprived Quebeckers of the possibility of expressing themselves democratically. This is something that merits discussion, something that is most disconcerting in a democracy. But back to my main point.

This secret deal could free the Prime Minister from this promise. How is that possible? Quite simply, if the attorneys for former Prime Minister Chrétien decided once again to question Judge Gomery's credibility and impartiality when the judge tables his preliminary report and if, by chance, they managed to have him removed, this would have the effect that the judge would not be able to table his final report. Consequently, the government would not have to keep its commitment of holding an election 30 days following the tabling of the final report, since a final report would not be tabled.

Thus, the notice of opposition by the Conservative Party arises from extremely valid and legitimate concerns.

• (1940)

That being said, we must recognize that the procedure that was used to bring these concerns is very questionable. It shows some degree of amateurism and improvisation. Why? Because when we talk, for example, about removing \$1 million from the vote, we should know to what we are referring exactly. We should trace this amount to know why it is \$1 million, and not \$1.5 million, or \$2 million or \$750,000. Thus, the amount put forward in the notice of opposition seems arbitrary to us and is not supported by specific data.

Also, we must recognize that our rules of procedure do not allow us to remove some amount from the initial vote. We must accept the vote or reject it entirely.

The program expenditures vote of the Privy Council is about \$125.413 million. If we decided to cut the whole amount of \$125.413 million, we would not only run the risk of sending this country into an election. It could also spell chaos for governance in Canada.

Of course, we have very serious reservations about the relevance of the Privy Council as the central agency of the government, but we have to admit it would not be justified to abolish it completely. Any government needs a central coordinating body where interdepart-

mental consultation can occur. That is exactly the role of the Privy Council.

Therefore, if we went along with the notice of opposition of our Conservative colleagues, which again is based on extremely valid and legitimate concerns, and if we opposed these votes, the consequences could be dramatic to say the least.

The Bloc Québécois has always advocated responsible action. In our opinion, it would be irresponsible, to say the least, to vote against this vote, given the dramatic consequences that could result.

Therefore, even though we obviously recognize the basis and the validity of the concerns expressed by our Conservative colleagues in this notice of opposition, we will not be able to join them in rejecting this vote.

It will not be our pleasure to do this, but we will do it because we have always said we would act responsibly in this House, and that is why we feel we have to adopt this vote and not reject it completely.

• (1945)

[English]

**Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak to the estimates this evening. It is a chance for all in the House to reflect on the past and to give some thought to what lies ahead and how we can be most effective as members of Parliament.

Tonight as we begin this debate I certainly feel some satisfaction and a sense of comfort knowing that we have been able to actually make a difference in this Parliament, to have an impact on the federal government's budget process. For us, this is a day of celebration. We are on the precipice of advancing some very important legislation, some significant changes to the federal Liberal budget proposition that will enhance the quality of life in this country and ensure that we are investing strategically in areas of our economy that will put us on the path to great growth and productivity for future generations.

I want to take a minute to talk about the hard work of the NDP throughout this budget process. Once again I commend the hard work of our leader, the member for Toronto—Danforth, and my colleague, the member for Vancouver East, and all of the members of the NDP caucus who joined together in one determined voice to say, let us try to make a difference at this moment in our history; let us try to effect some change. We thought that would be impossible up to that moment.

The Conservatives basically rolled over and played dead. The budget came down on February 23. The leader of the official opposition took a cursory glance at the budget, walked out of this chamber and said to the world that he could live with the budget. The Conservatives would not vote non-confidence in the government on the budget.

We took a look at that budget and we said that it missed the mark, that it was contrary to the wishes of Canadians. It did not respect the promises made by the Prime Minister in the last election campaign. The Prime Minister said during the election campaign that there would be no new tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy in our society until such time as money had been restored to those programs that had been cut over the years to ensure balanced budgets.

When that budget came down on February 23 with another round of tax cuts for corporations, we knew in an instant that we could not support the budget. Not only did the Prime Minister break his promise to Canadians with respect to another tax cut for large corporations, but he also failed to invest in several strategic areas that Canadians were counting on.

There was not a mention in that budget about education and about the need to make post-secondary education more accessible and affordable for our young people. There was nothing in the budget about the burden facing students after they graduate, the huge loans they have to pay back to the tune of \$25,000 or \$30,000. There was nothing about those families who desperately want to send their children to university but just cannot afford it. There was nothing about investing in our young people to build an economy for the future, to take advantage of the new economy around us.

To top it all off, there was nothing in the budget about the desperate situation that hundreds of thousands of Canadians are facing when it comes to decent housing. Imagine living in a community without certainty about safe housing. Imagine what it is like in some of the inner-city north end communities like mine where people cannot afford a safe, decent home because the cost is out of reach. Imagine what it is like when the government has pulled out of all of its housing projects and all the funds have dried up and some individuals and neighbourhoods cannot access money to renovate and improve old housing stock.

● (1950)

Imagine what it is like living on a reserve, in what have been clearly identified by impartial UN observers as third world conditions. There was not a mention in budget 2005 for housing, for making sure that everyone in this country has the right to safe, secure, decent housing.

There were more problems with the budget. I am not going to go into it all again. We know about the shortcomings with respect to the Kyoto accord. We know the government has missed the mark in terms of environmental planning and ensuring that we are able to preserve this earth for future generations. There was nothing in the budget in terms of meeting our commitment internationally, 0.7% of our GDP to be used for international aid and overseas development.

We recognize that the budget missed the mark. However, we did not just sit on our laurels and say that is it, that we will vote against the government no matter what. At the first opportunity we said, "Let us try to achieve those objectives. Let us try to fill the shortfalls. Let us try to deal with the neglect that we see in this budget by the federal Liberals".

We entered into negotiations with the Liberal government in the full light of day, not as my dear friends from the Conservative Party

### *Supply*

like to suggest, in some hotel room or in the back seat of a car. This was in the full light of day. I know they are envious of the relationship that we established, this short term project that we worked on, this extended one night stand, but for goodness sake, they do not have to let their jealousy get to that degree.

**Hon. Bill Blaikie:** A one budget stand.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** It is a one budget stand, as my hon. colleague has just said.

In the full light of day we set out to accomplish something that was good for Canada, and we did it.

We arrived at a fiscally responsible plan that ensured there would be no attempt to have this government go into any debt or deficit. There was no thought of giving up on some contingency emergency fund to be set aside for sudden situations if they were to occur, and not to go into debt. No, we said that our plan was to use the money that had been set aside for another corporate tax cut for large corporations, because those tax breaks are not producing huge benefits for Canadians in terms of new jobs, new companies and new opportunities in this country. In fact, the government has been giving tax breaks to large corporations and all the while profits have been going up and up for those corporations and investment has been going down and down. The key to our future prosperity is not about giving more tax breaks to those corporations. The key is to invest in areas that will create jobs, meet social objectives and enhance the quality of life in this country.

How can the Conservatives oppose something that positive? It is a proposal that is fiscally responsible. It does not create any kind of deficit for the government. It does not take away the contingency fund. It is a transparent use of surplus dollars. It shifts money from tax cuts for large corporations and puts it into housing for Canadians, lower tuition for students, cleaner air for people who cannot handle the smog warnings day in and day out, and gives some assistance for those suffering from tremendous economic and social structural barriers overseas. It is a very reasonable plan that makes a big difference in the lives of Canadians.

● (1955)

We are here tonight celebrating the fact that with the help of Canadians we have been able to make a difference. The better balanced budget is not perfect. It does not have everything in it. We were not able to accomplish all we would have liked to. We did not get a big concession in terms of employment insurance. We would have liked that. We did not get some new commitments on pay equity. We would have liked that.

We managed some constructive steps forward and we did it within a fiscally responsible framework. That is something to be proud of. I know that Canadians are proud of it and want the budget bills passed.

### *Supply*

I am sure that Canadians were appalled when they opened a newspaper and read about the Conservatives first playing games through the course of an entire sitting of witnesses at our committee and then gutting the bill and sending a blank page back to this House. The Conservatives took away the \$1.6 billion for housing. They took away the \$1.5 billion for education. They took away the \$900 million for environmental projects and public transit and for retrofitted housing. They took away the \$500 million for assistance overseas.

That is what the Conservatives did. They took away that which Canadians wanted. They are now being held responsible for that kind of irresponsible action. One only has to look at the polls. They dropped by 10 points overnight. They dropped like a stone in the polls, and rightfully so, as my colleague from Windsor has just said, because Canadians have sent us here to act responsibly. Canadians have told us to do a good job, to do something, to make Parliament work. Canadians do not want their members of Parliament to sit here and play games constantly and give them nothing but talk and no action. As one of my other colleagues said, all this talk and no action from the Conservatives is like a bad date.

Let us get back to the issues at hand. We have before us tonight the estimates for this budget year. We have before us two budget bills that are important for Canadians. We have before us a responsibility and a mandate to continue to make inroads, to make this country better than what it is, to ensure that we deal with some fundamental critical issues in our society today.

In the few minutes I have remaining, I want to outline a few of those points of where we have to go in the future.

We see Bill C-48, the better balanced budget bill as just a beginning. We do not see short term investments as the solution in the long run. We recognize there must be a responsibility on the part of the federal government to invest in lifelong learning. That means starting from early childhood and child care supports and going right through elementary and secondary and post-secondary education. It is not something that happens by neglecting an area like education and reducing the federal share of cash to provinces for education down to 11%. Whatever happened to this goal of shared responsibility between the federal and provincial governments?

We must build on what we have been able to accomplish through Bill C-48, in terms of the \$1.5 billion for education and improving access for students.

We must build on the beginnings of a national child care program that we see in Bill C-43, something that has been accomplished after many years of broken promises. In fact, members well know that the commitment for a national child care program is the longest running broken political promise in the history of this country. We are finally at the stage where we have the beginnings of a national child care program. We are pleased with that development. It is a beginning step. It is the initial step in a long journey to ensure that this country has affordable, non-profit, quality child care spaces.

Contrary to the Conservatives who like to suggest that our society will come to rack and ruin if we proceed down this path, we say that we have a responsibility to families who choose to work, or who

must work, to ensure that their children are in safe, secure, quality child care arrangements.

We have heard so much from the Conservatives over these last two days about choice in child care. For once, let us get this debate straight. We are talking about a policy to deal with working parents. We are trying to respond to the fact that there are thousands of children in unlicensed day care spaces. We are trying to deal with the fact that there are families, too many to count, who cannot afford or cannot find quality child care to ensure their children are in safe, secure, quality settings.

● (2000)

I hear the Conservatives yelling in the background as usual because they cannot grasp the notion that it is possible to combine work and family. It is possible to be a good mother and still hold down a job, like being a member of Parliament. It is possible to provide the nurture, love and caring that is required of mothers and fathers by their children and still hold jobs, provide for families and make a living, but it takes some help from government. It takes government working with communities to make it possible. It means helping families and communities from the ground up to ensure they can help themselves. We are talking about that.

This policy is not about trying to meet all the needs of every individual in our society. If parents choose to stay at home to care for their children, we have an obligation to ensure that policies and tax provisions address those circumstances. That is exactly what must happen, but let us not mix apples and oranges. A child care program to respond to the needs of working families is one thing that has been neglected for too many decades. It must not be allowed to languish for one week more.

Then the issue of dealing with whether our tax system is responsive to all family situations, especially in the cases where one parent chooses to stay home to care for the children full time, must be addressed. No one has said it should not.

It is absolutely irresponsible on the part of the Conservatives to suggest that by addressing one end of this public policy debate, we are taking away from another. We are not taking away choice. We are not denying the needs of all our citizens. We are recognizing the millions of children who now have a right to safe, secure, quality child care and early childhood development. It is as simple as that.

By investing in child care now, we grow the economy. We plan for the future. We ensure that there is a bright future for all in our society. That is but one example of where we must go in the future.

In the two minutes I have remaining let me also say this. In conjunction with lifelong learning, post-secondary and university education and child care, we must also look at achieving policies that ensure the appropriate balance between work and family. The work life balance issue must be addressed by this Parliament in the near future.

*Supply*

Too many families are struggling with the stress of trying to be excellent parents, good providers and contributing members of our workforce without supports that take into account the stress of juggling so much, ensuring there is food on the table and the needs of the family are taken care of with some time left over for themselves to have leisure activities and to enjoy the society to which they are contributing. That is another area for future work.

In the context of budgets, let us look at the issues of equality between the sexes and recognize that nowhere has the government yet achieved a simple objective to ensure gender sensitive, budget making processes and to look at the impact of our policies and decisions on women in the workforce. Nowhere is that more important than in the area of employment insurance.

We still have in practice employment insurance policies that discriminate against women because they want to work part time and care for their children the rest of the time. That is a perfect example for the Conservatives who say that they want to provide choice. If they want to provide choice, where are they when it comes to seeking something as simple as a change in the employment insurance rules so a part time worker is recognized as a permanent member of the workforce and is able to access employment insurance?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** The Conservatives are against that.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** The Conservatives, yes, are against that. It is some choice they are offering Canadians.

• (2005)

Finally, we have a major issue with respect to fiscal imbalance. We must ensure that this federation is nurtured and cared for. We must put back on the agenda the issue of equalization, stop this kind of one-off, divide and conquer approach by the Liberals and start to look at this nation as one. We must recognize and ensure an equalization program is in place so the wealth of one area is shared by others and so everyone in this society is entitled to the same quality programs in health care, education, housing and social services. That is our aim.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment about the member's points on the housing and I have a question on the day care file.

As a starting point, I am sure the member would concede that it is not fiscally responsible, nor even possible, to address all government responsibilities and priorities in each and every budget. In fact, it is the series of budgets that we have to look at in terms of have we continued to respond to the emergent difficulties and problems.

However, I agree with the member in regard to the social housing issue. I spent a number of years on our local housing authority, rent geared to income and rent supplement. About 50% of the people using those services were seniors and 50% were family units. The vast majority were lone parent scenarios. Therefore, we know this is an important area in services to all communities across Canada. There are people who need help.

I agree that no matter where we provide the housing, whether it be at the social housing level or the affordable housing level, bringing

in new housing stock means that other people can move and those in need can fill in those spots as they become available.

I am somewhat pleased that the housing issue continues to be of concern. We know CMHC is putting some \$3.9 billion a year into its programs, mortgage insurance, et cetera. Is it enough? I do not think it will ever be enough to ensure that we deal with those in our country who are most need.

I know the member is very much involved in the day care and early learning side. Experts have said that it would cost about \$15 billion to implement a full program of national day care plan, which I think is down the road. The OECD characterized existing day care arrangements in Canada outside of Quebec as being glorified babysitting, and this concerns me.

Does the member feel that the existing day care systems, which have been established throughout the country, have to upgrade their facilities and the quality of the people to ensure that our children get the full benefit of the early learning programs?

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** Mr. Speaker, first, I appreciate the comments by my hon. colleague, both on housing and child care.

