



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 140 • NUMBER 120 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, June 21, 2005**  
**Part A**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

All parliamentary publications are available on the  
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

The House met at 10 a.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1000)

[*Translation*]

### 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 have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to a petition.

\* \* \*

● (1005)

[*English*]

### SALE OF MEDALS PROHIBITION ACT

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-415, An Act to prohibit the sale of Canadian military and police medals.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from British Columbia for seconding the bill. As we all know, we get very concerned when we see the medals that have been worn by our proud veterans, our service personnel and the RCMP, for example, being sold at a flea market or on the Internet or anything of that nature.

This enactment would prohibit the sale of any medals given by the Government of Canada to our brave soldiers, our veterans and RCMP officers throughout the country. In our heart of hearts we believe that these medals are not currency. They are very valuable and they should not be sold or bartered in any way, shape or form.

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

\* \* \*

### EXPORT AND IMPORT OF ROUGH DIAMONDS ACT

**Hon. R. John Efford (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.)** moved that Bill S-36, An Act to amend the Export and Import of Rough Diamonds Act, be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS, PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, presented to the House on Wednesday, April 13, be concurred in.

It is an honour to rise in this House to speak to this motion. I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

This is a very important motion. I want to share a little of its history. Nine mayors came to the justice committee and shared with us a very important concern of theirs: that nine RCMP detachments were going to be closing in Quebec. Commissioner Zaccardelli also came and spoke to us. We heard from him that there was a plan and we heard the rationale. The rationale was to close these detachments and redeploy these RCMP members to work in a central location to attack organized crime.

The nine mayors who came to the committee were very concerned that the presence of the RCMP was being removed from their communities, with the officers going to a central location. What does this do to these communities? When we remove the police presence, we are giving a message to organized crime members that they can do whatever they want. The nine mayors were very concerned about this.

I have a bit of a background in dealing with the RCMP. Before becoming a member of this House, I was a loss prevention officer. One of the things we dealt with in regard to the RCMP was the importance of the presence of the RCMP. If people do not see a police presence, the message is very clear that they can do whatever they want.

A vast majority of citizens are law-abiding, tax-paying, hard-working Canadian citizens, but there is a small percentage of people in Canada, in our world, who are not law-abiding. That is why we need a police presence. Just the presence of the police acts as a deterrent.

An example of that can be found in traffic issues. People who never see a police officer tend to drive a lot faster. When police officers are present, people slow down. We have all seen that on the freeway. We have seen how people slow down a police officer is there.

*Routine Proceedings*

All kinds of studies have been done in which a police decoy is put out there. Even if it is a fake car, even an old decommissioned RCMP vehicle or municipal police vehicle, traffic slows down. The presence of the police is very important.

It was important enough for the mayors of these nine communities in Quebec to come to Ottawa and ask us to please stop this because the decision to close these detachments, coming right from the top at the RCMP, was going to be disastrous for these communities. Why? What were some of the reasons?

Not only was the lack of a police presence seen as a problem, marijuana grow ops are a problem right across this country. If RCMP detachments are removed, who is going to be dealing with them? If this happens, we are saying that organized crime can do whatever it wants.

**An hon. member:** We're telling them where to go.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** We are telling criminals that these are the communities where there is no more police presence and these are good areas where they can open up these grow ops. If we do not have a police presence, we are telling criminals they can have their legal weapons, that they can do whatever they want to do.

The nine mayors came to committee and asked us to please stop the closure before it was too late, saying that if the police were removed their communities were going to be in trouble.

In December 2004 the committee presented its fourth report. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee adopted the following motion on December 9, 2004:

That the Committee recommend to the government that the RCMP keep open the nine detachments in Quebec whose closing was an issue in our hearings and that it maintain a return to them, a critical mass of officers per detachment.

Some of the detachments had only one officer. That is not adequate. We want to have the minimum number of officers that would provide the critical mass.

●(1010)

After the fourth report, we again had Commissioner Zaccardelli speak to the committee. The committee was told that it had already happened and that how dare the committee question it. We also heard the government say that how dare the committee question the RCMP.

Every member of the House is proud of and has great respect for the RCMP. It does an incredible job. The question we had concerned the logic in closing down these detachments. These detachments are not on the border but they are part of the patrol that guards the Canadian border.

We have heard a concern that we are not adequately protecting the Canadian borders. We are a sovereign country and the government has a responsibility to protect Canadians and our border. We have heard that thousands of people every year blow across the border without stopping. These people are not bringing milk across the border or crossing the border to buy cheese. These people are smuggling people, guns and drugs and the government is not doing anything.

Who is patrolling our borders? The RCMP is being pulled out of Ontario and Quebec and now it is going after Manitoba. It has to stop. It should have stopped before.

We have an epidemic within our country where police resources are being removed. We have a growing population and a growing crime problem. To remove RCMP members and police forces, who have limited numbers and limited resources, from the streets and put them in an office somewhere does not work. We need to protect Canadians and our borders.

**An hon. member:** It is our duty.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** It is our duty and we do need members at the border.

Customs and immigration officers are responsible for our border crossings but between the border crossings it is the responsibility of the RCMP. We do not have enough resources at our border crossings when we see people are blowing across the borders. Statistics from the United States border services show that thousands of people are sneaking in between these crossings. Whose responsibility is that? As I said, it is the RCMP's responsibility to ensure that is being dealt with.

When we remove these officers, close these detachments and send them all to the city to work on their laptops, that is not good management of a valuable resource.

We then have the sixth report, which states:

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), your Committee has considered the matter of the closure of nine (9) Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachments in Quebec.

Your Committee draws to the attention of the House the fact that the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and the Senior Management of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have not taken into account the opinion expressed by the Committee in its Fourth Report but rather have continued the process of closing nine RCMP detachments in Quebec.

Your Committee recommends that the Minister and the RCMP put a stop to this personnel redeployment plan and reopen the detachments concerned.

This justice committee report about these detachment closures had total unanimity among committee members. We are very concerned about this and it is unanimous, other than in the government. The government for some reason has a plan to close the RCMP detachments and to remove RCMP members from our borders and our freeways. It is remove, remove.

●(1015)

We need an RCMP presence and whatever the hidden plan of the government is, it needs to be exposed. I think Canadians want this dealt with right now. The plan that the government has needs to be exposed and it needs to be stopped.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we are looking at the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. This is a matter of much interest to parliamentarians and, indeed, to all Canadians and it is one of the reasons that it was debated in this place on, I believe, May 3. The members may want to look at the debate.

*Routine Proceedings*

I want to just make a couple of points before I put the question to the member. The issue is that the resources in Quebec with regard to the RCMP were, as a consequence of this reorganization, not even reduced by one officer. They were reorganizing to improve the efficiency of the RCMP.

As well, the RCMP, under the RCMP Act, has the authority to manage our national police service and to direct the resources where they are most needed. Subsection 5(1) of the RCMP Act clearly states:

—the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who, under the direction of the Minister, has the control and management of the Force and all matters connected therewith.

The motion really goes straight to the heart of the responsibility and lines of authority with regard to the RCMP and, in fact, undermines the legislative foundation of our national police service.

Having full knowledge of the debate that was held in this place on May 3 and understanding that this was a reorganization for efficiency, is the member suggesting somehow that the reorganization was not the proper thing to do in that it was transparent and open and that it was the decision of the RCMP, not the Government of Canada?

• (1020)

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Madam Speaker, the member's question is a good one because that is exactly what we heard at the committee. The rationale was to improve efficiency. We heard that it was more efficient to remove the RCMP from the border.

It did not compute and I do not think it computed with any member of the committee other than the Liberal members of the committee. They said that it was safer for those communities and more efficient to take the RCMP out of those communities and off the borders. We would rely on the Americans to protect our Canadian border.

Canadians do not believe that and not one member of that committee believed that rationale. There is some plan going on here that defies logic.

It is hogwash when we hear the government say that it is more efficient to remove the RCMP members. What is more efficient is to have them where the issues are, where the marijuana grow ops are happening and where crime is happening. These things need a police presence and to remove them makes no sense.

In talking about the lines of authority, the message is very clear. The committee members have no confidence with the decision made by the government. I hope it understood that message. We have zero confidence in the decision that the government has made in regard to removing RCMP officers.

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the Liberal member claims that it is about efficiency and the delivery of service. Where is the efficiency in continually pumping tens of millions of dollars into a useless gun registry that does nothing to solve crime and which Canadians across the country have rejected as a means to deal with any sort of crime and then looking at other ways to save money? The Liberals then turn to front line police officers at our borders to find those savings.

Could the member speak to the hypocrisy of funding a useless registry and then cutting back on front line officers to prevent crime?

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Madam Speaker, my colleague's question is right on the mark. Canadians do want to know why we are wasting their tax dollars. They want their tax dollars to be used wisely and that does not mean on programs like the \$2 billion gun registry boondoggle.

People involved in organized crime do not register their firearms. People who smuggle drugs back and forth across the border and who have marijuana grow ops with booby traps that endanger our fire departments and our police officers do not register their firearms.

**Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague from British Columbia for sharing his time with me.

I understand the justice report is about the closure of a number of RCMP detachments. It is important that we look beyond the specific detachments mentioned in the report. For the last 10 or 12 years, the problem with RCMP detachments has been a problem. I live in the small community of Sidney, British Columbia which has a local RCMP detachment staffed by 25 officers.

As far back as I can remember this detachment has been chronically understaffed for a number of reasons. Typically the staffing is short by about 25%. Quite often when it sends out a platoon, two officers will be left with one officer out patrolling in a car. For a variety reasons, from maternity leave to staffing shortages to transfers, the detachment is unable to refill positions.

Why has our national police force been put in this position when it comes to replacing members? Sometimes a detachment will wait a long time to fill positions, as we see in the report. A number of small detachments across the country are being shut down completely.

In the early days of the Liberal government, it all but closed the RCMP training depot in Regina because it was not doing its job. We ended up with a serious situation. For years we had very small number of classes, if any, to train new police officers. Therefore, the backlog was enormous. The shortage of hundreds of police officers created difficulties for RCMP detachments across the country.

What was the government's response? Many reports say that the government chose not put front line police officers on the streets so it could save around \$2 billion. The Liberals made a very definitive decision to remove front line police officers because there was not enough training to fill the vacancies. Instead they spent billions of dollars on a gun registry. No one in Canada believes people should be walking around the streets with guns.

Prior to this infamous gun registry, on which the government spent billions of dollars, people were not allowed to carry handguns. If they wanted to move them from their home to a shoot or a range, they had to go to their local police for a permit. In effect we had a form of a registry for handguns with the local police. However, the government, in its wisdom, decided it would spend billions of dollars. How could we possibly spend \$2 billion on a database, on a gun registry?

*Routine Proceedings*

One only has to look at the sponsorship program. It does not take a lot of imagination to see where the money has gone. I am sure we will find out in the years ahead, once we see more audits and information come forward, that a great deal of the money probably went to people who were very good supporters of the Liberal Party of Canada. I have no one doubt in my mind that we will see contracts given to high donors to the Liberal Party. It is kind of the normal way of doing business.

●(1025)

Also, we have been put in a more difficult situation in the last three or four years since September 11, 2001.

Canada Customs is in places to deal with ferry traffic going to the U.S. When people go into the U.S., they are pre-cleared. However, U.S. immigration officials refuse to operate inside Canada unless they have an armed police officer with them. This border crossing is right across from the street where I used to live. The Anacortes ferry terminal had one or two sailings a day, four hours a day. An RCMP officer from the detachment in Sidney had to be with the U.S. Immigration Service.

I note the Senate committee has come forward and said that our Canadian customs people need one of two things. They either need armed police officers with them as they are secure our border or they need to be armed. It is ironic that the government will not give Canadian customs officials sidearms or at least an armed police officer, but it will do it for American immigration officials who work inside Canada. That is unbelievable. That is how it is today.

U.S. immigration workers working at the Anacortes ferry terminal in Sidney or downtown in the inner harbour in Victoria where people go on the Coho to the U.S get Canadian police officers because they will not work unless they are in the presence of an armed officer for security reasons. We do not even do that for our own customs officers.

Where are the government's priorities? The RCMP is chronically underfunded. The government decided to put billions of dollars into a gun registry, which by all accounts is not providing an ounce of benefit other than to some people who may be good Liberals and who are who sending in contracts to the national firearms registry and, lo and behold, getting millions of dollars. How could the government possibly spend \$2 billion on a database. I would love to have that contract. It is absolutely amazing.

The government cut back training at the RCMP depot in Regina to a bare minimum. This detachment has been chronically understaffed. This is happening in detachments across the country. Sometimes detachments have to wait six months or more to get a replacement for an officer who has been transferred somewhere else. Watch duty officers at these RCMP detachments have to deal with this problem when they scheduling officers. They have to find a way to cut the number of police officers on a platoon because they do not have the bodies.

In my community, the RCMP detachment was pretty much chronically understaffed by about 25%. It was a very serious problem. The remaining officers had to fill regular shift schedules. Officers also had to be sent over to the ferry terminals because U.S.

immigration officers would not work unless they had an armed officer with them. We do not do that for our own customs officers.

This is about priorities. The government needs to focus on its priorities. We have spent a large portion of this spring session on Bill C-38, the same sex marriage bill. Again, it is a matter of priorities. Why are we not focusing on jobs, the economy, getting taxes down, looking at our health care system? The government's priority is focused on getting Bill C-38 through the House.

●(1030)

We have very different priorities on this side of the House. We want to bring forward legislation that will have a meaningful impact to Canadians right across this country. It is about priorities. It is time the government had a look at what it has done for the last 12 years. Anyone could come to the conclusion that the Liberals have their priorities all wrong.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I indicated that the House debated this matter on May 3. The point was made at the time that under the RCMP Act, the RCMP had the authority to manage the national police service and direct resources where they were most needed under section 5(1). Although it is in conjunction with the minister, the minister has no purview with regard to the day to day operations. It is more in terms of strategic policy.

I also wanted to point out that the commissioner appeared before the committee. The commissioner explained to the parliamentarians that the detachments should be closed. He gave reasons why. The commissioner told the committee that to keep those detachments there and not redeploy would make Quebec less safe, contrary to what the members have been saying. The commissioner also explained that the need for the officers was elsewhere because of the growing priorities in Quebec, particularly with regard to terrorism and organized crime.

Let me reiterate that not one RCMP officer was taken away. It was a redeployment of resources.

Finally, I would also point out that in the last four to five years the budget for the RCMP has been increased from \$2 billion to \$3 billion. This is a very significant increase in the resources available to our police officers.

Why does the member not believe Mr. Zaccardelli, the head of the RCMP, when he says that closing this would make Quebec less safe?

●(1035)

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Madam Speaker, whether I believe Mr. Zaccardelli or not, the member should talk with the people in the local detachments. Look at their shift patterns. See if they have 100% staffing. Walk into most RCMP detachments and see if all the positions are filled. I think he will find a lot of vacancies. Of course there is redeployment as they shuffle people around.

Even more so, the member opposite talked about the strategic decisions for doing this. Let us talk about the strategy of the Liberal government. How does it justify another \$50 million in this year's estimates for the gun registry? Where are the priorities?

*Routine Proceedings*

Does the government not think that perhaps the money might be better spent by putting front line officers on the street? Does the government think our RCMP detachments are 100% staffed. Does the government think the detachments are getting increases in their budgets? We are skeptical on this side because we see promises after promises from the Liberal government broken one after the other, right from the mouth of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister came to my riding during the election last year. He looked some of my constituents right in the eye and promised to help them. He promised he would fix a problem for JDS Uniphase employees and their taxation problem. Now he is saying too bad. The Liberals' word is worth nothing. It is absolutely meaningless.

The member should come out to my riding and talk with some of my constituents. He should talk with some of the JDS Uniphase employees. Whether it is justice matters or taxation matters, the government will do anything and say anything to get a vote. When it comes time to deliver, its word is worth absolutely nothing.

The record speaks for itself. There are billions of dollars spent on a useless gun registry. We shake our heads in disbelief at what the Prime Minister's priorities have been in the last year. Canadians are disillusioned.

The only response from the government to the opposition is to come at the opposition with unfounded allegations and attacks. It is time for this Parliament to bring forward legislation that will have a meaningful difference to every Canadian in every corner of the country.

We have to allow young Canadians, who are graduating from universities and high schools, to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. Businesses should not to be hamstrung by a taxation policy that will not allow them to grow and flourish.

When I graduated from high school in 1975, I was making the same amount of money per hour as the kids are who are getting out of school today. There is something wrong.

The policies of the government have hamstrung the country. The Liberals have been in power for the last 13 years. Their policies are driving this country's economy into the ground. Let us start refocusing our priorities. Let us start watching where we spend the money instead of spending it on their Liberal friends.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an interesting discussion. Nonetheless, as was the case in the past, we believe Canadians want this Parliament to address important legislation such as the government's budget bill.

[*English*]

That is why I move:

That the debate do now adjourn.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** The House has heard the terms of 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 yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** Call in the members.

• (1125)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 127*)

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	André
Angus	Asselin
Bachand	Bagnell
Bains	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell
Bellavance	Bennett
Bergeron	Bevilacqua
Bigras	Blaikie
Blais	Blondin-Andrew
Boire	Boivin
Bonsant	Boshcoff
Bouchard	Boudria
Boulianne	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Brisson
Broadbent	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	Fruita

*Routine Proceedings*

Gagnon (Québec)	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)
Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)	Galloway
Gaudet	Gauthier
Godbout	Godin
Graham	Guay
Guimond	Holland
Hubbard	Ianno
Jennings	Julian
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell
Karygiannis	Khan
Kotto	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)
Lastewka	Lavallée
Layton	LeBlanc
Lemay	Lessard
Lévesque	Longfield
Loubier	MacAulay
Macklin	Malhi
Maloney	Marceau
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	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
Patry	Perron
Peterson	Pettigrew
Phinney	Picard (Drummond)
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Plamondon
Poirier-Rivard	Powers
Proulx	Ratansi
Redman	Regan
Rodriguez	Rota
Roy	Russell
Sauvageau	Savage
Savoy	Scarpaleggia
Siksay	Silva
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)	Simard (Saint Boniface)
Simms	Smith (Pontiac)
St-Hilaire	St. Amand
St. Denis	Steckle
Stoffer	Stronach
Szabo	Telegdi
Temelkovski	Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les
Basques)	
Thibault (West Nova)	Tonks
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Valley
Vincent	Volpe
Wappel	Wasylcia-Leis
Wilfert	Wrzesnewskij
Zed — 191	

**NAYS**

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Batters	Benoit
Bezan	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Carrie
Casey	Casson
Cummins	Day
Devolin	Doyle
Duncan	Epp
Finley	Fitzpatrick
Fletcher	Gallant
Goldring	Goodyear
Gouk	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guergis	Hanger
Harper	Harris
Heam	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Jaffer	Jean
Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
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)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	O'Connor
Obhrai	Oda
Pallister	Penson
Poilievre	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
Williams	Yelich — 88

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

I wish to inform the House that there are 2 hours and 25 minutes remaining for debate on the motion for concurrence of the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. Accordingly, the debate on the motion will be rescheduled for another sitting.

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured to table today petitions signed by over 15,000 Canadians from all over the country who call on the government to ensure that American war resisters who have conscientious objections to serving in the United States armed forces in the illegal war in Iraq be allowed sanctuary in Canada as refugees or through some other provision.

These petitioners strongly urge the government to maintain its commitment to opposing the illegal war in Iraq by refusing to return these conscientious objectors to the U.S. where they can face incarceration, persecution or possibly the death penalty.

● (1130)

CANADA POST

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition on behalf of my constituents, in particular from the town of Quill Lake. They are very concerned that the government may go back on its word and begin rural post office closures.

The petition states that the undersigned citizens of Canada draw the attention of the House to post office closures. They call upon Parliament to keep the Quill Lake post office open and retain the moratorium on post office closures. It is my pleasure to present this petition signed by the majority of the great people of Quill Lake.



[Translation]

CIVIL MARRIAGE ACT

**Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and my constituents I am tabling a petition on Bill C-38.

[English]

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present to the House today.

The first set of petitions all speak in opposition to Bill C-38. They pray that Parliament pass legislation to recognize the institution of marriage in federal law as being the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

TAXATION

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my second petition has 60 signatures. It is from a number of seniors in my riding calling on Parliament to change the Income Tax Act. They want it changed to allow spouses to pay taxes as if the total family income were earned equally.

GREAT LAKES WATER DIVERSION

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my third petition consists of 45 signatures. It deals with opposition to the Great Lakes water diversion. The petitioners ask that all the people of Canada condemn the annex 2001 agreement between the eight northern states and Ontario and Quebec to stop water diversions and protect the Great Lakes.

HEALTH

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my fourth petition asks that Canadians be provided with greater access to non-drug preventive and medicinal options. The petitioners support Bill C-420, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act.

DIABETES

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the final petition I have the great honour to present is on behalf of the health critic, the member for Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia. It calls on the government to secure federal funding targeted specifically to juvenile type 1 diabetes research and to provide \$25 million a year for the next five years.

CANADA POST

**Mr. Dave Batters (Palliser, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present two petitions on behalf of a number of citizens who live in my riding of Palliser, most of whom are from Avonlea and Cardross, Saskatchewan.

The petitioners wish to call to the attention of Parliament that the Liberal government imposed a moratorium on post office closures in 1994 and yet a number of rural post offices have been closed. Canada Post considers rural post offices to be a heavy burden on its bottom line and is reviewing rural post offices in communities the size of Avonlea and Cardross for closure.

The closure of rural post offices threatens the continued viability of many rural communities. The petitioners call upon the govern-

*Routine Proceedings*

ment to keep its moratorium promise and keep the Avonlea and Cardross post offices open.

IMMIGRATION

**Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have two petitions to present.

The first calls on the government to recognize the last group of Vietnamese boat people as refugees under the country of asylum class and allow the resettlement of some 500 individuals on humanitarian and compassionate grounds during the 2005-06 fiscal year. These signatories are from across Canada.

The second petition asks Parliament to increase the quotas for parental sponsorship admissions and reduce time for sponsorship applications.

• (1135)

INTERNATIONAL AID

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I take pleasure in tabling more petitions on behalf of Canadians urging the government to move decisively toward an international aid target of 0.7% of GDP and triple its contribution to the global fund to fight HIV-AIDS, TB and malaria.

It seems like a particularly appropriate day on which to do this when the Minister responsible for CIDA, before the foreign affairs committee, has just made it clear that either the government does not have a plan for moving toward 0.7% or if it does, it is not telling Canadians or our global partners.

WATER QUALITY

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** Madam Speaker, these petitioners state that the International Joint Commission, which administers the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes water quality agreement, recommended in 1992 that Canada and the United States develop a timetable to sunset the use of chlorine in the Great Lakes watershed. Forcing campgrounds, restaurants, trailer parks and rural churches to chlorinate their drinking water, which will cost thousands of dollars that they do not have, violates this federal chlorinated substances action plan and international agreement.

Since there is no scientific evidence that the basis of the chlorinated water effluence being added to the list of toxic substances is being paid attention to, the petitioners call upon Parliament to instruct the federal environment minister to impose a moratorium on the expanded use of water chlorination in small, rural applications until other alternatives have been studied.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I already tabled one petition. I want to table two additional petitions, different from each other but on the same subject. They deal with missile defence and weapons in space.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners are calling upon Canada to: first, maintain the multilateral approach to security and reaffirm this country's support for non-proliferation arms control and disarmament; second, reject any and all plans for weapons of war in space, including any plans for missile defence; and third, seek Canada's withdrawal from any discussion of or participation in missile defence and the weaponization of space.

This is reflecting the fact that Canadians are very worried about whether the government will drag us into missile defence through the talks that seem to be ongoing as there is no acknowledgement by the government with respect to future participation through Goose Bay.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 150 and 152.

[Text]

Question No. 150—**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:**

With respect to the implementation of sections 35, 37 and 40 of the Firearms Act by the Canada Border Services Agency: (a) how many person years have been allocated to this activity for the fiscal year 2004-05; (b) how many person years will be allocated for each of the next five fiscal years; (c) what is the total amount that has been spent for the fiscal year 2004-05; (d) what is the total amount that will be allocated for each of the next five fiscal years; (e) what activities does the implementation of these sections entail; and (f) what are the potential risks to public safety and national security resulting from the diversion of human and financial resources from activities such as the pursuit of smugglers, terrorists, illegal immigrants, illegal guns, drugs, explosives, and other contraband?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** With respect to the implementation of sections 35, 37 and 40 of the Firearms Act by the Canada Border Services Agency, CBSA, only section 35 is in force and administered by the CBSA at this time. Consequently, in response to

(a), 28.71 person years have been allocated to section 35 activities for the fiscal year 2004-05.

In response to (b), approximately 26 person years will be allocated for section 35 activities in the fiscal year 2005-06. This amount will remain the same for each of the next four fiscal years if there is no change in responsibilities. If sections 37 and 40 of the Firearms Act come into force during that time, additional resources would be required from the Canada Firearms Centre, CAFC, on a cost recovery basis. The amount is to be negotiated.

In response to (c), \$1,837,381 has been spent on section 35 activities in the fiscal year 2004-05.

In response to (d), \$1,700,000 will be allocated for section 35 activities in the fiscal year 2005-06. This amount will remain the same for each of the next four fiscal years if there is no change in responsibilities. If sections 37 and 40 of the Firearms Act come into force during that time, additional resources would be required from the CAFC on a cost recovery basis. The amount is to be negotiated.

In response to (e), under section 35 of the Firearms Act, the CBSA processes firearms declared by unlicensed non-residents. This entails determining the class of firearm being imported, including its import requirements; confirming the authorization to transport, if required; ensuring that the importer and firearm information matches that on the non-resident firearm declaration form, Form CAFC 909; collection of a confirmation fee, which is subsequently transmitted to the CAFC; holding the firearm for a period of time if not all legal requirements have been met; and processing the export or destruction of the firearm if ultimately the importer is not entitled to import it to Canada. Amendments to section 35 not yet in force would also require the CBSA to process those non-resident importers who have received a report from the Registrar of Firearms in advance of the importation, which for those importers takes the place of the non-resident firearm declaration.

Under section 37 of the Firearms Act, the CBSA will not need to perform any activities, as it will not be required to process unlicensed non-residents exporting their firearms.

Under section 40 of the Firearms Act, the CBSA will process licensed individuals importing firearms. This entails determining the class of firearm being imported, including its import requirements; confirming the authorization to import; confirming the authorization to transport, if required; if the firearm is not registered, ensuring that the importer and firearm information matches that on the authorization to import, which is subsequently transmitted to the CAFC; informing the registrar of the impending importation; holding the firearm for a period of time if not all legal requirements have been met; and processing the export or destruction of the firearm if ultimately the importer is not entitled to import it to Canada.

In response to (f), the overwhelming majority of all resources used by the CBSA to implement sections 35, 37 and 40 of the Firearms Act are provided by the CAFC on a cost recovery basis. Consequently, any diversion of CBSA resources as a result of administering those sections on behalf of the CAFC is negligible.

Question No. 152—**Mr. Bill Casey:**

With regard to those fatal and serious automobile accidents in Canada between 1995 and 2005, where alcohol or "driving under the influence" was a factor in these accidents: (a) how many conditional releases have been granted by the government to individuals who have caused serious or fatal automobile accidents while driving under the influence of alcohol, (i) by province, (ii) by age demographic, (iii) by gender, and (iv) by year; (b) is the Department of Justice considering, or will it consider reducing the legal alcohol content of blood from 0.8% to 0.5% so that there can be a further reduction of the fatality rates in Canada; and (c) is the Department of Justice considering the impounding of vehicles from those individuals found to be driving under the influence of alcohol?

**Hon. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** In response to (a), before 1997, Parliament did not make available to sentencing courts the possibility of a conditional sentence of imprisonment. They first begin to appear in the statistics from the Adult Criminal Court Survey of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics in the year 1998-99. Between 1998-99 and 2003-04 there were 38 conditional sentences given in cases of impaired driving causing death and 350 conditional sentences given in cases of impaired driving causing bodily harm.

*Routine Proceedings*

(i) By province: B.C. death 7, bodily harm 35; Alberta death 7, bodily harm 57; Saskatchewan death 4, bodily harm 22; Ontario death 19, bodily harm 165; Quebec death 0, bodily harm 0; New Brunswick death 1, bodily harm 11; P.E.I. death 0, bodily harm 0; Nova Scotia death 0, bodily harm 5; Newfoundland and Labrador death 0, bodily harm 29; Yukon death 0, bodily harm 4; and Northwest Territories death 0, bodily harm 0.