Let me just first touch on housing, since we both agree that it is a very important area of investment. I remind the member that while we share this concern, it was the NDP that moved the agenda forward by adding \$1.6 billion to the budget for housing. There was zero in the 2005 federal budget for housing until the NDP proposed the additional money.

The Minister of Housing may be going around the country suggesting that he has a plan and that he would have done this anyway. He may have a plan, but he did not have the money. It is important for us to acknowledge that. Because Canadians spoke so strongly about this need, we made a commitment to include that demand in our negotiations with the Liberal Party. I might add, that investment alone is estimated to create approximately 26,000 person years of employment, so again evidence of the bang for the buck.

On the question of child care, which a very important issue, when the OECD looked at Canada and said that about our child care system, it looked at the country as a whole. The fact that we do not have a national child care program has led the OECD to comment that we have more like a babysitting service than a good early childhood program.

The OECD recognizes that provinces like Manitoba and Quebec have very excellent models that ought to be replicated across this country. However, what the OECD has said and what other economists in Canada have said, like David Dodge, is that the investment in this area is so important for dealing with productivity and for ensuring our economy grows. We cannot ignore this area or we lose in the long run. It is like cutting off our nose to spite our face. If we do not invest in these areas, we are only hurting ourselves in human terms and also in economic terms.

*Supply*

Let me close by saying that it was Charles Coffey from the Royal Bank of Canada who said that a child's brain development in the first six years of life sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health. High quality early childhood education produces long term positive outcomes and cost savings that include improved school performance, reduced special education places, lower school dropout rates and increased lifelong earning potential. We have so much to gain by investing in the area of child care.

● (2010)

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. friend's comments. When I listened to her boast about all the money the NDP had incited the Liberals to waste and to throw around, I began to think. Her leader is very much an outstanding spokesman for the silver spoon socialists who he represents in his downtown urban Toronto riding.

My hon. friend talked about a lack of fair equalization. Why was it not in the agreement? What the Conservative Party campaigned on in the last election was that all provinces be allowed to keep their natural resources and not have them clawed back, like the agreements with Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia.

I understand the premier of the province of Saskatchewan is an awful negotiator. When the federal government tells him something, he listens and walks away. He does not negotiate. He does not stand up for it and maybe he listens to his national party leader who says that Saskatchewan is not important, Saskatchewan does not matter.

The essence of my question is this. When the deal was made or hatched in the back seat of a car or whatever the hon. member said, why were provinces like Saskatchewan forgotten? Why was there nothing for a fair equalization deal for Saskatchewan? Why was there nothing for agriculture? Between an NDP premier in Saskatchewan and a supposedly powerful new finance minister in the person of the leader of the New Democrats, why could nothing be done that would help areas outside of the very narrow corner of downtown Toronto, the only area of the country the leader of that party actually cares anything about?

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** Mr. Speaker, I guess the first response to my hon. colleague would be where were the Conservatives when the federal government brought down the budget? Did we hear any amendments from the Conservatives? Did we hear any suggestions? Did they have any kind of an agreement reached with the Liberals?

We heard the Minister of Finance at committee yesterday say that the Liberals had to turn to the NDP because they could not get anything from the Conservatives. They would not deal. They would not talk, or plan or propose. They are stuck in their rut and focused on one issue of having an election without any platform.

I would suggest that the hon. member read the subcommittee on finance which was initiated by the Bloc member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. It was done explicitly to deal with the issue of fiscal imbalance and we attempted to deal with the matter of equalization.

We are not talking necessarily first and foremost about a budgetary provision. We are talking about trying to convince the federal government to start to negotiate seriously with provinces for a new equalization agreement that is based on a 10 province formula that includes natural resource revenue and that is true to the wishes

of the premiers as expressed two years ago and ignored by the federal government.

The question again arises, where were the Conservatives throughout this debate? Did members hear the Conservatives suggesting we needed a new commitment to equalization? No. What the Conservatives suggest is that we need to move more in the direction of a patchwork approach to this federation. We need more one-off deals. We need more band-aid approaches. That is the Conservative approach.

At least the Bloc, although we may not always agree on everything, was able to recognize that there was a problem that had to be addressed and we worked together to try to find solutions. That is the issue before us today.

I know the Conservatives are envious. I know they are suffering from sour grapes and NDP envy. However, but I wish they would get on with the fact of recognizing they missed the boat and pass Bill C-43 and Bill C-48 so Canadians can access the money they want and we can get on with building a great country.

● (2015)

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Cape Breton—Canso.

I spoke at a graduation recently and I was inspired, as I often am with our young people, by their motto: "Shoot for the moon and even if you miss, you'll fall among the stars". It reminded me of the many unheralded accomplishments of the Prime Minister in his first term in office.

I remember that in two 20 minute speeches in the House I tried to list all of his accomplishments. I could never get through them all. I would challenge both the national press and the opposition to tell us of a Prime Minister in history who had accomplished so much in the first year.

Those accomplishments do not come from only the Prime Minister himself. He needs the support of his cabinet and particularly the administrative branch of the Privy Council Office, which works so hard and plays such an important support role in these accomplishments.

The press or the opposition might wonder why we are so high in the polls at the moment. If we stop looking inside the House and look outside for a moment, where we are not concentrating on only one or two subjects, we would see the big picture and the accomplishments. What kind of Canada do we see out there?

If we were to go out into the city here, we would see a vibrant, bustling city. There is lots of economic activity. The same would apply if a person were to go across this great nation. Beginning on the east coast in Halifax, going to Montreal, Toronto, Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver and Whitehorse, we would see the same vibrant cities and communities across this country.

*Supply*

If we were to look at the poor and the families with poor children in this country, we would see that there are more programs to assist them. We would see this in the tax changes that we have made. Soon 850,000 families will be off the tax rolls completely. Those children will have a better economic situation.

We would see the best social programs since medicare. It would include the national child benefit that the government has been increasing year after year. We would see aboriginal head start which has been so successful for the aboriginal children of this country. We would see the national day care initiative, often for single parent families, allowing parents to provide a proper and educated upbringing for their children.

We would see a country where the disabled and their caregivers have more access to different programs and initiatives. We would see aboriginal people in this great nation, who for the first time have a government-to-government relationship. They are working on the major issues that they brought forward. They are working in partnership with us on major round tables in areas such as housing, economic development, education, health care, government and accountability for results.

We would see historic numbers of first nations people and aboriginal people now governing themselves in modern governments. They are doing so in some systems unparalleled in the world today.

We would see for the first time in history that rural Canada is more connected than most nations of the world. We would see new initiatives in rural health because of this connectivity. We would see long distance education that gives access to educational opportunities that rural people have never had before.

As we go across this country and turn outward from this House and from the media, members of Parliament would see what is happening with regard to the environment. We would see new national parks that we are so proud of in this country. We would see new underwater marine areas. We would see the unprecedented cleanup of contaminated sites. We would see all sorts of new and exciting initiatives related to air quality and greenhouse gases.

We would see thousands of energy efficient homes constructed with assistance from the government. We would see new auto emission reduction standards and world class agreements. We would see assistance for solar energy, wind energy, geo-thermal energy, small hydro, landfill gas and CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration.

We would see the green infrastructure programs in many communities across this country. These are some of the leading communities in the world.

We would see a nation that greatly supports and appreciates cultural diversity. That cultural diversity leads to the protection of individual Canadians, where we stand up for their rights. That cultural diversity that we built and celebrate leads to excitement in our communities that may not occur in other nations. Around the world that cultural diversity gives us a great economic advantage that other nations do not have.

● (2020)

As we go across this country, we would see flourishing universities, where we are leading the G-7 in the research investments that Canada is now making. Our students have access to the largest scholarship program in Canadian history with the millennium scholarship fund. We would see the unprecedented level of research funds where they can work in research during their senior education. We have the highest level of post-secondary participation in the G-7.

Some people say the north is the symbol of Canada. It is really what sets us apart. We would see a north that is having unparalleled attention being paid to it by the Prime Minister and the Privy Council Office. We would see a northern strategy and northern economic development fund that we have been after for years. We would see extra money to deal with the challenges in health care, infrastructure, new special transfer payments and unique first nations land claims.

As we go across this country and talk to our seniors, often the most in need in our society, we would see that they are being provided with increased pensions. We would see a reinvigorated new horizons program and all the types of activities that seniors love in that program. We have seniors who now have their own secretariat to ensure that their issues do not fall between the cracks. If these seniors happen to be veterans, we would see the new veterans charter. It is the first time since the great wars that we have reinvigorated and modernized the benefits available to those who have done so much for this nation.

If we were to look at our military, we would see the new foreign affairs strategy that includes: 5,000 more peacekeeping troops, 3,000 more reserves, new trucks, helicopters and utility aircraft, large investments in exercising northern sovereignty, and over and above this, \$12 billion to fund all these new strategies. That is the largest investment in 20 years.

In spite of all these critical investments to build a Canada that Canadians want, individual Canadians and their companies are still enjoying the largest tax cuts in history of \$100 billion. Canadians are enjoying the largest health care increase in history of \$41 billion, and a whole new equalization scheme. The foundation of this great nation is to help those areas of the country at times when they need regional help. The Prime Minister and the PCO have been able to arrange, with all the provinces and territories, this whole new equalization foundation of Canada.

Canadians are proud of their new invigorated country, leading the world with peacekeepers in Haiti and Afghanistan, providing support for Darfur, helping with AIDS, malaria and TB in Africa, leading the world in the fight against polio, constantly increasing foreign aid, and leading the debt relief for poor nations. The Prime Minister pioneered the L-20 and the concept of a responsibility to protect.

### Supply

Canadians all the while are safely blanketed in a host of security provisions and investments since September 11, and the knowledge that their citizens had the say and the Prime Minister had the courage to stay out of Iraq and missile defence. Canadians are enjoying a vibrant culture of song and theatre with unprecedented investments by the Government of Canada. These were huge needs to be true to our values in order to build the kind of Canada we all want

However, to make those massive investments, did the Prime Minister, the finance minister and the PCO undermine the tremendous fiscal strength that the Prime Minister built for Canada when he was finance minister? Definitely not.

We are the only country in the G-7 with a surplus. We have had eight consecutive surpluses, the first time since Confederation. We have stable inflation. We have reduced the debt by \$61 billion, so we can make these investments in health care, the military, the disabled, education and the environment. We have the best job creation in the G-7, the lowest interest rates, a triple A rating, and billions in cost-cutting.

This is perhaps an unparalleled level of government achievement in the world, but rather than increase resources and rewards to facilitate this great PCO work, we face a Conservative motion to cut 0.7%. If I were a Conservative member with any hope of rebuilding a party, so it could once again be a nation-builder, I would be aghast at trying to make this 0.7% cut from one of the most remarkable administrations in history that has done so much for the poor, the environment, the military, cities, and the sick and homeless.

I implore all members of the House to support the PCO and the government employees who have done so much to make this the greatest nation on earth.

● (2025)

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, maybe it is time we had a reality check. We have listened to the member speak for a few minutes and most Canadians have not experienced the things he is talking about. They are only seen and experienced by the fantasy in the Liberal caucus over there apparently.

I want to talk about some of the issues. The budget that he is so proud of has very little for agriculture, virtually nothing. In fact, I was particularly disappointed in the NDP when it made its deal with the Liberal government. It made a choice that it was not interested in agriculture at all and so there is nothing for agriculture in the special deal that it made. So, for the member to be standing there talking about what a great job the Liberals are doing for Canadians, he has left out a big chunk of Canada right there, just dealing with rural Canada and agriculture.

He talks about health. I come from an area where the NDP government in Saskatchewan has basically destroyed the health care system. It has shut down the funding and it comes from this Liberal government cutting back funding to the provinces, forcing the provinces to then download onto the local communities until many of them have no services left in those areas.

Why has the health care system been destroyed to the level that it has in the 12 years that the government has been in power?

Just today we found out that five single-person RCMP detachments will be shut down in my riding. There was no consultation at all. The RCMP are pulling back and pulling out of there. Again, it is an issue of funding.

The government has money for everybody. It is throwing it all over the place and it is not putting it into places where it is needed. People in my riding are going without while the government is making deals all over the place and throwing money in every direction except where some folks could use it.

We have five single-person RCMP detachments along the border. There will be a 70-mile stretch of that border where the nearest RCMP officer is going to be 50 miles away. Why is that happening after 12 years of this government? That is not all. There is a ton of other things.

He talks about seniors. If they are doing such a good job at improving the lives of seniors, why are we constantly getting letters from seniors asking that their benefits be raised. We just had a letter the other day saying that the individual could not live on \$900 a month and was there something that we could do? We have veterans calling in who cannot live on the pensions that the government is giving them either. I think it is hypocritical for this member to get up and to speak as he has because in so many areas in this country the Liberal government has completely failed people.

I would like his response, particularly on the RCMP issue. People are being left without the protection that they need because the government does not have enough money for those basic services. Yet, it is willing to spend money on all kinds of special areas where its friends can get that money instead.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell:** Mr. Speaker, it is embarrassing that the side opposite does not know of the many government assistance programs for the people in agriculture. I will just list some of them. There is the deferral of taxation on patronage dividends. Preferred shares will benefit agricultural co-operatives. In June 2000, we launched a policy framework with \$1.1 billion in annual funding. In budget 2005 there was \$104 million over four years, including \$2 million for farmers in Atlantic Canada. Right after the budget, there was another billion dollars for farmers.

The RCMP manages itself. It deploys its resources. It has come up with a better deployment strategy. The Conservatives and the Bloc were trying to tell management what to do.

What I found fascinating about the question was that for the first time we were asked some questions by the Conservative Party. We have had six months with no questions on: foreign affairs, veterans, mines, unemployment insurance, national defence, national debt, tax cuts for the poor, regional development, transit, the environment, Canada's role in greenhouses, culture, taxes, fisheries, the handicapped, Darfur and foreign aid. It is great that finally the Conservatives are getting on to an agenda and asking questions on the things that we are providing. The items that the member brought up are in our budgets. He should be supporting the budget and voting for those items tonight.

● (2030)

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to join in this debate this evening.

The opposition motion really is central to the operation of the government. Many of the speakers here this evening have talked about the budget and the importance of some of the significant investments that are being made through this budget. If people are watching this at home their eyes may be glazing over as we look at the numbers being bandied about, in the billions of dollars, and the various program investments that have been made.

What I would like to do is speak to how these investments make their way to the provinces and the impacts they are having on the provinces, on communities and on individual Canadians. It is important and it is significant. That is what it comes down to: being a better country and investing in a great country. I think our strength is in our communities.

I will speak on behalf of the Atlantic Liberal caucus. There are many advances in the budget. There are so many positive aspects in this budget that will pay benefits and dividends to the people in Atlantic Canada. I want to identify a couple of them first.

There is one that certainly everybody in the House is very attuned to and aware of. It is probably one of the sexiest aspects when we look at Atlantic Canada. The one that got the play nationally was the offshore accord. That money is ready to be delivered to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the province of Nova Scotia. It is a significant amount of money. It was a promise that was made by the Prime Minister during the last election and it is being delivered on. There was a long and protracted series of negotiations. Through equalization and then through the accord, this is one of the most complex federal-provincial deals that the federal government has.

The parties at hand, both provincial governments and the federal government, stuck to it and hammered out a deal. The Prime Minister went beyond the commitment he made. He went beyond the 100% offshore royalties and even provided for an upfront cash payment to each of the provinces. It is very significant.

For my own province of Nova Scotia, there will be \$830 million in upfront money. It has already been identified by the premier that this money will be applied to our provincial debt. I commend him for this

Currently Nova Scotians carry the highest per capita debt in this country. I think this was part of the rationale and driving force behind the Prime Minister's election commitment to make sure that is

### *Supply*

dealt with, because the people in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador are handcuffed with this particular debt.

That \$830 million will be applied to the debt. In turn, that will loosen up between \$40 million and \$50 million annually for the province of Nova Scotia, which it can now invest in highways, education and various programs such as sport and recreation. This money will make it into the communities of Nova Scotia and will be of benefit to the people of the Atlantic region.

There will be \$1.17 billion in the new equalization deal, which will provide for \$151 million going into the province of Nova Scotia alone.

The money from the gas tax revenue has been debated and there have been questions asked in the House. There will be \$145 million going to the people of the province of Nova Scotia. This will make its way into the regional municipalities, into the Cape Breton regional municipality and towns such as Mulgrave and Port Hawkesbury, into those municipal units that very much need the dollars.

● (2035)

From an Atlantic perspective, federal involvement in various aspects of the fishery is very important. I sit on the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. Many of the challenges that we have faced, many of the recommendations that have come forward from that committee, and many of the issues that we have dealt with in recent years have found their way into this budget. They have been addressed by having funding opportunities through the budget.

Let us look at a number of them. There is the Coast Guard, for example, and the brave men and women who serve the country in the Coast Guard. We have seen \$276 million allocated to the Coast Guard over the next five years, with \$117 million of that finding its way to the Atlantic provinces.

We will see investment in six new large vessels, two for offshore research and four for midshore patrol and protection and enforcement. That is a significant investment in our Coast Guard. We have heard time and time again that our Coast Guard is underfunded and that it needs the tools to get the job done. It needs the tools for protection and it needs the tools to support science. This commitment of money in the budget certainly goes a long way toward addressing that.

There is another benefit we will find in this as well: an investment in our shipbuilding. We will see activity. Some state of the art technology that is being advanced by our country's shipbuilding companies will benefit from this investment.

Another aspect of fisheries and oceans that is being funded is the oceans action plan. Sometimes it is taken for granted, but industries that rely on the ocean generate \$22 billion annually for the Canadian economy. That is fairly significant.

We are concerned about the loss of marine habitat. We are concerned about the deterioration in stocks. We see \$28 million over two years being pulled out in this budget, with \$14 million allocated to the Atlantic provinces to implement phase one of the oceans action plan.

### *Supply*

On overfishing, I recall that a number of months ago we had an emergency debate here in the House on overfishing. This minister and this government are committed to addressing overfishing. When we look at our responsibilities through NAFO and that whole regulatory area, we see that we have made an investment of \$15 million on an ongoing basis to address the concern on overfishing.

The Atlantic salmon endowment fund is one that is close to me personally because the Margaree River is in my area and is part of my constituency. The Margaree River is really the whole focal point and the essence of the tourism industry throughout the Margaree Valley. The unfortunate part is that if there are no fish in the rivers there are no heads in the beds and we have no tourism industry.

The impact of acid rain on our environment and the fish habitat has taken its toll over the years. The budget includes \$30 million for a one-time peel-out for Atlantic salmon to make sure that those stocks are healthy and sustainable for years to come.

Just to put it in terms we all understand, when we look at a commercially caught salmon we are looking at a benefit of about \$3.50 a pound. For a salmon that is caught recreationally, it is about \$35 a pound. That is because sportsmen come in from the United States and from all over Europe. They come and stay for weeks at Margaree and they fish salmon. It is important that we work with communities and special interest groups that continue to promote the health of Atlantic salmon stocks.

I want to make a point on regional economic development. Let us look at the opposition party and its position on regional economic development. I do not think it has one. I think this is something that party fears.

● (2040)

I want to tell the House that this party stands behind regional economic development. This party sees targeted investments, working with our business communities. Economic development does pay dividends. There is a great need in Halifax, Moncton and St. John's. Those economies are chugging right along. Those economies are doing so well for themselves.

Let me tell members something. If we are in rural Atlantic Canada and have a great idea with a great business plan and we take that plan to the bank, the bank is not very excited about supporting those initiatives. If the plant is in Mississauga or Hamilton and that business does not work out, the bank would not lose any of its investment, but it is a risk in rural Canada. The Conservatives across the way should know that it is the same in rural Canada everywhere.

Guaranteed loans are something we continue to support through ACOA and the investments in ACOA. This is an important budget with great investments through this budget. I encourage everyone in the House to support the budget.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marc Boulianne (Mégantic—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my remarks and my question are for the two previous speakers who shared their time and who also share the same ideas. We were told there was a budget to fight poverty. We know there is a lot of poverty in Canada. We can see this in the statistics. It was also mentioned to us that it was a budget to assist families. It is the same for families: there is a lot of poverty.

The member concluded his speech by talking about rural regions. You know that we have a problem now. Some Quebec regions are emptying entirely because of the federal policies and the lack of investment. If budget forecasts or budgets are so good, why did the government change the summer career placement projects? This is one of the finest examples that we have.

For example, in the riding of Mégantic—L'Érable, I had \$360,000 last year. This year, I have \$200,000, a cut of about \$150,000. This means approximately one hundred student jobs. What do you think the students will do? They will go to the big cities. That is the rural exodus.

We had the firearms registry scandal: \$1 billion was spent, was stolen. We had the human resource scandal: \$1 billion. We are now in the middle of the sponsorship scandal: \$300 million. And now, it is the summer career placement scandal, so that young people cannot work in their region.

How can the member explain, if the government has so much money and the rural regions are developing, that we have projects that will entirely empty the regions? Moreover, he says this with a straight face, while being serious. I do not understand such speeches.

[*English*]

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner:** Mr. Speaker, in the last point I was making when my time expired I was speaking about rural development and what this government has done for rural development. I cannot speak specifically about Quebec, but I am very comfortable in stating that we have seen success stories in rural Atlantic Canada.

The point I made about the banks not wanting to support rural investment is a reality, but we are fortunate in Atlantic Canada that we have ACOA. It has guaranteed loans for businesses that want to set up in rural Atlantic Canada. There is a 92% repayment record on those loans. Any bank would be proud of that. The loans are given at preferred rates, but the federal government does get its money back. I encourage the people across the way to check this out.

We have seen investments in communities through the strategic community investment fund. One of the communities in my area picked up a 50 tonne lift. We could not service some of the bigger fishing boats in my community. They used to have to be towed and salvaged to Halifax. By investing in a key piece of infrastructure, now we are able to get that done.

We can go to that boatyard now and see 48 people on the payroll of this particular company. That is huge for this small community. Another thing is that it is a great saving to the fishers in that community. It is a great saving to those fishers who do not have to go up the coast to Halifax to have their boats repaired anymore.

I think there is investment identified in the budget to help rural communities and to help those that need the help through no fault of their own. I guess the easy thing would be if we all packed up the car and moved to Toronto, Hamilton, Calgary or Fort McMurray, but that is not Canada and that is not what this party believes in. We believe in the regions and we believe in rural Canada, and this budget supports rural Canada.

*Supply*

• (2045)

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, all afternoon I have sat in my seat in the House of Commons and listened to the speeches from members opposite.

We heard about budgets, about money and about what is good for Canadians. We heard that the two tier Liberal day care system will be set up with very little money and resources and will be targeted only at people who live in cities, not at people in the rural areas and people on shiftwork. There is a real gap there.

I have heard about the gun registry over this past year and the billions and billions of dollars that have been wasted on that. I have heard about the lack of police officers on our streets and the lack of resources for our police forces to combat crime. There is little to nothing in the budget for that.

However in every one of the speeches I never heard members opposite talk about the waste in the Gomery inquiry and the scandal going on in our country right now of millions and millions of dollars being given away and lost.

Quite categorically, when members opposite are talking about the budget, they should talk about how they will pay back taxpayers for this terrible waste of money.

How can the member opposite talk about budgets when in actual fact a war room was set up to combat the scandal centred around the Gomery commission? Why do members opposite not talk about how they will pay back that money to taxpayers? I think people across this nation might then give some credibility to the budget if those issues were addressed.

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner:** Mr. Speaker, the government wants to get to the bottom of the scandal. I know the party across the way has been transfixed on the Gomery inquiry. The commission was appointed, it is moving its work forward and it will tender its report.

If members opposite want any evidence that the Canadian public is past this, I would suggest they might want to check the polls because the Canadian public has every confidence in Gomery, as does this government.

If those members would come forward with some policy, with something other than the Gomery, maybe the bleeding would stop.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member across the way that the bleeding will stop when the Canadian public vote the Liberals out and bring back responsible government, the Conservative Party of Canada.

It is a pleasure to rise tonight, along with a number of my colleagues, in opposition to the one million taxpayer dollars being spent by the Liberal government in a pathetic attempt at nothing more than Liberal style damage control. Let us start with the \$1 million.

In late May the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that it had discovered the Gomery war room under the direction of the Privy Council Office. This war room, as mentioned in the newspaper, is staffed by four or five workers whose sole responsibility is to monitor the Gomery inquiry and provide advice to the Prime Minister's Office on how to deal with, or basically how to spin, the damaging testimony coming out of the Gomery inquiry.

Talk about adding insult to injury. As if Canadian taxpayers had not already been bilked enough by the government. The Liberals spent \$250 million under the auspices of a sponsorship program to boost their profile in Quebec and help fight separatism in Quebec. The \$100 million dollars of the \$250 million that went out in commissions and fees to Liberal friendly ad agencies are at the centre of what the Gomery inquiry is checking into and the subject of criminal charges, of which there will probably be at least four brought down.

To date, the Gomery budget for the current year is \$20.4 million and that figure could double after the next phase, bringing the tally for the inquiry to approximately \$40 million. Add that amount to the almost \$40 million in expenses for the four federal departments involved, the Department of Public Works, the Treasury Board, the Department of Justice and the Privy Council Office, and the overall tag is \$80 million.

The public works minister has tried to contend that the money being spent by these four departments is not linked with Gomery's budget although it is directly related to the inquiry as a whole.

I am sure most of us in the House can think of much better ways to use the \$80 million and the other \$250 million that was spent on the sponsorship program. Over the last few days we have listened to the Supreme Court and we have realized that the health care system could use many more dollars. The injection of \$330 million into a system that, as some would say, is in major trouble and in major need of a fix would certainly be much better used than in a sponsorship program.

The member was talking about Atlantic Canada but I am certain that agriculture throughout the country could have used the \$330 million. It is not just that \$330 million. Now we have learned that another \$1 million is being misspent in the Liberal government's attempt to deflect criticism and mitigate the damage that is being done to its reputation. That is what the \$1 million does. It adds spin and deals with damage control to the Liberals' reputation.

The issue of the Gomery war room was first raised in the House by the leader of the official opposition on May 23 when he asked the Prime Minister if he would direct the Liberal Party to repay the money. The Prime Minister refused, denying that public money was in fact being misused. He defended the Gomery war room saying that it was needed to "ensure the commission has the support it requires from the government".

The kind of support for which the government was using that money was certainly not the type of support that Gomery was looking for. Before we went into the last election what Parliament was looking for was simple compliance by the government so that we could get to the bottom of the worst scandal in Canadian history.

• (2050)

I would like to take this opportunity to remind the House and the Prime Minister that the Gomery inquiry and the ensuing cost of \$80 million would never have been necessary if the sponsorship scandal had never been a reality. If the government had not misused the dollars initially, all these millions of dollars would not be in question here tonight.

### Supply

I would also point out that the Prime Minister has promised to call an election within 30 days of Gomery releasing his report. However there is absolutely no guarantee that the report will be brought down in a timely manner. The release of the report could, for all we know, be withheld until after criminal proceedings are concluded, which could take months. We have seen this before: cannot comment, a criminal investigation is underway, will hold off on the report. This is not out of the realm of possibility with those guys.

Last month when the member for Newmarket—Aurora crossed the floor, the Prime Minister made a big deal out of the fact that he had appointed her to implement the recommendations arising from the Gomery report. The member justified her switch to the scandal ridden party and tried to paint herself as a hero in that she had been tasked with cleaning up the mess. She does not have a broom big enough to clean up this mess. The member may have been empowered on paper to implement the recommendations but those recommendations will be swept under the carpet by the election that is supposedly to occur within 30 days after the release. Her appointment in my opinion is nothing more than more smoke and more mirrors.

Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Lumsden—Lake Centre.

The sponsorship scandal is proving to be the worst scandal in our country's history. We have heard sworn testimony that the Liberal Party received cash for sponsorship contracts. These are not just allegations or innuendoes. I remind the House and Canadians that this is actually sworn testimony under oath, which is subject to perjury charges if it is found to be untrue or deliberate.

This testimony clearly shows that the Liberal Party has been firmly entrenched in deception and fraud from the beginning until end. I see the minister shaking his head. As most members on this side of the House are preparing for elections, we are out fundraising and trying to raise money. We tell our constituents that we are funding an election and we ask if they could kick in \$10, \$100 or whatever. Those guys are using taxpayer dollars to fund election after election.

As stated earlier, to add further insult, the Liberal government is using one million taxpayer dollars to fund and staff a war room that has been established solely for the purpose of damage control. No amount of money in my opinion will help the Liberal government spin its way out of this scandal.

When the Auditor General reports that it is the mother of all scandals, the biggest scandal in Canadian history, the government responds by asking how it can set up a war room and how can it get taxpayers to fund it. Canadians are not that naive and for the government to think they are is perhaps the greatest insult of all to Canadians.

As requested by the Leader of the Opposition, I ask the Prime Minister to dismantle his Gomery war room, to pay back the money that the Liberal Party of Canada has wrongfully used to fight a political battle, a battle that was not of Parliament's own choosing and a battle that was not placed upon him by Parliament, but rather a battle that was placed upon him by the corruption that just happens to be in that party.

● (2055)

**Hon. Shawn Murphy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talked about the sponsorship issue which was a troubling set of circumstances involving a small number of people. The Prime Minister took very decisive action. He cancelled the program and immediately appointed a commission of public inquiry.

Instead of attacking the judge conducting this public inquiry, we on this side of the House are supporting him. We will wait for his recommendations and we will deal with his recommendations once they are made.