(ii) By age of person conditionally sentenced: 18 to 24: death 13, bodily harm 110; 25 to 34: death 10, bodily harm 102; 35 to 44: death 6, bodily harm 78; 45 to 54: death 6, bodily harm 38; 55 plus: death 2, bodily harm 17; age unknown: death 1, bodily harm 5.

(iii) By gender: male: death 33, bodily harm 287; female: death 3, bodily harm 18; sex unknown: death 2, bodily harm 0.

(iv) By year:

1998-99—death 3, bodily harm 22

1999-2000—death 3, bodily harm 42

2000-01—death 5, bodily harm 38

2001-02—death 4, bodily harm 80

2002-03—death 12, bodily harm 78

2003-04—death 11, bodily harm 90

Justice Canada Research Section, with the cooperation of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, was able to provide the above information. The raw data exists with the Adult Criminal Court Survey but a special run was required to obtain the data on conditional sentences for impaired driving serious cases. Statistical data for the year 2004-05 is not yet available. Up to 2000-01, the survey covered about 80% of the national caseload. Not included were: B.C., New Brunswick, Manitoba and Nunavut. Starting from 2001-02, the survey covers about 90% of the national caseload. Still not included are Manitoba and Nunavut. Also, data for Quebec represent 80% of the Quebec caseload and data for B.C. represent 95% of the BC caseload.

In response to (b), in January 2005 the Department of Justice sponsored a roundtable of key stakeholders to consider the issue of lowering the legal limit to 50 milligrams per cent of alcohol. There was agreement that this level represents an increased risk of crash. However, that risk is significantly lower than the risk at the current Criminal Code legal limit, which is 80 milligrams per cent. There was disagreement on the instrument that should be used to address the collision risk at the 50 milligrams per cent level with some advocating the use of Criminal Code provisions and others advocating the use of provincial traffic laws.

The Minister of Justice indicated in a meeting with representatives of Mothers Against Drunk Driving held on May 2, 2005 that he had not taken a fixed view on the question of lowering the Criminal Code legal limit from “exceeds 80 milligrams of alcohol” to “exceeds 50 milligrams of alcohol”. He is willing to consider the views of those on both sides of this question. It is noted that all provinces, except Quebec, using their constitutional authority for licensing and highway safety, already have short provincial driving

license suspensions imposed at the roadside, typically for those who exceed a provincially established limit of 50 milligrams. There is divided opinion on whether lowering the Criminal Code legal limit would reduce significantly alcohol involved fatality rates. There is concern from law enforcement and prosecutors that resources could be thinly stretched if a new cohort of drinking drivers, 51 to 80 milligrams of alcohol, is addressed by the Criminal Code. Others believe that resources required for criminal law enforcement against a new cohort of cases in the 51 to 80 milligrams range would be offset to some degree by some persons in the group of drinking drivers who otherwise would have been “in excess of 80” lowering their consumption as a result of a new legal limit and others who would have been in the 50 to 81 range also lowering their consumption.

In response to (c), The Criminal Code in section 490.1(1) already permits a court to order forfeiture of property used in an indictable offence. This section has been used in an impaired driving case in New Brunswick, *R. v. Waite* (2004) N.B.J. No. 455; NBPC 29. For impaired driving causing death and impaired driving causing bodily harm, the prosecution must proceed by indictment. For impaired driving, for driving “in excess of 80 milligrams of alcohol”, and for refusing to provide breath samples, the prosecution may proceed either by indictment or by summary conviction. There is no present plan to expand the forfeiture provision to include cases where the prosecution has chosen to proceed by summary conviction procedure. Nor is there any present plan to introduce amendments that would force police, as a Criminal Code measure, to impound the vehicle of a suspected impaired driver. Some provinces have chosen to use their constitutional head of legislative authority for “property and civil rights within the province” to enact vehicle impoundment legislation.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, if Question No. 140 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

**The Acting Speaker, (Hon. Jean Augustine):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Government Orders*

[Text]

Question No. 140—**Mr. Martin (Sault Ste. Marie):**

With respect to the Federal Economic Development Initiative in Northern Ontario (FedNor): (a) what was the global budget of FedNor and its programs from 1993 up to and including the present day; (b) how much of FedNor's economic development funding and other funding it administers went to projects and initiatives in Northern Ontario from 1993 up to and including the present day; (c) how does FedNor define the boundaries of Northern Ontario and has this definition changed since 1993; (d) how many jobs were directly created in Northern Ontario, as well as other regions, by FedNor programs and other programs it administers from 1993 up to and including the present day; and (e) what is the complete list (by location) of all full-time employees and equivalents working for FedNor?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Madam Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE**

## DEVILS LAKE DIVERSION PROJECT

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** The Speaker has received a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul. I invite the hon. member to state her request.

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 52, I seek leave to move a motion for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing North Dakota's intention to proceed with the Devils Lake diversion.

The member for Selkirk—Interlake, the whole Manitoba caucus, and the people of Manitoba are very concerned about this issue. It is feared that this diversion will have significant adverse environmental ramifications for water in Lake Winnipeg, which is already compromised with troubles of its own, the Red River and the Hudson's Bay watershed.

The Canadian government has claimed that an agreement has been reached which would delay the opening of the diversion. In fact, the real reason for the delay is because of wet weather and the high water levels of the Red River.

Madam Speaker, I know you will take this under advisement and I look forward to your reply.

• (1140)

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** I thank the hon. member. The Speaker has asked me to convey to you that this request will be taken under advisement. He will return to the House later today to render his decision.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MINISTER OF FINANCE TO MAKE CERTAIN PAYMENTS**

The House resumed from June 20 consideration of Bill C-48, An Act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Central Nova, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to take part in the debate that really boils down to what could only be described as a prop up NDP add-on budget to the Minister of Finance's original plans which included none of the back of the napkin spending spree that is outlined in this particular document.

The legislation was not dreamed up in the staid boardrooms of the finance department. It was cooked up in a hotel room between the Prime Minister and the leader of the NDP, high on his own new found power as a king maker.

In contrast, my colleague, the member of Parliament for Medicine Hat, has presented Canadians with an eloquently outlined and hopeful vision of how the Conservative Party would move Canada's finances forward. It would include a competitive and productive effort to bring Canada forward, striving for national potential with an invigorated, motivated youth who would have a place to work and participate in the economy, and having programs that were compassionate, forward looking and focussed on prosperity. As my colleague from Medicine Hat has said many times, a prosperous nation is a country that can generate wealth that can then be a generous nation.

We want to provide citizens with a better quality of life and Canadians should look to their government to be able to help them in that regard, to find a job anywhere in the country, and find a job in their home town should they stay and be with their families. What is more fundamental than being with your loved ones?

We want every young Canadian to have the ability to go to university without graduating with a huge debt that is the equivalent of a mortgage. We should be the most educated and most forward looking intellectual country in the world. We have the capacity to achieve that goal.

We want Canadians to be able to start a business if they want, to prosper in their communities, and to participate fully in the economy. Canadians want to succeed and Conservatives want to help them do just that because success should be celebrated. Holding Canadians back is what is happening under the current regime. It is holding Canadians back because of repressive and regressive tax structures. There are punishing payroll taxes. Having the basic personal exemption raised would remove many Canadians from the tax rolls altogether.

*Government Orders*

We want people to have quality health care. We want Canadians to have the assurances that they will be comfortable and taken care of in their retirement. Nobody is more responsible for the abysmal failure of our health care system than the current Prime Minister. In his capacity as finance minister, he presided over the country's finances for over 10 years, was responsible for brutal cuts that drastically led to the deterioration of health care in Canada.

Canadians want to have the ability to work within this current process. They want to work under the Canada Health Act but they clearly need to move in a direction of innovation. There clearly has to be greater input from the health care providers, the provinces and from those on the front lines of health care delivery.

We want to ensure that the tax structure is fair. Tax relief is very much about improving competition, improving the job market, and improving the ability of companies to employ thousands of Canadians. That was a priority because it appeared in the first budget, but this add-on budget very much neglects that element of the economy. We have too many hardworking, overtaxed Canadians who again are being held back.

Bill C-48 is but one page. It contains three clauses. It would spend \$4.6 billion without any plan or detail. It would be an abysmal and irresponsible free-for-all spending orgy, like the sponsorship program, the long gun registry, and like the irresponsible and unaccountable spending in the HRDC department.

Bill C-48 is not a firm commitment. It will not even take effect for a year and a half if, I am quick to add, there is a surplus. It is a pie in the sky throne speech promissory note that will not take effect for at least a year and a half. The NDP clearly tried to exact as much as it possibly could from the government in its negotiations to prop it up. The NDP budget is something that will promote irresponsible spending without a plan.

● (1145)

Conservatives are behind the goals presented in the bill. We are behind better education, cleaning up our environment and ensuring adequate housing. We support helping poor nations as part of our commitment to the betterment of the global village. In terms of foreign aid as a percentage of our GDP, that is part of our platform for the coming election.

Let us not forget that it was a Conservative prime minister who was recently voted the greenest prime minister ever in the history of Canada by the Sierra Club and Elizabeth May.

As I said before, what we are opposed to is spending without a plan. This is what led to the problems we have seen in many of the programs that have gone out of control. We oppose raising expectations of individuals who assume naturally that a government would not make these commitments without having a concrete plan behind it.

Bill C-48 is a case in point. It is costly, insubstantial and it is a throwaway commitment that likely will never be met. The promises contained in the bill will only happen if there is a surplus.

Like the mythical story of *Jack and the Magic Beans*, I think the NDP is left with nothing more than a handful of beans, anything but a concrete commitment in terms of budgetary items.

Is there any possibility that the surplus will not be there and not be adequate to cover these expenditures? Well, time will tell. We are living in volatile times and the economy can take downturns, as we have seen, God forbid. We know the Liberals cannot resist this type of spending though. It burns holes in their pockets.

Since 1999-2000, program spending has gone from \$109.6 billion to \$158.1 billion, an increase of 44.3%. In contrast, the growth in our economy has been 31.6%, a compound annual growth rate of 5.6%. The economy is not keeping pace with the government's spending practices.

I spoke earlier about the tax implications. Trade is also a big implication. The dollar and the debt to GDP ratio and the interest on our debt that remains so high. The Liberals are dealing away their problems. They are throwing money at problems hoping they will go away. That is the case with health care, with law and order and with our military. This type of approach is not in the best interests of Canadians. It is not in keeping with fiscal management. It is not in keeping with accountability in this place.

The Conservative Party has a responsibility to rigorously examine these spending practices, and that is what we are doing. Despite the massive funding that is committed in Bill C-48, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness told my colleague from Yorkton—Melville that in 2004 the Canada Firearms Centre lost track of at least 46,000 licensed gun owners. This could have drastic consequences for police officers responding to a call where they believe no gun is present.

This is the type of inefficiency and waste in these types of programs that have ballooned in its spending and they do not work in the best interests of Canadians and take money away from other priority areas where it would have a more profound impact. It is about priorities.

With respect to national unity, let us take the sponsorship program where someone paid commissions to Liberal friendly ad agencies to promote unity. It was done through such means as putting up flags and banners but the money was then funnelled back to the Liberal Party through the sponsorship program. Well, as the former prime minister said, what is a few million when it comes to saving the country? How delusional and disingenuous.

This network of kickbacks, of money laundering and now the cover-up leaves Canadians with a very sordid image of government spending. However it is the Liberal Party. It is not Quebec and it is not all bureaucrats. It is the systemic corruption that runs through the Liberal Party that spawned the sponsorship scandal. It was a taxpayer funded program that was going for partisan purposes, mainly in the province of Quebec.

Let us just imagine the taxpayer funded lawyers working for the Department of Justice arguing that the current and former prime ministers should be completely exonerated of all responsibility for this disastrous program that is under criminal investigation. What happened to the mantra of "let Mr. Justice Gomery do his work?" That of course is a thing of the past when it comes to the partisan interests forwarded by our current Prime Minister. How disingenuous.

*Government Orders*

Clause 2 of Bill C-48 also deals with money for public transit and an energy retrofit program for low income housing. It talks about enhancing access to post-secondary education to benefit, among others, aboriginal Canadians. It talks about affordable housing and increased foreign aid. Those are all laudable goals, but again, no plan and many of them fall within provincial jurisdiction.

• (1150)

Where is the accountability? How will we ensure that the expenditures of this money are actually committed to? The lack of a plan, the expected results and the lack of details of delivery characterize the minority government. It is similar to the institutional day care plan that was promised by the government without any details. It does not fit the diversity of the country.

Bill C-48 would authorize the establishment of an absolutely out of control type of spending that the Conservative Party cannot support, which is why moved amendments that would have improved the process. Canadians deserve better than blank cheques. In its desperate attempts to cling to power, the government appears willing to do just about anything. Canadians need a blueprint for the future, and that is what the Conservative Party would provide.

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to ask the very distinguished member for Central Nova a couple of questions about agriculture and what impact Bill C-48 would have on it.

There is not a word about agriculture in Bill C-48. It has not been mentioned at a time when farmers are hurting the most. In the province of Nova Scotia, in which the member and I share ridings, farmers are the part of our society who are hurting the most and facing the most challenges. Some of them are faced with losing their farms, losing their incomes, losing their profession and losing their homes, and yet there is not a word in Bill C-48 about agriculture.

To make it worse, it has been announced that the Nappan Experimental Farm in my area, which farmers depend on for science and research on our unique soils and terrain, et cetera, will be closed. We have also learned that the government is planning to close the experimental farm in Kentville.

I wonder if the member could speak a bit to that and tell us what he thinks should be in Bill C-48 to help farmers and to help agriculture.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Madam Speaker, my colleague has worked very hard on this particular issue and, as usual, his diligence has paid off in that much of his digging has uncovered the government's secret plan to close many of these experimental research farms which do, as he said, provide vital research and vital information to farmers who are combating many challenging times in terms of plague and viruses affecting animals. We have seen the effects that can result from terrible afflictions, such as BSE, and the impact they have on the entire agriculture sector. However it goes beyond that. All resource sectors were ignored in this particular add on budget on the part of the NDP and the Liberals.

Agriculture, a vital sector of our economy that provides food and that provides so much in terms of employment, lifestyle and a basic way of life for Canadians, has been completely ignored in the priorities set out in Bill C-48.

In regard to the member's question, the government and the minister from the area have been completely disingenuous in suggesting that closing the experimental farm in Kentville was just an off the cuff suggestion from the department. This was a concrete plan to withdraw funding and to eventually close the research station in Kentville, just as my colleague has seen in his own riding with the Nappan Experimental Farm. Commitments were made, then commitments were withdrawn and that facility is slated to close. That is very disingenuous to Canadians and the agriculture sector that relies heavily on that facility for the important research that it needs.

It is like withdrawing money from education or health care. Agriculture is a stable part of the economy of Nova Scotia as it is throughout the country. However the government seems to be blind in its misspent priorities and its complete adherence to the one priority, which is to cling to power at all costs. The Liberals will make whatever deal they have to make with the NDP or others to cling to power at all costs in order to preserve a hold over the partisanship that allows them to make appointments and control the industries and the ministries.

The government is out of step with Canadians, out of step in its priorities and is certainly letting Canadians down, particularly in our area when it withdraws funding from important research centres like the one my colleague has mentioned.

• (1155)

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, let us recall that Bill C-48 comes at the expense of tax relief for corporations such as Ford, Chrysler and General Motors.

In my community of Windsor, Ontario, in the first quarter of 2005 we are down 6,000 jobs and unemployment is up to 9.4%. Many of these jobs were in the auto parts sector that supply our major OEMs, such as Ford, General Motors and DaimlerChrysler. The tax relief for these corporations is very important to preserve jobs here in Canada, high paying jobs that support a quality of life through charitable giving and tax dollars.

Would my hon. colleague comment on why the NDP is abandoning auto workers at this particular time by getting rid of corporate tax cuts that would have helped Ford, Chrysler and General Motors stay in Canada?

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Madam Speaker, it seems inconceivable to me that the NDP would be advocating such an approach because, as he said, of the importance of the jobs and the importance to the community for individuals who are working in unions and, in particular, in the auto sector. They need that company to thrive and prosper. If the company does well, then the employees do well. It seems very much out of step with reality.

*Government Orders*

What is most difficult to comprehend is that the Minister of Finance himself was so clearly committed to this in the original budget and then he swallowed himself whole. Ralph the wonder invisible dog swallowed himself whole and committed to letting the NDP set the stage for the budget which did away with the tax cuts that would have helped the auto industry, my colleague's constituents included, and instead abandoned all principle to cling to power. That is what it was about.

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in debate on Bill C-48 to talk about the Conservative Party of Canada and about me as a Conservative member of Parliament and a new member of Parliament, and how we are here to build a better Canada. I have a tangible investment in future generations. I have four kids. My oldest turned eight only three days ago.

We are interested in building a better Canada with an improved quality of life within a better fiscal arrangement, not with boondoggle mismanagement the way things have been done for 12 years on that side of the House, and not with sponsorship scandals where hard-earned tax dollars are skimmed to fund Liberal Party election campaigns in Quebec. Neither do we want deals on the back of a napkin, those sorts of poor fiscal arrangements.

What we are looking for in the Conservative Party of Canada is lowering taxes to increase freedom for families so they can pursue priorities in their lives, so they can put their kids into soccer classes, so they can do the things they want to enjoy life. We stand for paying off the debt—

**An hon. member:** What about housing? What about education? You're talking about soccer practice?

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** There is incivility on that side of the House. That is quite the hypocrisy coming from the New Democrats.

We want to pay off debt so we can relieve generations to come of crippling bills. The New Democrats want to send a major \$500 billion bill to my children and my children's children rather than paying off the national debt.

We want an arrangement whereby we have real jobs here in Canada, not overseas in China. We in the Conservative Party of Canada are fighting for auto workers, for family farmers and for others who deserve to work here in Canada.

Bill C-48 is a wolf in sheep's clothing. The New Democrats are peddling paradise while they are flouting the open and transparent budgetary processes of the House. They are peddling paradise using deceptive reasoning.

I want to probe a couple of the arguments that the NDP has been putting forth in favour of Bill C-48. The first is that the New Democrats are simply taking the tax cuts for corporations like Ford, General Motors and Chrysler and reallocating them to other areas, to what they call their priorities. This is not actually true. This is not a simple reallocation within the same fiscal year.

Bill C-43 offers corporate tax relief. It is a guaranteed budget expenditure, so it is accounted for in a particular year's fiscal arrangement. Bill C-48, the NDP's budget wish list, is a conditional expenditure that triggers only beyond a \$2 billion surplus. It does so no sooner than 18 months from now.

A national crisis could emerge. There would go the surplus and the NDP's Bill C-48. We could have downturns in the economy, which could eat up that fiscal room. We could have further provincial demands that need to be satisfied.

Corporations like General Motors, Chrysler and Ford need guaranteed relief to keep jobs here in Canada. They need to know that a guaranteed expenditure is coming to help them so they can plan to stay here and keep jobs in Canada. The NDP is promising, with smoke and mirrors, something that may not even come true.

The NDP will argue that there is plenty of fiscal room and says not to worry about it. The NDP also wants a child care system that would cost \$10 billion a year more than the Liberals are currently funding in Bill C-43. That will mean a disappearance of any fiscal room and more. That will necessitate increased taxes, and there may be program cuts from health care and education in order to reallocate money to this national day care.

Or there may be deficit spending. We had plenty of that in Ontario. We remember Bob Rae. We certainly remember the \$11 billion deficits that were run in the province. We remember Rae days, on which people could not visit their doctor because the doctor's office was closed that day. Why? There was no money for the doctor to get paid that day. That is what we remember about New Democratic fiscal prudence, or what they like to call fiscal prudence.

This means that maybe child care is on the mantel, to be chopped off. Maybe child care will not be pursued. Where are the dollars going to come from? Will they go to fund Bill C-48? Will they go to fund national day care? They cannot do both with the same fiscal surplus.

*Government Orders*

●(1200)

Let us look back in time. We have had \$90 billion in unplanned surpluses since 1997. The actual surpluses were astoundingly higher, but the Liberal government made an art of end of the year, empty the cupboard, politically driven spending sprees to shrink surpluses so Canadians would not be so alarmed by their size.

I see a train wreck coming for the New Democrats, who actually think they may get something with Bill C-48. They are not likely going to see a dime go to funding their priorities when their Liberal cousins empty the cupboard by year's end. They have been duped. Either that or they are trying to dupe Canadians into believing that something will be there. They know it will not be. The NDP has been keeping the Liberals afloat and the NDP gets nothing. That is a raw deal and those members do not even see it coming.

Let us talk about corporate tax cuts for a moment. The NDP has been claiming that corporate tax cuts simply benefit the rich while claiming that New Democrats are helping regular Canadians.

First, the Conservative Party believes in tax relief, not simply tax cuts. Canadian families, along with corporations having trouble competing because of the high dollar and other reasons, need relief now, and not just a simple one time tax cut. They need sustained relief in taxation. Real people struggle every week to make ends meet. They deserve tax relief.

Second, tax relief for corporations actually benefits Canadians in the workforce. I am Parliament's first auto worker. Let us talk about auto workers for a moment. Having our dollar going up in Canada is hurting our exports. Canadian auto companies' productivity is being hurt. Their ability to compete globally from here in Ontario is being hurt.

Massive layoffs have begun in the United States. We have seen layoffs in my community of Windsor and in the communities in the riding of Essex. We have seen them across Ontario. This is happening not just with Ford, Chrysler and General Motors, but with our parts makers and parts suppliers and our tool, mould and die sector, which has had a 38% attrition rate in Essex county in the last decade under the Liberal watch. Those jobs have gone to foreign labour markets such as China and the United States.

Buzz Hargrove, a friend of the New Democrats, the one who actually helped them cut this backroom deal, says that these layoffs are coming to Canada soon with the trickle-down from the 25,000 layoffs that GM has announced in the United States. The NDP wants to get rid of tax relief for Ford, General Motors and DaimlerChrysler right at a time when they are losing the ability to keep auto workers employed here in Ontario. Those are Canadian families at risk of losing their jobs right at a time when that party, which says it likes to fight for auto workers, is getting rid of that tax relief.

Every auto job supports six other jobs. Five hundred thousand regular Canadians lose their jobs when auto jobs head to cheaper foreign labour markets like China or to lower tax jurisdictions such as Georgia, Alabama or South Carolina.

No, tax relief benefits real Canadians on main streets, not just in urban centres but in rural towns, villages and hamlets. The NDP just does not get it. It is no wonder that the first auto worker in

Parliament elected by regular Canadians is a Conservative from Essex and is not from the NDP, the CCF, the Liberals or anybody else.

●(1205)

**Mr. Jeremy Harrison:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This is a very important speech that the hon. member is giving. I do not believe that we have a quorum. I ask for a quorum call.

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I believe there is quorum.

On another point of order, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Hon. Paddy Torsney:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite keeps talking about being the first auto worker elected to Parliament. Of course the first auto worker who was elected to this House was Janko Peric, who was the member for Cambridge and a Liberal member. I think the member should get the record straight on that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary. I do not think that is a point of order, but maybe something can be raised in questions or comments or in debate.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** Mr. Speaker, let me just end my remarks with the NDP logic and what it looks like. That logic says to get rid of tax relief for auto companies, to hurt the quality of life for Canadians by passing Bill C-48, and to hope there is enough money left over after Liberal year end spending sprees to try to replace the quality of life the NDP hurt in the first place.

It is no wonder that the NDP has never formed a government in Canada. It is not likely to do so. We all remember Bob Rae. Canadians will come to their senses, too, when it comes time for the next election.

To sum up, Bill C-48 is a bad deal cut on the back of a napkin. That is not sound fiscal management. It defies the budgetary processes of the House for thorough prebudget hearings and everything else. A couple of people met in a hotel room to prop up a government; this is how they do fiscal management here in Canada. It is a bad deal. I look forward to voting against it.

●(1210)

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to some of this and it was a little hard to take, particularly on the factual side.



*Government Orders*

The hon. member is talking about the state of the Canadian economy. I have been around here a few years. I remember Conservative years. I remember the economy having an unemployment rate that was larger than the Prime Minister's shoe size, only by a fraction. I remember the period of time when the interest rates were about the same size.

I remember that not in one single budget in eight years—and I will not say that they did not balance because Conservatives never can balance a budget and we all know that—could they live with their own forecasts of the deficit they said they were going to have. Those are the years we remember.

Now we have 6.8% unemployment. We have booming sectors of the Canadian economy. We have jobs being created right across the nation. We have an excellent budget, the seventh consecutive balanced budget. We have a budget that has been improved on by this bill and I will be the first to admit that.

**An hon. member:** Eighth.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Eighth? I am sorry. It is the eighth consecutive balanced budget. I was underestimating how good we are.

We have this budget bill, Bill C-48, which will assist those who are less well off in our society.

The hon. member across has said, in a kind of Hobbesian state of nature way of looking at things, to just reduce taxes and let people fend for themselves, presumably where life will be brutish and short, as Thomas Hobbes used to say, and that will fix everything.

I do not agree with that way of looking at it and I do not believe Canadians do either. We are here for the greater good as well as ourselves individually.

**An hon. member:** Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** I know that Thomas Hobbes was an English philosopher. I have quoted him extensively in the past.

The hon. member across will know that what he was saying about the state of the human mind when people do not look out for the greater good can happen. I happen to think that there is room in our society to make things better by pooling the resources of this society for the greater good.

I believe that this is the right way of looking at things. We have examples in some provincial jurisdictions, in Quebec for instance, with the day care system. I think that has been a good experience in that province. We are now enabling other provinces to do the same thing. What is wrong with that?

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** Mr. Speaker, I may be young at 34 but I remember the red book in 1993 and the election campaign that year. The Liberals came to power. Nobody was talking about tax relief, paying down the debt, or any of those types of things. In fact, the red book was a recipe for handing over one's chequebook. There was more and more spending.

But surprise, there was a protest party out west, one of the legacy parties of this Conservative Party. It elected a surprising number of members of Parliament. They came to Ottawa and pushed for things

such as eliminating the deficit, zero in three, I think it was back then. There were some surprising ideas that interestingly enough were not in the red book.

Where did the current conditions for today's economy come from? They did not come from ideas from that bench. They came from the official opposition. They came from the Conservative Party's fighting to put the fiscal house in order.

Bill C-48 on the other hand, to get back to the debate at hand, is a recipe for returning to deficits. Combine this with some of the Liberals' other \$26 billion in spending promises since the Prime Minister showed up on national television to beg for his political life. They have a \$10 billion per year unfunded liability for a national day care system. Put this all together and it is a recipe for higher taxes, program cuts or borrowing the money to pay for them. That is fiscal irresponsibility.

The Liberals have allowed the NDP in because the government needed to be propped up. This is the way the Liberals do it. It is a recipe for deficit spending. It is irresponsible and I look forward to opposing it.

• (1215)

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this morning we are here discussing important policy issues in Bill C-48. Our party has been sharply critical of this bill. As we have seen in the past, the Liberals' approach to spending without a plan is a recipe for disaster. I think that goes without saying. It goes without saying when we manage our households and it goes without saying when managing the economy of the country. It is widely accepted that the only reason the Liberals agreed to this bill was to save their political skin. There has been much made of that in the last day or so and I am sure there will be much made of it in the days to come.

All that being said, I want to use my time this morning to lay out a larger concern. I will be more specific in my concern in dealing with the Liberal approach to the economy. I want to talk in particular about the government's approach to managing the fishery. This is an important budget item. It is one which I think if the government was going to make an addition to its budget, it is an issue that the Liberals should have addressed.

I want to talk about the government's failure to include in its budget adequate resources to deal with the fishery on the Fraser River. The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans has done a couple of excellent reports on this issue in the last couple of years. It has given the government good advice which has been ignored. The committee has spoken of the problems that are being faced with the harvest on the Fraser River this year, in particular the restrictions that will be put on the harvest of Fraser River sockeye because of concerns for the sockeye coming into Cultus Lake.

The 2005 sockeye fishery on the Fraser River should be a boon to the economy of British Columbia. There are about 12 million sockeye expected to return to the river, compared to about five million that came back last year. The harvest should have been substantial.

*Government Orders*

In fact, if we look back at the harvest rates on this particular run in the 1990s, there was a commercial harvest of around eight million fish on the Fraser River. This year the projection is a harvest of only 1.4 million sockeye. This is only a modest increase over the 1.3 million harvested last year, with a return of less than half the size.