While we are on the issue of corruption, I want to ask the member opposite about the former leader of his party. The last Conservative prime minister, Brian Mulroney, left this country in a mess. It was bankrupt. Months after he left he went into a hotel room and took \$300,000 in cash from Karlheinz Schreiber. I ask the member across, why was the money paid in cash. Why was it paid? Under what basis was it paid? Should a public inquiry be called? Does this not suggest corruption at the highest level we have ever seen in this country, political, private or otherwise?

● (2100)

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, I can say that this is the new Conservative Party of Canada. I got involved in politics in a party that was called the Reform Party because I wanted to be involved in a party that would change the system. Certainly, we recognized from many different governments that it is systemic change that is needed.

I am not going to stand here tonight and defend a man whom I have not met. I am not going to accuse him. In fact, I would encourage the member to step outside and make some of those allegations. It is awfully easy to make allegations inside this House when he has government immunity, but he should step outside the House and make them.

I do know that the Auditor General, an independent individual, stepped forward, went through the books and found the scandal. She said it was the mother of all scandals in the history of our country. The member stood in the House and said, yes, it was a scandal but was it as bad as that scandal? I think that is a shame. It is a shame that he goes to his notes and pulls out war room talking points. How are the Liberals going to damage control the war room, the fact that they take another \$1 million out of public funds and put it into spin doctoring to help bail out a Liberal Party that is in drastic trouble?

Tonight we are dealing with the estimates. We are dealing with budgets and the priorities of the government. He talked about what the Prime Minister did in setting up the Gomery commission. I want to remind the member that in the midst of this biggest scandal in Canadian history dealing with \$250 million, the Prime Minister was the finance minister and he said that he had no idea that it was going on. He was the finance minister when there was \$100 million going to Liberal ad agencies that were shooting the money back into the Liberal Party of Canada, and he did not know it was going on. He is either completely missing the boat with his job or is negligent at doing the work that he should have been doing, or he was indeed complicit in it. That is what Mr. Gomery is going to decide.

*Supply*

Mr. Gomery is going to decide who was involved, who knew, how much they knew and when they knew. I look forward to waiting for Mr. Gomery to report. I wish that the government would recognize that it should let him report. Perhaps what the government should say is that if it is going to have spin doctoring and damage control, maybe the Liberal Party of Canada should be paying for it.

The taxpayers in the riding of Crowfoot, the taxpayers in Alberta and the taxpayers across the land are sick and tired of paying for damage control to a corrupt government.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in this assembly to speak to the opposed vote calling on the government to remove \$1 million-plus from the Privy Council budget. If nothing else, this is a symbolic move to try and tell Canadians that what the government did in setting up this Gomery war room was wrong. We have heard time and time again tonight that the sole purpose of that war room was to do damage control, to spin a message so that Canadians would be confused over what really happened in the sponsorship scandal.

Before I go on, my colleague from Vegreville—Wainwright spoke earlier this afternoon. He said that he recalled a pop tune from years past. He said it had similarities to what was happening here. He said the name of the tune was *Turn! Turn! Turn!* and that this was like spin, spin, spin. My colleague could not recall the name of the group. For the record I want to help out my colleague and say that song was sung by a group called The Byrds. The song was composed and penned by Bob Dylan.

I raise that because that got me thinking. A very good friend of mine back in Regina Beach by the name of Butch Lasek and I many times talk about songs late into the evening. One of the amazing attributes that Butch Lasek has, and he has many, is he can recall the words to every obscure pop tune ever recorded. What is even more amazing is that the later at night it gets, the more words he can recall.

I raise this because it reminded me of another obscure pop tune that to me shows the similarity between the song and the relationship between the Canadian voter and the Liberal Party of Canada. The name of the song from back in the 1970s is *The Snake*. It tells the story of a woman who was walking in the countryside late one winter evening and came upon a poor frozen snake that was obviously dying. The woman, being a caring and loving person, picked up the snake, wrapped it in her scarf, took the snake back to her home, nurtured it, fed it, took care of it, kept it warm and eventually nursed the snake back to health.

One day when she was tending to the snake again, the snake now in full health, rose up and bit the woman. It was a poisonous snake. All of a sudden the woman fell back and said to the snake, "Why did you do that? Why did you bite me? I am surely going to die because your bite is poisonous. After all the time I have taken to take care of you and nurse you back to health, you have bitten me". The snake said, "Well really, stupid woman, it is your own fault. You knew I was a snake when you took me in".

If most Canadians can see the relationship between the Canadian voter and the Liberal Party, they might understand the words to the song. If they do not, I can have them phone my friend Butch who will explain it to them in clear and uncut terms. But I digress. I can

see we do not have many music fans across the way, although we do have one on this side and I appreciate that.

What we are talking about is the fact that once again this government has taken in secret over \$1 million of Canadian taxpayers' dollars to fund an operation, not to benefit Canadians, but to spin the truth about what happened at Gomery.

The ironic thing about this as I see it is that the government did not come forward and tell Canadians or tell this House what it was doing. It took an access to information request by the *Ottawa Citizen* to find out what was happening. Even with that request we still do not know everything. A lot of the information on the transcripts was blanked out. Client-solicitor confidentiality and that type of thing was cited.

We really do not know a lot of the information that was going on in that war room, but we do know a couple of things.

Number one, we know it was a secret operation. No one on the Liberal side announced the Liberals' intention to do this. If it was as open and above board and in the normal course of action as the members opposite suggest, why did they keep it under wraps?

The real irony is that they, being the Liberal Party of Canada, are basically on trial. Justice Gomery is trying to get to the bottom of what happened to \$250 million that was stolen from taxpayers, or perhaps it was only \$100 million. Let me correct myself: \$250 million was the cost of the sponsorship program, but there is \$100 million in question that was apparently stolen from taxpayers and funneled back to the Liberal Party of Canada.

● (2105)

We would not have known about that had there not been an access to information request by a member of the media, who later relayed that to the Auditor General, who began her investigation which eventually uncovered what had been happening.

The government keeps saying that it wants to get to the bottom of it, yet it is doing the same thing with this war room. It took an access to information request to find out what it was doing with the war room. Does the government not learn lessons? Apparently not. It continues to do the same thing that got it into trouble in the first place, and that is to misuse taxpayers' dollars.

I will not stand in this House and say that the million dollars that were budgeted to the Privy Council for these war room operations were stolen from the taxpayers, but clearly there is an ethical question. The use of taxpayers' dollars to benefit the government of the day, to limit the damage coming out of Gomery, is something that no Canadian, certainly no Canadian taxpayer, should accept. It is totally unacceptable. What we need, in the essence of true openness and transparency, is a government that merely lets Gomery do his work, as the Liberals continually say to do.

*Supply*

How in the world are we to believe that this was a relevant use of taxpayers' dollars when the intent of the use of the taxpayers' dollars in this war room was to coach witnesses appearing before Gomery? Why could the witnesses not merely go before Justice Gomery and tell the truth? Why did they have to be coached? Why did they have to be prepped? There is only one reason. It is because the Liberal machine, and again as one of my colleagues said earlier this evening, is a great spin machine and I give them full credit for that. The Liberals wanted to make sure that only their message was coming out on a daily basis. They wanted to make sure that no witness who appeared before Gomery would say anything untoward that might get them in further trouble with Justice Gomery and the Canadian public.

What did they do? They took \$1 million of Canadian taxpayers' hard-earned money and said, "Here are your lines for today. When questioned, here is how you respond". Part of the money apparently was also to prepare answers in question period. What answers do they need? We heard consistently, day after day, week after week, month after month from the public works minister, "Let Justice Gomery do his work. I cannot comment on daily testimony because testimony one day may be contradicted by testimony the second day". We paid \$1 million to hear that?

Never did we hear a clear answer from any minister on the opposite side of the House to direct testimony. I must say again, going back to some of the drivel that we heard from members opposite during question period, when they say that testimony one day is going to be contradicted the next, that they are only allegations, as we have said time and time again, much of the sworn testimony that we heard during Gomery were not allegations. They were confessions.

These were individuals who, through their sworn testimony, were implicating themselves. Why would they do that if it was not true? Because it was true. These were confessions under oath of misuse of an orchestrated and systematic method over a 10 year period of taking money from the sponsorship program, taxpayers' dollars, funneling it through friendly Liberal ad agencies and then pumping that money back into the Liberal Party of Canada in Quebec to fight elections. These were not allegations. They were confessions. Yet that whole operation, rather than allow Justice Gomery to do his work, as the members opposite say they wished, they set up a war room to control the message.

Why do they need to control the message if we are really looking for the truth? The truth speaks for itself. It always has and it always will, but if they are controlling the information, if they are controlling the message, clearly the only conclusion that any Canadian can come to is that there is something to hide, and we know the government is hiding. We know the government hid the sponsorship scandal and the impact of that money. We know it is trying to hide the truth behind the Gomery commission. We know it is trying to shut down the Gomery commission before Justice Gomery has an opportunity to come to his conclusions.

• (2110)

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the speech of my colleague and to ask some questions.

I was most interested to hear him share his views on the PCO's Gomery war room, as it is called, the four or five person swat team within the PCO in charge of damage control to ensure the public only hears what they want it to hear about the Gomery commission and the information associated with it.

My view is if the primary function of this million dollar Gomery damage control war room is to coach witnesses, and this is what we heard in testimony, how is that different from tampering with witnesses? How is witness coaching different from witness interference? Would he not agree with me that the only coaching one should need to give witnesses is to advise them to tell the truth, to tell say what they know about the corruption in the civil service or wherever else they may have found? Would he agree with me that the Gomery war room is a travesty, that it is an insult to the intelligence of all Canadians and that it undermines the integrity of the Gomery commission to have a Gomery war room for coaching witnesses?

• (2115)

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely right on point. Why does one need to coach someone to tell the truth? If someone wants to give me a million dollars to tell somebody to tell the truth, I could be done in five seconds. However, this was set up over a two-year period, not only to coach and prepare witnesses, but to get the Liberal message out through the witnesses.

The member opposite says that it is an insult to the intelligence of Canadian people when the Liberals say that this is normal procedure. Absolutely. However, not only is it an insult to the intelligence of the Canadian taxpayer, it is an affront to the Canadian taxpayer. This is our money.

I know the member opposite has been very active over the years in the House trying to ensure that things like access to information and legitimacy of government operations to protect taxpayer dollars are paramount. The member has spent his career trying to ensure that things like Gomery are done above board and in a correct fashion.

I can only imagine what he must be feeling when he takes a look at what happened in this war room and the amount of money that was spent to coach and prepare witnesses, when all anyone had to say was to tell the truth. All the Prime Minister needed say to every public servant who was going to be called before Gomery, "My advice to you is tell the truth". However, he spends a million dollars of hard-earned taxpayer money, not to tell the public servants that simple message, but to coach and prepare the witnesses. This is shameful. It is an absolute affront to the Canadian taxpayer.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member should know that we have had witnesses before the Standing Committee on Government Operations on estimates on this matter and we have dealt with all the questions that have been raised. The member should maybe apologize to the House for his language. "Coaching witnesses" is to imply that somehow there is some secretive war room coaching witnesses on what to say and not say.

*Supply*

The preparation of witnesses was paid for by this coordinating group out of the Privy Council Office. The preparation of witnesses was not done by that office. It was done by the counsel for the government who would advise them of their rights. He also would provide them with the binders that would be referred to during questioning. This so-called coaching seems to imply leading or influencing what witnesses would say, and that is not the case. It is ensuring that the witnesses are prepared to participate in the cross-examination and examination by government counsel and other counsel. It is nice to use the word, but the member has misled the House in that matter.

Did the member also know that half the budget of the coordinating group out of PCO was for providing copies of documentation to the commission, as well as for providing translation services and for providing for the legal fees for his party?

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, again in reference to one of the earlier comments of the member opposite about someone making an apology to the House, it is the Liberal Party of Canada that should apologize to all Canadians for what it did in the sponsorship scandal. It should be making the apology, yet we have heard nothing for the last two years. Not one member opposite has ever stood up and said, "I am sorry. We did wrong and I apologize to the Canadian public". That party should apologize, not anyone from this side of the House.

This whole thing is an extension. The \$1 million Gomery war room, as identified by members opposite, is merely an extension of the problems that occur when we have government that is corrupt, arrogant and does not fear the voter. This is a government that has for 12 years consistently said, "We can do whatever we want and we can get away with it". Finally, there will come a day when Canadians will say it cannot get away with it and that day is coming soon.

• (2120)

[Translation]

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak this evening on the main estimates for the Privy Council Office.

For fiscal year 2005-06, the Privy Council Office has allocated \$125 million for program spending. The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has moved a motion to cut \$1 million from vote 1, under operating expenditures for the Privy Council Office.

So I wanted to speak today on the government's behalf on the motion to support the main estimates for the PCO and, consequently, the main estimates for Intergovernmental Affairs, which I have the pleasure of heading.

In the 2004 throne speech, the government introduced an ambitious program in order to put our country on a track that would allow Canadians to unite their efforts in order to achieve their objectives and their collective goals. Canadians have hopes and are entitled to a country with a solid social foundation, where all citizens are treated with dignity, receive assistance in times of need and where no one falls through the cracks.

We want a strong economy able to generate highly paid and interesting jobs and an economy with a solid financial foundation that is prepared to reap the rewards of technological innovations.

Canadians also want a country that can play an influential role in the world, make our voice heard, defend our interests and highlight our Canadian values in order to try to solve the many problems in today's world.

Canadians want a government in which they can trust and have faith, a government that is more transparent, that adheres to higher ethical standards and that has achieved a high level of financial responsibility.

The mission of the PCO is to provide non-partisan advice and support, to the best of its abilities, to the Prime Minister, ministers within the Prime Minister's portfolio and cabinet. In order to do this, it focusses on four main objectives. First, it is responsible for administering the decisions made by cabinet. It must, then, examine and coordinate strategic proposals by departments, analyze policies and act as the secretariat for cabinet committees.

Second, it is responsible for conducting research on medium and long term policy issues of importance to Canada.

Third, it must articulate and support the government's policy agenda and cooperate with other departments as well as other levels of government and external stakeholders to advance this agenda. I will elaborate on that later on when I talk about my responsibilities as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Finally, the role of the Privy Council is also to help foster a strong public service for the 21st century, one that is values-based, high performing and accountable.

In describing these roles, one realizes that the Privy Council Office is a unique and privileged entity within the federal government in that it acts as secretariat to the cabinet and as adviser to the Prime Minister on a wide range of policy and operational issues related to the management of the federation. In carrying out its mandate, it must take into account a multitude of external factors and public interest issues.

For example, the Privy Council Office must take into consideration demographic changes, including increased diversity, the aging of the population and urbanization. It must also take into consideration the state of the economy, including our economic performance at all levels and our capacity to adapt to an increasingly competitive global economy.

• (2125)

It must also take into account the values and priorities of Canadians, in particular in relation to health services and national security; the state of the federation and intergovernmental affairs, the role played by Canada in a constantly evolving geopolitical context and its place in that context; and lastly the socio-economic issues that impact on certain large segments of our society, including aboriginal people, children and the elderly.

### *Supply*

The PCO must therefore be constantly able to adapt in order to provide reliable, informed and timely advice on major issues, be they regional, national or international. It plays an important and unique role though its government-wide approach to policy development and issue management.

The Privy Council Office delivers a wide variety of services in fulfilling its essential duties. With an ongoing concern for professionalism and impartiality, it provides strategic advice and efficient support to both the Prime Minister and the ministers reporting to him. There are a number of us who make up the Prime Minister's portfolio along with the Privy Council. These are: the Deputy Prime Minister, myself of course, as President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs; the government House leader, the Leader of the Government in the Senate, and the Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, who is also the Minister responsible for Official Languages.

So the Privy Council's mandate is to oversee the smooth operation of the cabinet decision making process, while adhering to the principles of responsible government and the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

This means in practice that the PCO facilitates discussions during regular cabinet meetings as well as throughout the periodic planning sessions for the government's program. It defines key objectives and priorities and ensures that established policies comply with the government's program.

It facilitates the discussion of initiatives, programs or strategic changes that are put forward during cabinet committee meetings and one-time and informal meetings of ministers.

In addition, the Privy Council Office oversees the development of departmental initiatives that will be presented for cabinet approval. It makes sure all proposals are based on a thorough analysis, that the intergovernmental consultations that were required have been made, and that the proposals fit in with the broad government priorities.

In this regard, the Privy Council Office plays an important role by examining the policies that departments put forward. The ministers determine and present priorities and initiatives from the perspective of their own department and other responsibilities. They are supported by experts and the action of specialized organizations in each department.

The Privy Council Office works closely with the Department of Finance et and the Secretariat of the Treasury Board to make sure the proposed policies are in tune with the agenda and other priorities of the government and that the whole impact on resources has been factored in.

It contributes to a better coordination between various governmental organizations that are crucial to the design and implementation of governmental policies. This coordination helps make sure that the new proposed policies complement the existing ones and that they fit in with the broad objectives of the government.

• (2130)

The PCO plays a very important management role in terms of the public service reform initiatives. It works closely with the other

central agencies so that the efforts to modernize the public service continually aim at establishing policies and methods that improve management of human resources.

The advantages Canadians can draw from improved performance by the PCO are clear. It ensures the functioning of government operations and the precise formulation of its objectives.

Very regularly, when we speak with the public in our ridings or meet individuals and talk to them about the Canadian government's PCO, they wonder what the office does, exactly. Its name sometimes raises questions. People are more used to the names of departments, which set out their responsibility clearly. For example, the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development looks after human resources; the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, agriculture. However, people wonder about the role of the PCO.

In the course of my parliamentary and government experience, I have realized the importance of the Government of Canada's central agencies. I am thinking specifically of the Treasury Board Secretariat, the Department of Finance and the Privy Council Office. These are three bodies with a truly government wide view. They observe government action everywhere and try to bring much more consistency to our government policies, so that the public receiving services can understand better what the government as a whole is trying to provide.

The PCO therefore plays a fundamental role. I might be allowed to wonder about the intention of opposing the votes allocated the PCO, when it is so essential to the operation and decisions of the government.

In short, it is a little like the department of the Prime Minister, which manages all of government. It therefore needs a specialized, trained and competent team around it to advise it and Cabinet on the decisions to make.

I have the honour of working on this portfolio, the Prime Minister's portfolio, in other words, the Privy Council, as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. I have the opportunity to experience from the inside what the Privy Council can do for the entire government. I can assure you that its advice can be quite judicious. The final decision always falls on the ministers and the Prime Minister, with his cabinet, but we are supported by very knowledgeable people around us.

Allow me to elaborate more specifically on my responsibilities as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, which is one of the very important aspects of the role of the Privy Council Office.

Intergovernmental Affairs is an integral part of the Privy Council Office. It supports the Prime Minister and cabinet in policies and communication in areas such as federal-provincial-territorial relations, aboriginal affairs, evolution of the federation and Canadian unity.

*Supply*

● (2135)

Intergovernmental Affairs provides analyses, advice, liaison and strategic planning. It follows issues concerning major intergovernmental elements, assesses federal, provincial and territorial priorities, works together with the federal departments and with the provincial and territorial governments. It also handles constitutional and legal issues related to the evolution of the federation and Canadian unity.

We live in a federal system. We live in a federation. When we look at our country's vast diversity, culturally, linguistically or otherwise, we understand why the fathers of Canadian confederation chose the federal model over a unitary one. In this great diverse country of ours, the federal system suits the needs of the public very well.

In a federation, one of the basic rules is that the partners of the federation have to work together with a view to meeting the needs of their constituents. To do so, we need to have harmonious intergovernmental relations.

Our Prime Minister, since he became the Prime Minister of Canada, has said loud and clear that he wanted these intergovernmental relations to be more energetic and harmonious. In 2004 alone, there were three first ministers' meetings in this country. When government leaders meet, it is really to discuss issues facing our country and to find ways to better respond to people's needs.

At that time, my staff and I, as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, help the Prime Minister of Canada in preparing for these meetings with his counterparts. Let us examine the experiences that we had in 2004. There was the first ministers' meeting on health. How many individuals and, sometimes, opposition members were saying that we would have trouble reaching a consensus on an issue that is so dear to Canadians? Yet, our government leaders, with the Prime Minister of Canada, were successful in reaching a very important agreement for the future of health care.

It was the same when all first ministers met to discuss equalization. That is another fundamental feature of our federation. Indeed, equalization is an important value to all Canadians. Why? Because it is a shared value in this Canadian federation.

We can see how important intergovernmental relations have become. We are indeed dealing with increasingly complex issues in the environment in which we now live, even internationally. In that context, the provincial, territorial and Canadian governments have to work harder and harder at meeting these needs of our population.

In its various dimensions, be it intergovernmental affairs or in connection with official languages, which are so important to our country—that is another important Canadian value—the Privy Council Office is involved on the pan-government level to try and ensure that all departments make the best decisions.

In this context, we have to support this evening the operating budget provided for the Privy Council Office to carry out this central responsibility in our government, to help make better decisions for the Canadian public as a whole.

I therefore urge my colleagues to support the motion to adopt the main estimates for the Privy Council Office.

● (2140)

*[English]*

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the hon. member. I was listening very intently to the speech. It was very interesting to hear about the Privy Council Office and the functions that happen within that office. I was quite taken with three things the hon. member said. The Privy Council Office sets up, according to members opposite, a government that they can trust, a government that has transparency and a government that will have fiscal responsibility.

In the description of all the departments and the description of the intent of the Privy Council Office, it was good to hear that those were the kinds of things that were supposed to be set up.

Here is my question for the member opposite. With all these grand descriptions of the Privy Council Office, how can the hon. member square that with the fact that our nation has seen one of the largest scandals in the history of our nation, with the government taking money from taxpayers and now paying \$32 million for the Gomery commission to get to the bottom of this scandal, which was and is a Liberal scandal? As well, now we discover that a war room was set up with a \$1 million price tag.

We hear about the Privy Council Office and all the people who are giving advice to the Prime Minister and how the Prime Minister wants to set up the sort of government that has transparency and fiscal responsibility. Can the hon. member please answer the question of how this can happen when clearly there is no accountability or transparency in the Privy Council Office?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard:** Mr. Speaker, the problems that we experienced recently regarding sponsorship activities were recognized by everyone in this House, and first and foremost by our government.

Our government, through the Prime Minister, took concrete action as soon as the issue surfaced. This is what is most important. When there is a problem in the government, it is important to have the means necessary to determine what occurred and what mistakes were made, to go to the bottom of things, to look at what happened, and to take corrective action.

In this case, the problems were such that the Prime Minister of Canada himself decided to set up a commission of inquiry to go to the bottom of things. The seriousness of this situation is reflected by the fact that it was dealt with directly by our Prime Minister.

When a problem of such magnitude surfaces, it is only normal that the Privy Council Office would set up a group to help the government make decisions.

*Supply*

As far as I am concerned, the fact that we decided to have a group to support cabinet and the Prime Minister shows precisely that we recognized the seriousness of the problem. I think it was perfectly appropriate to set up this group, which provides very sound advice to the government, so that we can take proper measures to ensure that this problem does not occur again in the future.

• (2145)

[*English*]

**Hon. Keith Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the comments from the hon. minister.

I want to correct something that the member from the other side mentioned on the accountability issue and which is probably not well known by her, that is, the government put forth a comptroller system, which is absolutely essential in producing extra accountability for the expenditure of other people's money. That is what we did.

On top of that, we also put forth an external expenditure abuse system, which is another check and balance. It is very exciting to see what that does. We are actually making sure that every single minister and every single ministry will be looking at expenditures, taking out the bottom 15% and ensuring that those moneys are put into the highest priorities of the people of Canada. I think it is an innovative thing that this government has done. It is not well known by the public, but I think that perhaps it is something we should be talking about more.

I do have a question for the hon. member. We have a complex federation. One of the challenges of any government is to make sure that we work with the provinces as one country but respect the jurisdiction of each province in various areas such as health care, education and welfare. How is the hon. member strengthening the federation? How is she working with her provincial counterparts to make sure that the needs of Canadians are met from coast to coast in our country?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard:** Mr. Speaker, we could have a debate on that question. Indeed, it would be interesting to hear from all parliamentarians.

Living in a federation as we are demands mutual respect between all partners as the first basic principle. We must strictly respect the role of each partner but work together to best serve the citizens.

In the present circumstances the solutions to our citizens' problems require simultaneous action in different areas of jurisdiction. That requires all levels of government to work together. I would not say that this is always easy. In a federation, there are always tensions but they can be turned into positive tensions if we really want to try to develop better services for the population.

It is in that context that Intergovernmental Affairs tries to support all departments with a view to improving dialogue with our friends in the provinces, finding solutions, reaching consensus, in short, mediating while not losing sight of the fact that our main objective is to better serve our fellow citizens. Mutual respect, cooperation and partnership are key to successful intergovernmental relations. That is how we find solutions for Canadians as a whole.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to debates attentively for two hours. I must tell you that it has been a most amazing example of a special presentation of the two solitudes at their very best.

It began with some hon. members, some of the best, from the NDP. They were boasting, to the point of bursting, like the frog in the fable of *The Frog and the Ox*, that they had negotiated improvements to the Liberal budget on behalf of the people. Did they bother about people from Quebec on whose backs this sponsorship scandal was initiated? Conservative colleagues did denounce this loathsome corruption, but did they bother learning why this sponsorship scandal had been initiated in the first place?

If our colleague from the Privy Council were still here, I would ask her who, in the Privy Council, knew what Chuck Guité was up to? They are the ones who organize the fight between Canada's national sovereignty and that of Quebec. Who apologized to the Quebec nation for what the sponsorship scandal represented? Who?

We are a people and a nation. As long as you do not recognize that, you are bound to have problems. In 1867, a confederation was created.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Would you please restore order, Mr. Speaker?

Fortunately, in Canada, there are people who are beginning to—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

• (2150)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** Order, please.

The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I want at least to be respected. We never hid the fact that we want to attain sovereignty through pacific and democratic means. Sponsorships are not an honest means. Some Canadians are starting to realize that, in this so-called fight for national unity, they are losing their soul. Corruption is meaningless. Turpitude in the name of national unity is meaningless. Our means are democracy, openness and transparency.

In the rest of Canada, people are starting to understand some things about the future. You have probably noticed that Paul Jackson and Richard Gwyn, two Canadian thinkers, now say that it is pointless to try to prevent Quebec from becoming a sovereign nation. They say Canada should let Quebecers do it if they want, and the two nations should preserve their friendship.

The future of Canadians and Quebecers depends on their will to work together, to cooperate with each other. You will not make us disappear by trying to silence us, to hide things from us, to buy us or to threaten us. We will be here!

Again, there are Canadians who see in this national fight, with the means used, including sponsorships, corruption, lying and “what-ever”, that they are losing their soul and heading down an extremely slippery and dangerous slope.

It would have been possible in this budget to address the most crucial issue for all the provinces, that of the fiscal imbalance. The government wanted nothing to do with it. The NDP, having obtained a little negotiating power because of the Liberals' desire to buy belated virginity, did not even care about doing anything about either the fiscal imbalance or employment insurance.

Canada is paying and will pay a high price for nation building on the back of the Quebec nation. Indeed, the Canada of others, even the Canada that Trudeau wanted to build, is not a country built on corruption. The aim of the corruption was to buy Quebecers not only physically but spiritually and mentally. It did not succeed; quite the contrary.

At some point, we will have to talk to one another and they will have to accept that we are here to stay. And like two free countries, brothers and friends, we will both be the strongest and most able to influence the world.

• (2155)

In fact, Canada, which is looking to be a leader in some field, could do so if it could show it could honestly and openly settle with Quebec, without corruption, the problem of recognizing its nationhood and identity.

On that, I wish us a good vote.

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I hear a lot of heckling tonight.

I have a question for the member from the Bloc Québécois. What does she think about our ancestors' history? It is not about only her ancestors, but mine, ours, the first Canadians, the first French settlers who were called Canadiens. The others, they were called Englishmen.

Our ancestors did not stay for long in one place. They travelled through this great, large country, they opened it, they discovered it and participated in its life. It is a beautiful country. We are proud to be Canadians in this country.

I do not understand how the Bloc Québécois can forget this history that we share, as Francophones and Canadians. Why is this hockey team called The Montreal Canadiens? It is because the players were Francophone Canadians.

I am fed up with those comments. Because I was born in Ontario, just like my parents and my grand-parents, does that mean I have no part in the history of this country. I am sorry, but this is my history and this is our history.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois and I have an infinite respect for all those Canadians from the French parts of Canada, who made their contribution in building the country for French and English Canadians.

Nevertheless, my colleague will understand what others understood before, including Daniel Johnson senior. He was the first one to ask for equality or independence, even though his grandfather was Irish and did not speak French. He understood that Quebec would be the homeland — such was the expression used at the time — of French Canadians.

### Supply

We have nothing against French Canadians who settled in other parts of Canada. To the contrary, we recognize their accomplishments. But we cannot use their presence in the rest of Canada as an excuse to deny the people of Quebec, a multi-ethnic nation, the right to claim its place in history, alongside Canadians and Americans.