The question is why. Again, it is government inaction on a very important issue. The government has a constitutional obligation to protect wild fish and their habitat. It should be an integral part of the government's budget, yet in this particular instance the government is ignoring the problems.

Cultus Lake sockeye have a very serious problem when it comes to survival. There is no question about that. The survival of these fish is not one that stems from overharvesting by the commercial or sports fishermen, or in fact by native fishermen. The problem comes from the lake itself and problems within the lake.

For example, there is a problem with northern pikeminnows in that lake. In an October 2004 document that I received under access to information, the department makes it very clear when it talks about predator removal. The department says:

Adult northern pikeminnows are abundant in Cultus Lake and are predators of salmon fry. The removal of adult pikeminnows from Cultus Lake has been conducted on two separate occasions in the past. An evaluation of this previous work indicates that the removal of predators can increase survival of sockeye fry.

● (1220)

We know that survival of these fish can occur if we deal with the predator problem. The question is why are we not? Improvement is significant. It is estimated that there are about 40,000 northern pikeminnows in the lake that eat the sockeye fry. It is estimated that each sockeye that returns to Cultus Lake lays about 3,500 eggs. After the eggs hatch the following spring, the fish will spend a year in the lake. That is the time that the northern pike do great damage to the Cultus run.

It is suggested that if we reduce the pikeminnow population by 80%, it would give a jump start on the Cultus Lake sockeye run because the smolts from the 350 to 500 fish that do return would have a far greater chance of survival. There are about 425 sockeye with 3,500 eggs each. If the survival rate was increased by only 1%, it would mean an additional 14,875 sockeye would survive. That is exponentially larger than the 80 fish or so that the department hopes to get back to the lake by almost shutting down the sockeye fishery in the Fraser River this year.

Shutting that fishery down is going to mean a loss to the economy of British Columbia up to probably \$75 million. The question is, why is the government not taking some action? Why are there not budget considerations given to removing these predators from the lake?

The fishing industry has proposed that it would go into the lake and seine these northern pike. It has been done before, as was mentioned in the government document that I quoted from. It has been done before very effectively. The only reason it was not continued was that the government balked at spending \$15,000 in wages for the fishermen who were doing it. For \$15,000 in wages it said it was not going to continue the program and yet the cost to the British Columbia economy is in the tens of millions of dollars.

That is the kind of planning that the government undertakes. That is why I think we should all be concerned about it. There are other problems on the lake as well. There is an Asian milfoil problem. The government, again in the October 2004 document that I received under access to information, talked about it:

Habitat restoration work involves the removal of Eurasian Watermilfoil (a common yarrow plant that provides habitat for sockeye predators) in Cultus Lake. Milfoil removal has been conducted in the past, mainly as a control for "exotic weeds". Milfoil is an invasive species and its removal would have a dual benefit: expose juvenile pikeminnows to predation by adult pikeminnows and to clear milfoil from prime salmon spawning habitat.

Again, there is a program that the government should be undertaking to save these fish. As well, Cultus Lake is a very busy lake. It is within an hour and a half or two hour drive of downtown Vancouver. With a population of a couple of million, an awful lot of those folks will spend a good part of a day or days in the summer enjoying Cultus Lake. There is heavy recreational boater use. There are summer vacation homes and permanent residences. Each of these factors adds to the level of pollutants in the lake and makes it more difficult for the fish to survive.

When we talk about the budget and the additions that the government put in Bill C-48, it is all very well and good. Some of the additions are meant to help people who are not in a position to help themselves, and yet that is exactly what I am talking about. The expenditure of a few dollars would be of great help to the fishermen in British Columbia.

There is one last item that I want to mention about the management of the fishery. It has to do with the snow crab quota for fishermen in eastern Nova Scotia.

● (1225)

I talked last night with Josephine Kennedy, a snow crab representative. She told me that the government was to cut the quota for snow crab by about 60%, from 16,000 pounds. This will have a huge impact on the economy. All of this without any consultation.

Whether it is budget implementation or whether it is management of the fishery, these are things on which the government falls down. The minister refused to talk to those folks about the issue. The government has refused to have an appropriate discussion with fishermen on Cultus Lake. All of that is hurtful.

I hope that the government will take some action to address these issues.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated my hon. friend's comments, particularly with respect to the fishery. One of the things I enjoy about the House of Commons is the fact that we gather here from all parts of Canada to learn and to study together.

I am trying to think which province is farther away from the ocean, but I believe my province of Saskatchewan is the most removed. It was an education for me to listen to the member, especially when he talked about predatory fish in Cultus Lake. I did not totally understand where this fish came from or all the details about it.

*Government Orders*

I hope the hon. member can enlighten a prairie boy, someone who is more used to beef than to fish, on the predator fish. From where does it come? Is it naturally occurring or is it part of some government transfer program? Perhaps all members could listen and learn something from his expertise.

**Mr. John Cummins:** Mr. Speaker, my friend's question is important. From where did these predator fish in Cultus Lake come? Cultus Lake is one of several lakes in the area that flow into the Fraser River. This pike minnow does not exist in Harrison Lake, which I believe Mr. Speaker is in your riding, or in Pitt Lake. From where did the fish come. Did someone dump an aquarium? Was it part of some provincial or federal transfer program to enhance sport fishing? No one really knows. Those kinds of answers are necessary.

The minister made an announcement a few day ago. When he makes announcements about British Columbia fisheries, he does not go to British Columbia to do it. He does it here at a press conference in Ottawa. It saves the taxpayers travel money, but more important, the minister does not have to stare down the people who are most concerned about this, the people who have an interest in fisheries in British Columbia. He does this by way of teleconference from Ottawa.

In the recent teleconference he talked about spending \$5.2 million to strengthen enforcement, implement new catch monitoring programs and to improve scientific research. The type of research being done is probably more politically motivated than it is motivated by a real desire to understand the environment in which these fish operate and live. Particularly in the issue of Cultus Lake, I am unaware of any money being directed to that fishery. The department is remiss in conducting base level research on a variety of issues whether it be the pike minnow in Cultus Lake or the effects of high water temperatures on returning sockeye. The base level research really is not done.

I was talking the other day with a fellow who was doing some research for the Sierra Club. I pointed out to him the problem that was experienced from the set net fishing in the Fraser Canyon. This is an ongoing problem. It is a problem that is recognized throughout the fishing community. I have had conversations with members of the Native Brotherhood, which is the oldest commercial fishing organization for native people in British Columbia. I think it is about 75 years old. I have talked with the Chilcotin Indians just west of Williams Lake in the central and coastal areas of British Columbia. They are concerned about the set nets in the Fraser Canyon.

The fish, which are navigating through the canyon, are under huge stress, not just from the fast flowing water but at from high temperatures as well. However, they manage to navigate through the canyon by hugging the canyon walls and scooting from back eddy to back eddy. The government allows a set net fishery in that canyon which adds to the stress of these fish. Some research has been done by other folks, independent of government, who demonstrated how hard that was on the fish, but no one is doing anything about it. Government is not doing the kind of research that is necessary to protect our fisheries resource.

I do not see it in this budget. It is important for the government get on track and start to address some of its core responsibilities. One of those is the protection of wild fish and their habitat.

● (1230)

**Mr. Andrew Scheer:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I heard my hon. colleague speak before and I think we should have more members in the House to hear him give his speech. I do not think we have quorum right now.

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

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** We have quorum. Resuming debate the hon. member for Prince Albert.

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to look at this with a chronological approach. Back in Saskatchewan, I observed the goings on in Ontario in the early 1990s with the Bob Rae government. From my recollection of that government and what I read about it, there was massive unemployment during that period. By the time he left office, a million people were on welfare, more people than in the entire province of Saskatchewan. Taxes were very high and fiscal imbalances were really out of whack, something unbelievable in Ontario.

I remember seeing a sign in Buffalo. The Buffalo chamber of commerce put up a huge sign naming Premier Bob Rae as its man of the year. He was the man of the year for Buffalo because he had driven so much investment and business out of Ontario and into Buffalo that it thought it should acknowledge the benefit of NDP socialistic policies in Ontario.

Fortunately, in 1995 the people of Ontario put that party out of existence. It had caused so much damage in the province that for a few elections afterward not a single NDP member was elected to the federal Parliament. It was that bad. That is the NDP record with spending when it gets its hands on power.

The Conservative Party opposes this bill because we have seen what Bob Rae type governments have done to the economy and how it sets back the nation. We do not like to see that happen.

From a Saskatchewan standpoint, I have to oppose the budget because it does not address BSE issues. It does not address the forestry problems. A forestry sector in Saskatchewan is hurting very badly for a whole host of reasons. It does not help the grain producers who have been hit by drought, frost and income problems. It is unbelievable. The farmers in Saskatchewan are looking at a net income situation that is massive this year, unparalleled in the province's history.

Then there is the equalization formula. Of all provinces, the province that I think is most unfairly dealt with under the equalization formula is Saskatchewan. Every elected official, including the premier of the province, knows this. We are all united in an effort to get this thing changed, except for one, the Minister of Finance. I have to remind myself to keep mentioning that point.

None of these things are addressed in this budget. Rural communities in Saskatchewan are reeling from these sorts of problems, but not one step has been taken in this deal to address those issues.

*Government Orders*

Let me go back to the vote on the first budget bill. Our party had a lot of concerns about the budget. There may have been some good things in the it but there were a lot of negatives. We respected what people were saying across the country, which was to let Parliament work. Canadians did not want an election so we held our noses and abstained on that.

The leader of the New Democrats and his 18 New Democrat members voted against that budget and pointed fingers toward the Conservatives and said, "How dare you prop up this corrupt, incompetent Liberal government". There was not one announcement in the budget for agriculture. New Democrats sent out ten percenters and news releases to Conservative ridings condemning the Conservatives for abstaining on the first budget. Lo and behold, a few months later, here we are.

Let us review another aspect of this whole thing. It is quite clear that history will show that this is one of the most desperate Prime Minister's in Canadian history. He goes from one crisis to another and will do just about anything to stay in power. That is how history will judge the Prime Minister.

• (1235)

Back in that period of time, the Prime Minister, through Tim Murphy and other people in his office, started trolling for opposition members of Parliament to prop up and support his government. They trolled and trolled. They caught one fish, a little fish in a big pond, but they did catch it and get it on the other side. They tried like the dickens to get more people. However, at the same time, three of the Prime Minister's own people left his ship. So much for his leadership.

Lo and behold, the Prime Minister had a meeting with the leader of the NDP in a five star hotel in Toronto. I am sure there was champagne. They had their luncheon and their meeting and so on, and they signed themselves a deal. It was an unholy arrangement, I would say. It solemnized something that I am not exactly sure would receive blessings from any divinity, but they did have Father Buzz there. Father Buzz Hargrove gave it his seal of approval.

With that trolling on that date, that desperate Prime Minister really hit pay dirt. He got 19 New Democrats to join his incompetent and corrupt administration. They were caught hook, line and sinker on that day. They bit big time. With all the trolling that carried on, the Liberals got one person from the Conservatives, but on that day they got 19 New Democrats that just went right into bed with them and solemnized this unholy arrangement.

What is this great Liberal-NDP budget? I have it here. If we throw off the front page, it is just legalese. Paragraphs one and three are legalese. The bill is one-quarter of a page long. What does it say? I will put this from a Saskatchewan standpoint. I am trying to find out how the farmers in Saskatchewan and the equalization issues and so on are addressed by any of these points. Maybe I missed something and the NDP members can point out where I am wrong.

For the environment, including public transit and the energy efficient retrofit program for low income housing, there is an amount not exceeding \$900 million. I do not see anything about farming there. I do not see anything about BSE. I do not see anything about forestry and I do not see anything about equalization.

The second point deals with training programs and enhanced access to post-secondary education to benefit, among others, aboriginal Canadians, in an amount not exceeding \$1.5 billion. Yet again, I do not see anything for agriculture. I do not see anything about equalization. I do not see anything for tax relief for small business people in Saskatchewan.

The third point deals with affordable housing, including housing for aboriginal Canadians, in an amount not exceeding \$1.6 billion; and the fourth point deals with foreign aid in an amount not exceeding \$500 million.

I do not want to be interpreted as being meanspirited in the area of foreign aid, but quite literally, I have communities in my riding in Saskatchewan that are reeling big time. We have a government in this country that is deaf and blind to the problems in those communities. We need some foreign aid in our own country as well because we have some big time problems in different parts of the country.

There is a lot I can say about this unholy arrangement between the NDP and the Liberals, but it still boils down to the fact that there is nothing really of any substance for the people of Saskatchewan. There is nothing for grain producers, nothing for BSE, nothing in the way of equalization, and nothing for a very troubled forestry industry. There must have been too much smog in Toronto that day and the leader of the NDP could not see Saskatchewan when he made his one-quarter page deal with the Liberals, but he did join that corrupt and incompetent Liberal administration when he signed that deal, and so did the other 18 members of the NDP.

• (1240)

**Hon. Keith Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians listening to the diatribe across the way would be aghast at what they heard. Most Canadians are not really interested in the silly hijinks that often occur in this place.

What do they care about? They care about having a job. They care about health care when they get sick. They care about education for their children. They care about ensuring that we have a vibrant private sector that would enable us to create jobs for them. They care about social programs that would be there in perpetuity. They care about the aged to ensure that they are going to have care when they get older. They care about their pensions being there for a long period of time. They care about their environment. They care about their cities.

Those are the things that Canadians care about. Those are the things that we have been seized with. Those are the things that are in our budget that we released. We put infrastructure money for cities. We put money in to ensure that kids have a headstart and that their basic needs are cared for, not to supplant parents but to work with them to ensure kids have the best chance possible. We have ensured that our budgets are balanced. We have a budget that is the eighth consecutive surplus budget.

*Government Orders*

Is it perfect? No, it is not perfect. However, it goes a long way toward addressing many of the concerns Canadians have, in a pragmatic way, in a financially stable way, and in a way that addresses their concerns. No government can do everything that is asked of it, but I would submit that we have gone a long way to addressing many of the concerns of Canadians.

The member mentioned that there is nothing in the budget for Saskatchewan. The member obviously has not read, or understood, what the government has done with respect to its cities agenda. We put money in not only from the gas tax but we have ensured that we have moneys for the GST. GST moneys are going to be removed from municipalities and those moneys can be used to help the infrastructure needs of those communities.

Does the hon. member not acknowledge that Saskatchewan is going to get substantial amounts of moneys from the GST rebate and also money from the cities agenda that we have actually managed to hammer out or are in the process of negotiating with the various provinces? Does he not think that would be a good thing and if he does not, what is his party's plan to deal with the infrastructure needs of cities?

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick:** Mr. Speaker, we presented a motion last year and the member should remember it. I think he was an independent at that time. We recommended that 5¢ go back to the provinces on the condition that it be used for roads, bridges and municipal infrastructure. That was a firm commitment by us. It was a platform issue we had last time.

The member has been here since 1993. This is 12 years later. All of a sudden, the Liberals see the light that there is an imbalance at the municipal level and they need some cash to pay for something if they had some important things. The light finally went on. The leader of the Liberal Party is basically stalled on a page from the Conservative platform on fiscal balance and the municipal infrastructure issue. The Liberals are on that page and it took them 12 years to do it.

I have a point regarding gas tax rebates. Saskatchewan, because of its economy, is getting back its revenues on a per capita basis, but it uses twice as much per capita as any other province in the country. One could almost argue, under this arrangement, that Saskatchewan, whose per capita income is well below Toronto or Vancouver or Montreal, is in fact subsidizing major infrastructure programs in those centres.

If the member opposite thinks that is a fair arrangement, taking from a province with a per capita income of \$19,000 and transferring it to cities where the per capita income is \$55,000, I am afraid I have a serious disagreement with him and I have a problem with his mathematics as well.

• (1245)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Prince Albert mentioned a number of items that were not in the budget. He mentioned forestry, equalization, farming and BSE, and obviously, they were not in Bill C-43 when it came before the House. However, \$4.6 billion in tax cuts for corporations was in that budget, which in essence the Conservatives supported by way of not voting against it. In essence, they were voting for a

budget that did not have farming, BSE, equalization, forestry and a number of items.

We worked out a deal where some additional dollars could help out Canadians with education and affordable housing. My colleague again mentioned and criticized the foreign affairs dollars which were supported by his own colleagues and are still supported by his own colleagues within his party. So they had better get things together because they are starting to sound like the Prime Minister and the finance minister.

If all those things were not in the budget, why did he not vote against the budget and why did his party not make some effort to get that budget changed so that it would reflect the needs of Canadians?

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick:** Mr. Speaker, I find the whole discussion kind of convoluted and hard to figure out. There were some tax cuts for the business sector including small, medium and large size businesses. Part of the deal made with the champagne socialist leader and the Liberal member in that five star hotel was to take away all those tax cuts.

The Minister of Finance was left right out of those negotiations, but he came back to the House after three different budgets were introduced in one week and he is still standing. He is a little bit shorter, but he is still standing I guess. He said he would take the tax cuts out and then put them back through another deal, but the Leader of the NDP said that they must come out. However, here they are still in their unholy alliance despite these acknowledgments. I find that interesting.

I guess the NDP has adopted the Liberal approach which is to take a bunch of money and give it to a few Liberal friends in the corporate and commercial world and make all the other businesses suffer, rather than give everyone the benefit of tax cuts, including small, medium and large size businesses. This way they can all prosper and compete on a level playing field.

The NDP would prefer to give grants to General Motors rather than give General Motors a tax cut so it can get some breathing room. That is the NDP approach.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak to the bill. To give a little history of where I am coming from and what I am speaking to in this bill, I will go back to the original budget bill because, as has been well established, this is budget bill part two.

On the morning right before the finance minister brought forward the bill, I had an S. O. 31 member's statement about what the priorities were for people in my constituency, what the people of my province cared about. I want to revisit that.

In that statement I talked about my good friend, Andrew Duff, a farmer who works on a feedlot in eastern Saskatchewan. I talked about some of his priorities for his family. I want to go through a few of them again.

*Government Orders*

One of his priorities was tax cuts. He is on a farm and makes no money, yet he still pays taxes, some of which admittedly are provincial and municipal, but largely because of the unequal equalization, those taxes are difficult to lower. Other taxes are through his job, such as his EI premiums, which are applied in Saskatchewan. As a farmer he is ineligible for unemployment, so that is nothing more than a payroll tax. Of course there is the fuel tax, the inputs on his fertilizer for his grains and so forth.

One of his priorities was to have a tax cut so that he could afford the farm, something which is being productive and supplying jobs for other people through his purchases in the community.

Another of his priorities was a real and sustainable plan for agriculture. We held our noses the other day when we voted for the other piece of legislation that really did not do anything for agriculture. We did that because of the dire straits of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, a province which has been short-changed repeatedly by the federal government. That province needed help and needed the prosperity from its own natural resources returned to it, as it rightfully should be. We in this party, even though we knew that there were large elements of the larger budget bill that were not good, reached out to help a part of the country receive its rightful due.

There was nothing in that plan for agriculture. There is nothing in this part two of the plan for agriculture. I am not talking about announcements of money, because as has been proven, announcements of money often are not delivered. What is needed is real substance, a real plan to be delivered.

Finally, the third thing my friend and his family would need, and which is true for many young families in rural Saskatchewan, is the child tax credit, something that could help them raise their families. My friend and his wife come from a dairy farm. The children are a part of the farm. They work. They cannot just run to and from town to an organized government day care centre. It is impractical. It costs more for them to drive in, drop the children off and then come back to work. It just cannot be. The only way they are going to get any help is if there is a direct child tax credit given to them. In the original budget and in this new piece of legislation that we are debating, it is not there. The priorities of Canadians from my riding and of Saskatchewan residents in general were not brought forward.

Another reason I am unhappy, displeased and opposed to this legislation is the lack of accountability. This point was brought up, quite succinctly I might say, by some members during the debate last night. A major priority and the main purpose of Parliament, of the people's representatives, is to hold the government to account for the spending of the dollars.

That is what all the battles were about. When we go back into British parliamentary history, in dealing with the problems of the funding, the king would not recall Parliament because he did not like Parliament's views, but he was forced to because Parliament ended up controlling the spending. We have seen the English civil war, various reforms, Gladstone and Disraeli, et cetera, as history has gone forward. Accountability is something of extreme priority that we must hold to.

One thing that is most disturbing about this current piece of legislation that we are debating is there is no plan and no real guidelines. As has been stated, that is true for the previous legislation. That is the justification and rationale used by some members who have been saying during the debate that there has been other inept, ridiculous, poorly thought out legislation which I and my hon. friends in the Conservative Party held our noses and supported, so why not support all future legislation that is poorly thought out and poorly planned?

• (1250)

We are sometimes forced to support things for the greater good. This legislation has absolutely no greater good to it. There is no accountability. The point has been raised over and over again that when we read the substance of the bill, it is very sketchy. There is nothing there.

I remind my hon. friends in the NDP that if they really believe in the deal they got, perhaps they should take a look at past history. Whenever the Liberals have promised something, it has taken anywhere from five to 15 years to deliver that promise.

I remember the great campaign when the Liberals promised to take apart the GST. They promised over and over again to do it. A former member from Hamilton ended up having to resign her seat. In the end the promise that was said over and over again was not delivered.

There must be accountability. It is the primary purpose of Parliament. We look at past follies, and it has been said that a member from Saskatchewan will bring this up every time, but it affects so many people in our province. Firearms, rifles and shotguns are the tools that we use on our farms. They are used by hunters and for recreation; they are part of our culture.

The gun registry is perhaps the largest fiasco and the most ill thought out, ill conceived, unaccountable policy ever presented in the history of this country. It has cost \$2 billion to register duck hunters. They are not the people who use handguns. Handguns have been taken care of since 1935. The gun registry was another one of those Liberal plans with no accountability. The Liberals just went out there and did what they wanted to do without thinking about it.

I want to briefly touch on some of the macroeconomic effects of reckless spending. This was demonstrated in the previous coalition between the NDP and the Liberals in the 1970s. I know the criticism will come that there were other reasons for the wild and reckless spending and the way interest rates got out of control. Fiscal prudence and accountability are important in all that we do.

One of the major concerns I have about reckless out of control spending is higher interest rates. It is fairly well known that when there are unproductive, irresponsible fiscal pressures on the demand side, the pressures then lead to higher rates of inflation.

The Bank of Canada has wisely followed a strict monetary policy. This is something which was not done and was part of the problem in previous eras, the lack of a conservative monetary policy. The Bank of Canada responds by hiking interest rates to crack down on inflation.

*Government Orders*

I want to ask everyone who reads these words or who is watching on television or any member listening in the House to think what higher interest rates will do for small businessmen and for home owners with mortgages. For example, if a carpenter is watching, he or she should think of how it will impact on his or her job in the future. Continued reckless spending by the NDP-Liberal coalition will help to kill that job.

Most people who own a home in Saskatoon, in my riding, in Burlington or anywhere have a mortgage. Young families have mortgages. I myself recently took out a mortgage when I purchased my first home. I am not looking forward to the macroeconomic disaster that the government's reckless spending is going to create.

I want to give some positive suggestions to the government so that the Liberals in the future have some positive ideas. I listed my priorities earlier, but let me state one of them again. I mentioned a cut to EI. This is a cut to what is essentially a payroll tax. I have particular personal empathy with this one because I worked in a bakery at minimum wage for a year prior to going to university.

I worked at the bakery with people who had been there for 10 or 12 years and who were ineligible, because of the vagaries of the system, to collect employment insurance. Yet year after year they were paying higher premiums than they deserved to pay. This is a job killer. Nothing stops small business from hiring more employees than pressures on the payroll and higher costs.

I know the government thinks our unemployment rate of 6.8% is wonderful. Any politician south of the border with such a rate would be defeated. Our unemployment rate needs to go down. There needs to be continuous pressure. This is only one item. There are many other things the government could do to have productivity and an agenda that actually creates growth for the country, instead of merely looking around to redistribute the wealth with no plan, no thought and no wisdom.

• (1255)

The priorities the government has brought forward are not the priorities of the constituents of Saskatoon—Humboldt. They are not the things I stand for. That is why I will be voting against Bill C-48.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe the member's speech with its staggering number of inconsistencies and outright untruths. It was absolutely amazing to hear the lack of veracity for the facts that he was tossing around in the House.

The member thinks that somehow we have mismanaged the economy, but let us look at the facts. Canada has the most robust economy of all 26 nations in the OECD. Our unemployment rate is the lowest we have ever had. Our interest rates are the lowest we have had in decades. We are paying down the debt.

The member was correct when he said that to have a robust economy we need low inflation rates and low interest rates. That is important in order to have a robust private sector that can create jobs.

Does the member not read the economic indices of this country? Our economy is providing jobs. We have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the history of our country. We have the lowest interest rates and lowest inflation rates that we have ever had.

I am sure his constituents would support that. Does he not support that? Does he not acknowledge that is the situation in this country? Does he not acknowledge that is good fiscal management?

• (1300)

**Mr. Bradley Trost:** Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to listen to my friend comparing economic statistics around the world. I do not really care how badly many of the other economies in the world are run. Canada needs to do what is best for Canada.

He was comparing Canada with other countries around the world. Let us take a look at Germany, a country that is not partially run by his ideological allies, but completely run by his ideological allies. Germany has a 12% unemployment rate. That country followed policies similar to those in which the government is engaging.

The hon. member was crowing about a 6.8% or 6.9% unemployment rate. The President of the United States, and I have some pretty harsh criticisms of his economic platform too, almost lost the last election because that country had a 5% unemployment rate. That is using calculations which are stricter than what we have here in Canada.

I am not quite sure what the hon. member is tooting the government's horn about. Great Britain has a lower unemployment rate than Canada has, to a large degree caused by the previous Tory administration which followed a strict monetary policy that emphasized tax cuts, growth, ownership society.

I am really not quite sure where the hon. member is coming from. He is claiming credit for low interest rates, low inflation, et cetera, but let us take a look at the record.

I agree that previous Tory administrations did not follow correct and strict monetary policy. They were Keynesian in their approach. The member is taking credit for that. The Liberals criticized that for many years. Pressure was put on our economy to force up inflation because of reckless policies followed in the 1970s in this country and in other countries around the world. It is known as Keynesian economics, spending to prop up the government, put it on the demand side, and end up with stagflation, higher unemployment rates, lower productivity, no growth, no future, no plan.

That was why the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, chambers of commerce and so forth condemned the government. The government knows how to take credit for everything that was done before it, but it does not know how to actually get things done. It knows how to surf.

Hon. members on that side heckle about a previous administration. I am not here to defend any previous administration. In the 1872 election I would have voted Liberal because that was the party of honesty and integrity back then, something which the present Liberal Party is not. We have a duty as members to speak for policy now and policy for the future. I really do not care about previous governments. They all need to stand on their own record in history. We need to stand for what is right now.

*Government Orders*

I was too young to vote on all these issues that many members are discussing. I am one of the younger members in the House. My job is to look forward to the future. My job is to look forward to the future for my riding, the future of the people of Saskatoon—Humboldt, the future of all Canadians, young, middle age, old, however Canadians describe themselves.

Canadians need a growing economy. They need a robust economy. The low expectations of 6.9% that the government has made are simply not good enough. Canada should have the greatest economy in the world, the lowest unemployment rate, and the highest standard of living. This country has the natural resources and the talent. We have everything we need to make Canada the greatest nation in the world.

● (1305)

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise and speak in the House with you in the chair, Sir. I was going to say with you, Mr. Speaker, ruling the roost, but I am not sure it would be a compliment, although hopefully it will give me a couple of marks that I can use later.

We are here today debating Bill C-48. This is a budget bill that was put together for the prime purpose of keeping the present government in power. It was a \$4.6 billion deal between the NDP and the Liberals to get NDP support to prop up the Liberal government.

This was at a time when not only were the Liberals buying a party, and they did buy a whole party through this process, but they were starting to try to buy individual members in the House. I think that goes a long way toward explaining why there is so much cynicism in the country. When Canadians sit back and look at some of the action the government has taken on just to stay where it is, it appalls them.

I have a couple of issues to start with and then I would like to get into what my party and I think about where the country should be and what kind of country it could be if it were properly managed.

What we have now is a \$4.6 billion budget bill that is two pages long and does not have the programs or the regulations to back up spending that money. The authorization is given to cabinet to “develop and implement” the programs, as it is stated in the bill, and to pay out the funds as it sees fit.

Does that not remind us somewhat of what happened with ad scam? Money was thrown around, hundreds of millions of dollars of our money, without proper authority and without the proper regulations, checks and balances in place to make sure it was being spent properly.