#### OPPOSITION MOTION — STRATEGY TO HELP OLDER WORKERS

The House resumed from June 9 consideration of the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** It being 9:59 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 9, 2005, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the hon. member for Chambly—Borduas relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

• (2230)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 103)

### YEAS

#### Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alcock
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Victoria)
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	André
Angus	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand
Bagnell	Bains
Bakopanos	Barnes
Batters	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell
Bellavance	Bennett
Benoit	Bergeron
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Bigras	Blaikie
Blais	Blondin-Andrew
Boire	Boivin
Bonin	Bonsant
Boshcoff	Bouchard
Boudria	Boulianne
Bourgeois	Bradshaw
Breitkreuz	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brunelle
Byrne	Cannis
Cardin	Carr
Carrie	Carrier
Carroll	Casey
Casson	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chong	Christopherson
Clavet	Cleary
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Côté
Cotler	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Day
Demers	Deschamps
Desjarlais	Desrochers
DeVillers	Devolin
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Doyle
Drouin	Dryden
Duceppe	Duncan
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Epp
Eyking	Faille
Finley	Fitzpatrick
Fletcher	Folco

*Supply*

Fontana  
Frulla  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Galloway  
Gauthier  
Godfrey  
Goldring  
Goodyear  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Holland  
Ianno  
Jean  
Johnston  
Kadis  
Karetak-Lindell  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Khan  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lauzon  
Layton  
Lee  
Lessard  
Longfield  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Mark  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Énard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Mitchell  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Myers  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Pacetti  
Paquette  
Parrish  
Penson  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Poilievre  
Powers  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Redman  
Reid  
Richardson  
Robillard  
Rota  
Russell  
Sauvageau  
Savoy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Skelton  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
St. Amand  
Steckle

Forseth  
Fry  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gaudet  
Godbout  
Godin  
Goodale  
Gouk  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Hubbard  
Jaffier  
Jennings  
Julian  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Karygiannis  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kilgour  
Kotto  
Lafambe  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Lastewka  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacAulay  
MacKenzie  
Malhi  
Marceau  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Minna  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Murphy  
Neville  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Owen  
Pallister  
Paradis  
Patty  
Perron  
Pettigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Prentice  
Proulx  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saada  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Schellenberger  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Simms  
Smith (Pontiac)  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stoffer

Strahl  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Tonks  
Trost  
Ur  
Valley  
Vellacott  
Volpe  
Warawa  
Watson  
Wilfert  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Zed- — 301

Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Torsney  
Tweed  
Valeri  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wasylycia-Leis  
White  
Williams  
Yelich

NAYS

PAIRED

Nil

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.*[English]*

OPPOSITION MOTION—CHILD CARE

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Edmonton—Spruce Grove relating to the business of supply.

● (2245)

*[Translation]*

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 104)*

YEAS

Members

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
Batters  
Bezan  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Casey  
Chong  
Day  
Doyle  
Epp  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guergis  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Nicholson  
Obhrai

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Benoit  
Breitkreuz  
Carrie  
Casson  
Cummins  
Devolin  
Duncan  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gallant  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffier  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Lauzon  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Mark  
Merrifield  
Mills  
O'Connor  
Oda

Pallister  
Poilievre  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 95

Penson  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Schellenberger  
Skelton  
Solberg  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Watson  
Williams

## NAYS

### Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Angus  
Augustine  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bennett  
Bevilacqua  
Blaikie  
Blondin-Andrew  
Boivin  
Bonsant  
Bouchard  
Boulianne  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Brunelle  
Cannis  
Carr  
Carroll  
Chamberlain  
Christopherson  
Cleary  
Comartin  
Côté  
Crête  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
Deschamps  
Desrochers  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Dryden  
Easter  
Emerson  
Faille  
Fontana  
Fry  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Galloway  
Gauthier  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Guimond  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
Kotto  
Lalonde  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Loubier  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Marleau

Alcock  
André  
Asselin  
Bachand  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélanger  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Blais  
Boire  
Bonin  
Boshcoff  
Boudria  
Bourgeois  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Catterall  
Chan  
Clavet  
Coderre  
Comuzzi  
Cotler  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
D'Amours  
Demers  
Desjarlais  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin  
Duceppe  
Efford  
Eyking  
Folco  
Frulla  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Guay  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Lastewka  
Layton  
Lee  
Lessard  
Longfield  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marceau  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)

## Supply

Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Owen  
Paquette  
Parrish  
Perron  
Pettigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Plamondon  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saada  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed — 205

Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinity  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
O'Brien  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Paty  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Russell  
Sauvageau  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Simms  
St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewszky

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

\* \* \*

[English]

## MAIN ESTIMATES, 2005-06

### CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PRIVY COUNCIL

The House resumed consideration of Motion No. 1.

**The Speaker:** 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 Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

## Supply

● (2255)

[Translation]

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 105)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	André
Angus	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand
Bagnell	Bains
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bell	Bellavance
Bennett	Bergeron
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Blaikie	Blais
Blondin-Andrew	Boire
Boivin	Bonin
Bonsant	Boshcoff
Bouchard	Boudria
Boulianne	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Brunelle	Bulte
Byrne	Cannis
Cardin	Carr
Carrier	Carroll
Catterall	Chamberlain
Chan	Christopherson
Clavet	Cleary
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Côté
Cotler	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies
Demers	Deschamps
Desjarlais	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Drouin	Dryden
Duceppe	Easter
Efford	Emerson
Eyking	Faille
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Gagnon (Québec)	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)	Galloway
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godbout	Godfrey
Godin	Goodale
Graham	Guarnieri
Guay	Guimond
Holland	Hubbard
Ianno	Jennings
Julian	Kadis
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Khan	Kilgour
Kotto	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lastewka
Lavallée	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemay	Lessard
Lévesque	Longfield
Loubier	MacAulay
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Marceau
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McDonough	McGuinty
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLellan	McTeague

Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Minna	Mitchell
Murphy	Myers
Neville	Owen
Pacetti	Paquette
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Perron
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Picard (Drummond)
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Plamondon
Poirier-Rivard	Powers
Proulx	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy
Russell	Saada
Sauvageau	Savage
Savoy	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sgro
Siksay	Silva
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)	Simard (Saint Boniface)
Simms	Smith (Pontiac)
St-Hilaire	St. Amand
St. Denis	Steckle
Stoffer	Stronach
Szabo	Telegdi
Temelkovski	Thibault (West Nova)
Tonks	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Valley	Vincent
Volpe	Wappel
Wasylcyia-Leis	Wilfert
Wrzesnewskij	Zed— 206

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Batters	Benoit
Bezan	Breitreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Carrie
Casey	Casson
Chong	Cummins
Day	Devolin
Doyle	Duncan
Epp	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Forseth	Gallant
Goldring	Goodyear
Gouk	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guergis	Hanger
Harper	Harris
Harrison	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Jaffer
Jean	Johnston
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mark
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	O'Brien
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Obhrai
Nicholson	Pallister
O'Connor	Poilevre
Oda	Preston
Penson	Reid
Prentice	Richardson
Rajotte	Scheer
Reynolds	Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Ritz	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
Schellenberger	Sorenson
Skelton	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Solberg	Tilson
Strahl	Trost
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Van Loan
Toews	
Tweed	

Vellacott  
Watson  
Williams

Warawa  
White  
Yelich— 96

### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 carried.

[*English*]

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—SOLICITOR GENERAL (PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS)

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** moved:

Motion No. 2

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$49,564,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness) — Canadian Firearms Centre — Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

• (2305)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was agreed to on the following division:)

### (Division No. 106)

#### YEAS

Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Angus  
Augustine  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bennett  
Bevilacqua  
Blaikie  
Blondin-Andrew  
Boivin  
Bonsant  
Bouchard  
Boulianne  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Brunelle  
Byrne  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Catterall  
Chan

Alcock  
André  
Asselin  
Bachand  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélangier  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Blais  
Boire  
Bonin  
Boshcoff  
Boudria  
Bourgeois  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carr  
Carroll  
Chamberlain  
Christopherson

Clavet  
Coderre  
Comuzzi  
Cotler  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
D'Amours  
Deschamps  
Desrochers  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Dryden  
Easter  
Emerson  
Faille  
Fontana  
Fry  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gaudet  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Guay  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Lastewka  
Layton  
Lee  
Longfield  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marceau  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinity  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paquette  
Parrish  
Perron  
Pettigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Russell  
Sauvageau  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Simms  
St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valley  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

#### Supply

Cleary  
Comartin  
Côté  
Crête  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
Desjarlais  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin  
Duceppe  
Efford  
Eyking  
Folco  
Frulla  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gauthier  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guamieri  
Guimond  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
Kotto  
Lalonde  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Patri  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saada  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Amand  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Valeri  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 198

#### NAYS

Members

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Benoit

*Supply*

Bezan	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Carrie
Casey	Casson
Chong	Cummins
Day	Demers
Devolin	Doyle
Duncan	Epp
Finley	Fitzpatrick
Fletcher	Forsyth
Gallant	Goldring
Goodyear	Gouk
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guergis
Hanger	Harper
Harris	Harrison
Hearn	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Jaffer	Jean
Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lemay	Lévesque
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mark
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	O'Brien
O'Connor	Obhrai
Oda	Pallister
Penson	Plamondon
Poillievre	Prentice
Preston	Rajotte
Reid	Reynolds
Richardson	Ritz
Scheer	Schellenberger
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Skelton
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Sorenson	Strahl
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Trost	Tweed
Van Loan	Vellacott
Warawa	Watson
White	Williams
Yelich — 101	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 2 carried.*[English]*

## CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—SOLICITOR GENERAL (PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS)

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.)** moved:

Motion No. 3

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$14,550,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness) — Canadian Firearms Centre — Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** The question is on Motion No. 3.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if you would seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the motion now before the House.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 3, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 107)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	André
Angus	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand
Bagnell	Bains
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bélanger
Bell	Bellavance
Bennett	Bergeron
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Blaikie	Blais
Blondin-Andrew	Boire
Boivin	Bonin
Bonsant	Boshcoff
Bouchard	Boudria
Boulianne	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Brisson
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Brunelle	Bulte
Byrne	Canniss
Cardin	Carr
Carrier	Carroll
Catterall	Chamberlain
Chan	Christopherson
Clavet	Cleary
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Côté
Cotler	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies
Deschamps	Desjarlais
Desrochers	DeVillers
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Drouin
Dryden	Duceppe
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Eyking
Faillie	Folco
Fontana	Frulla
Fry	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godbout	Godfrey
Godin	Goodale
Graham	Guarnieri
Guay	Guimond
Holland	Hubbard
Ianno	Jennings
Julian	Kadis
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Khan	Kotto
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Outremont)	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Lastewka	Lavallée
Layton	LeBlanc
Lee	Lessard
Longfield	Loubier
MacAulay	Macklin
Malhi	Maloney
Marceau	Marleau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mathews
McCallum	McDonough
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan
McTeague	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Neville
Owen	Pacetti
Paquette	Paradis
Parrish	Patry

Perron  
Pettigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Russell  
Sauvageau  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Simms  
St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valley  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

Peterson  
Phinney  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saada  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Amand  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Valeri  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed- — 198

## NAYS

### Members

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
Batters  
Bezan  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Casey  
Chong  
Day  
Devolin  
Duncan  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gallant  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffer  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kilgour  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lemay  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Penson  
Poilievre  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 101

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Benoit  
Breitkreuz  
Carrie  
Casson  
Cummins  
Demers  
Doyle  
Epp  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guergis  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Komarnicki  
Lauzon  
Lévesque  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Mark  
Merrifield  
Mills  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Plamondon  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Schellenberger  
Skelton  
Solberg  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Watson  
Williams

## Supply

### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 3 carried.

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.)** moved:

That the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2006, including Vote 25 under PRIVY COUNCIL as reduced by the Standing committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, except any Vote disposed of earlier today and less the amounts voted in Interim Supply, be concurred in.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if you would seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yes.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, members of the Conservative Party will be voting no.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois are voting against this motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP are voting in favour of this motion.

• (2310)

[*English*]

**Hon. Roger Gallaway:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yes to the motion.

**Mr. Paul Steckle:** Mr. Speaker, hence on where votes are applied, I want my vote applied in the affirmative with the government.

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yes to the motion.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting yea.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I vote nay.

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I vote yea.

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 108*)

## YEAS

### Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélanger  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carroll

Alcock  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Catterall

*Supply*

Chamberlain	Chan	Cummins	Day
Christopherson	Coderre	Demers	Deschamps
Comartin	Comuzzi	Desrochers	Devolin
Cotler	Crowder	Doyle	Duceppe
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Duncan	Epp
Cuzner	D'Amours	Faïlle	Finley
Davies	Desjarlais	Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
DeVilliers	Dhalla	Forseth	Gagnon (Québec)
Dion	Dosanjh	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Drouin	Dryden	Gallant	Gaudet
Easter	Efford	Gauthier	Goldring
Emerson	Eyking	Goodyear	Gouk
Folco	Fontana	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Frulla	Fry	Guergis	Guimond
Galloway	Godbout	Hanger	Harper
Godfrey	Godin	Harris	Harrison
Goodale	Graham	Hearn	Hiebert
Guarnieri	Holland	Hill	Hinton
Hubbard	Ianno	Jaffer	Jean
Jennings	Julian	Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Karygiannis	Khan	Komarnicki	Kotto
Kilgour	Lapierre (Outremont)	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lafraimboise
Lastewka	Layton	Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
LeBlanc	Lee	Lauzon	Lavallée
Longfield	MacAulay	Lemay	Lessard
Macklin	Malhi	Lévesque	Loubier
Maloney	Marleau	Lukiwski	Lunn
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	MacKenzie	Marceau
Masse	Matthews	Mark	Ménard (Hochelaga)
McCallum	McDonough	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Menzies
McGuinty	McGuire	Merrifield	Miller
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan	Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
McTeague	Minna	Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Mitchell	Murphy	O'Brien	O'Connor
Myers	Neville	Obhrai	Oda
Owen	Pacetti	Pallister	Paquette
Paradis	Parrish	Penson	Perron
Patry	Peterson	Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Pettigrew	Phinney	Poilievre	Poirier-Rivard
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Powers	Prentice	Preston
Proulx	Ratansi	Rajotte	Reid
Redman	Regan	Reynolds	Richardson
Robillard	Rodriguez	Ritz	Roy
Rota	Russell	Sauvageau	Scheer
Saada	Savage	Schellenberger	Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Savoy	Scarpaleggia	Simard (Beauport—Limoulu)	Skelton
Scott	Sgro	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Siksay	Silva	Sorenson	St-Hilaire
Simard (Saint Boniface)	Simms	Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Smith (Pontiac)	St. Amand	Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
St. Denis	Steckle	Toews	Trost
Stoffer	Stronach	Tweed	Van Loan
Szabo	Telegdi	Vellacott	Vincent
Temelkovski	Thibault (West Nova)	Warawa	Watson
Tonks	Torsney	White	Williams
Ur	Valeri	Yelich— 149	
Valley	Volpe		
Wappel	Wasylycia-Leis		
Wilfert	Wrzesnewskyj		
Zed — 153			

PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-58, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2006 be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

**Hon. Reg Alcock** moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if you would seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent for members who voted on the previous motion now be recorded as having voted on the motion before the House, with Liberal members voting yes.