Here we have \$4.6 billion that will be dispensed through the authorization of the cabinet without any documentation to back it up or to bring to the House so Canadians can have a look at how it is going to be spent and if it is going to be spent wisely. That in and of itself is a huge problem.

When we look for some of the things that are not in Bill C-48, as many of my colleagues have alluded to, it is quite alarming. In the NDP priorities that were part of the deal made with the Liberals, things were left out and forgotten. We could go on about agriculture and a few other things, but we will move on.

Before I get into it too deeply, I would like to thank the members of the Conservative Party who sat on the finance committee. As we know, there were many late nights with long hours and pretty intense debate. I remember one night being here until almost midnight when the finance committee was in a parallel sitting to the House to deal with this bill.

The members for Medicine Hat, Portage—Lisgar, Peace River and others who sit on that committee did a tremendous job of trying to hold the government to account and also of bringing forward good, solid amendments. Had those amendments been accepted, we would be able to move forward. The government completed rejected most of those issues.

As it ended up, the bill that came back to the House was a title with nothing below it because we could not agree on any of it. We are very concerned, as most Canadians are, that this money is going to be spent and spent in a way that is not open to public scrutiny and could be mismanaged.

We as the Conservative Party stand and criticize the government to hold it to account, which is part of our mandate, but our other mandate is to have alternatives to what the government is doing and to have our own vision of where Canada should go.

This country is blessed with natural resources and an expanse that should allow every citizen of Canada a good life and an ability to work, to feed their families, to plan and save for the future, and to have the wherewithal to educate their children. These are the issues that most families talk about when they come to talk to me.

They would like to see some substantive tax breaks for families so they can decide. We can get into the child care situation the government is promoting, in which it is going to create many day care spaces, not worrying about people who work shift work and not worrying about people in rural areas. That will be for just certain aspects of society.

● (1310)

We in the Conservative Party are saying that all families should be given a tax break so they can make the decisions and have a choice as to how they raise their own children. Most parents, when it comes right down to it, would prefer to raise their own children, but most families are now two income families. Both parents work because it takes six months out of every year just to pay their tax bill.

Parents have to work half their lives just to pay taxes. That is the reason they have to work. If we were able to restructure the tax system and leave the money in the pockets of parents, they would have choices as to how their children should be cared for and they would have a few bucks to save for their future, their retirement and their children's educations.

A lot of Canadians will never realize the hope and dream of owning a home because they do not have the funds left over at the end of the month to put toward a mortgage. We have to change that. Everybody should have the opportunity to have affordable housing. That is right in the Conservatives platform. We support Canadians having affordable homes.



*Government Orders*

As for this idea that we have to take the money away from all Canadians so we can direct it back to them, should we not leave it with them and let them make the decisions on how they are going to spend their funds? Does that not add up?

There is a regional disparity in Canada. There is this financial imbalance we talk about. This is another thing that we as a nation need to be addressing. We need to make sure that all areas of Canada have the opportunity for economic growth and stability. With that comes the opportunity for citizens to enjoy a good quality of career, to own their own home and to have peace of mind knowing that they have been able to put a few bucks away to educate their children or for their own retirement.

When people are empowered in that way, when they make those decisions for themselves, it also blends into creating a society that looks more toward itself to solve its problems than anywhere else. That is where people should be looking, but we have to give them the means to work through those problems. I think that if we levelled out the economic situation across this country and gave everybody that hand up instead of a handout, that is the way to improve things.

Part of the deal the NDP made with the Liberals is really amazing. It cost them \$4.6 billion to buy an entire party on the premise that the Liberals would get support in the House. There still were not enough votes to ensure the Liberals' success, so they had to try to buy off more people in the House. They were successful in some cases and unsuccessful in others. Part of the deal was that the NDP wanted the tax cuts taken out of the budget, so the Liberals said they would do it, they would take them out of the budget and then bring them back in another way.

Therefore, not only did they spend \$4.6 billion to buy some votes that were not enough to sustain them in the House, they reneged on the part of the deal regarding tax breaks, because those tax breaks are still going through and the NDP is still in the House to prop up the Liberals. It is almost as ridiculous as some of the backbench Liberals who are so opposed to Bill C-38 and are continually propping their government up long enough so they can pass Bill C-38. Some of these people will need to answer to their own constituents.

I would like to get into some of the party policy that Conservatives think needs to be implemented in this country to keep it strong and viable, to make it an even greater country than it is, to make it as great as it should be. As I say, I am from Alberta, and Albertans are blessed with resources, many of which are as yet untapped. We have oil, coal, farmland and forests. Everything is there.

I suppose that those of us living in Alberta have an advantage due to that, but because of the way this country is structured and because of the willingness to share shown by provinces that have more than others, we should be making sure it is done in a way such that the people who do not have as much are brought up to the same standard.

● (1315)

We believe that in order to have a strong economy and maintain good health, Canada must have strong, coordinated and achievable environmental policies. A Conservative government believes that responsible exploration and development, conservation and renewal

of our environment are vital to our continued well-being as a nation and as individuals.

Being from Alberta, I say that because of the oil and gas exploration and the many things that go on there. At the same time that we explore and develop those very necessary resources, we have to be conscious of the environment. It is a proven fact that when the economy is going well, the most attention is given to the safeguarding of the environment.

In many of the classes in which I speak, like most of the members here who do the same when they go around to schools, I note that the environment is a key issue to the young people in our country. Good for them, I say. I am not so proud of what my generation has done to the environment, but the next generation is going to be prepared to fix it. We have to ensure that the tools are there to do it. Responsible development and responsible exploration, with an eye on both, and being able to facilitate that while protecting the environment, is part of what needs to be done and it is part of what we believe in.

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, to respond directly to my colleague's comments, he mentioned that the Conservatives support good, quality education so I am at a loss as to why they would not support the additional dollars the NDP has ensured in Bill C-48. They were not in Bill C-43, the budget that the Conservatives were willing to go along with. They are in Bill C-48, yet the Conservatives are talking about not supporting it. That is speaking on two sides, and I imagine we will see both coming out in the pamphlets that the Conservatives will send around in the next little while.

In the member's last statements, he talked about supporting the environment. Again, on the road to improving support for environmental initiatives, it is in the NDP budget, Bill C-48. It is there. It hit that right on the mark. He talked about the need for affordable housing. That is in the NDP budget, Bill C-48.

I am really at a loss as to what the problem is that the Conservatives have with this budget other than the fact that corporations may not get \$4.6 billion in tax cuts, the corporations that the Conservatives are here to represent rather than representing all the people of Canada. Tax breaks for small and medium sized business are still in the budget. That was part of the deal as well. Those members can talk about them not being there all they want, but the reality is that they are still there.

If the Liberals can come up with another \$4.6 billion for tax cuts, we will deal with that next time around, but what we are saying is that if they can give this \$4.6 billion after already giving billions of dollars in tax cuts in the last number of years, they can give back to Canadians. Why are the Conservatives against dollars going back to ordinary Canadians?

**Mr. Rick Casson:** Mr. Speaker, that is interesting. In my remarks I asked how we are to know where this money is going. There is a lot of assuming going on here on behalf of the NDP. If those members are going to make a deal with the Liberal government, they had better get it spelled out pretty clearly as to how it going to be applied. There is no indication of when and how this money is going to be dealt out. I think the NDP members are in for a big surprise. When all the smoke clears, I think they are going to end up getting a very small portion of what they have agreed to.

*Government Orders*

The member talks about giving some tax money back to Canadians and asks why not. That is exactly my point. Why take it in the first place? Why take it and then give it back? The most equitable way to do this is to leave it in the pockets of the people who earn it and let them make the decisions on how they are going to spend it. There are certain areas that the government needs to be dealing with, such as the security of our nation, the funding for the armed forces, the international issues that face us and monetary policies. All of these issues need to be dealt with by the federal government.

However, a lot of what the federal government is doing here, with the support of the NDP, I might add, is pushing more and more into provincial territory. The gas tax rebate is something we support but we want to do it in a very different way. To get that money to municipalities there must be provincial involvement. For the federal government to say directly to a city or a municipality that it is going to do this, thus bypassing the authority of the province, is a dangerous precedent. If we are going to do it, let us get involved with the provinces and let us make sure there is an agreement for them to pass that money forward.

• (1320)

**Mr. Wajid Khan (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party has just demonstrated why it has been in opposition for 12 years and I anticipate it will remain there for another 12.

Let me set the record straight. Before I do that, the rambling speeches that I have heard in the last couple of days are full of inaccuracies to the extent that they could probably make the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

The fact is the deficit, unemployment, interest rates and the bankruptcies were soaring when that party was in power. Surplus after surplus after surplus has brought nothing but good to the Canadian people. The rates are low, affordability is high, tax cuts of \$100 billion have been given to the people over the last five years and the country is prosperous.

I cannot understand why the government was so corrupt when Bill C-43 was before the House and the same corrupt government, supported by the Conservative Party, voted in support Bill C-43. Initially the Conservatives opposed it and then they supported it. Now Bill C-48 is corrupt. Will they make up their minds and support Bill C-48? It is for the greater good of the people.

Members opposite said that the deal was recorded on a napkin. It does not matter where it was recorded. They also said that the government saved its skin by making the deal with the NDP. We have saved the skin of Canadians who do not want to be burdened with the deficits, tax burdens and all those things that party wants to impose on them. Why did they support—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Lethbridge.

**Mr. Rick Casson:** Mr. Speaker, the one thing on which I agree with the hon. member is the Liberal government is corrupt. I will just repeat what he said.

We are short on time, but one area of the economy that the hon. member boasts about is the agricultural community in the country. The agricultural industry last year was in the red. If we add it up, the

entire industry lost money. That is due to the Liberal government's failed attempts at negotiating fair deals for our producers. It is due to the high taxation policy of the government. It is due to the government taxing the industry into the ground.

As the hon. member said, one of the basic pillars on which the country was built is the agricultural community. As an entirety, it lost money last year. It is a damning statistic that comes from the government's failed policies, whether it is agricultural, economic or trade. They have all contributed to that.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Oshawa, I will be speaking against Bill C-48. By supporting it, it would be encouraging and allowing reckless spending, spending that is being deployed by the government in a desperate attempt to hold on to power.

The Conservative Party will not allow the government to spend without a plan and we will not allow the Liberal Party to buy the votes of Canadians. We cannot give our approval for an irresponsible budget to a corrupt government that lacks the moral and constitutional authority to govern. The Conservative Party is committed to standing up for Canadians and Bill C-48 is clearly not in the best interests of Canadians.

In exchange for NDP support, the Liberal government has made careless promises and is engaging in reckless spending. Even before the deal was made with the NDP, program spending under the Liberal government soared by \$18 billion, or 12% more than last year to more than \$158 billion. The Liberals have now committed to spending an additional \$5.1 billion over the next two years, funded entirely through contingency funds set aside for unforeseen circumstances.

To fully implement all the programs included in this bill, the government would need to post \$8.5 billion in surpluses over the next two fiscal years. Leading economists have warned that these spending commitments rule out fiscal flexibility to cut taxes, reduce the debt or increase spending over the next few years. The Conservative Party will not support such irresponsible fiscal policy.

If enacted, this bill will have detrimental effects for Oshawa, as it would for many cities in the country. Let us not look at the fact that this is a bill to spend without a plan, but let us look at where the Liberals claim the money will be spent.

The Liberals say that this is a bill to lower tuition for students, but when reading the bill, not once does it say student and not once does it say tuition. It is not mentioned. It talks of supporting training programs and enhancing access to post-secondary education. This is an example of misleading the Canadian public. This statement could mean anything. If the Liberals wanted to lower tuition, why did they not just say so?

*Government Orders*

They claim the bill is for the environment, for low income housing and for improved public transit. Recently we have learned that by far the greatest benefactors of the gas tax are the big cities. For example, Toronto, which only has 20% of the population in Ontario, will receive half the gas tax. The NDP mayor of Toronto was recently quoted as saying that he was thrilled with the results of the public transit deal. That is not a surprise, considering Bill C-48 disproportionately benefits big cities.

I stand here today on behalf of the hard-working taxpayers of Oshawa who are sick and tired of subsidizing these big cities. According to my calculations, Oshawa pays approximately \$30 million per year in gas taxes, which means \$150 million over five years. According to the *Toronto Star*, that Liberal paper right from the centre of the universe, over five years Oshawa would receive back a total of \$11.3 million. In other words, we take out of Oshawa \$150 million and we get back \$11.3 million, a difference of \$138.7 million.

This is not acceptable. This bill is merely an attempt by the Liberals to buy big city votes while taking advantage of small-town taxpayers and rural Canadians.

Experts agree that to fund its budget, the Liberal government will have to use up the majority of the federal emergency reserves, a move that rules out any potential personal tax cuts at a time when Canada is dealing with near stagnant economic growth. Experts argue that this is just one more sign of the Liberal government's failure to acknowledge Canada's productivity crisis.

Over the past decade, Canada has ranked 18th out of 24 industrial nations in average growth, labour and productivity. GDP per capita is estimated at just 84% of that of the United States as a result of lower productivity growth in Canada. A recent Statistics Canada report indicates that last year was Canada's worst performance in terms of productivity in almost a decade. The finance minister commented on it and blamed the corporations. As a result, our standard of living is at risk.

●(1325)

Experts say that to improve this situation, Canadian corporations desperately need the \$3.4 billion in tax relief that the government offered in its original budget. By renegeing on this commitment, the Liberal government is ignoring the productivity crisis in the country and allowing the prosperity gap between Canadians and Americans to grow.

The government's agreement to scrap the corporate tax cuts in exchange for NDP support will also damage manufacturers and exporters that are already burdened by over regulation and an uncompetitive tax regime as a result of Liberal policies over the last decade.

The government has been warned that if these policies do not change, we are unlikely to be the number one trade partner to the U.S. five years from now if it refuses to address this reality.

I represent Oshawa, the jewel of Canadian and North American auto manufacturing. The manufacturing plants in Oshawa recently won the J.D. Power award for top automotive quality in North America. This is something of which I am very proud. For someone who worked on the line at GM while growing up, I know how hard

the employees work and how much pride they take in their achievements.

Over the past few years General Motors, along with other Canadian industries, has dealt with a 30% appreciation of the Canadian dollar that has consequently harmed competitiveness and productivity. In other words, with our greatest trading partner, the United States, everything that we put across is costing 30% more.

The Canadian automotive industry is facing unprecedented challenges and competition from the offshore auto manufacturers. The threat of an influx of Chinese automobiles right now in North America is a threat that needs to be taken seriously, not ignored.

Recently General Motors announced 25,000 layoffs in the United States. According to the CAW, there will inevitably be a fallout here in Canada. Canadian auto jobs are at risk. What did the NDP do, the supposed champions of labour, at a time of unprecedented offshore challenges and a high Canadian dollar? In conjunction with the Liberals they hit the automotive industry when they were down. By removing the corporate tax cuts, they are further putting Canadian jobs at risk. If the NDP thinks it can affect the automakers bottom line without directly affecting jobs, it is not fooling anyone.

When the NDP members had the Liberals on the ropes and the Prime Minister was willing to agree to almost anything, they failed to make Canadian auto workers a priority. They could have easily forced the Liberals to table their elusive auto strategy. We have been hearing about this auto strategy for months. Where is it? They claim it is in the works, but they fail to release a transparent auto policy for all to see.

Instead the NDP members sold their votes for a deal, a deal that will ruin the finances of the country by allowing the government to spend and to spend without a plan and without accountability. Does that sound familiar to anyone?

To support Bill C-48 would mean the Conservative Party of Canada supports a government that does not have the authority to govern. We stand strong in our belief that accountability and transparency in government are vital to democracy in our country and that the well-being of Canadians should come first.

I stand in the House today to assure the people of Oshawa and Ontario that I, along with my Conservative colleagues, will not support reckless legislation that will harm Canadians and put Ontario jobs at risk. Therefore, we will vote against Bill C-48, and our votes cannot be bought.

*Government Orders*

The Conservative Party of Canada believes that our goal should be to give Canadians the highest standard of living in this world. Every Canadian who wants a job should be able to get a job. Our policies should be reflective of this. Every region, such as Oshawa, in the country should enjoy economic growth and new opportunities for the people in these regions.

Our goal is to make Canada the economic envy of the world. We want every mom and dad, every child in the country, to go to sleep at night and know that they can reach the Canadian dream.

Every family and person should be able to buy a house, save for their retirement and ensure that they have a little left over if they want to go to summer camps or on vacations. Maybe Canadians want to use their money. We should leave it in their pockets because they may want to start a business some day. That can only be done if the government does not tax too much and does not spend too much.

Bill C-48 is just that. It is opening up a blank cheque for the government to reckless spending. We cannot support this bill.

• (1330)

**Hon. Judi Longfield (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Housing, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with some interest to the young member across who said that he was here to defend his constituents in the city of Oshawa. I would remind the member that I also have the great honour of representing the citizens of the city of Oshawa.

I was quite surprised to hear the member indicate that this government has not helped the city of Oshawa. What about the government's \$200 million grant to General Motors for its Beacon project? This investment by the Government of Canada will allow General Motors to invest \$2.4 billion in the very city he says that he wants to represent and where he wants to protect jobs.

How does this \$200 million investment kill jobs and how does this investment not help his constituents?

The member says that he will be voting against Bill C-48 but he also says that he agrees with affordable housing and with cleaning up the environment. As a former chiropractor, I am sure he understands that clean air is what gives us all a better quality of life. When I read Bill C-48, I see money for the environment and for affordable housing.

If he were to talk to the chair of social services in the Durham region, she would tell him that Durham region is in need of affordable housing and that it is happy to have the money that this government is putting in.

If he were to talk to the chair of the region that he represents, who is also the president of AMO, he would tell him how excited and pleased he was about the gas tax rebate.

If he had attended the meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities he would have heard mayor after mayor from small communities extolling their absolute delight at the kind of cooperation they were finally getting from a federal government that considered them partners.

I am surprised that the member opposite is not listening to his constituents.

• (1335)

**Mr. Colin Carrie:** Mr. Speaker, it is hard to say where to start and where the question was exactly in there.

In talking to the 40 mayors who came up to visit the Conservative caucus, they were concerned because for the last 12 years they have had no contact with the Liberal government. As a matter of fact, they said that they were happy with the little crumbs that were finally being thrown at them by the Liberal government after so many years of neglect and so many years of downloading from the Liberal government to the provinces and then to the municipalities.

What my constituents are telling me is that they are sick and tired of paying increased municipal taxes to subsidize the big cities where the NDP and the Liberals want to vote buy.

She talked about the GM Beacon project and how the government is investing \$200 million. Well I say thanks very much, finally, for an investment in the infrastructure that General Motors is going to invest in as well. However this is just an example of the Liberal government's policy toward industry.

What the government first wants to do is overtax the corporations, then over-regulate them and then, as we have seen at General Motors Corporation, once they start to struggle, subsidize them. This is typical of the NDP and Liberal approach. What they want to do is choke off business by overtaxing them and when they are running into problems, hand them out money.

That is not our approach. We are not into giving blank cheques to corporations. We are looking very closely at the money given to General Motors. I am very pleased to see that we are finally getting an investment but it is just a little bit. I would liked to have seen a little bit more planning.

If we are looking at an auto strategy, the Minister of Industry has been promising an auto strategy for years, and an auto strategy is not about throwing money at corporations. An auto strategy is investing in the infrastructure required to make investment, not only automotive investment but all industry investment, here in Canada and in our province of Ontario.

Where is the new border crossing at Windsor-Detroit? When the NDP had these guys on the ropes, it could have talked about that. The recent Senate committee said that it was an emergency situation, not something that needs to be put off another 12 years before the government decides on it.

We need to see some leadership from the government to move forward to get that border crossing put in there, not 10 years from now but now. We needed it 10 years ago. Where is the planning and the looking ahead? The government fails to look ahead and fails to plan.

*Government Orders*

If the government does not understand the situation I will explain it. One in seven jobs in Canada is related to the auto industry. Over \$1 billion in revenue goes across the Windsor-Detroit bridge every day. When will the government step up to the plate? When will it look at the regulatory problems, the infrastructure and a power coordination over the entire country so that when industry wants to invest and do business in Canada we will have stable electrical and power supply? When will that happen? That is what I want to see from the government.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, putting together a budget is mainly a science, although not 100%. It is also partly an art with a little bit of a hope, on a wing and a prayer, because one is never sure in the upcoming year what kind of economic factors one will face as a country that may be out of one's actual control.

It takes a lot of work from a lot of people giving it a lot of thought to come up with a budget that they think will carry the nation through for a year, and with these Liberal budgets even further than that, and properly provide for the essential services based on the amount of revenue that will come in from a variety of sources.

However we need to take into account the interest rates, the commodity rates and what the price of oil and gas will be. It is definitely a science that has to be followed carefully and rules have to be applied and followed, otherwise the budget goes off track.

It is not a lot different than preparing a household budget. Every family that is prudent knows that they have to take a look at what is coming in for the month, look at what the expenses are going to be and base their spending accordingly. Anybody who has ever put their household on a budget also knows that if one suddenly lurches from one's budget plan, one can be headed for trouble. There might be things that the family might look at and like to buy but we would consider those things in light of how much income there is or what is predicted to be coming in. Departing from that path could lead to a financial disaster in the household budget.

Canadians need to understand that this is precisely what has happened with the federal Liberal government. It came out with a main budget and when we looked at it as an opposition party there were some things that we did not like but there were some things in the budget that we did like. As a matter of fact, a number of the key factors in the federal budget, which was originally presented, were there because of our input. Our leader and various critics had gone over certain areas and came up with some suggestions. It was our suggestion that a portion of the federal gas tax go back to municipalities, so of course we support that in the budget.

We supported a lot of elements in the main budget but then an extraordinary thing happened. On the way to tabling the budget, which the Liberals did table and to which we gave tacit support because of our own input, all of a sudden there was a lurch and the budget went off the rails because the government made a deal with the socialists, the NDP, and came out with an unprecedented and unplanned amount of spending in the neighbourhood of \$4.6 billion. This was out of the blue.

Earlier, when we had been proposing other measures, the government said that it could not be done because it had carefully budgeted, that it was a science and a bit of an art. It said that it had

considered everything very carefully and that it had a budget. However, out of the blue, it put \$4.6 billion on the table to buy 19 socialist votes. I ask members to do the math. It roughly works out to about a quarter billion dollars per vote. In a frantic effort to survive, the minority government went to the NDP and asked what it would cost and said that it would pay whatever the price. The price was \$4.6 billion.

Some people have criticized the NDP members for striking this deal with the Liberals but I do not. I say, good for them. They said that each one of their votes was worth a quarter billion dollars. If we accept the amount that the Auditor General said the government blew in the province of Quebec on the sponsorship scandal, which was about \$350 million, and we accept that Quebec has four million or so voters, that means that each voter in Quebec was worth about \$80 to \$85 to the government. However members of the NDP were worth a quarter billion dollars each. We are talking about egalitarianism gone wild.

The government just tossed out this \$4.6 billion of taxpayer money. If we were to depart from our household finances as radically as the Liberals have departed from the finance of the nation we would get the attention of our bankers, our creditors and our suppliers who would be saying that we are out of control.

● (1340)

The exact same thing will happen here and is already happening. Outside sources monitor what Canada is doing. Governments have to contend with credit agencies and rating agencies because their bonds are based on the kind of stability and confidence these external agencies have in their projections. When we take a \$4.6 billion lurch, that introduces a notion of instability in people who are banking literally on our bonds and on our credibility.

The \$4.6 billion caught the attention of the *Economist* magazine, one of many, which is a non-partisan magazine, but pointed to the government being out of control.

I have heard Liberal MPs try to blame previous governments. We all know that it was in the 1970s moving into the 1980s when the Liberal government, under Pierre Trudeau, departed from all sense of economic reality. That is simply a fact. Deficit financing was introduced at a gigantic, unparalleled, unprecedented rate and the country was plunged into record deficits like it had never seen before. That is when it started.

Pierre Trudeau had bought into the philosophy of John Maynard Keynes who said that when we run into trouble we just keep borrowing. That is basically what it comes down to. When John Maynard Keynes was asked what would happen in the long run when deficits kept piling up and we started hitting compound interest, he said that in the long run we would all be dead.

That was an irresponsible approach and this was an irresponsible approach to throw \$4.6 billion out the door just so the Liberals would not wind up dead in the next election. That is irresponsible to future generations.

*Government Orders*

The mayors and councils of municipalities in my constituency could not get away with tabling a budget one day and then, in a matter of days later, radically depart from that budget. The ratepayers would not allow them.

The mayor of Okanagan Falls; the mayor of Naramata; Mayor Perry in Penticton; Mayor Tom Johnston in Summerland; Mayor Bob Harriman in Peachland; the regional district in Westbank; Mayor Laird in Merritt; and Mayor Brown in Logan Lake; those people could not get away with departing from the budget and just telling the taxpayers to trust them and that the money will be there.

The former finance minister, who is now the Prime Minister, had built up a bit of a false legend about himself being a great deficit cutter. What he did to dig into the deficit was that he slashed the health care transfer to the provinces overnight by 34%. It was no act of genius.

Regardless, he had built for himself a bit of a reputation as someone who was concerned about a deficit, but suddenly, like a drug addict who had finished the rehab program, he went crazy when he had a budget and he thought he was going to be curtailed; \$4.6 billion one day and in the next 21 days the Prime Minister went coast to coast after his sad appeal to Canadians on national television and announced spending of \$23 billion, even outstripping the amount that he paid to buy off that NDP vote.

The other concern is with whom he has struck the allegiance. He has struck the allegiance with NDP members of Parliament, people who operate on a failed socialist philosophy, an NDP philosophy that plunged the province of Ontario into unprecedented debt and deficit and racked and ruined the economy. They did the same thing when they had the opportunity in British Columbia.

NDP policies are not built on reality. It will take whatever jurisdiction and plunge it into debt and deficit and therefore the inability to pay for essential services.

On this side of the House we are concerned about Canadians. We want to see essential services maintained, strengthened and, where necessary, expanded. We have already support Bill C-43, the main budget, but the only thing that will expand under Bill C-48 is the sense of recklessness that will lead to increased deficit and possibly even debt. We want to stop that. It is not wrong for opposition MPs to stand in the House and try to put a stop to the recklessness that the government is now putting on the shoulders of Canadians.

● (1345)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for the hon. member.

Given that under Bill C-48 new spending only comes into effect if there is a federal budget surplus of \$2 billion or more, would the member not call that budget bill a no deficit budget bill?

**Mr. Stockwell Day:** Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker, because the spending that the Liberals are talking about is unplanned. It is almost laughable. I do believe the member is being sincere here, so I am not laughing.

It is almost laughable when he talks about surpluses because we have seen the Liberal record when it comes to predicting or projecting surpluses. The Liberals tell us there will only be a certain

amount at the start of the year. All the economists warn that they are way out of line, that the surpluses will be huge and that we should be giving money back to the people of Canada. They have been over on their surplus projections by untold amounts, so they have constructed for themselves a *carte blanche*.

They have drawn up an arbitrary figure of \$2 billion and say that if they hit it, then all this spending kicks in. They can make that spending kick in at any time because their projections, according to every credible economic forecaster and every external commentator, is absolutely out of control. It is based on one thing and that is to have a hidden surplus near the end of the year or at election time so they can go on a vote-buying spending spree. We cannot trust that kind of surplus projection.

● (1350)

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member for Okanagan—Coquihalla and to several of his colleagues, screaming and yelling about how this \$4.6 billion, very carefully allocated to some very clear priorities that are absolutely supported by Canadians and desperately needed by people, is somehow reckless, irresponsible, and it will break the bank. They infer that it is just totally irresponsible for this kind of big money to be dedicated.

Yet the member just stood up and acknowledged himself, in a very accurate way, that there have been very large surpluses that the government has not acknowledged. The potential is there for it to trot out the surpluses. The last time around the projection of the surplus was \$1.9 billion and the surplus was actually \$9.1 billion. What is the reversal of those two numbers? Something like \$8 billion. What is the problem?

How is it that the Conservative members who understand this would not support something as clearly targeted to the needs of Canadians. Bill C-48 deals with four things: first, accessible and affordable education that we know is critical to a prosperous and productive society; second, affordable housing, which is an important job stimulus as well as something that Canadians desperately need. I heard the member for Central Nova talk about making sure families can live together. Affordable housing is part of that. Third, public transit; and fourth, energy retrofitting of low income housing, so we can have clean air to breathe. In addition, we finally make a tiny step in the direction of meeting the 0.7% commitment to international development aid, which his own party has now finally reluctantly come around to support.

How can the member explain the contradiction between the excessive rhetoric on how this cannot be afforded and what he knows to be the facts?

**Mr. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, we have given our support to each and every item that the member has mentioned. There are elements of that in the first budget that was tabled, Bill C-43, the very elements to which we gave support. We do not and cannot support unplanned and unprecedented spending.

*S. O. 31*

The member for Halifax is quite right. I said in my remarks that when the government projects a surplus, it is wildly off the mark, but intentionally so. It hides the surplus throughout the year when we are asking for the true needs of Canadians, until we approach either election time or the end of the budget year, which we call March madness, because we know in March, spending goes crazy. It was close to seven times the amount. The member was quite right, \$1.9 billion is all the government said it would have as surplus. We get to the end of the year and surprise, it is \$9.1 billion.

Where does that excess come from? One of the biggest areas of excess is from an EI fund that is grossly overtaxed. We have hardworking employees paying out of their paycheque every day into the EI fund. Even the Auditor General has agreed with our figures and told the government that it was putting way too much burden on the shoulders of hardworking people in the EI fund and the business community, especially small business. They are paying far too much into the EI fund.

There is enough in the EI fund to take care of long term unemployment problems or even a catastrophic crisis in employment. Yet the Liberals continue to tax at too high a level. They are overtaxing hardworking Canadians to get surpluses that they hide and then announce with unplanned and unprecedented budgeting. It is not the way to go. It is not honest. It is not good for the economy and it is not good for hardworking people.

**Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is important to review the events that led up to the introduction of Bill C-48 and how our socialist friends in the NDP down at that end have reacted with the corrupt Liberal government.

In weeks prior to the deal being made in some hotel room with respect to Bill C-48, the NDP stood up on a daily basis in the House reflecting and railing about the corruption that was being made public through the Gomery commission. This corruption was not being made known through arbitrary allegations, but through sworn testimony and sworn confessions by key Liberal Party members who had participated in the biggest corruption scandal that we have ever had in the last decade.

The NDP knew that. It acknowledged that on a daily basis. Those members criticized the government over and over again, every single day, for the corruption and the ripoff of taxpayers' money. Those NDP members cried about the Liberals scooping that money for their own campaign coffers when it could have been used on things such as affordable housing, the environment, and helping students with tuition fees. Those members talked on a daily basis about the nasty corrupt Liberals.

Then came the time when the corrupt Liberal minority government was possibly going to go down in political flames through a non-confidence vote. We have to perhaps forgive the leader of the NDP for being a little naive about the honesty of the Liberals, but then again maybe not because several people in his caucus have a lot of experience dealing with that crowd over there.

The NDP leader and some of his party members knew the Liberals were corrupt. They knew the Liberal Party stole tens of millions of dollars from taxpayers and had given it to their friends or used it on their campaign. However, the NDP members felt the Liberals were in a real tough spot and were going to go down in flames on a non-

confidence vote, so they thought they would see what they could get out of it. The NDP members thought they could scoop some of the money for some of their projects.

In the blink of an eye NDP members went from calling the Liberal government corrupt, which it is, to being best friends via a deal made in some hotel backroom brokered by Buzz Hargrove, the new Liberal finance minister apparently. They came up with a deal. The NDP knew the Liberals were corrupt. That party knew the Liberals did politics in a very suspect way. The NDP members told the Liberals that if they received about \$4.5 billion for some of their projects, they would forgive them, sleep with them, and everything would be fine. I did not say this, but that type of arrangement has been described by some as basic political prostitution. I did not say it, but I tend to agree with that statement.

Here is what happened. The Liberal finance minister presented a budget in February 2005, Bill C-43. The Conservative Party proposed some amendments to the legislation because we did not quite agree with it. The Conservative Party wanted to make this Parliament work. We were committed to making this Parliament work, so we decided to propose some amendments. We decided to support the legitimate budget, Bill C-43, for the 2005-06 parliamentary year.

Suddenly, because of the sinking ship fiasco, this new deal came along with \$4.5 billion written on a napkin with Buzz Hargrove's signature on it. The NDP made a deal with the Liberals to provide them with support for the non-confidence vote.

• (1355)

This is \$4.5 billion of taxpayers' money that came out of the sky, 23 floors up in a hotel, that the Liberals want us to accept when there is absolutely no plan for spending attached to it. There are some vague areas, but there is no plan. The areas that they describe are ones that have been criticized soundly by the Auditor General and we cannot support them.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will now move to statements by members.

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

### *THE 1918 ANTI-GREEK RIOT IN TORONTO*

**Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a turbulent time in our history. Between August 2 and 5, 1918, mobs of about 50,000 people took to the streets in Toronto waging pitched battles with police and destroying every Greek business they came across. The riots were the result of prejudice against new immigrants and the belief that Greeks did not fight in World War I.

*S. O. 31*

Today, Mr. George Treheles, Mr. Michael Vitopoulos and Mr. Thomas Gallant presented a book entitled *The 1918 Anti-Greek Riot in Toronto*, documenting the causes and the results of the 1918 riot to the Library of Parliament.

I want to thank these gentlemen for writing and publishing this book so that this tragic event in our history is not forgotten. Although the riot took place in 1918, it brings into sharp focus the need for all Canadians to respect and accept the cultural diversity which makes Canada such a vibrant place to live and bring up our children. We must remember our history so we do not repeat our mistakes.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY**

**Mr. Jeremy Harrison (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 2005 is the year of the veteran and today is National Aboriginal Day. It seems only appropriate that on this day we honour Canada's aboriginal war veterans.

This morning at the National Aboriginal Veterans War Monument, Canadians from all walks of life paid their respects to the first nations, Innu and Métis who served their country, many of them making the ultimate sacrifice.

Thousands of aboriginal people volunteered to serve their country. From the warriors under the leadership of Joseph Brant who helped repel the American invasion of 1813, through the first and second world wars and the Korean war, to the numerous peacekeeping missions of today, aboriginal people have served Canada despite the fact that many of them were not accorded full rights as citizens.

While laying a wreath or making a speech can only pale in comparison to the sacrifices made by these brave men and women, they symbolize our gratitude. In Cree they say "*Kahgee pohn noten took*" on Remembrance Day. It means "the fighting has ended". On behalf of all Canadians I say, may we never forget.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN FORCES NAVAL SWORD**

**Hon. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on June 12, Lieutenant Ralph Edwards was presented the Canadian Forces Naval Sword with the gold braid on behalf of cadets, officers and parents at the Sea Cadet Corps Iron Duke in Burlington for his 25 years of outstanding contribution to youth in our community.

A sea cadet first in 1957, Ralph Edwards joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1967 and served on board HMCS *Fraser*. In 1974, he became a member of the RCMP. Ralph Edwards has made an extraordinary contribution to youth as a cub scout leader since 1970 and with many youth organizations, including the Sea Cadet Corps Iron Duke as civilian instructor and eventually commanding officer.

Ralph and his wife Sandra Edwards have been foster parents with the Halton Children's Aid Society for the past 29 years and their two older children have followed their example.

On June 4 this year, the RCMP recognized Ralph Edwards for his outstanding volunteer service. He received the IODE Police Community Service Award in Edmonton.

All Canadians and all citizens thank Lieutenant Ralph Edwards for his contribution and wish him all the best.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]**CARMEL PAQUIN**

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, some people touch our lives because of their dedication, or their love for others, the arts, artists, young people and life in general. These big-hearted people make us wonder what we would do without them.

I know of such an exceptional man. His name is Carmel Paquin and he is a parish priest in Lac-à-la-Tortue. He has touched my life and the lives of the people of the Mauricie and all of Quebec during 50 years of religious service.

His dedication, work and concern for others are proof of an unwavering open-mindedness that has made a lasting impression on the hearts of everyone he meets.

Carmel Paquin, we wish you a happy anniversary and many more years among us.

\* \* \*

**VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, my father-in-law's home in Bouctouche, New Brunswick, caught fire as a result of a problem with the electrical panel. In less than 45 minutes, the house was totally consumed by flames.

However, the volunteer firefighters in the town of Bouctouche arrived on the scene, got the fire under control and prevented it from spreading. With the help of other volunteer firefighters from Cocagne, Saint-Antoine and Shediac, further losses were avoided and the fire was brought under control and eventually put out. We offer them our thanks.

Such difficult times make us think about the extraordinary services our voluntary firefighters provide. These brave men and women often face great danger but they always do their duty, and our communities are much safer as a result of their commitment and courage.

It is time that Parliament recognized their services by, as I have always said, supporting the bill granting them a tax credit as compensation for their efforts and commitment and, above all, the sacrifices their families make.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[*English*]**HEALTH CARE PROVIDER**

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with bittersweet feelings that I speak to the House today. Melissa Anderson, who has been my primary health care aid for two years, is leaving to get married.



Melissa is special in many ways and I would like to highlight two of them. She is the first unelected person to sit with members in the House of Commons and she embodies the same selfless, patient care administered every day by health care workers across Canada.

My logistics as an MP are complex. With Melissa's help, I have been able to fully perform my duties.

For Melissa, family is her first priority. I know she will provide the same compassion and care she has given me to her new husband, Carlin Thiessen, as well as her stepchildren Devin, Colin and Bryce.

I would like to thank Melissa for her commitment, dedication and her unwavering patience with me. It has been an honour to serve my first year as an MP with her. I wish Melissa all my best.

\* \* \*

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today, June 21, is National Aboriginal Day. As founding peoples, first nations, Inuit and Métis have played a vital role in shaping Canada's history and future.

Canada is a country of great cultural diversity built upon compromise and understanding.

Today in Iqaluit, 11 Inuit students will be the first graduates from the Akitsiraq law program. Inuit are participating in key areas of leadership and social awareness. I congratulate them.

I would also like to congratulate the Premier of Nunavut, Paul Okalik, on attaining an honorary Doctor of Laws from Carleton University this past Saturday.

Inuit and all aboriginals alike are playing a leading role in this great country's future and we will do more. I join all Canadians in celebrating National Aboriginal Day.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### GISÈLE AND JEAN-CHARLES BURELLE

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on June 30, two volunteers who have been heavily involved in working for the children of the world will be taking retirement. They are Gisèle and Jean-Charles Burelle, the directors of UNICEF Montréal.

Mr. and Mrs. Burelle have been involved with UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, for over 40 years, working with it to provide disadvantaged children with a better world. They also founded Mécènes de la Montérégie, a philanthropic organization which works more directly with disadvantaged families on the south shore.

In my capacities as a mother, who believes every child is entitled to a good start in life, as a proud ambassador for UNICEF Montérégie, as a citizen of the riding of Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, as well as its MP, I assure them of my deepest admiration and appreciation of their exceptional commitment to humanity's greatest treasure: our children.

S. O. 31

#### ANNE-MARIE ALONZO

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Quebec cultural community mourns the loss of Anne-Marie Alonzo of Laval, playwright, poet, novelist, critic and publisher.

Laval's annual Festival de Trois owes its existence to her. The author of some 20 books, she won the Émile-Nelligan award in 1985 with her *Bleus de mine*.

Anne-Marie Alonzo was a contributor to the *Gazette des femmes*, *Spirales* and a number of other periodicals. She co-founded *Trois* magazine and in 1989 launched the Festival littéraire de Trois.

In 1996 she was made a member of the Order of Canada and in 1997 was awarded the bronze medal by the Société Arts-Sciences-Lettres of Paris.

Ms. Alonzo leaves a permanent legacy to the culture of Quebec. My most sincere condolences to her family and friends.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT STAFF

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we approach the end of this parliamentary session, I thought it would be appropriate to take a moment to thank all the individuals who help us fulfill our roles as members of Parliament.

We as members depend on our staff for support at all hours, for advice on issues facing the nation and, in most cases, help with our day to day lives.

I must make special mention of three Conservative staffers who are leaving the Hill to pursue other interests. Jim Armour will be missed for his fatherly advice and his fast quips. Mike Storeshaw will be missed because of his leadership and his ability to stay cool under pressure.

Nancy Heppner, our question period director, will be missed because of her ability to focus us on the topical issues and put the Prince of Meanness, the member for Calgary Southeast, in his place.

On behalf of my Conservative colleagues, I want to thank all of our staffers for their sacrifices, their sage counsel and their support during this past session.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[Translation]

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to be able to recognize the investment promised by the Government of Canada to the communities in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

As part of the new deal for cities and communities, the government will divert over \$13 million in revenues from the gasoline tax directly to the 10 municipalities in my riding. These funds will help all the communities to improve their infrastructure, thereby improving the quality of life there.

*S. O. 31*

I look forward to seeing progress on the innovative projects this money will make possible.

I congratulate the Prime Minister and the Minister of State for Infrastructure and Communities on this excellent initiative.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is National Aboriginal Day and I am proud to reaffirm that New Democrats stand in solidarity with Canada's first nations, Innu and Métis peoples. In this Year of the Veteran, it is appropriate to especially honour aboriginal veterans.

[*Translation*]

So it is a very special honour for me in this Year of the Veteran to pay tribute to Canada's aboriginal veterans.

[*English*]

Aboriginal veterans fought side by side in wartime but have been treated shamefully in peacetime; Canadians, like Sergeant Tommy Prince of Manitoba, our most decorated veteran. He won service medals, the Military Cross and was even awarded the Silver Star of the United States. Despite his great service to our country, he died like so many other aboriginal war veterans, in poverty, without access to the compensation other veterans enjoyed.

As we celebrate today our solidarity with Canada's aboriginal peoples, let us not forget those left behind and let us vow not to let it happen again.

[*Translation*]

May we never forget.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr. Gordon O'Connor (Carleton—Mississippi Mills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the federal public service is the largest employer in the national capital region. There are over 119,000 employees, thousands of whom reside in my constituency of Carleton—Mississippi Mills.

As we know, federal public servants are known for their professionalism, resourcefulness and hard work on our behalf. I support sound and innovative policies that continue to foster an efficient, effective and independent professional public service. As well, I firmly believe in legislating robust whistleblowing protection to ensure that those who expose corruption and wrongdoing are protected from reprisal.

In honour of National Public Service Week, I extend my appreciation and thanks to all public servants, especially those in Carleton—Mississippi Mills who work every day to provide Canadians with the services that make our society a healthy, safe and prosperous one.

[*Translation*]

#### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

**Mr. Bernard Cleary (Louis-Saint-Laurent, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention today, June 21, to National Aboriginal Day.

This is a very special day set aside to celebrate the heritage, culture and unique contributions of first nations peoples, the Inuit and the Métis to all the other peoples of the world.

For the first nations, the summer solstice marks the celebration of light and the longest day and is marked by festivities in the communities.

I would like therefore, on this special occasion, to offer my best wishes to all aboriginal persons in the fullness of peace and friendship.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I had the rare privilege of meeting U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson in March. The Texas congressman was a prisoner of war in Vietnam for seven years. His book, *Captive Warriors*, is one of the most meaningful, significant descriptions on inhumanity that I have ever read.

Thirty years later there are continued allegations of maltreatment of religious organizations, harassment of practitioners and persecution of leaders. Political dissidents in Vietnam called for respect of human rights, freedom and democracy.

In January of this year, I visited Hanoi. I learned that the current political regime takes note of international opinion because it wants to ascend to the WTO and, in that context, is showcasing Vietnam by hosting the APEC summit in 2006.

This weekend, Vietnam's prime minister is visiting Canada. We must be honest with him. Canadians want to constructively help with the peaceful evolution of true democracy in Vietnam.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

#### ETOBICOKE—LAKESHORE

**Hon. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as parliamentarians, we all know the importance of a strong community base. I am proud to represent the people of Etobicoke—Lakeshore because they have an incredible sense of civic pride and are working continuously to improve our community.

Through their contributions, our community continues to flourish. Community activities not only create camaraderie but they also establish a supportive network that helps people improve issues of common concern.

*Oral Questions*

This coming weekend the Grand Hamptons Owner's Association will be hosting their summer street party to meet each other and celebrate their neighbourhood. Throughout the GTA, members will be promoting safety in their communities in the National Night Out campaign.

I wish every one of my constituents a wonderful and safe summer. I look forward to seeing them and their families in and around the riding and at my summer community picnic on August 28 at Marie Curtis Park. Have a safe and enjoyable summer, to all my colleagues in the House and all of my constituents.

---

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it has now been confirmed that the former immigration minister was caught in a serious conflict of interest. During last year's election, the former minister rushed through ministerial permits to the benefit of campaigning Liberal MPs. In fact, she signed off on some 74 of them during the campaign and 19 in a two day period leading up to the writ.

Will the Prime Minister tell the House if anyone in his office was aware of this policy at the time?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have not had a chance to read the report. I have just come back from Montreal, where the cities announcement for Quebec was made. My understanding is that the report does not conclude that there was any personal wrongdoing on the part of the member for York West herself. That obviously answers the hon. member's question.

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Calgary Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me explore my first question a little further. The Prime Minister has consistently defended the actions of the former minister. In fact, he stood up for her actions 100% up until today, and I guess including today. Can the Prime Minister tell us when he became aware that the former minister was distributing ministerial permits on a partisan basis?

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact no permits are issued on any partisan basis. They are issued to the applicant, wherever that applicant comes from.

In response to that kind of initiative it is probably instructive for the Leader of the Opposition and in fact for all of us to understand that the department makes some 1.1 million positive decisions a year and that some of these TRPs are in those 1.1 million decisions a year, according to a very transparent and merit based system that the department exercises.

**Hon. Stephen Harper (Calgary Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Ethics Commissioner found that 98% of the rushed permits went to Liberals. Nobody is fooled that this is not on a partisan basis.

Members will remember that in the lead-up to May's confidence vote, the government staged a phony complete exoneration for the former minister here in the House. The Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and the

communications director of the Prime Minister all sang the former minister's innocence, which is not exactly what the report says.

When did the Prime Minister learn that this so-called complete exoneration was in fact a fabrication?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, clearly what the hon. member is doing is misstating the report. I have not had the opportunity to read it, but it is my understanding that the Ethics Commissioner came to the conclusion that there was no personal wrongdoing on the part of the hon. member.

There is an independent Ethics Commissioner. I think it is very important that we not engage in innuendo and allegation here. The fact is that I have great confidence in the hon. member. I have expressed that before and I express it again today.

\* \* \*

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is important that the Prime Minister read the report before he exonerates the minister. It would be a nice change.

Canadians are facing some of the highest gas prices we have ever seen in this country. Meanwhile, the government continues to rake in massive gas tax revenues. The price of gas affects every single individual, family and business in the country. When is the government going to do something to lessen the burden on Canadians?

• (1420)

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the budget we have in fact taken steps to reduce the tax burden on Canadians. There was a proposal for about \$13 billion in savings over the course of the next five years, including increasing the minimum amount that is tax exempt, which will be going from \$8,000 to \$10,000. That will in fact put 860,000 Canadians of low income off the tax rolls altogether.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that rhetoric and 90¢ will buy us a litre of gas. We are asking about gas taxes here. The government is rolling in gas tax revenue right now. Canadians, though, are getting hosed at the pumps, in part due to high taxes.

The government charges GST on top of all the other taxes on gas, which leads to still higher prices. When will the finance minister commit to ending this government sponsored price gouging and simply axe the tax on tax?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have taken two steps specifically in relation to this measure.

First, in an earlier gas spike not very many months ago, we earmarked the proceeds from that period of time to the medical equipment fund, which was in fact in the \$41 billion that we are transferring to the provinces to improve medicare. Now we are transferring half of the gas tax, ramping up half of the gas tax, to Canadian municipalities to help to pay for their infrastructure.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with the arrival of the summer holidays, gasoline prices continue to climb. There is a paradox here. Whenever oil prices soar, prices at the pump immediately follow suit. Conversely, when oil prices drop, quite often, retail gas prices do not immediately reflect that slide.

Does the Prime Minister realize that oil and gas companies are taking advantage of the inaction of this government, which continues to sit on the sidelines and do nothing to rectify this rather particular situation?

*[English]*

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Competition Bureau has reviewed gasoline pricing a number of times over the last 10 years and has never found any evidence of collusion. The price of oil and gas is internationally determined. The setting and control of gasoline prices at the pump is a provincial responsibility.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are well aware that retail gas pricing is a provincial responsibility, but the Competition Act is a federal one. If they have not found anything, it is because this legislation has no teeth. That is the problem. The government also has the power to create a petroleum monitoring agency, something the Bloc Québécois has been demanding for a number of years.

Once again, is this government not proving that it is favouring the oil and gas companies over consumers?

*[English]*

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody needs to be reminded of what gasoline prices are out there. What we need to do is make sure that we have a good strong competition policy. I hope the hon. member and his party will vote for the amendments to the Competition Act that are in front of this Parliament.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, every time gas prices soar, we have proof that the federal government has not fulfilled its responsibilities as it might every time we have asked it to.

Will the Minister of Industry admit that, fluctuations in international prices aside, refinery profit margins are too high, and that the federal government still refuses to intervene in order to protect consumers? Why?

*[English]*

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the Competition Bureau has investigated gasoline pricing numerous times over the last 10 years. It has not found any evidence of conspiracy to fix prices.

If the hon. member has a complaint, it should be brought before the Competition Bureau. He and his party should support amendments to the Competition Act to give it more teeth.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Paul Crête (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government has the powers and the responsibility to look at competition issues. The lack of competition in the oil and gas sector creates such high gas prices for us.

Will the government admit that power is concentrated in the hands of the oil and gas companies because the refineries and the distributors in Canada are in fact one and the same, and they can do whatever they want with gas prices at the expense of consumers?

● (1425)

*[English]*

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say that the last people in the world who should be trying to figure out what a competitive market looks like are politicians and people like that. It should be left in the hands of experts. It should be left in the hands of an arm's length legal body like the Competition Bureau.

\* \* \*

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, the one who says he has kept every promise that he has ever made. It turns out that Bob Geldof does not agree. In fact, he is saying that the Prime Minister should stay home unless Canada is going to meet its obligations and keep its promise to the world.

Canadians are bothered by the fact that we are asked to stay home because we cannot keep our word to the world. Does this bother the Prime Minister enough that he is finally going to keep this promise?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe in the 0.7% and I would very much like to see Canada get there by the year 2015, but I am not going to make a commitment that I am not sure the government will be able to keep.

I believe it is important that governments say not just what they are going to do, but that they say how they are going to do it. I am telling members that the problem with international public policy is that too often commitments are made on the grounds of photo ops. I will not do that.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it says a lot about this Prime Minister's foreign policy that Khadafi wants him and Geldof does not. That is all I can say. Talk about photo ops.

Let me ask a question of the finance minister, if I may, because he quoted Bob Geldof yesterday. According to him, Canada was doing what Sir Bob was asking, but today Sir Bob himself contradicted the finance minister and in fact told the finance minister to stay home if he was not willing to keep Canada's promise to the world.

Would the minister like to quote Sir Bob today or would he finally get around to honouring Canada's commitment?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, let me quote Sir Bob from this morning. He said “a historic doubling of aid to Africa, which is precisely what is needed...all that Africa can absorb in terms of aid, because of a lack of infrastructure” and government “is a doubling of aid”. I am pleased to say that Canada's aid to Africa was doubled in the budget on February 23.

\* \* \*

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the ethics report on the former immigration minister contains new information that the Prime Minister's Office knew of the scandal immediately following the last election.

Why did the Prime Minister not act on it then? How can Parliament or the public have any confidence in the ethics code when the Prime Minister himself knew it had been violated but conspired to keep this scandal silent?

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as was said earlier, the report came out today and the government and the responsible ministers are reviewing the report. The Ethics Commissioner did his work. He provided that report to Parliament.

What is wrong is that the hon. members do not like the contents of that report, so they are attempting once again to discredit the Ethics Commissioner himself.

**Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister waited until the immigration scandal became public before he acted on it. He also waited until the sponsorship scandal became public before he acted on that scandal.

Why does the Prime Minister always wait until he gets caught before confronting corruption?

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the first question, in terms of my own staff, the report indicates, I am told, that my staff did act appropriately and there was no criticism of them.

In terms of the member's second question, the fact is that on the day the Auditor General's report was tabled in the House of Commons, we named the Gomery commission. The day I became Prime Minister, we cancelled the sponsorship program. The fact is that what we did was take immediate action because we believe that the truth will out and triumph. The fact is, get the facts out and we will act on them, and we have.

\* \* \*

● (1430)

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday I stated in question period that three years ago the U.S. had requested an IJC referral for the Devils Lake diversion and the Canadian government refused.

The environment minister claimed that is not true. I have a letter dated May 21, 2002, from former Canadian ambassador Michael Kergin, which states that the Liberal government declined a joint

referral. Why is the government trying to cover up the fact that it had an opportunity to have a joint referral to the IJC?

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us correct the record on this fact that has been circulating around here. The fact that the member has raised is absolutely not true. Canada has never refused to go to the IJC. We said at that time that on the preliminary project it might be premature, but we never denied and we never refused going to the IJC. On the contrary, on an earlier draft of the project, we simply said that we needed the full project to go on it, on the basis of the reality.

This is just wrong.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think the minister will want to rethink his answer.

Marc Grossman of the U.S. Department of State sent a letter on May 20, 2002 to the Canadian embassy inviting Canada to join the U.S. in making a reference to the IJC on the then proposed Devils Lake project. Ambassador Kergin replied in writing:

In the view of the Government of Canada, it is inappropriate to refer to the IJC a proposal, such as the potential Devils Lake project—

Why did the government blow such a great opportunity to make a joint referral to the IJC?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those members are not helping the cause of Lake Winnipeg and Canada by repeating false interpretations. At that time it was the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that claimed that the project was under review for environmental assessment, that was cancelled by North Dakota. At that time indeed, we rejected that argument. Members should get their facts right. It is strange that they only started expressing concern about Devils Lake this month. Before that they did not care.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BROADCASTING**

**Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if I understood the Minister of Canadian Heritage correctly yesterday, she said she cannot be both judge and jury, that she cannot act immediately, that she cannot appeal the CRTC decision on subscription radio before certain groups appeal the decision themselves.

Can the Minister of Canadian Heritage assure me that her words, as I have reproduced them, are a clear reflection of her thinking on the recent CRTC decision on subscription radio?

**Hon. Liza Frulla (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I did say yesterday that this is a highly complex decision and that it had taken the CRTC a year to reach it. We are going to take time to judge the repercussions.

Second, the groups or organizations wishing to appeal have 45 days to do so, and then we have 45 days to respond. We will meet our responsibilities and respond.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will read an excerpt from the Broadcasting Act. It states:

Where the Commission makes a decision to issue, amend or renew a licence, the Governor in Council may...on, on petition in writing...or on the Governor in Council's own motion, by order, set aside the decision or refer the decision back to the Commission for reconsideration and hearing of the matter by the Commission.

Why does the minister maintain that she needs to wait for certain groups to appeal before she acts, when the legislation clearly stipulates that she may do so on her own initiative?

• (1435)

**Hon. Liza Frulla (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the decision was released at 4 p.m. on Thursday. It took the CRTC a year to reach that decision and submit its recommendations to us.

As I said, the groups have 45 days to appeal and we have 45 days to respond. There is every indication that some groups will be appealing. We are, therefore, going to wait. In the meantime, we are studying the repercussions of the decision. I will not go back on my word.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage made it very clear yesterday that she cannot be both the judge and the judged regarding the CRTC's recent decision on subscription radio. The minister is, in fact, neither judge nor judged. Her role is to appeal, as permitted under the law.

Will the Minister of Canadian Heritage stop talking about being both defendant and judge, which is not relevant here, and will she do her duty and ensure the Canadian and Quebec culture is protected?

**Hon. Liza Frulla (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have to say, with all due respect to the opposition, that I do not need their advice on protecting Canadian and Quebec culture.

That said, all indications point to an appeal by certain groups. In the meantime, I repeat, the decision is a complex one. We are looking at it very thoroughly. I will carry out my responsibilities, as I always do, to protect Quebec and Canadian culture. That is the story of my life.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like the minister to add one chapter that is not blackened to the history of her life. At the moment, francophone Quebec culture has a mere 2.5% of all satellite radio programming, something the Union des artistes criticized as well this morning.

In the name of the cultural diversity so dear to her, will the Minister of Canadian Heritage act immediately, not wait for the others, not wait until certain groups decide to launch an appeal, but appeal the decision herself?

**Hon. Liza Frulla (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Minister responsible for Status of Women, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said I will carry out my responsibilities and so I will. I need no lessons from anyone. I will do it with full knowledge of the issue. Period.