*NAYS*

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
André	Asselin
Bachand	Batters
Bellavance	Benoit
Bergeron	Bezan
Bigras	Blais
Boire	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boulianne
Bourgeois	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brunelle
Cardin	Carrie
Carrier	Casey
Casson	Chong
Clavet	Cleary
Côté	Crête

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 109)*

### YEAS

#### Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bell
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Boivin	Bonin
Boshcoff	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Bulte	Byrne
Cannis	Carr
Carroll	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Christopherson	Coderre
Comartin	Comuzzi
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Drouin	Dryden
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Eyking
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin
Goodale	Graham
Guarnieri	Holland
Hubbard	Ianno
Jennings	Julian
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Khan
Kilgour	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lastewka	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Marleau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Matthews
McCallum	McDonough
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan
McTeague	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Neville
Owen	Pacetti
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Powers
Proulx	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Saada	Savage
Savoy	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sgro
Siksay	Silva
Simard (Saint Boniface)	Simms
Smith (Pontiac)	St. Amand
St. Denis	Steckle
Stoffer	Stronach
Szabo	Telegdi

Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 153

### Supply

Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

### NAYS

#### Members

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent

*Supply*

Warawa  
White  
Yelich— 149

Watson  
Williams

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Strahl in the chair)

• (2315)

**The Chair:** House in committee of the whole on Bill C-58.

(On clause 2)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 2 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 3 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 4 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 5 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 6 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall clause 7 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Clause 7 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall schedule 1 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

**The Chair:** Shall schedule 2 carry?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

(Clause 1 agreed to)

(Preamble agreed to)

(Title agreed to)

(Bill reported)

**Hon. Reg Alcock** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree, I would propose you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yes.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed to apply the vote previously taken at second reading to the vote for concurrence?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 110)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bell
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Boivin	Bonin
Boshcoff	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Bulte	Byrne
Cannis	Carr
Carroll	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Christopherson	Coderre
Comartin	Comuzzi
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Drouin	Dryden
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Eyking
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin
Goodale	Graham
Guarnieri	Holland
Hubbard	Ianno
Jennings	Julian
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Khan
Kilgour	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lastewka	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Marleau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Matthews
McCallum	McDonough
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan
McTeague	Minna

Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paradis  
Patry  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed — 153

Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Parrish  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger  
Simard (Beauport—Limoulu)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 149

### Supply

O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Watson  
Williams

### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave, now?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Reg Alcock** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you will find unanimous consent to apply the vote last taken on the vote of the motion now before us.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 111*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Doyle  
Duncan  
Faille  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Heam  
Hill  
Jaffér  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukowski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Moore (Fundy Royal)

### NAYS

#### Members

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carroll  
Chamberlain  
Christopherson  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin

#### Members

Alcock  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Catterall  
Chan  
Codere  
Comuzzi  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
D'Amours  
Desjarlais  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Dryden

*Government Orders*

Easter	Efford	Gauthier	Goldring
Emerson	Eyking	Goodyear	Gouk
Folco	Fontana	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Frulla	Fry	Guergis	Guimond
Galloway	Godbout	Hanger	Harper
Godfrey	Godin	Harris	Harrison
Goodale	Graham	Hearn	Hiebert
Guarnieri	Holland	Hill	Hinton
Hubbard	Ianno	Jaffer	Jean
Jennings	Julian	Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Karygiannis	Khan	Komarnicki	Kotto
Kilgour	Lapierre (Outremont)	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Laframboise
Lastewka	Layton	Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
LeBlanc	Lee	Lauzon	Lavallée
Longfield	MacAulay	Lemay	Lessard
Macklin	Malhi	Lévesque	Loubier
Maloney	Marleau	Lukiwski	Lunn
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
Martin (LaSalle—Énard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	MacKenzie	Marceau
Masse	Matthews	Mark	Ménard (Hochelaga)
McCallum	McDonough	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Menzies
McGuinity	McGuire	Merrifield	Miller
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan	Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
McTeague	Minna	Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Mitchell	Murphy	O'Brien	O'Connor
Myers	Neville	Obhrai	Oda
Owen	Pacetti	Pallister	Paquette
Paradis	Parrish	Penson	Perron
Patry	Peterson	Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Pettigrew	Phinney	Poilievre	Poirier-Rivard
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Powers	Prentice	Preston
Proulx	Ratansi	Rajotte	Reid
Redman	Regan	Reynolds	Richardson
Robillard	Rodriguez	Ritz	Roy
Rota	Russell	Sauvageau	Scheer
Saada	Savage	Schellenberger	Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Savoy	Scarpaleggia	Simard (Beauport—Limoulu)	Skelton
Scott	Sgro	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Siksay	Silva	Sorenson	St-Hilaire
Simard (Saint Boniface)	Simms	Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Smith (Pontiac)	St. Amand	Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
St. Denis	Steckle	Toews	Trost
Stoffer	Stronach	Tweed	Van Loan
Szabo	Telegdi	Vellacott	Vincent
Temelkovski	Thibault (West Nova)	Warawa	Watson
Tonks	Torsney	White	Williams
Ur	Valeri	Yelich— 149	
Valley	Volpe		
Wappel	Wasylcia-Leis		
Wilfert	Wrzesnewskyj		
Zed — 153			

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.  
(Bill read the third time and passed)

\* \* \*

**BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2005**

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of Bill C-43, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 23, 2005, as reported with amendment from the committee, and of the motions in Groups Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motions at report stage of Bill C-43. The question is on Motion No. 1.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you would find unanimous consent to apply the votes on this as well.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
André	Asselin
Bachand	Batters
Bellavance	Benoit
Bergeron	Bezan
Bigras	Blais
Boire	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boulianne
Bourgeois	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brunelle
Cardin	Carrie
Carrier	Casey
Casson	Chong
Clavet	Cleary
Côté	Crête
Cummins	Day
Demers	Deschamps
Desrochers	Devolin
Doyle	Duceppe
Duncan	Epp
Faille	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Forseath	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gallant	Gaudet

*(Division No. 112)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélangier  
Bennett  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carroll  
Chamberlain  
Christopherson  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin  
Easter  
Emerson  
Folco  
Frulla  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
Kilgour  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Énard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paradis  
Patry  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed — 153

Alcock  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Catterall  
Chan  
Coderre  
Comuzzi  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
D'Amours  
Desjarlais  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Dryden  
Efford  
Eyking  
Fontana  
Fry  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Layton  
Lee  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Parrish  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

## Government Orders

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Doyle  
Duncan  
Faille  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffer  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger  
Simard (Beauport—Limoulu)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 149

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Watson  
Williams

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

*Government Orders*

The next question is on Motion No. 2.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, again if you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the previous vote to this motion.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed to apply the previous vote to this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 113)***YEAS**

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Boivin	Bonin
Boshcoff	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Bulte	Byrne
Cannis	Carr
Carroll	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Christopherson	Coderre
Comartin	Comuzzi
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Drouin	Dryden
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Eyking
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin
Goodale	Graham
Guamieri	Holland
Hubbard	Ianno
Jennings	Julian
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Khan
Kilgour	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lastewka	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Marleau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Matthews
McCallum	McDonough
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLellan
McTeague	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Neville
Owen	Pacetti
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Powers
Proulx	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Saada	Savage

Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 153

Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskij

**NAYS**

## Members

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Doyle  
Duncan  
Faille  
Fitzpatrick  
Forsyth  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffer  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger

*Government Orders*

Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 149

Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Watson  
Williams

McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paradis  
Patry  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed- — 153

McGuire  
McLellan  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Parrish  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 3.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote previously taken on the motion that is now before the House.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to apply the vote?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 114)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélangier  
Bennett  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carroll  
Chamberlain  
Christopherson  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin  
Easter  
Emerson  
Folco  
Frulla  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
Kilgour  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum

Alcock  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Catterall  
Chan  
Coderre  
Comuzzi  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
D'Amours  
Desjarlais  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Dryden  
Efford  
Eyking  
Fontana  
Fry  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Layton  
Lee  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Doyle  
Duncan  
Faille  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffer  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)

## NAYS

## Members

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies

*Government Orders*

Merrifield	Miller	Gauthier	Goldring
Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	Goodyear	Gouk
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
O'Brien	O'Connor	Guergis	Guimond
Obhrai	Oda	Hanger	Harper
Pallister	Paquette	Harris	Harrison
Penson	Perron	Hearn	Hiebert
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon	Hill	Hinton
Poilievre	Poirier-Rivard	Jaffer	Jean
Prentice	Preston	Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Rajotte	Reid	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Reynolds	Richardson	Komarnicki	Kotto
Ritz	Roy	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Laframboise
Sauvageau	Scheer	Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Schellenberger	Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Lauzon	Lavallée
Simard (Beauport—Limoulou)	Skelton	Lemay	Lessard
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg	Lévesque	Loubier
Sorenson	St-Hilaire	Lukiwski	Lunn
Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson	MacKenzie	Marceau
Toews	Trost	Mark	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Tweed	Van Loan	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Menzies
Vellacott	Vincent	Merrifield	Miller
Warawa	Watson	Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
White	Williams	Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Yelich— 149		O'Brien	O'Connor
		Obhrai	Oda
		Pallister	Paquette
		Penson	Perron
		Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
		Poilievre	Poirier-Rivard
		Prentice	Preston
		Rajotte	Reid
		Reynolds	Richardson
		Ritz	Roy
		Sauvageau	Scheer
		Schellenberger	Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)
		Simard (Beauport—Limoulou)	Skelton
		Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
		Sorenson	St-Hilaire
		Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
		Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
		Toews	Trost
		Tweed	Van Loan
		Vellacott	Vincent
		Warawa	Watson
		White	Williams
		Yelich— 149	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 5.

● (2320)

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members having voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting on the motion now before the House with Liberals voting against.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed to apply the previous motion in reverse to the question now before the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 5, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 115)*

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
André	Asselin
Bachand	Batters
Bellavance	Benoit
Bergeron	Bezan
Bigras	Blais
Boire	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boulianne
Bourgeois	Breitreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brunelle
Cardin	Carrie
Carrier	Casey
Casson	Chong
Clavet	Cleary
Côté	Crête
Cummins	Day
Demers	Deschamps
Desrochers	Devolin
Doyle	Duceppe
Duncan	Epp
Faille	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Forsth	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gallant	Gaudet

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Boivin	Bonin
Boshcoff	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brison
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Bulte	Byrne
Cannis	Carr
Carroll	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Christopherson	Coderre
Comartin	Comuzzi
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Drouin	Dryden
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Eyking
Folco	Fontana
Frulla	Fry
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin

## NAYS

## Members

Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
Kilgour  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Énard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paradis  
Patry  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 153

Graham  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Layton  
Lee  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Parrish  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

#### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 5 defeated.

The next question is on Motion No. 6.

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If you will recall and look in the blues, I think you would find that the member across the way, whose riding I have now unfortunately forgotten, had said that in subsequent votes he would be voting yea for all of these votes.

**The Speaker:** The hon. chief government whip on a point of order.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote just taken on the motion now before the House.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed that the vote on Motion No. 5 be applied to Motion No. 6?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 6, which was negatived on the following division:)

#### Government Orders

#### (Division No. 116)

#### YEAS

#### Members

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Doyle  
Duncan  
Faillie  
Fitzpatrick  
Forseth  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gallant  
Gauthier  
Goodyear  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffer  
Johnston  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich— 149

Ablonczy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps  
Devolin  
Duceppe  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gaudet  
Goldring  
Gouk  
Guay  
Guimond  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Watson  
Williams

*Government Orders*

## NAYS

## Members

Adams  
 Anderson (Victoria)  
 Augustine  
 Bains  
 Barnes  
 Bélanger  
 Bennett  
 Blaikie  
 Boivin  
 Boshcoff  
 Bradshaw  
 Broadbent  
 Bulte  
 Cannis  
 Carroll  
 Chamberlain  
 Christopherson  
 Comartin  
 Cotler  
 Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
 Cuzner  
 Davies  
 DeVillers  
 Dion  
 Drouin  
 Easter  
 Emerson  
 Folco  
 Frulla  
 Gallaway  
 Godfrey  
 Goodale  
 Guarnieri  
 Hubbard  
 Jennings  
 Kadis  
 Karygiannis  
 Kilgour  
 Lastewka  
 LeBlanc  
 Longfield  
 Macklin  
 Maloney  
 Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
 Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
 Masse  
 McCallum  
 McGuinty  
 McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
 McTeague  
 Mitchell  
 Myers  
 Owen  
 Paradis  
 Patry  
 Pettigrew  
 Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
 Proulx  
 Redman  
 Robillard  
 Rota  
 Saada  
 Savoy  
 Scott  
 Siksay  
 Simard (Saint Boniface)  
 Smith (Pontiac)  
 St. Denis  
 Stoffer  
 Szabo  
 Temelkovski  
 Tonks  
 Ur  
 Valley  
 Wappel  
 Wilfert  
 Zed — 153

Alcock  
 Angus  
 Bagnell  
 Bakopanos  
 Beaumier  
 Bell  
 Bevilacqua  
 Blondin-Andrew  
 Bonin  
 Boudria  
 Brison  
 Brown (Oakville)  
 Byrne  
 Carr  
 Catterall  
 Chan  
 Coderre  
 Comuzzi  
 Crowder  
 Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
 D'Amours  
 Desjarlais  
 Dhalla  
 Dosanjh  
 Dryden  
 Efford  
 Eyking  
 Fontana  
 Fry  
 Godbout  
 Godin  
 Graham  
 Holland  
 Ianno  
 Julian  
 Karetak-Lindell  
 Khan  
 Lapierre (Outremont)  
 Layton  
 Lee  
 MacAulay  
 Malhi  
 Marleau  
 Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
 Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
 Matthews  
 McDonough  
 McGuire  
 McLellan  
 Minna  
 Murphy  
 Neville  
 Pacetti  
 Parrish  
 Peterson  
 Phinney  
 Powers  
 Ratansi  
 Regan  
 Rodriguez  
 Russell  
 Savage  
 Scarpaleggia  
 Sgro  
 Silva  
 Simms  
 St. Amand  
 Steckle  
 Stronach  
 Telegdi  
 Thibault (West Nova)  
 Torsney  
 Valeri  
 Volpe  
 Wasylcia-Leis  
 Wrzesnewskyj

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 6 defeated.

The member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park may have to seek clarification in respect of his point of order.

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the member for Huron—Bruce. I just had a mental block. I apologize for that. I believe that is what he said.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Huron—Bruce wish to clarify the situation?

**Mr. Paul Steckle:** Mr. Speaker, this member rarely forgets what he said. I should point out that I said at that time I would vote affirmatively with the motion before the House but then would be voting with the government hence on.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park appreciates the clarification, as do all hon. members.

The question is on the amendment to Motion No. 7.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote just taken on the motion before the House and Liberal members would be voting yes.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed to apply the vote on Motion No. 6 to the vote on the amendment of Motion No. 7?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Just so there is no confusion, Mr. Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party will be voting yes on this motion.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois are voting against the amendment to Motion No. 7.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP are voting no to this motion.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting yes.

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting against.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting yes.