[English]

**TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIPS CANADA**

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has not been forthright about the management of Technology Partnerships Canada.

For years this program has been justly criticized because virtually no money has been repaid, very few jobs have been created, and reviews and reports that have been promised have never materialized.

The Minister of Industry yesterday claimed that there have been no improper payments to lobbyists through the TPC program. If this is the case, why will the minister not release the results of the special audit today?

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the audit that we have done is part of a preventive audit that the department has undertaken as a proactive measure to ensure good administration.

We have found some anomalies in that consulting fees were paid to people to help clients apply for a TPC grant. Those grants have been extremely effective in helping to transform the technology of companies in Canada. They have helped create companies like Research in Motion.

We will continue to administer these programs with diligence.

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is over \$2 billion of taxpayers' money and taxpayers deserve to know how their money is being spent.

The fact is that three Liberal industry ministers in a row have promised public reviews of this program, yet not one has ever been presented to the House or to Canadians. Billions of dollars have been spent, millions of dollars have been wasted, yet this program remains shrouded in secrecy.

Why does the government continue to hide the facts of this program? Why has a special spin committee been set up at Industry Canada to do damage control on the audit? Why will the minister not release the audit?

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those hon. members have been attacking the technology partnerships program for as long as I can remember.

It is a program that is helping to transform technology in a lot of small and medium size companies in this country. A lot of them are in those members' ridings. A lot of those people are lobbying government for TPC grants.

It is a good program. We will be releasing the results of the audit that we are undertaking. We will be reforming the program.

• (1440)

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry has publicly admitted that money from the Technology Partnerships Canada program ended up in the wrong hands. Yet despite assurances that he will get to the bottom of it, the minister is delaying the release of his findings until September.

Canadians cannot handle another cover-up. If the Minister of Industry is really serious about getting to the bottom of this, will he ask the Auditor General to conduct a full audit so that Canadians can be assured of the truth?

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I already said yesterday in the House that we would be releasing the results of the audit in September.

The reality is the audit is not complete. The audits are very complex. If the Auditor General chooses to undertake an audit, and I believe she will, that will be done whether I ask her or not.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his optimism, but Canadians do not share it. I am quite certain he can understand why. They do not trust the government or its ability to manage funds properly.

Will the Prime Minister give his word that no moneys from the technology partnerships program found their way to the Liberal Party of Canada?

**Hon. David Emerson (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is the usual hogwash, innuendo, name calling, attempts to smear.

All of the money that was paid to consultants who were helping clients obtain TPC funding has been returned. All of it has been returned, every cent.

\* \* \*

#### ALBERTA FLOOD

**Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the province of Alberta has experienced significant rainfall resulting in severe flooding and the evacuation of many residents. While the situation has stabilized, numerous highways remain closed and there are several communities still under a local state of emergency.

Can the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness please inform the House what arrangements the federal government has in place in order to help in the recovery effort?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that the government expresses concern for all of those in Alberta who have been affected by the flood.

The Prime Minister has spoken with Premier Klein and the mayors from a number of affected communities. I am in regular contact with those on the ground, including mayors and provincial ministers.

I have offered assistance, be it military, financial or otherwise, if the province believes it is required. The province can request financial relief under the DFAA. I have indicated to the Government of Alberta that if it makes such a request, we will move quickly to respond.

#### Oral Questions

In fact, we should be able to advance dollars as soon as a provincial request is forthcoming.

\* \* \*

#### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is the first day of summer and Canadians are sparking up their barbecues.

Steak prices have not dropped, farm debt is rising and packer profits are soaring. We are living through the worst agricultural crisis in memory and two U.S. food giants are making out like bandits. Cargill and Tyson control over 80% of the slaughter capacity in this country.

What steps will the minister take to ensure a guaranteed floor price and protection against predatory pricing practices from these U.S. food giants?

**Hon. Andy Mitchell (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are a number of measures that need to take place.

First of all, we need to increase our capacity in this country for processing meat and that has increased by more than 30%. Second, we need to expand our marketplace simply beyond the United States. I am happy to say that we have regained access or established new access in 14 new marketplaces over the last year.

At the same time, we have provided either direct or indirect support to those in the cattle and beef industry and other ruminant industries, of over \$2 billion. We will continue to support those industries.

• (1445)

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am not talking about band-aid solutions to producers or allowing Tyson and Cargill to expand their slaughter capacity. We know that they control the shots on both sides of the border. The March 2005 boxed beef report says that packer profits have jumped sharply, while cattle prices have tanked. It is a virtual U.S. agri-monopoly.

What do we do with monopolies? We bust them up. When will the government stand up and bring in a regulatory pricing regime to insist that these U.S. profiteers are finally brought into line?

**Hon. Andy Mitchell (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising to have the NDP characterize \$2 billion as band-aids. That is in line with that party's philosophy.

Quite frankly, what we have done in terms of helping our cattle producers is to put in place a set aside program which has helped to stabilize the price. This has allowed them to get a much greater return from the marketplace than they otherwise would have.

The long term solution is to bring rationality back into the marketplace by balancing supply and demand. That is why it is important to increase our slaughter capacity. That is why it has increased by 30% over the last few months.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to privately owned health clinics, one of the biggest customers is the federal government itself.

The Canadian Forces spent \$1.3 million last year and \$1.6 million the year before that. Like the Supreme Court, the Canadian Forces recognize that wait times in the public system are far too long, so they are sending their patients elsewhere.

Is the Prime Minister opposed to our soldiers getting care from private clinics?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the Canadian Forces are not participating in the health care system with the provinces.

We get our health care where we can in conjunction with the needs for those services. We acquire them from the public health care system, but we do use private facilities when necessary to meet our unique occupational needs.

We have done that and we will continue to do that as we are not a part of the health care system of this country. We have unique characteristics and unique needs.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says that he is opposed to a two tier health system, but he gets his health care from a private clinic.

Correctional Service of Canada spent \$31 million on medical clinics and suppliers last year. The RCMP spent almost \$250 million on medical clinics. Neither distinguished between a privately owned clinic or a publicly owned clinic.

The real question is why do the likes of Clifford Olson and Paul Bernardo get health care ahead of ordinary Canadians?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that right from the inception of public health care, there have been groups that have been exempted from the Canada Health Act and from the public health system. They are the RCMP, the forces and the workers compensation boards.

If we now want to change that and embrace them within our public health care system, I am certainly prepared to take a look at that.

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday on a Vancouver radio show the Prime Minister claimed that wait times are coming down. The reality is that wait times have doubled under 10 years of Liberal government. There are no benchmarks. The government has no plan.

Will the Prime Minister admit that he misled Canadians and that there are no benchmarks for wait times in place?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is wrong. If we look at the experience in Saskatchewan, the wait times are coming down. If we look at the experience in Ontario, there will be a website that will be launched to monitor wait times. The fact is that the hon. member uttered complete hogwash about the Prime Minister misleading the House.

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is incorrect. I said that the Prime Minister misled all Canadians.

The Supreme Court has said that people are dying due to wait times. At the health committee last week a Liberal member blasted her own government for inadequate action on addressing wait times. The court decision proves that Liberal mismanagement and incompetence is wreaking havoc on the health of Canadians.

Does the Prime Minister agree with the Supreme Court, members of his backbench, and the vast majority of Canadians that the government has no credibility on health care?

• (1450)

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely wrong. We recognized the issue in the last election campaign. We provided \$41 billion for the next 10 years. The court has simply given expression to something that we recognized a year ago.

The opposition party wants to actually dismantle our health care system. Let me read from the Reform Party's 1995 taxpayers' budget. It stated:

Activities in the Department of Health would also be phased out as provinces assume their constitutionally-mandated responsibility for health care.

In that government, if it ever came to be, health care—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, members of civil society as well as undocumented immigrants are marching to Ottawa in order to make the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration aware of the need to resolve this situation, to stop the removals and to abolish security certificates. The minister has apparently said that he has submitted a regularization plan and would be obtaining cabinet approval shortly.

Does the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration intend to meet with the marchers and listen to their demands for a complete and inclusive regularization program?

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have met with various groups representing various segments of our society. I continue to meet with all those who are interested in making this great country their home. I am also following through on making changes to ensure that our immigration system is the best in the world.

**Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration also take this opportunity to listen to Amnesty International, the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who have all indicated that the lack of any appeal process is a major flaw in the Canadian refugee determination system?



*Oral Questions*

**L'hon. Joseph Volpe (ministre de la Citoyenneté et de l'Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that I listen and then take action, judging by the changes I have already presented this year in the House. For example, many more parents and grandparents are now being accepted. A system was implemented that will allow people with student visas to work while in school and another system will help regionalize the benefits of immigration. We—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a Quebecker was kidnapped in Haiti. She was tortured and held until a ransom was paid. When her family called to report it, the Department of Foreign Affairs advised them to call the Montreal police. Almost every time a Canadian is captured or tortured, the government does nothing.

When will the government protect its citizens abroad?

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that family has even thanked the Canadian government and the Department of Foreign Affairs for the excellent work we did in this regard.

Making public reference to a ransom is not a very responsible thing to do. The family asked specifically that we adopt the attitude we have taken.

We are asking Canadians not to travel to Haiti at this time, unless they have extremely important or urgent reasons for doing so. At present, the situation in terms of safety is precarious and difficult.

We will not comment on a specific case, in keeping with the family's wishes and our sense of duty.

[English]

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we just talked to the family member who made the call and she was not too impressed. It was the same situation when Bill Sampson was held prisoner in a foreign country for two years. He was tortured. Our government did virtually nothing. In fact, it was the British who helped the man escape.

When Zahra Kazemi was captured in Iran, she was beaten, tortured, raped and murdered. What was our government's response? We sent in our ambassador to normalize relations. In this situation, a frantic family member phones up after somebody has been kidnapped and is told to phone the Montreal police.

When will the government start speaking up for Canadians and putting some word of concern into the terrorists and the—

• (1455)

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can tell members that our government has always been vigilant. My parliamentary secretary has been paying a lot of attention to precisely those cases and has travelled around the world to help Canadians, as do our consular services. We have triple the

number of consular cases across Canada, given the situation we are in.

I can tell members that our embassies, consulates and consular services are there for Canadians. However, Canadians must take some responsibility as well and check with our website, and check the locations where they are travelling. We must take some responsibilities. The world out there is not always the way we would like it to be.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Northern Development.

June 21 is National Aboriginal Day, a day to recognize the contributions of first nations, Inuit and Métis to the development of Canada. I am delighted to extend my best wishes to the millions of Canadians celebrating National Aboriginal Day.

In recognition of this important day, will the Minister of State please tell the House what the government has done to close the gap that still exists and improve the quality of life for the first aboriginal peoples of Canada.

**Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Minister of State (Northern Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, National Aboriginal Day is the day of recognition for Canada's aboriginal people, and to acknowledge their contributions to Canada, their cultures, their traditions and their spirit as the first people of this country.

The past year has seen significant achievements. Last month the Government of Canada signed five accords with national organizations which reflect the renewed and strengthened relationship with first nations, Inuit and Métis people, and ensure a full partnership on issues that matter most to aboriginal people like health, education and housing.

\* \* \*

**CHINA**

**Ms. Helena Guergis (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister opposite continues to deny she gives money directly to China, but on the other hand, she will not deny she gives money to China indirectly, through her partners. When I asked her in committee today why her website lists various Chinese government ministries as the recipient of Canadian aid, the minister said it was not true. She said we could trust her.

Who is telling the truth, the minister or her department?

**Hon. Aileen Carroll (Minister of International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thought that this morning we had finally had a calm and reasonable discussion in committee. I had the opportunity to explain what bilateral means, what government to government means, and to explain in detail the fact that our NGOs are working in an incredible manner to fill their rule of law which is to help enhance the human rights concept on the part of the government.

I said then, and I will say now, the government and my agency do not give one cent to the government of China.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

Is it clear? Does the member understand this?

\* \* \*

[English]

**INFORMATION COMMISSIONER**

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today in committee, John Reid, the Information Commissioner of Canada, indicated that on March 17, 2005 he received a letter from the justice minister advising that his term would end on June 30. On June 15 the same justice minister voted in favour of the standing committee's fifth report calling for the commissioner's term to be extended for one year.

What is up with that?

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon has asked a question. I know he is waiting to hear the answer and so are all other hon. members. We will have some order in the House please while the President of the Treasury Board gives his answer.

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said the last time I was asked this question, we are looking into it. The motion was just passed. We will prepare the necessary documents. I will be discussing it with the Minister of Justice. What is up with that?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, former defence minister Paul Hellyer has said he was misinformed, deceived even, by the military of the day, and was not told the whole truth about the use of agent orange, an extremely harmful defoliant, at CFB Gagetown during the 1960s.

Does the present Minister of National Defence intend to take action and to intervene with the military authorities in order to ensure that they give him all the information they have available? How, in particular, does he intend to ensure that what they are telling him is true?

• (1500)

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said on several occasions in the House, these events happened 45 years ago. We are making every effort to determine what happened.

This morning, experts appeared before the committee to answer members' questions. This week, some people will be going to Gagetown, New Brunswick to inform the public and to try to determine all the facts and find out who was affected. We will then be determining what compensation can be offered to those affected by these dangerous products.

[English]

**REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES**

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, approximately one year ago, the 37th Parliament passed a bill on reproductive technologies, first, to prohibit such things as human cloning, and second, to control certain activities such as experimentation on human embryos. Before such controlled activities can come under the law, regulations must be drafted, submitted to the health committee for comment, be amended as necessary, and then be promulgated.

Can the Minister of Health advise when the required regulations will be forthcoming, so that the law restricting experimentation on human embryos can be enacted?

**Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, regulation in this area would require consultation with Canadians across the country. We are in the process of doing that. We will be drafting regulations and then, of course, presenting them to the committee.

Last May 9 I announced the agency's location in Vancouver. It will be operational by early 2006 and the recruitment process of the agency's board of directors is already under way.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**VIETNAM**

**Hon. David Kilgour (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Canada has been involved in training judges in Vietnam in order to help it reform its legal system.

[English]

The government of Vietnam continues to arrest and sentence individuals for their religious beliefs and peaceful expression of views, and charges them with things like sowing division among the people and undermining state and party unity.

[Translation]

Would it not be time now to consider other options to help Vietnam reform its legal system in order to produce tangible results?

[English]

**Hon. Aileen Carroll (Minister of International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know how concerned the member is about assisting countries such as Vietnam and bringing them forward into a better understanding of democratic practices. We have a number of excellent programs in Vietnam. Some are in the training of the judiciary and our legal NGOs are building a number of legal capacity dimensions. I think that the work that CIDA has undertaken with Vietnam, which is one of our development partners, is indeed moving that country in the direction wished by the hon. member.

## POINTS OF ORDER

### GOVERNMENT MOTION NO. 17

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with regard to Government Motion No. 17, which was put on notice yesterday and was under embargo.

Since the deadline for tabling motions is 6 p.m., I would argue that an embargoed motion cannot go on beyond that time. Indeed, I was unable to access the motion until 12:25 a.m. today and I would argue that Motion No. 17 should not be allowed to be called for debate until Thursday, June 23, for two reasons.

First, I should have been able to access the motion at 6 p.m. last night. The failure to have access to Motion No. 17 at that time should carry over by one day the notice requirement period.

Second, the notice was inaccessible until after Monday, June 20, at midnight.

Therefore I would argue that the earliest Motion No. 17 could be called is at 12:25 a.m. on Thursday.

• (1505)

**Hon. Tony Valeri (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would make the point that in terms of providing the motion, we met every requirement and every compliance. It went on notice as it should have. It was on the Order Paper today and there is an opportunity to call the motion on Wednesday.

I understand the hon. member across the way does not want to debate the motion and does not want to stay here and deal with the legislation that we are dealing with, which is why he is making this point of order. However I would submit that we have complied with every requirement in putting this on notice.

I expect you will consider that, Mr. Speaker, when you ultimately decide on whether the point of order has any merit.

**The Speaker:** The Chair will look into the matter raised by the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River. Let me say that we are not accustomed to having these late night sittings at the end of June. We have not had them for a number of years. Last year, as members will recall, we were not sitting in June and the year before we did not bother with the late night sittings, as I recall. It is something on which I am not as familiar as I would like to be, otherwise I would be rattling off an answer for the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River off the top of my head.

I might do it now and wing it but I would rather convince him that my argument is correct in presenting it. I know I have to convince all members but I must convince the member because he raised this. Therefore I will take a little time and come back with an answer a little later this afternoon because I would not want him upset if the motion got called tomorrow for some strange reason and he thought it could not be called until 12:25 a.m. on Thursday. I will get on to this and see what I can do.

### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House to table a letter dated May 21, 2002 from the former Canadian ambassador,

### *Points of Order*

Michael Kergin, to Mark Grossman, under-secretary of the U.S. state department, in which he stated that this government declined a joint referral.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul have the unanimous consent of the House to table this letter?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE RAISED BY MEMBER FOR AHUNTSIC

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Liberal member for Ahuntsic rose in the House on a speech that I had given with regard to changes to the Elections Act. I would like to read into the record exactly what I said so that she clearly understands it. The first sentence reads:

In the member's last presentation, he spoke about how even current presidents of Liberal riding associations have actually been appointed to be the returning officers in their ridings.

The second sentence reads:

He listed specifically the riding of Ahuntsic, where the returning officer was the president of the Liberal riding association.

The third sentence reads:

If that is not a spurious and strange conflict of interest, I do not know what is.

The first sentence, which is what the Bloc member said about current presidents of Liberal riding associations being appointed, is true.

The second sentence, in which he specifically mentioned the riding of Ahuntsic where the returning officer was the president of the Liberal riding association, is also true.

The third sentence, which is where I said that it was a spurious and I believe strange conflict of interest, is a matter of debate.

I think the hon. member's issue was that the person who was appointed was indeed a former president. My second sentence stated that. She has taken umbrage with the idea that he was not the current sitting president.

Mr. Speaker, if you read the record, you will find that it is a matter of debate.

• (1510)

**Hon. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Social Development (Social Economy), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should take the time to read what I read into the record yesterday.

I will repeat what I said yesterday because he may be interested in my words. He maligns character. Character assassination in the House is the sport of choice of the Conservative Party with no consideration for the truth.

Here is another example of wallowing in the mud by that particular member for Calgary West. In fact, he did not say what he said he read into the record. He does not even have the courtesy that the Bloc did to actually withdraw his remarks. He has no respect for the House and no respect for Canadians out there.

*Government Orders*

**The Speaker:** The Chair will examine the remarks made by both hon. members but I must say that I do feel we are getting into debate here. As I say, I will look at the documents that the hon. members has referred to and the arguments put forward by the hon. member for Ahuntsic and come back to the House, if necessary, but as I say, I think we are getting into debate here and it is probably just as well we move on to something else.

\* \* \*

**REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE**

SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** This morning the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul requested an emergency debate pursuant to Standing Order 52 for the purpose of discussing North Dakota's intention to proceed with the Devils Lake diversion. I have considered the hon. member's request and decided to grant it.

The difficulty the Chair is facing at the moment is the wording of the Standing Orders in respect of this because they do not contemplate what we do when we are sitting until midnight.

---

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

**AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MINISTER OF FINANCE  
TO MAKE CERTAIN PAYMENTS**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-48, An Act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the Motions in Group No. 1.

**Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, discussions have taken place between all parties with respect to the report stage of Bill C-48 and I believe you would find consent for the following motion. I move:

That notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of this House, at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 21, all questions necessary to dispose of report stage of Bill C-48, an act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments, shall be deemed put, recorded divisions deemed requested and the said divisions taken immediately without deferral; and,

That should the said debate collapse before 7 p.m. today, all questions necessary to dispose of report stage of Bill C-48 be deemed put, the recorded division deemed requested and deferred to 7 p.m. today.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Jay Hill:** Mr. Speaker, just for clarification. We certainly are in agreement with the government. The government whip is quite correct in saying that there have been discussions, I believe, between all the parties on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, would it be your intent then to immediately follow the vote with the emergency debate which would then be between the hours of 7:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. approximately?

**The Speaker:** If that is the agreement of the House, certainly it would make it possible because if we consider that the House then

reaches its adjournment hour the emergency debate would proceed until 12 o'clock, which is what the Standing Orders provide for.

If this motion is agreeable, I would be quite delighted if the emergency debate could be held then rather than after midnight which I think would be highly inconvenient.

Let me put it to members this way. It is understood that if this motion is agreed to, we would start the emergency debate after the votes have been taken and that would go until midnight as provided in the Standing Orders. Is that agreeable?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. chief government whip have the unanimous consent to move the motion on the understanding I have outlined?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

• (1515)

**Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know all Canadians who are watching the debate today are looking forward to the next five minutes.

About three years ago in a speech to the House I made the statement that the Liberal government would go down as the most corrupt government in the history of Canadian politics. Little did I know in saying that just how prophetic that statement would be.

We have seen corruption through the ad scam issue, payoffs to Liberal friends and payoffs into party coffers to run campaigns. We have seen deals made with the socialist NDP in the corner to allow the Liberals, despite their corruption record and despite their record of mismanagement and lack of priority spending, to keep their political *Titanic* afloat. I am just amazed how it goes on and on.

Today we heard from the member for Ahuntsic and our member for Calgary West. An accusation was made by one of the Bloc members that in the riding of Ahuntsic the Liberal government appointed a former Liberal president as the returning officer in the last election.

One wonders what can the Liberals do next to demonstrate to the Canadian people that they will go down in history as the most corrupt government we have ever known in Canadian politics.

Bill C-48, the deal with the NDP, brokered by Buzz Hargrove, promises to spend an additional \$4.5 billion over and above the Bill C-43 budget, which we were willing to support it in about three or four different areas. However, like so many of the previous Liberal budgets, they outline vague spending plans without any real and solid facts about how they will spend that money.

*Government Orders*

I do not know how the NDP could accept such vague promises from the Liberal government given the fact that so many of their members have sat here for 12 years and have seen promise after promise broken by the Liberals, going back to 1993 to the famous red book and the promises broken then. The NDP itself continued to chastise the Liberal government about those broken promises. Now the Liberals say that if the NDP supports them and keeps them afloat, they will promise to spend another \$4.5 billion dollars on things the NDP members want. I am sure they know it is not slated to kick in until some time next year.

I would have to be pretty darned hard up to accept a promise from the Liberal government about money that may be coming next year sometime, given the record of broken promises about which the NDP know. We have seen the record of broken promises.

I want to sum up with some promises that I think the Liberals have demonstrated they are capable of keeping. I have a list of 10. I call it the top 10 of probable promises that could be kept by the Liberals.

Promise one is they will continue corruption, graft, payoff to their friends and their party campaigns.

• (1520)

Promise two is they probably will keep continued high taxes and mismanagement.

Promise three is the reckless spending, with no plans.

Promise four is they will continue to support the same sex marriage in spite of the fact that a vast majority of Canadians do not want that type of legislation.

Promise five is likely they will keep continued loopholes in the child pornography laws that allow perverts and pedophiles to possess certain types of child pornography for, as the Liberals term it, artistic purposes.

Promise six is they will to continue their discrimination against single income families.

Promise seven is they will continue the slap on the wrist penalties for violent criminals in our society and they will continue to use conditional sentencing when dealing with convicted violent criminals in our society.

Promise eight is they will continue to oppose raising the age of sexual consent from 14 to 16. They have demonstrated that they are not going anywhere on that.

Promise nine is they will continue pouring millions of dollars into the useless gun registry program. They clearly have said they will do that.

Promise ten is the Prime Minister will keep his ship in the Barbados tax haven that he himself helped to create.

My Blackberry went off. I have it set on corruption alert. I think we had better have someone check the government out to see what is going on right now.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the experienced

member knows, we are not allow to use gimmicks in the House. I am sure he will apologize to the House when he gets up for his answer.

Let us just recap, for those who were not here yesterday. As members will remember, yesterday morning the Conservatives embarrassed themselves by not having anyone who could discuss the bill. In the afternoon a member made an excellent presentation on affordable housing. However, the rest of the members were using the same speech from the researchers, with the exact same sentences and words. It looks like they are starting down the same path today by not speaking about the bill.

He mentioned 10 topics and none had anything to do with the bill. However, perhaps the member could comment on the elements of the bill. I know it is very difficult. I have sympathy for the members opposite. Their party is the only one in the House that could possibly argue against transit, or clean air for Canadians, or foreign aid for those in need in other nations, or assistance for children who cannot get even one full meal a day, or affordable housing so other people in Canada can have a chance to have a house for their families like the rest of us and or post-secondary education, especially for aboriginal people who may not have that opportunity.

Could the member comment on one or four of the elements in the bill?

**Mr. Richard Harris:** Mr. Speaker, the three or four areas of spending that appear in Bill C-48 as a result of the hotel room deal that was made with Buzz Hargrove and the NDP may have some merit in the essence of them, but there is no defined commitment or detail on where the money will go.

The government and the member for Yukon are basically asking us to accept that the ministers would be given a blank cheque of \$4.5 billion to develop some programs on whatever the flavour of the day might be. Business is not done that way. If they thought those programs were so important, then they should have been included in the original budget. When the finance minister was creating the 2005-06 budget, which became Bill C-43, those items should have been included in it and defined in a way that would show how the money would be spent and what the results of that spending would be. Then it could have been sent to the finance committee for debate and amendments rather than trying to ram Bill C-48 through the House as a result of a deal made on the back of a napkin with people who are not even politicians. This deal was made with the NDP to help the Liberals keep their sinking government ship afloat.

There is a procedure to introduce spending in the House and it must be accompanied by a defined plan on how the money will be spent and how it will be accounted. That is not present in Bill C-48. We will never support a bill like that in the House. It is absolutely irresponsible. The Conservative Party is not an irresponsible party. We are responsible and we will show that when we form the government in the next election.

*Government Orders*

● (1525)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are insisting that something is missing out of Bill C-48. They are insisting there is no indication in the bill as to how the money would be spent. If those members would be honest and upfront with Canadians, they would tell them the truth. The approach used in Bill C-48 is the same approach in each and every budget. It is written down in a general way where the money will go, but we do not get all the specifics.

Just for once those members should try to be honest with Canadians.

**Mr. Richard Harris:** Mr. Speaker, I implore the Liberals to be transparent with Canadians, to be accountable to Canadians, to be honest with Canadians when they put spending amounts forward in the form of legislation. Bill C-48 contains nothing of that. The Conservative Party and I will not vote in support of it, ever.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Discussions have taken place between all parties concerning this evening's proceedings pursuant to Standing Order 52 and I believe you will find consent for the following motion. I move:

That during today's proceedings pursuant to Standing Order 52, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be entertained by the Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

**AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MINISTER OF FINANCE TO MAKE CERTAIN PAYMENTS**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-48, an Act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take just a minute to speak on Bill C-48.

Contrary to what the opposition has been claiming, this is not the budget. The budget per se of course is a document that is read in the House and tabled under a ways and means motion. We then have a list of companion bills to implement the overall thrust of the budget.

The first one, the main budget bill, was Bill C-43. It was adopted and sent to the other place. Now we have the second, the companion bill, pursuant to an agreement that was made between two parties of the House, and which I must say in my opinion improves upon the document that was there already. It delivers additional benefits to Canadians.

It does not rewrite the budget. It is not a new budget. It is nothing of the sort. That is simply nonsense. If we did all that, if it was an overall change of the kind described by the Conservatives across the way, we certainly would not be affecting only a small fraction of the budget.

Let us get a few facts straight, because we are a little short on facts today. That is mainly due to the fact that too many Conservatives have spoken and not enough Liberals. That would provide a shortage of facts. This is definitely too heavily weighted on the Conservative side.

Let me bring a few things in balance which might assist the House, hopefully convince the Conservatives of the error of their ways, and perhaps even convince them to vote for Bill C-48.

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**Hon. Don Boudria:** I hear the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke heckling. I was writing my memoirs and reminding myself of the day that I went to make an announcement in Haley Station in her riding. The evening before, my staff gave advance information to the hon. member. Instead of respecting the usual rules of confidentiality, she leaked the whole thing to the media, trying to grab a few of the headlines, and even invented for herself some praise as to how she had influenced the process.

The story gets a little bit funnier, because a little later after the announcement was made we returned to the House and the hon. member's seatmate was standing right beside her questioning the same program that she had been praising in her own riding just a few minutes before, namely, the technology partnership program. Thus, we had an Alliance MP, now called Conservative, which is the same thing anyway, standing in the House telling the Prime Minister that, first, it was terrible that we had the technology partnership program and, second, that it assisted companies like Bombardier.

Meanwhile, the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, still wearing egg on her face from what she had just done, was sitting right beside the member and it was obviously unbeknownst to her that her colleague was criticizing the program that not only was she complimenting but was taking credit for bringing to her own constituency.

That tells us of the Conservatives' inconsistency and how they can be wrong about good Liberal programs. In that case, and it is a rare exception, the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke was right in praising the program. She was wrong in taking credit for it, of course, and we all know that, but she at least was on the right track in that regard.

In any event, let us get back to the fiscal and economic facts of Canada. It is important for us to note that under this very competent Liberal government we have had eight consecutive budgetary surpluses, reducing our federal debt by \$61 billion.

*Government Orders*

• (1530)

The House would no doubt want to know how many times the previous Conservative government had a balanced budget and a budgetary surplus. How about zero for the previous Conservative government? It never had a balanced budget, not even once, let alone the repayment of old debt. More than half of the accumulated debt of this country was generated between 1984 and 1993 when I sat on the opposition benches there, watching the Conservative government of the day.

Canada was the only G-7 nation to record a surplus in 2004. You would know that, Mr. Speaker, being the independent, objective person that you are. Canada is the only G-7 country expected to remain in surplus in 2005-06, that is, with the passage of Bill C-43 and Bill C-48, we will be the only G-7 country to be in a surplus.

I remind the House of what I said a few moments ago about the Conservative years. That is the reality. They can try to spin it every which way they like, but it does not change facts.

Let me get to some other facts here. The debt to GDP ratio of this country, that is, the debt to gross domestic product ratio, is now 41%. Shortly after we took power it had risen to 68%. It went from the second highest in the G-7 to now the lowest debt to GDP ratio, thanks to the Liberal government that we have now. The hon. members across the way obviously did not know of this when they said they were against Bill C-48. Perhaps listening to these clarifications will make them change their minds.

• (1535)

[Translation]

Furthermore, there are tax cuts of \$100 billion for Canadians. The Conservative members do not mention this, of course.

We could talk about corporate taxes, which are in many ways more advantageous here than in the States. The *Economist* says that, in terms of a political environment attractive to investment, Canada is second in the world behind Denmark and ahead of the United States. This is an achievement of our government.

The members opposite do not mention this. They might do well to listen. Better yet, I have statistics that might convince a reasonable person who thought otherwise. This might leave out some of the members opposite, as they are not always reasonable.

We have increased our commitment to health care. There is a lot of discussion about that. We made \$63 billion available in support to the provinces for health care between 2000-01 and 2007-08. We provided more money for the child tax credit. We improved the Canada pension plan by investing funds and by creating the regulatory framework that everyone is familiar with.

[English]

We have invested. A little earlier today, one Conservative member was speaking about investing, a member for whom I have a lot of respect and who is usually knowledgeable on issues involving research and so on. I am sorry, but I forget the name of his riding. He talked about not investing enough in research and innovation.

I do not know how much is enough, but we have invested \$13 billion in research and innovation, turning Canadian universities and

research centres into world leaders, including, for instance, the synchrotron in the province of Saskatchewan, which I had the pleasure of visiting during my last days as a minister. I guess time flies; it is a year and a half now since I have had such a function.

Let us end by talking about unemployment. The Canadian economy created 35,000 jobs last month alone. There is 6.8% unemployment now in Canada, compared to 11.2% when we took power, and three million more Canadians are working today than when we were elected. I will be leaving in the next election, but I will be proud that three million more Canadians are working since I crossed from the opposite side of the floor to this one.

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the finance minister spoke in this House when he was talking about his budget. He said he had consulted many Canadians and had arrived at a balanced budget. In fact, when the Leader of the Opposition spoke to him to see if he would make any changes to the budget, he said only technical changes, not substantial changes.

Yet when the government was faced with a non-confidence vote, it was prepared to spend \$4.6 billion to buy the support of the NDP members, simply for the purpose of staying in government. In addition to this, we found that constitutionally when a motion of confidence is raised in this House, directly or indirectly, there is an obligation on the Prime Minister to call a non-confidence vote of his own. For a week, without any constitutional authority to continue to govern in this House, in my mind, he used the levers of power and the levers of government to buy additional votes simply to stay in power.

Furthermore, the member has indicated that he has visited Saskatchewan. He should have visited Saskatchewan more recently, when there were 49 auction sales in my constituency and 179 auction sales in Saskatchewan. Farmers are going through the greatest crisis of their lifetimes. Husbands and wives and sons and daughters are working to try to survive on the farm. It is the greatest crisis they have ever faced.

Meanwhile, this government is throwing around \$4.6 billion. It is making a deal with the NDP and spending \$4.6 billion but with nothing for the farmers of Saskatchewan in that deal when they are in the greatest crisis of their lives. Why is that?

• (1540)

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I sympathize very much with the plight of farmers, both in the constituency that I represent and the hon. member's riding.

*Government Orders*

I do not think the hon. member was here in the previous Parliament, or perhaps he was, when a number of us worked together in the hay west campaign to assist people in another part of the country. The member may remember my involvement in that campaign. The Saskatchewan federation of municipalities gave me recognition in that regard and I appreciated it very much.

On the issue of assistance to farmers, the hon. member will know, of course, that although it is not part of the companion document, it was part of the other one. The hon. member will know that.

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki:** Small units—

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, he asked a question. He should listen to the answer.

The hon. member is arguing, of course, that there is not enough assistance to agriculture. For the beef producers of my area, and of course for the dairy producers and in regard to the cull cattle and so on, there is only one long term solution and that is opening up the Canada-U.S. border. We all know, of course, that this is the case. Some 50% of all the cattle produced in Canada are for export.

The hon. member asked me to comment on the legitimacy of the government. I believe he asked a question about the confidence vote. He will know that a motion referring something to a committee is not a confidence vote. No one really believes that, and I suspect that not even he does.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (British Columbia Southern Interior, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I heard the hon. member mention that he was writing his memoirs. While I disagree radically with the hon. member's politics, I do respect that he is someone who likes to get things right and who works very hard at his job. I would like to make three points for the hon. member relative to what he said today.

First of all, he kept referring to the Conservative Party under Brian Mulroney and in the past. I would like to remind the member that his was the Progressive Conservative Party. Like the Alliance Party, and certainly like the government with all its faults now, each of us had some problems in the past, so we formed a new party using the best of both of those organizations, with a new policy and a completely new platform. He is talking apples and oranges.

Second, the Progressive Conservative Party that he refers to as adding this high amount to the debt was subject to the highest interest rates in my entire lifetime, international interest rates, not Canadian interest rates. Around the world at that time, interest rates were the highest that they have ever been in my lifetime. Right now, this government, while taking credit for what it is doing, is subject to the lowest interest rates in my entire lifetime.

Finally, the point I would like to make to the member is that the highest amount of debt that we have ever had in one year in this country, adjusted for constant dollars, was under a Liberal finance minister named Jean Chrétien.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for some of his points. He talked about the high interest rates. I remind him that when the interest rates were at their high during the Reagan right-wing years, the Canadian rates were higher than the U.S. rates. Under this government the Canadian rates have been at par with or often lower than the U.S. rates because of the excellent management.

The hon. member corrected me about the Progressive Conservatives versus the present Conservatives and I do apologize for that. I do not want anyone across the way to think that I accused them of being progressive.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was certainly pleased to hear the member's speech. I would like to bring the member up to date on some other facts, because he gave us many facts. I will start with 12 or 14 years ago when we became involved in what are real problems for this country. That of course was the serious debt that the country was getting into.

I remind him that in 1969 we had zero debt. Under Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Chrétien, who were then the prime minister and the finance minister, it went to \$18 billion by 1971. By 1984 it was up to \$170 billion to \$180 billion. From there it went up to \$480 billion by 1993. Of course today it is at \$530 billion. Basically, some \$40 billion a year is spent simply on interest payments.

That is what concerned us. That is why we came here. Our philosophy was to leave money in people's pockets, let them spend it with less government, less bureaucracy. That was the philosophical reason behind why we came here.

Of course, we came to a tax and spend Liberal government and that has not changed. The fiscal recklessness of that party is only demonstrated by Bill C-48, the Buzz Hargrove budget, where \$4.6 billion was spent to buy 19 votes in a hotel room in Toronto.

My constituents are seniors and low income single moms who have to pay their income tax. They are farmers who have the lowest grain prices they have had for many years. They are young farmers who are losing their farms because they cannot make their mortgage payments because of the cattle crisis. Imagine what they think about this hotel room budget drawn up on a serviette. Really it is a blank cheque.

I remind the NDP and the Liberals that is the way to get sponsorship, to get ad scam, the way to get Shawinigate, the HRDC boondoggle and the gun registry, the nine foundations where money has been socked away unaccounted for and not audited. That is how to get a blank cheque which is what we have received from this. There are few details. There is no accountability. Certainly from my perspective and from my constituents' perspective, this is a disgrace.

As far as the environment is concerned, there is \$900 million budgeted and \$800 million for rapid transit. Obviously we think that is a worthwhile project. We would like to see some details, however. We would like to know how that is going to be invested, how it is going to be accounted for, and how we are not going to lose it all in bureaucracy. As far as the \$100 million that environment gets, again I am sure that the Liberals will find a way to dispose of that with no business plan, no vision and really no long term planning.



*Government Orders*

What else has the government done? The last speaker talked about how great we are and how we are leaders in so many areas. Let me mention a few examples, and I hope the member has his pen in hand so he can take notes on this. As the critic for the environment, I feel it is my job to read into the record some of the statistics for the member's benefit. He and I have been here quite a while now, he for much longer than I have, but he would be interested in this.

In terms of sulphur dioxide, the OECD rates us 27th in terms of our release per capita out of 28 countries. For nitrous oxide, we are 25th out of 28. For volatile organic compounds, we are 25th out of 26 analyzed. Does that possibly let the member know why we have a record number of smog days in Toronto, Ottawa and many other cities? If he looked at those figures, he would see that we are at the bottom or within one position of the bottom. For carbon monoxide, we are 26th out of 27. For greenhouse gas emissions, we are 27th out of 29. For water consumption, we are 28th out of 29.

• (1545)

I will try to go a little slower so the member can get all of this down. In terms of energy consumption, Canada is 27th out of 29. For energy efficiency, we are 28th out of 29. In terms of recycling glass and paper, we are 23rd out of 27. For hazardous waste production, we are 24th out of 27. For nuclear waste and storage, we are 28th out of 28. For consumption of ozone and ozone depleting substances, we are 13th out of 16 analyzed. For fertilizer use, we are 25th out of 28. For the volume of fish caught, kilogram per capita, we are 20th out of 28. For forest consumption in cubic metres per capita, we are 27th out of 29.

Members can see that this country is at the bottom in terms of environmental rating. That is not the kind of stewardship that I think the member would like to brag about. Obviously he decided to ignore some of those figures in his comments when he was bragging about where we were at.

Again I come back to the taxpayers who are asking, "What is happening? What is the government doing? How can it come up with a budget of \$4.6 billion after it has already come out with a budget of \$170 billion plus? How can it do that?" It is strictly politics. The Liberals are playing politics with our country.

Members who have travelled very much can see that when they go to other countries. They see how our influence is declining. We are not able to maintain the status we used to have largely because the government has lacked vision. It has lacked a vision of where we are going. There is no plan. There are no details. The government has no direction.

As a result, while the last speaker said that our country is a great success story, I would put forward from an environmental perspective that it is anything but that. Actually, we have a long way to go. When we talk about it, we should put some options forward.

What would the Conservatives do? I have elaborated a number of times in the House on some of the things we would deal with. We would deal with a clean air plan. That would deal with all of the products that are producing the pollution and smog that is infecting our cities and causing health problems for so many of our seniors and young people.

We would deal with the water. We would map our aquifers and deal with how our water exchange is occurring. We would plan with the provinces just how to deal with that. We would deal with the cross-border issues. Whether it is the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, Devils Lake or the Fraser Valley and the Sumas River, we would deal with those as issues and we would have a plan. The environment takes long term planning.

In terms of soil, we have contaminated sites. Just about every municipality has brownfields, such as a street corner where a service station used to be but which closed long ago. Services pass and the municipality gets no taxes from that area. If we really want to help municipalities, we can help them find solutions to clean up those brownfields.

Along with that, of course, there is conservation. There is preservation of our watersheds. That becomes most pertinent when we look at some of the flooding and so on that is occurring today.

Finally, we need to deal with energy. We need to deal with how we are going to protect our present fossil fuel industries in the long term, how we are going to develop conservation, transitional fuels, alternate energy and all those exciting areas we can get into.

Above all, it takes vision. It takes a plan. I say that Bill C-48 is an example of no plan, no direction and is considered to be totally despicable by the constituents in my riding.

• (1550)

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague invited me to note some of his remarks. I was pleased to listen to the entire speech, but there were a couple of things missing from what he said.

The hon. member talked about the environment. It is a big concern for many of us. He no doubt will remember that it was his own party, perhaps under his leadership—I forget whether he was the environment critic then—that opposed so ferociously the Kyoto accord, where all countries need to get together to improve on the quality of the environment.

I live in the province of Ontario downwind from the Ohio-Mississippi Valley. I know what it is like to live in the area of that smog. I have lived here all my life. Most of that smog is generated in the United States, more particularly, a lot of it in the states of Ohio and Michigan.

In addition, he will no doubt know that under the Conservative premiership of Mike Harris and his successor in Ontario, there was no action on the plans which probably by now would have shut down the largest source of pollution in North America, the Nanticoke coal fired generating station on the shores of Lake Erie. None of this happened after the years of Conservative government that we had in Ontario. The Government of Canada does not generate electricity at Nanticoke. That is the largest single source of pollution.

Second, I never was satisfied, nor were my constituents, as to why the member so vehemently opposed the Kyoto protocol enabling Canada and other countries to get together, put pressure on the United States and anyone else who is not joining in so that we can together fight the pollution that exists in the northern hemisphere.

*Government Orders*

•(1555)

**Mr. Bob Mills:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question gives me an opportunity to explain to him and this House again why supporting Kyoto is just a pipe dream, why it is not going to achieve any of the things that he supposes it might.

I should remind him as well that it was the Liberal government that last week decided not to close the coal fired power plants. I would like to explain to him again as simply as I can that Kyoto is about greenhouse gases, largely CO<sub>2</sub>. CO<sub>2</sub> is not part of pollution. It is not part of smog days. Smog is caused by sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxide, particulate matter and surface ozone. That is what smog is. If every country in the world signed on to Kyoto and lived up to Kyoto, it would not change the smog issue very much because it is not targeting the right thing.

The bureaucracy of the whole Kyoto protocol is what the problem is. The problem as well is that the U.S., China and India are not part of this whole program.

I am glad he brought up coal because coal is pretty interesting. What would we do? We would promote the gasification of coal, technology that is 60 years old that is being used in other places and that is being really promoted in the U.S. Think if we developed that technology and became world leaders. We have enough coal in Canada to last us several hundred years. The Americans have approximately 1,500 years' supply of coal. Think about gasifying that.

Right now, if we developed that technology and could promote that technology, think of what we would do. Some 81% of China's electricity comes from coal; 78% of India's electricity comes from coal; 57% of the United States' energy comes from coal; 25% of Ontario's energy comes from coal; 70% of Alberta's energy comes from coal. Think if we developed the technology how much better it would be to market that technology around the world than it would be to send money to foreign countries so that they can develop the technology and compete with us.

How does that make any sense at all, sending money offshore when we could develop it and use a made in Canada development of technology? That is why we oppose it, because it is not going to accomplish the targets. We will not hit our targets and neither will most other countries signing on to Kyoto.

•(1600)

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was ready to ask a question which I have been trying to do all day, but I am happy to enter the debate and then perhaps we could still have an exchange.

It was disappointing to hear the comments made by the member for Red Deer about how much his party would like to see real development of clean coal technology as part of the answer to the climate change problem that we are dealing with.

One of the things that the Liberal government did when the finance minister, now the Prime Minister, decided to swing a meat axe at public spending in general was to make the biggest cuts to environment spending in the history of this country.

The Conservative Party, and to be fair it was then the Reform Party before it became the Alliance, was absolutely silent on the decision of the government to shut down important research that was taking place at the time in Cape Breton in the coal industry. His party was silent on how to develop clean coal technology, to get it on track, and to ensure that we could both continue to use coal in a safer, cleaner way and at the same time continue to be responsible to meet our environmental commitments.

In some ways, one of the things that makes this debate hard to stomach is the fact that we hear day after day from the Conservative members of the House about the sins and omissions of the Liberal government. For the last couple of weeks since the devastating Supreme Court decision on health care, we have heard from the Conservative benches again and again that our health care system is in crisis. We have heard how we now have two tier health care alive and well and progressing. That is actually a legacy of the Liberal government and it has been brought to us compliments of the former Liberal finance minister who is now the Prime Minister.

That is in part true, but it is also true that the Conservative official opposition was front and centre, used its might and muscle to scream, yell and demand cuts in social spending. When we heard the bragging of the then finance minister that his Liberal government had reduced social spending to the lowest level since the second world war, the Conservative official opposition did not do a thing to use the opportunity that its numbers to get the government to stop taking us down the road to two tier health care. Why? Because that party, not in words but in fact, supports that direction.

Now we are dealing with the debate on Bill C-48. We have heard member after member revile the NDP caucus because we are propping up these corrupt Liberals. That is why the Conservative opposition says that it cannot support Bill C-48 because this will be propping up the corrupt Liberals.

That begs the question and sort of circumvents the question that if that is the position of the official opposition on Bill C-48, that this is nothing more than the NDP propping up corrupt Liberals, how is it that the Conservatives in about 10 seconds of hearing the Liberal budget before the amendments and the changes brought in by Bill C-48, and before the add-ons that in fact make it a better balanced and more progressive budget, could not wait to get to the microphones fast enough? The Conservative leader was out before those microphones endorsing that budget in a whipstitch. Why? It was because he liked that budget a lot. It had massive tax cuts. That was the explanation given.

•(1605)

How was that not propping up the corrupt Liberals when the Conservatives stood up and said that they were going to vote for that budget? How was it not seen by them as a confidence vote and that they would be somehow evasive and irresponsible about not saying that they were prepared to support this budget?

It is a little hypocritical. There is a little problem in that it is convenient to criticize the Liberal budget. I would have thought the Conservatives would have a much harder time defending Bill C-43 with their constituents than the better balanced budget that we now have as a result of Bill C-48.

*Government Orders*

I would have thought that Bill C-43 would be more difficult for the Conservatives to defend in their constituencies who sent them here. After the massive cuts that the Liberal government engaged in, particularly affordable housing, post-secondary education, environmental initiatives, public transit and international development assistance, how could the Conservative official opposition not support the program to begin restoring some of the funds to those fundamentally important initiatives?

I keep listening to hear some rationale for why the substance of Bill C-48 is unsupportable. We heard last week and we heard again earlier this week, because it is convenient politically for the Conservatives to say so, that the Liberals wear the responsibility. It is the Liberal Party's legacy for having put our public not for profit health care system into such crisis and into such jeopardy, and we need to do something about that.

How is it not possible for this official opposition to not see that the same is true with respect to post-secondary education? The Liberal government has put our post-secondary education system into crisis with its reckless, unilateral massive cuts.

Applying the logic that governments should keep their promises, there is not one member on the Conservative benches that does not know that the Prime Minister, during the election campaign in 2004, committed to restore up to \$8 billion that was gutted from our post-secondary education core funding. It was a specific commitment made to begin the restoration.

The NDP better balanced budget does not for a minute get us to the restoration of the core funding that would ensure that we could begin the rebuilding. Without the NDP investment of post-secondary education funds, that is contained in Bill C-48 that those Conservatives are going to vote against, we have only reached the level of post-secondary education core funding that was in place in 1995.

Ten years later we do not have it. However, these Conservatives cannot even bring themselves to begin the process of rebuilding the post-secondary education infrastructure, the quality of education having been significantly eroded at the same time that tuition fees have skyrocketed. They have skyrocketed because of the massive withdrawal of funds at the federal level and because of the weakening of needs based grants for students. Nobody on those benches seems prepared to acknowledge that they are about to vote against the restoration of at least \$1.5 billion in funds of the \$8 billion taken out.

•(1610)

Similarly with affordable housing. I heard several people in the rhetorical flourishes say that we need to ensure that people have affordable housing, so their families can live in comfort and dignity like the rest of us. The member for Central Nova said that as well as some others.

It is a known fact that we had in this country the best social housing program of any country in the industrial world. Canada was seen as a model. We were invited to go around the world and share that model with people. It was eliminated by the Chrétien government. The Conservative bench is not prepared to restore at least \$1.6 billion toward rebuilding that affordable housing.

I look forward to debate some of the substance in the better balanced NDP budget that is contained in Bill C-48.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Halifax was quite eloquent about all the wonderful imaginary things that would supposedly come through this budget.

I remember reading this short bill and thinking of all the different shell games the Liberals have played over the years. They say one thing and do another. I will give the House an example.

For many years there has been bracket creep, a de facto tax increase because of inflation. It is a tax hike which is automatically built into the system. When the Minister of Finance and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance stopped those systematic and continuous tax hikes after many years of criticism from the Conservative Party, they claimed it was a tax cut. It is weird and twisted logic that the lack of a tax hike is a tax cut. I use that as an example because whenever we look at a piece of government legislation, we are not always sure what we are getting. For example, a lack of a tax hike being calculated as a tax cut.

When I looked at the bill, I began to see what it was. It was vague generalities without any accountability. I believe \$500 million is listed for foreign aid. Knowing the reputation of the government and how it defines things, I thought that it could define subsidies to a business connected to the Liberal Party or perhaps to many other things as foreign aid instead of something substantive and real such as money for wells in Africa, immunization programs et cetera.

We in the Conservative Party are not naive about how the Liberals do things. Why were the NDP so naive as to actually believe the Liberals meant what they said? How does the NDP know that at the end of the day the Liberals will not play shell games with the finance books, make spending adjustments in other areas, and that this will actually come to pass?

The hon. member believes that every last expenditure in the bill would build a better society. Fair enough. I do not necessarily agree. Does she actually believe, with the government's lack of credibility, that it will actually deliver?

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot even tell members how much I welcome that question. That is a wonderful question for us to debate here. I feel that we could actually begin to deal with the substance of Bill C-48 if we could continue down this path.

I do not believe that the Liberals can be trusted to just deliver what they have promised. God knows, there is a lot of evidence that they cannot be. But that brings us to the question of what is the responsibility of opposition members who are elected to this place.

Sometimes I think the Conservative Party has such a problem with power envy that it does not have any intention of using the official opposition numbers it has in the House and it is not prepared to understand that it is the job of members of Parliament to try to make this Parliament and government work. The way in which we are challenged and charged with making government work is to take the privilege that we have been given as members of Parliament to come here and advance the things that Canadians need.

*Government Orders*

I intend no disrespect to the Speaker's rulings when I say this, but it is pretty obvious that the opposition bench has no respect for the rule of relevancy, never mind consistency. We are debating four specific measures to do with affordable housing, accessible education and better training, cleaner air and public transit, and finally beginning to meet our commitments to overseas development assistance, something the Conservative Party has actually voted in favour of at committee level but cannot vote for here.

We are debating those four measures in Bill C-48. What I have heard from those members in just the last few hours is discussion about bracket creep, conditional sentencing, prostitution, pornography, age of sexual consent, gun registries and tax havens. I have to wonder if these members have any interest not just in making this minority Parliament work but in making government work at all.

I will go back to the question that was raised. Do I trust the Liberals to do what they say they are going to do? Not for a moment. I am here to make sure they do what they said they were going to do. That is how a democracy works and that is especially how a minority Parliament can work.

The more I listen to all the talk coming from the Conservative corner about corruption, lack of accountability and broken promises, the more I think that Canadians must actually be asking themselves what the official opposition has been doing. If there have been this many problems with the Liberals, I would say there is a pretty big indictment of the Conservatives' failure to do their job in getting the Liberals to deliver on what they have promised and to get the Liberals to be held accountable for any corrupt measures or malpractice that is going on.

•(1615)

**Hon. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Canada—U.S.), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the questions and comments that just took place were quite interesting.

It is my honour and privilege to rise this evening to speak to Bill C-48, which I believe is a concrete example of this Liberal government's commitment to continue to invest in Canada's social foundations and the commitment of this government to make minority Parliament work.

I think it is a strong indication to all Canadians, ordinary Canadians, that the Liberal government, with the assistance of the NDP, has put the interests of ordinary Canadians before partisanship, before personal political interest, before—

**An hon. member:** Saving your own skin.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** The member opposite says saving our own skin. It has nothing to do with saving our own skin.

It has to do with building on Bill C-43, the government's February-March budget, which already had increased investments in these four areas of affordable housing, post-secondary education, the environment and foreign aid.

With the assistance of the NDP, to ensure that we continue to build on and improve the social foundations here in Canada in these four crucial areas, Bill C-48 was given birth. It was not a painful birth. Most women who have been through childbirth would say that it was

a relatively easy birth, because it built on values that the Liberal Party of Canada holds dear, that the Liberal government holds dear.

I want to speak on two specific areas. I wish to speak on the affordable housing initiative and the increased investment into that and on the environment.

Why would I want to speak on those two issues? My riding of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, which, since the electoral boundaries reform, also includes what is the city of Dorval, includes some areas which have been deemed in the province of Quebec to be the highest poverty areas, the areas with the highest level of dropouts and the greatest need for social housing and affordable housing.

I can give one concrete example that is helping several hundred families in NDG, families that would not have had access to social and affordable housing had it not been for this government's reinvestment and re-engagement in affordable housing and social housing and with the homelessness initiative. I want to talk about the Benny Farm veterans housing.

Benny Farm, to many across Canada, is very familiar. It was veterans housing that was built after World War II to house veterans and their families. Over the years, we have had fewer veterans to live in that housing. The housing, which was owned and run by CMHC, was beginning to fall into disrepair because investments were not being made in upkeep and buildings were being left vacant and actually becoming derelict.

Back in the 1980s, CMHC began a whole process. It wanted to get a zoning bylaw to literally demolish all of the buildings to build high-rises, to sell the land to private developers for luxurious apartments and condominiums. Ordinary citizens in NDG and across Montreal protested and were successful in blocking that kind of development for over a decade.

My predecessor, who represented the NDG part of this riding, the Hon. Warren Allmand, was part of that citizen engagement to try to get the federal government to go back into affordable housing, to go back into social housing and ensure that people in Montreal would have a venue where they could actually live, work and raise their families and not have buildings falling down.

•(1620)

When I was first elected in 1997, that was one of the first issues that I engaged in. I participated with the community activists and representatives of ordinary citizens in NDG in order to convince the government to transfer and sell the property to Canada Lands and to get the government to start a homelessness initiative and an affordable housing initiative. Thanks be to God, in 2000 the government made that commitment and began those investments.

As a result of that, today those buildings are in the process of being renovated. Some of the renovations have actually been completed. They have been purchased by cooperative housing. They have been purchased by organizations that work with and provide social housing for young, unmarried women or single parents who are in school but have to provide for their children. Actual families are living there besides the veterans and their relatives and the living survivors of veterans, who are living in new buildings that have been created.

*Government Orders*

Benny Farm, which has become a model of citizen engagement on the housing issue, would not have existed had it not been for the government's commitment to Canadians.

I want to thank the NDP for also having the issue of housing close to its heart, because it has helped us further our commitment in the area of affordable housing. On the issue of homelessness, that is part of affordable housing. It is part of ensuring that ordinary Canadians do not have to live on the street and that they have real solutions, durable solutions, particularly for those who suffer from mental illness.

I can give another example of an organization, this time in Lachine, which only began in 1997-98 to deal with residents who suffer from mental illness. One of the main problems we have with regard to this part of our population is that at times they are hospitalized for significant periods of time in order to follow treatment. When those individuals come out of the hospital they no longer have any housing and they end up on the street.

There is now an initiative, thanks to the homelessness initiative that the Minister of Labour and Housing, formerly the minister for housing and homelessness, was involved in. A 24 unit building is now going up in Lachine in order to ensure that residents in that borough who suffer from mental illness, and who as a result of the effects of their mental illness no longer have housing, will have housing. They will have the social services on site in order to assist them in continuing to take an active and healthy part in the ordinary life and society of that community.

The additional investment that Bill C-48 foresees for housing is extremely important. It is something that ordinary Canadians want to see. It is something that Quebecers want to see.