● (2325)

(The House divided on the amendment to Motion No. 7, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 117*)

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alcock
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Victoria)
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Augustine
Bagnell	Bains
Bakopanos	Barnes
Batters	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bell
Bennett	Benoit
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blondin-Andrew	Boivin
Bonin	Boshcoff
Boudria	Bradshaw

*Government Orders*

Breitkreuz  
Brown (Oakville)  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carrie  
Casey  
Catterall  
Chan  
Coderre  
Cotler  
Cummins  
D'Amours  
DeVillers  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Drouin  
Duncan  
Efford  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Fontana  
Frulla  
Gallant  
Godbout  
Goldring  
Goodyear  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Holland  
Ianno  
Jean  
Johnston  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Karygiannis  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Komarnicki  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Lauzon  
Lee  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Marleau  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCallum  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Menzies  
Miller  
Minna  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Murphy  
Neville  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Owen  
Pallister  
Parrish  
Penson  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Powers  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Redman  
Reid  
Richardson  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Sgro  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Skelton

Brisson  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Carroll  
Casson  
Chamberlain  
Chong  
Comuzzi  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
Cuzner  
Day  
Devolin  
Dion  
Doyle  
Dryden  
Easter  
Emerson  
Eyking  
Fitzpatrick  
Folco  
Forseth  
Fry  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Gouk  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Hubbard  
Jaffer  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karetak-Lindell  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Khan  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Lunn  
MacAulay  
MacKenzie  
Malhi  
Mark  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Matthews  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Merrifield  
Mills  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Patry  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Proulx  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Schellenberger  
Scott  
Silva  
Simms  
Smith (Pontiac)

Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
St. Denis  
Strahl  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Tonks  
Trost  
Ur  
Valley  
Vellacott  
Wappel  
Watson  
Wilfert  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Zed- — 229

Solberg  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Torsney  
Tweed  
Valeri  
Van Loan  
Volpe  
Warawa  
White  
Williams  
Yelich

## NAYS

## Members

André  
Asselin  
Bellavance  
Bigras  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Broadbent  
Cardin  
Christopherson  
Cleary  
Côté  
Crowder  
Davies  
Deschamps  
Desrochers  
Faille  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gaudet  
Godin  
Guimond  
Kilgour  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Layton  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Masse  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Paquette  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Sauvageau  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Stoffér  
Wasylycia-Leis- — 73

Angus  
Bachand  
Bergeron  
Blaikie  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brunelle  
Carrier  
Clavet  
Comartin  
Crête  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Demers  
Desjarlais  
Duceppe  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gauthier  
Guay  
Julian  
Kotto  
Lalonde  
Lavallée  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Marceau  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
McDonough  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Roy  
Siksay  
St-Hilaire  
Vincent

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment to Motion No. 7 carried.

The question is on Motion No. 7, as amended. An affirmative vote on Motion No. 7 requires the question to be put on Motion No. 8.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion as amended?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent for the members who voted on the previous motion to be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting yes.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

*Government Orders*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, members of the Conservative Party will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois are voting against this motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP are voting in favour of this motion.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yes.

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yes.

(The House divided on Motion No. 7, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 118)*

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alcock
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Victoria)
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Batters
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bell	Bennett
Benoit	Bevilacqua
Bezan	Blaikie
Blondin-Andrew	Boivin
Bonin	Boshcoff
Boudria	Bradshaw
Breitkreuz	Brisson
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Bulte
Byrne	Cannis
Carr	Carrie
Carroll	Casey
Casson	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chong	Christopherson
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Day
Desjarlais	DeVillers
Devolin	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Doyle	Drouin
Dryden	Duncan
Easter	Efford
Emerson	Epp
Eyking	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Folco	Fontana
Forseth	Frulla
Fry	Gallant
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gouk
Graham	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guamieri	Guergis
Hanger	Harper
Harris	Harrison
Heam	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Holland	Hubbard

Ianno	Jaffer
Jean	Jennings
Johnston	Julian
Kadis	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Khan	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lastewka	Lauzon
Layton	LeBlanc
Lee	Longfield
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Mark
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (LaSalle—Énard)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McDonough	McGuinty
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLellan	McTeague
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Minna	Mitchell
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Murphy	Myers
Neville	Nicholson
O'Brien	O'Connor
Obhrai	Oda
Owen	Pacetti
Pallister	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Penson	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Poilievre
Powers	Prentice
Preston	Proulx
Rajotte	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Reid	Reynolds
Richardson	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Saada	Savage
Savoy	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Scott
Sgro	Siksay
Silva	Simard (Saint Boniface)
Simms	Skelton
Smith (Pontiac)	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
Solberg	Sorenson
St. Amand	St. Denis
Steckle	Stoffer
Strahl	Stronach
Szabo	Telegdi
Temelkovski	Thibault (West Nova)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Tonks	Torsney
Trost	Tweed
Ur	Valeri
Valley	Van Loan
Vellacott	Volpe
Wappel	Warawa
Wasylycia-Leis	Watson
White	Wilfert
Williams	Wrzesnewskyj
Yelich	Zed- — 248

## NAYS

## Members

Asselin
Bellavance
Bigras
Boire
Bouchard
Bourgeois
Cardin

*Government Orders*

Carrier	Clavet
Cleary	Côté
Crête	Demers
Deschamps	Desrochers
Duceppe	Faillie
Gagnon (Québec)	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)	Gaudet
Gauthier	Guay
Guimond	Kilgour
Kotto	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Lavallée	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Loubier	Marceau
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Paquette	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Poirier-Rivard	Roy
Sauvageau	Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)
St-Hilaire	Vincent — 54

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 7 carried. The question therefore is on Motion No. 8.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote just taken to the motion now before the House.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 8, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 119)*

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablończy
Adams	Alcock
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Victoria)
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Angus
Augustine	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Batters
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bell	Bennett
Benoit	Bevilacqua
Bezan	Blaikie
Blondin-Andrew	Boivin
Bonin	Boshcoff
Boudria	Bradshaw
Breitkreuz	Brisson
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Bulte
Byrne	Cannis
Carr	Carrie
Carroll	Casey
Casson	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chong	Christopherson
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies	Day
Desjarlais	DeVillers
Devolin	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Doyle	Drouin
Dryden	Duncan

Easter	Efford
Emerson	Epp
Eyking	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Folco	Fontana
Forseth	Frulla
Fry	Gallant
Galloway	Godbout
Godfrey	Godin
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gouk
Graham	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guarnieri	Guergis
Hanger	Harper
Harris	Harrison
Hearn	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Holland	Hubbard
Ianno	Jaffer
Jean	Jennings
Johnston	Julian
Kadis	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Khan	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lapierre (Outremont)
Lastewka	Lauzon
Layton	LeBlanc
Lee	Longfield
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Mark
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McDonough	McGuinty
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLellan	McTeague
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Minna	Mitchell
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Murphy	Myers
Neville	Nicholson
O'Brien	O'Connor
Obhrai	Oda
Owen	Pacetti
Pallister	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Penson	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Poilievre
Powers	Prentice
Preston	Proulx
Rajotte	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Reid	Reynolds
Richardson	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Saada	Savage
Savoy	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Scott
Sgro	Siksay
Silva	Simard (Saint Boniface)
Simms	Skelton
Smith (Pontiac)	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
Solberg	Sorenson
St. Amand	St. Denis
Steckle	Stoffer
Strahl	Stonach
Szabo	Telegdi
Temelkovski	Thibault (West Nova)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Tonks	Torsney
Trost	Tweed
Ur	Valeri
Valley	Van Loan

*Government Orders*

Vellacott  
Wappel  
Wasylcyia-Leis  
White  
Williams  
Yelich

Volpe  
Warawa  
Watson  
Wilfert  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Zed— 248

**NAYS**

## Members

André  
Bachand  
Bergeron  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Brunelle  
Carrier  
Cleary  
Crête  
Deschamps  
Duceppe  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)  
Gauthier  
Guimond  
Kotto  
Lalonde  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Paquette  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Sauvageau  
St-Hilaire

Asselin  
Bellavance  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Cardin  
Clavet  
Côté  
Demers  
Desrochers  
Faille  
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)  
Gaudet  
Guay  
Kilgour  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Marceau  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Roy  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Vincent— 54

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 8 carried.

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.)** moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in at report stage with further amendments.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

• (2335)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 120)***YEAS**

## Members

Abbott  
Adams  
Allison  
Anders  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Breitkreuz  
Broadbent  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Carroll  
Casson  
Chamberlain  
Chong  
Coderre  
Comuzzi  
Crowder  
Cullen (Etobicoke North)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
Desjarlais  
Devolin  
Dion  
Doyle  
Dryden  
Easter  
Emerson  
Eyking  
Fitzpatrick  
Folco  
Forseth  
Fry  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goldring  
Goodyear  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Hanger  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Holland  
Ianno  
Jean  
Johnston  
Kadis  
Karetak-Lindell  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Khan  
Komarnicki  
Lapierre (Outremont)  
Lauzon  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Lunn  
MacAulay  
MacKenzie  
Malhi  
Mark  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Merrifield

Ablonczy  
Alcock  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Batters  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bevilacqua  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carrie  
Casey  
Catterall  
Chan  
Christopherson  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cummins  
D'Amours  
Day  
DeVillers  
Dhalla  
Dosanjh  
Drouin  
Duncan  
Efford  
Epp  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Fontana  
Frulla  
Gallant  
Godbout  
Godin  
Goodale  
Gouk  
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)  
Guergis  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Hubbard  
Jaffer  
Jennings  
Julian  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Karygiannis  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kilgour  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lastewka  
Layton  
Lee  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Menzies  
Miller

*Government Orders*

Mills  
Mitchell  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Myers  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Patry  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Proulx  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Schellenberger  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Skelton  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
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Murphy  
Neville  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Owen  
Pallister  
Parrish  
Penson  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Powers  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Redman  
Reid  
Richardson  
Robillard  
Rota  
Saada  
Savoy  
Scheer  
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simms  
Smith (Pontiac)  
Solberg  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Strahl  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Tilson  
Tonks  
Trost  
Ur  
Valley  
Vellacott  
Wappel  
Wasylcia-Leis  
White  
Williams  
Yelich

[English]

**REMOTE SENSING SPACE SYSTEMS ACT**

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-25, An Act governing the operation of remote sensing space systems, as amended, be concurred in at report stage.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-25. The question is on the motion.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that you will find unanimous consent for all members who voted on the previous question be deemed as voting on the motion before the House, with Liberals voting yes.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party will be voting yes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois are voting no to this motion.

[English]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP vote no to the motion.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour.

● (2340)

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I vote for it.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I vote yes.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, it has been drawn to my attention that the member for Nickel Belt has left the chamber so I would ask that he not be recorded as having voted on the motion.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 121)

**YEAS**

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Adams	Alecock
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Victoria)
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Augustine
Bagnell	Bains
Bakopanos	Barnes
Batters	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell
Bennett	Benoit
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blondin-Andrew	Boivin
Boshcoff	Boudria
Bradshaw	Breitkreuz
Brisson	Brown (Oakville)
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Bulte
Byrne	Cannis
Carr	Carrie
Carroll	Casey
Casson	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Chong	Coderre
Comuzzi	Cotler
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cummins

**NAYS**

## Members

André	Asselin
Bachand	Bellavance
Bergeron	Bigras
Blais	Boire
Bonsant	Bouchard
Boulianne	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Cardin
Carrier	Clavet
Cleary	Côté
Crête	Demers
Deschamps	Desrochers
Duceppe	Faïlle
Gagnon (Québec)	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)	Gaudet
Gauthier	Guay
Guimond	Kotto
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lavallée
Lemay	Lessard
Lévesque	Loubier
Marceau	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Paquette
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Poirier-Rivard
Roy	Sauvageau
Simard (Beaumont—Limoilou)	St-Hilaire
Vincent — 53	

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

*Government Orders*

Cuzner	D'Amours	Ur	Valeri
Day	DeVillers	Valley	Van Loan
Devolin	Dhalla	Vellacott	Volpe
Dion	Dosanjh	Wappel	Warawa
Doyle	Drouin	Watson	White
Dryden	Duncan	Wilfert	Williams
Easter	Efford	Wrzesnewskyj	Yelich
Emerson	Epp	Zed- — 229	
Eyking	Finley		
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher		
Folco	Fontana		
Forseth	Frulla		
Fry	Gallant		
Galloway	Godbout		
Godfrey	Goldring		
Goodale	Goodyear		
Gouk	Graham		
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guarnieri		
Guergis	Hanger		
Harper	Harris		
Harrison	Hearn		
Hiebert	Hill		
Hinton	Holland		
Hubbard	Ianno		
Jaffer	Jean		
Jennings	Johnston		
Kadis	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)		
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis		
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)		
Khan	Kilgour		
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)		
Lapierre (Outremont)	Lastewka		
Lauzon	LeBlanc		
Lee	Longfield		
Lukiwski	Lunn		
Lunney	MacAulay		
Mackay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie		
Macklin	Malhi		
Maloney	Mark		
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)		
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Mathews		
McCallum	McGuinty		
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)		
McLellan	McTeague		
Menzies	Merrifield		
Miller	Mills		
Minna	Mitchell		
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)			
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Myers		
Murphy	Nicholson		
Neville	O'Connor		
O'Brien	Oda		
Obhrai	Pacetti		
Owen	Paradis		
Pallister	Patry		
Parrish	Peterson		
Penson	Phinney		
Pettigrew	Poilievre		
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Prentice		
Powers	Proulx		
Preston	Ratansi		
Rajotte	Regan		
Redman	Reynolds		
Reid	Ritz		
Richardson	Rodriguez		
Robillard	Russell		
Rota	Savage		
Saada	Scarpaleggia		
Savoy	Schellenberger		
Scheer	Scott		
Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Silva		
Sgro	Simms		
Simard (Saint Boniface)	Smith (Pontiac)		
Skelton	Solberg		
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	St. Amand		
Sorenson	Steckle		
St. Denis	Stronach		
Strahl	Telegdi		
Szabo	Thibault (West Nova)		
Temelkovski	Thompson (Wild Rose)		
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Toews		
Tilson	Torsney		
Tonks	Tweed		
Trost			

**NAYS**

## Members

André	Angus
Asselin	Bachand
Bellavance	Bergeron
Bigras	Blaikie
Blais	Boire
Bonsant	Bouchard
Boulianne	Bourgeois
Broadbent	Brunelle
Cardin	Carrier
Christopherson	Clavet
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Davies	Demers
Deschamps	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Duceppe
Faille	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godin	Guay
Guimond	Julian
Kotto	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Lavallée	Layton
Lemay	Lessard
Lévesque	Loubier
Marceau	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
McDonough	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Paquette
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Poirier-Rivard
Roy	Sauvageau
Siksay	Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)
St-Hilaire	Stoffer
Vincent	Wasylcia-Leis- — 72

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that if you seek the unanimous consent of the House you would get the unanimous consent of the House to see the clock as midnight.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to see the clock as midnight?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Government Orders*

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Monday, June 13 this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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(The House adjourned at 11:46 p.m.)



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