The last piece that I want to address is the issue of the environment. I am so pleased that the government has ratified Kyoto, that the government has come out with its green plan, its action plan to implement Kyoto, and I am so pleased that both Bill C-43 and Bill C-48 involve billions of dollars to ensure that we meet our Kyoto protocol commitments, including investing in sustainable energy sources such as wind power.

I want to thank the members of the chamber who have been here to listen to this. I do not thank those who heckled, but I do thank those who listened attentively.

• (1625)

I want to thank all the members on this side of the House, which includes the Liberals and the New Democrats, for their support of Bill C-48. I admonish the Bloc members who will not be supporting Bill C-48 unless they change their minds, because there are good things for Quebecers. Anyone who claims to have Quebec and Quebecers' interests at heart will be supporting Bill C-48.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her comments, especially the one about affordable housing. I was wondering if she was aware that back in 1998 the Liberal government put aside \$2.2 billion for affordable housing and there is still \$1.8 billion left in the kitty.

The problem is the way the system has been put together. The province has to match the federal money to put forth these projects.

Because of the Liberal cutbacks, many of the provinces do not have the money to provide affordable housing for Canadians who need it. Also, the way that the housing initiative is set up now is very wasteful. In other words, a lot more money is being spent to build affordable housing that could be done in the private sector.

I ask the member, why throw more money into a system that does not appear to be working when, because there is a glut of real estate, we could immediately be giving tax credits to seniors and people who actually need it and get them into affording housing right away?

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** Mr. Speaker, I would invite the hon. member from the Conservative Party to do a little more homework and research. If he did so, he would know that the federal government's affordable housing program in fact invites and encourages private developers to be involved in partnership in affordable housing. In my riding, Benny Farm has private developers who are involved in building affordable housing. Private developers are there.

It also encourages partnership with co-ops. It encourages partnerships with municipalities and municipal governments that run their own social housing. It encourages partnership with, for instance, Habitat for Humanity. The great thing about the affordable housing program and about the homelessness initiative is that they allow for partnerships from all interested stakeholders, including the private sector.

I can only speak for Quebec. It is working in Quebec. Housing is going up. There are real people who are living in that housing, who did not have housing before or who were paying upwards of 50% of their net income and in some cases gross income on housing. Now they are paying no more than 25% or 30% of their income on housing. It is working. I do not know about where the member comes from, but it is working in Quebec.

My understanding is that the agreement has just been signed in Ontario. It will be working in Ontario with cooperative housing. If it is not working already, it will be working in B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon. Maybe the only place it is not working is in Alberta and perhaps it is because of the Conservatives.

• (1630)

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has shown herself to be genuinely committed to the issues that we are discussing.

I do not want to shock anybody but I actually believe that the question raised by the Conservative member a moment ago is a serious one that we need to be concerned about with respect to the delivery of federal housing initiatives.

*Government Orders*

I speak from a Nova Scotian perspective when I say that notwithstanding the commitment of the federal Liberal government to finally allocate some dollars for genuine affordable housing construction, I am not talking about the homelessness initiatives. I do not want to be unfair, but the homelessness initiatives have kept social housing groups in a state of hope and highly motivated to try to keep the pressure on and keep moving in the direction of getting the government to take substantive affordable housing initiatives, but it has not resulted in the creation of a lot of affordable housing. It just has not.

We are talking now about affordable housing. Nova Scotia has barely anted up a cent with the result that a lot of federal dollars allocated for social—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member for Halifax on the issue of whether or not real housing has been created under the federal government's affordable housing program.

I would like to point out that the original affordable housing program required that the federal government actually negotiate and sign agreements with the individual provincial governments. Those governments in many cases had their own programs and might have been better placed to determine where the needs were within their provinces. It also required matching funds from the provincial governments. There were situations where certain provincial governments were either not interested or were unable to match the funds.

Under Bill C-48 there is no requirement for matching funds.

**Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-48. This is the NDP-Liberal budget that was concocted in a hotel room in Toronto. We understand Mr. Hargrove had a lot to do with it. I do want to get to the substance of the budget and why we oppose it.

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais:** Move that tape ahead.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** Get to the next point, because we are tired of hearing that false assertion again and again and again.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, I will just let them finish.

It is important that we bring the debate back to the facts. The truth is that when the government introduced the original budget, Bill C-43, it had absolutely no interest in anything in this present budget bill. The Minister of Finance is on record as saying it could not be cherry-picked, that these things could not be put in.

The NDP was pressuring the government on some of these issues and I understand why, but when the Liberals introduced the first budget, they said it could not be done. We should make no mistake about it, this budget was only introduced for one single, solitary purpose, which was 19 votes to keep the government alive. There was no other reason—

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** It is about cooperating and getting things done.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Halifax loves to heckle and so does the rest of the NDP. If those members would give

me the respect I gave them when they were speaking, it would be much appreciated.

This budget was brought in at a cost of almost a quarter of a billion dollars per vote. If the Liberals took four items out of our platform and tried to buy their way into preserving the government, and I do not care what four items they were, it would be an unconscionable way for a government to stay in power, to buy its way into power.

Look at what we have witnessed in the House in the last six months. Primarily there is the sponsorship scandal. The facts speak for themselves. We have heard the testimony. We have all heard the evidence about the millions and millions of dollars that were funnelled to the Liberal Party. The response of the government, which was on the verge of being defeated, to the largest scandal in Canadian political history was to take more taxpayers' money to buy more votes. It is reprehensible. It should not happen. I will stand up and absolutely support the Conservative Party in doing everything possible to oppose this budget.

Program spending is wildly out of control right now. The government will drive our economy into the ground with \$4.6 billion, a budget—

**Hon. Paul Harold Macklin:** Impale yourself on your sword.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** That you wanted to give to the corporate sector. You just wanted to shovel it off the back of a truck.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** Show some respect for the facts.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, again, I will ask the member for Halifax and the rest of her colleagues to give me the same respect I gave her when I sat here and listened to her speech.

The budget is one page long in English and in French and spends \$4.6 billion. The last time we saw that type of vague legislation was with the gun registry and the sponsorship scandal. Of course, no one knew the details of that. Spending went completely out of control. There was no accountability. There were no checks. For the NDP members to actually believe that this will happen is incredible. I understand that all of a sudden they have become a player in Parliament with their new-found friends the Liberals, but I absolutely 100% have to oppose the way this happened.

● (1635)

We could look at some of the substance in it. Let me just talk about the Liberal record on the environment. Kyoto was signed almost 10 years ago and CO<sub>2</sub> gases are going up. There are more problems with smog in our major urban centres today than ever before. Show me the results of what the government has done in 10 years on the environment. It is zero. It is not there, and it wants us to give it a \$4.6 billion blank cheque supposedly to spend on the environment.

*Government Orders*

Show me a specific program, specific legislation where we can measure and see tangible results. That is something I would be willing to support. However, the blank cheques that the NDP wants to give to the government, I do not think so.

On training programs, I want to remind the members opposite that it was the Conservative Party, on an amendment to the throne speech, that said we needed to reduce EI premiums to improve employment for Canadians. The EI surplus is \$46 billion. We do not need new money. Maybe we need some honest accounting on the money that is there and ensure that it gets to the workers.

There is a lot we can do, but the NDP budget is not one of them. I go back to British Columbia, when we had eight years the NDP in power. Our economy went into the ground. We sat with deficits year after year.

The Minister of Health, who is a senior member of cabinet, had his hand in building the fast ferries. A half a billion dollars of hard earned taxpayer dollars was shovelled away. It was gone; it evaporated.

That is the type of things we will see out of this budget. There are no specifics, no programs. The Liberals spent \$4.6 billion in 400 words. Are they completely naive to think that there will be an ounce of accountability, considering this government's record?

I fully support going to the wall on this legislation, opposing it at every opportunity we can. We have a constitutional responsibility to hold the government to account. That is what we are doing. The legislation is so fundamentally flawed. It was introduced for the most callous reasons, to prop up a government so it could cling to power.

The short answer is that the NDP members were bought for \$4.6 billion. They sold their souls. All of a sudden they think they are the new found friends of the Liberal Party

I look forward to the campaign at some point in time. I understand maybe it will be later this year, maybe it will be early next year. The Prime Minister said that it would be within 30 days of Justice Gomery's report. If the Prime Minister wants to have an election on this budget, then let us have one. The NDP and the Liberals can get together at the press conferences and defend their collective budgets. They are fundamentally flawed.

Where are the details on housing? What can we expect? Let us give these Liberals a blank cheque to spend \$4.6 billion. What do we think that they would give the Canadian people?

How about seeing some specifics on tax reductions? How about making it more affordable for first home buyers to get into the market so people can succeed. How about putting in money for co-ops and other types of housing programs. There are no substantive details in this budget. It is 400 words for \$4.6 billion.

One has to be crazy to support a budget that is this vague, not to mention how it was concocted, in a hotel room with Buzz Hargrove in Toronto to dream up a \$4.6 billion deal. The backbenchers of the Liberal Party did not get that much say in their own budget.

Take the Minister of Finance at his word "no, we cannot cherry pick or no, we cannot change it". If this were really the intention of the Liberals, why was it not in the first budget? It was not there

because they do not believe it. It was not there because they have no intentions of dealing with it.

Just look at the facts as to how this thing came to light. Look at what is in it. It is an absolute joke. In eight years as a member of Parliament, I have never seen anything in my life that is so pathetic. It is ridiculous to take \$4.6 billion on one piece of paper and want us to embrace it. They have to be kidding.

● (1640)

We will fight for every single Canadian across the country to ensure that their hard earned tax dollars are spent wisely and in an accountable way. We will challenge the government. I am willing to debate the government on this legislation any day. I will go toe to toe with any Liberal in any election, and for that matter the Liberals new found friends in the NDP. They can have their coalition, they can have the new Minister of Health from British Columbia because they are all cut from the same cloth and Canadians deserve a hell of a lot better.

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member's speech, particularly the portion around British Columbia. As the hon. well knows now, two-thirds of his federal riding are now represented by B.C. NDP MLAs. The reason why is very clear. It is because the Gordon Campbell Liberals in B.C. have the largest deficits in British Columbian history and the NDP balanced the books in B.C. That is an important lesson I think his constituents are sending him.

It is also important to note that the worst record in fiscal management in Canadian history was the Mulroney Conservatives. They were talking earlier today about what a wonderful job Brian Mulroney did and they embraced his record. His record was the largest deficits and the worst fiscal period returns in Canadian history.

It is not just from 15 years ago that we see this fiscal ineptitude of the Conservatives. We know that last June we had the largest, most bloated political platform in Canadian history from the Conservatives again. There were \$86 billion in spending promises and that was before the leader of the Conservatives threw the aircraft carrier at the last minute. We never did find out what the price tag was for that. It was the most expensive and most financially irresponsible political platform in Canadian history. That is the background of the Conservatives.

*Government Orders*

I agree with some of his comments about the environment and the Liberal inaction on it and on housing and poverty. That is why the 19 members in this corner of the House got to work to change that so this Parliament would deal with those issues.

He mentioned the term ridiculous. I want to ask the hon. member whether he thought these comments were ridiculous:

I don't think there's anything wrong with blowing the whistle and I don't think there's anything wrong with somebody trying to bribe you. What's wrong is if you take the bribe and he didn't.

That was a comment from the leader of the Conservative Party that it was okay to offer but not to take bribes. The comments were mentioned in the newspaper this morning.

• (1645)

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, those comments are absurd. They are just ridiculous.

Maybe those members could learn to just be quiet. I gave the member the respect to listen to his questions and if he would give me the same I would appreciate it.

It is absurd if he wants to believe that the NDP performance in British Columbia is something of which to be proud. I would be happy to debate any member of the NDP at any time. Its record was abysmal in British Columbia. Now the NDP members are teamed up with the federal Liberals. We are seeing wildly out of control spending like we saw in British Columbia which drove our economy into the ground. Ask anybody in British Columbia what those eight years were like. They were absolutely an unmitigated disaster.

The member stood up and said the Conservatives wanted to buy an aircraft carrier. The is just an absolute outright lie. It is absolutely false and I would stand and say that on the record. If he wants to stand in the House—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would respectfully ask the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to withdraw the word “lie”. He could get into debate but he certainly—

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, I could withdraw the word “lie”. How about making statements that are absolutely false because that is all that is. Every Canadian knows that it was just something that the Liberals put in a TV commercial. It is important that the record be factual.

We stand up in the House. We debate the issues. At least be factually correct and not go off on some long rant which is absolutely meaningless and wastes everyone's time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** To be clear, I would like the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to withdraw the word “lie”.

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Unequivocally.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for that.

**Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the member opposite on some of the statements he made during his speech. The member used the phrase that the NDP wanted to be players in Parliament. In the last election I thought the Canadian public made it clear that they wanted the minority government to work and that there would have to be cooperation.

What I recollect to have happened and transpired here was the Conservatives were not happy with the role of the leader of the opposition as the leader of the opposition. There were a couple of polls that showed their party ahead and that is when they yanked their support.

What the Conservatives were looking for was a new role. They were willing to sell out their corporate friends. How would he explain the role they played in selling out their friends just for the sake of having their leader become the prime minister?

• (1650)

**Mr. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, let me say on the record that I am very proud of our leader, what he has done, what he represents and what he stands for. We have a leader with honesty and integrity and who is principled. Whenever there is legislation before the House, he expects all members of his caucus to do what is in the best interests of Canadians. That is what we will continue to do.

The polls will move up and down day by day. If the member wants to believe all the polls he reads, I welcome him to do that. The polls will go up and we will be ahead and his party will be behind. I have no doubt they will change 10 more times before the next election.

What is really important is what a party stands for and its record in this Parliament.

**Mr. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I consider myself very fortunate to be given an opportunity to speak to Bill C-48, a very important bill building on government priorities.

I have had an opportunity to listen to some of the comments made by members of the opposition. There has been a great deal of rhetoric and a lot of partisan comments have been made. We need to deal with some of the facts. How did we get to this particular point? How did we get to this point in the House of Commons where we can debate a budget bill that would allow the government to spend billions of dollars on social programs?

I think it is important to acknowledge the hard work of the government after it inherited billions of dollars worth of deficit in the early nineties. This government reduced the deficit. It then went above and beyond that and started to reduce the debt. We have saved about \$66 billion or about \$3 billion worth of interest payments and savings on an annual basis.

Above and beyond that, the government conducted a recent internal expenditure review which was in the 2005 budget. That is also the foundation of this budget bill. We saved \$11 billion over a five year period on that as well. The government has saved billions of dollars which has enabled it to now make investments.

The backdrop of this particular debate has to do with the economy. The opposition talks about productivity and about having sound fiscal management in place. It talks about the importance of being accountable to taxpayers. Let us look at the economic story here and deal with some of the facts.



*Government Orders*

Canada led the G-7 nations in average annual growth in employment from 1997 and 2004 at 2.2%. The Canadian unemployment rate is currently at 6.8%. In the month of May, not too long ago, the government, through its policies and its initiatives, helped generate 35,000 new jobs for Canadians from coast to coast. That was a tremendous achievement.

The Canada-U.S. gap in terms of the unemployment rate was at five percentage points in 1996 when we inherited the deficit and the fiscal problem from the Conservative government and it is now down to 1.5%.

Canada's average productivity performance has improved significantly in recent years. Overall, from 1997 to 2004 the average business sector labour productivity growth was 2.1% per year, up from 1.2% from 1990 and 1996.

Those are some of the economic indicators as to where we are headed as a nation. Where do we come from and how did we get to this particular moment in time where we are in a sound financial position to make investments?

The opposition continuously asks us what government is all about, where we are headed and what we want to accomplish. We are a party that is socially very progressive, although I do not want to get into social issues, we also are financially very sound. We have the trust of the Canadian public. Which party reduced the deficit? It was our party. Which party helped reduce the debt? It was our party.

We are now in a position to invest in key initiatives. We took it upon ourselves to work with the NDP and come up with a deal to further enhance areas of common interest. It was not a new budget. It did not come out of the blue. It was based on common ground. This new deal focused on areas where both parties could work together to make sound investments. It amounted to a \$4.5 billion investment four key areas: affordable housing, post-secondary education, the environment and foreign aid.

I just do not understand what the opposition members are concerned about. Are they concerned about affordable housing? People in Mississauga—Brampton South and in other parts of the country need affordable housing.

Are they concerned about post-secondary education? Not too long ago I did my under-grad at York University and my MB at the University of Windsor. I recall the increasing tuition fees so I know firsthand that we have an obligation to students.

Are the opposition members concerned about the environment? We have heard about the smog in Toronto and other parts of the country. The environment is an important issue so I do not see what the problem is from the opposition side.

Is the opposition concerned about foreign aid? Even today the opposition talked about the 0.7% for foreign aid. The only way we can get there is by investing so we invested in those areas.

•(1655)

What does \$4.5 billion amount to? Those members make it seem like we are out of control and our expenses are out of control but that is not the case. The \$4.6 billion will come out of the anticipated surpluses. How do we generate those surpluses? Some economists

think we are too conservative. They believe that in our approach we are too cautious in that we do not want deficits. They are exactly right, of course we do not want deficits.

We were the government that came into power and eliminated deficits. Therefore it is based on our methodology and on the way we calculate our budgets that we come up with these surpluses.

By the way, the \$4.6 billion amounts to approximately 1% of our base budget over a two year period because we spend approximately \$200 billion on an annual basis. I cannot understand why the opposition would lose sleep over 1%.

On top of that, we have made a commitment to further reduce the debt by \$4 billion over a two year period.

As I have said before, in the four areas in which we will be investing money, \$1.6 billion of the \$4.6 billion amount will go toward affordable housing. It will definitely help a lot of low income families in my riding who are having difficulties. My colleagues in the past have talked about some of the initiatives that we are taking. This is a sound investment above and beyond what the government has committed in the budget already.

It will also be investing in post-secondary education. Not in my riding per se but in a riding nearby is the Erindale campus for the University of Toronto where I meet many of the students. Some of them even help me out during my campaign. It is just ridiculous the amount of debt they have after they complete their studies at post-secondary institutions, especially the students attending the University of Toronto. For them this bill will be a huge relief.

We talk about the fact that youth are not engaged in politics. This is an issue that speaks to youth concerns. This is a concern that they have and the fact that we are making a sound investment speaks to the fact that we are listening to them.

Then there is the environment. We are spending about \$900 million in that area and the focus is on public transit. I know in the riding of Mississauga—Brampton South that is very important. The fact is that the region is growing at a very fast pace. When we look at it on an annual basis, we have 240,000 immigrants that come to this country and close to 100,000 choose to call Toronto, or the GTA, their home. Naturally that has caused the growth in that area. We need to make sound investments in transit so people have a viable alternative as opposed to driving their car and that definitely has an impact on our environment.

I recall a couple of weeks ago a few constituents came to my office. They said that they had come from countries abroad and they were talking specifically about India. They were astonished about the fact that we care about the environment, that we invest money in the environment, that it is a priority of ours and it speaks to the kind of country we have built. They were very proud of that fact because of where they came from. They came from a large urban centre. One person was describing a particular instance of going out wearing a white T-shirt. He said that after a couple of hours he came back and his T-shirt was dark black. That is the kind of environmental concerns they have in other countries.

*Government Orders*

Therefore the environment should be a priority and I am glad we are spending \$900 million in that area as well.

The fourth plank in this agreement that we had with the NDP is foreign aid. We will be investing \$500 million in foreign aid.

As I have said before, the government has a responsibility and a role to play not only in domestic affairs but a role to play abroad as well. We have an obligation to those countries that need our assistance and to those people who rely on us for assistance.

I think \$500 million in foreign aid is a sound investment. It is something that speaks to again the type of country we are. We are the country that our former prime minister, Mr. Pearson, helped to build and develop our role in the world. That tradition has continued for many years and is resonating with our current Prime Minister as well. He has had the ability to travel abroad.

I have had the privilege of travelling abroad as well with the Prime Minister to Southeast Asia during the tsunami disaster and the fact that it devastated the lives of so many people. Many people lost their homes, many were displaced and many needed aid and assistance.

Because we are a privileged country and a country that is in a sound fiscal management position where we have millions if not billions of dollars in surplus, we have a responsibility. Again, this speaks to the Prime Minister's commitment.

Today we are here debating not about the budget but we are debating the kind of country we want to build. An additional \$4.6 billion investment into the economy and into social infrastructure is very important.

• (1700)

Through this budget, the government will be investing in key areas and those key areas have been further enhanced by our coalition with the NDP to get the budget through. It was not a sign of desperation. It was a sign of our philosophy and our commitment to the Canadian people.

We are part of a minority Parliament because people wanted us to work with opposition members. They wanted us to work with other parties so we made a deal with the NDP. Where did we make it? We made a deal on education. I do not see what is wrong with that. We made a deal on the environment and we strengthened our role in the world. I am very proud of that and I stand by the budget.

I again want to commend the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance for their hard work in putting together this budget.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate my colleague on his presentation today.

I found one aspect of his speech especially interesting. It was when he said that the people of Canada had chosen a minority government, that is, a government that turned out to be a minority because of its representation here in this House. Of course, the public does not choose the government directly, but elects a number of members of each party, which then determines the distribution of the members in the House.

That said, my colleague and I will agree that the public decided this Parliament should function. The ballot was not marked, "We do not want this Parliament to function". So the public gave all parliamentarians, collectively, the mandate to get Parliament to work.

In his presentation, my colleague has just pointed out that an integral part of the mandate is to negotiate with the other political parties in this House to ensure good governance of the country. Does he not agree with me that Bill C-48 is in a way evidence of this desire to have Parliament work and in the best interests of Canadians?

[*English*]

**Mr. Navdeep Bains:** Mr. Speaker, the member highlights a very key issue about the notion of how a minority Parliament is supposed to work. It is very straightforward. We do not have the majority of seats in the House so we have an obligation to work with other parties. Are we going to work with the separatists? Probably not, because they want to destroy this country.

We tried to work with the Conservatives but they just do not see how our social agenda works in making investments in these key areas. One moment they are supporting us and the next moment they abstain. Somehow their legs give out and they do not support us. A few weeks later they come to the realization that the budget is a good one and they are in trouble now because we have further strengthened the budget with our NDP friends and all of a sudden they are getting nervous again and they flip-flop. They support Bill C-43 but have an issue with Bill C-48.

I think the Conservatives deserve the term flip-flop but we have clearly demonstrated our ability to work with other parties in ensuring we strengthen the social foundation in this country and to ensuring we make sound investments in certain key areas, the areas I spoke to in my presentation, such as affordable housing. I do not see how they can have any problems with that.

Another area is post-secondary education. If I recall, some member said that their children were currently students. I know they make reasonable amounts of money as members of Parliament, but that is still a sound investment in post-secondary education. We are also investing in the environment and in foreign aid.

Those are all key area in which we have made investments and I am proud that we worked with the NDP. I hope the budget will go through but we are not flip-flopping. It is unfortunate that the Conservatives are not supporting the budget.

• (1705)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I quite liked the hon. member's speech. I thought it was significant that he addressed issues the NDP has been working on since it arrived in this Parliament. We have worked on getting more resources for housing. We know there is a growing number of poor families, poor children, and homeless people in Canada. Investments needed to be made in this area.

*Government Orders*

There is also a crisis in post-secondary education, college and university training and education. In Quebec and throughout Canada, there is a crisis. This Parliament absolutely must begin addressing these issues.

The environment is another key factor. We know that, unfortunately, greenhouse gas emissions have increased in this country. They were supposed to decrease by 20%, but instead they have increased by 20% over the past five years.

All these investments that the NDP has worked on incorporating in this budget through Bill C-48 are very important. I know that the hon. member is also aware of the fact that throughout Quebec, more and more organizations that work on behalf of the poor or disabled, organizations such as FRAPRU, which takes care of housing, are calling on all members from every political party in this House to support the budget, or Bill C-48.

As the hon. member mentioned, the Conservative Party and, unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois are opposed. How do they explain this opposition, especially in the Bloc, when so many Quebecers truly want this bill to be passed?

[*English*]

**Mr. Navdeep Bains:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member clearly demonstrates his desire to focus on a few key areas, but I would like to remind him that there are always competing priorities with limited resources. The government, the Liberal Party under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the finance minister have clearly shown the ability to balance all these priorities.

Everything cannot be a crisis. Everything cannot be important. The member must recognize and appreciate the fact that the commitments we have talked about with respect to this particular budget, Bill C-48, and building on government priorities of affordable housing, post-secondary education, the environment and foreign aid, were all important components in our base budget. Many people understand that and that is why the Conservative Party supported us initially. I do not know what it will be doing tomorrow or the day after that.

These are areas of common concern. We must be mindful of the fact that we need to balance the budget. We must be mindful of the fact that we cannot continue to spend money at a pace which will put us in a financial situation where we will bring about a deficit.

Again, it is about competing priorities. It is about the fact that not everything is considered a crisis, but about making sound investments in key common areas.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to add my dialogue to this debate at report stage of Bill C-48 on behalf of the people of Yellowhead.

I would like to begin where my hon. colleague finished and ask a question. How did we get into this mess? How did we actually get to position where we are deciding and trying to discern what to do with this piece of legislation?

I see it a little differently than my colleague. He said that it is all about a minority government and that the Canadian people want a minority government to work. To that point, I would agree.

If that was a fact and the government wanted to work together collaboratively with the parties to bring forward legislation in the best interests of Canadians, it would have added that negotiating power and negotiations would have happened in Bill C-43, not Bill C-48. A plan could have been set out along with the criteria around that plan and how it would be delivered.

It would not have happened in a Toronto hotel room as a desperation move by a government that will go down in history as the most corrupt government to serve the Canadian public. It would not have been done with the input of the labour movement.

It would have had some of the accountability measures that we need to have in place with all legislation, particularly in light of what has happened with the government with regard to the lack of accountability and the lack of planning that we have seen. If we are to be honest in this place when we come here to debate, we should do it with the knowledge and the full understanding of what actually happened.

The NDP members decided that they were going to sell themselves with regard to their votes and prop up this corrupt government. They said "What can we get for that? Let's go into the hotel room and see what we can get. Let's name our price".

Let us take a look at that price and take a look at what they actually got. Once the NDP members were prepared to sell themselves, in the sense of giving a vote to prop the government up when things looked very desperate, they said "Let's set our priorities".

I know what happened with the priorities in my riding. We have gone through significant difficulty in rural Alberta with regard to the BSE crisis. Before that we had two years of drought and grasshopper problems, and Atlantic Canada and central Canada had to help to contribute to some of the causes with the hay aid program.

It was a devastating situation for agriculture. Agriculture has never been in the situation that it is right now. We have a government that has failed farmers time and time again. In fact, the farmers of my riding are so desperate that they are really not sure what to do. Many are at the stage where they are losing everything.

When a farmer loses everything, it is not just that he loses his job, but he loses his whole life and in many cases the family history. Many of these farms are generational farms. It is a devastating situation.

What is the NDP priority? There is not a word for agriculture. There is not a bit of help for agriculture. It is not only western Canadians involved with agriculture in Alberta. Agriculture from coast to coast in this country is facing the same situation and the same difficulties.

After deciding to do what was in the best interests of Canadians, surely the NDP would have this as a part of its priority. It was not so. We have seen that it cooked up this little deal with 400 words on a sheet of paper and brought it forward saying that it would bring in this new piece of legislation, Bill C-48. It has no criteria on how it will be spent. It has no accountability and no plan. I suggest also that its priorities are not necessarily in the best interests of Canadians.

*Government Orders*

If it was about a government that wanted to do what was in the best interests of Canadians, this budget would have been negotiated in Bill C-43. We have to be honest here. The honest part of Bill C-48 is that is not what happened.

How much money was actually spent in this House in the last two months for the benefit of Canadians? If we look at it from that perspective, we can see that the price tag on this was \$4.5 billion. However, we have to accumulate that on top of all the announcements that the government made to buy votes, not only the NDP votes which cost \$4.5 billion. We must add to that another \$22 billion. A total of \$26 billion of Canadian money has been spent to illegitimately prop up the government. That is the reality of the situation we are in.

• (1710)

However, it did not stop there because that was not quite enough. The Liberals needed the 19 votes from the NDP to stay in power. However, that still was not good enough. They had to buy some opposition members. We saw that happen, as well, in this House.

It is the most disgraceful thing because it is not about the money and it is not about where the money went. It is about respecting the role of a parliamentarian in this House and respecting the very democracy that we try to protect for the benefit of all the people back home in each of our ridings.

I have become as cynical as some of the people back home when I talk to them about politicians because it reflects badly not only on the Liberal Party and the NDP but on every one of us in this House. I almost feel like we have to go home on weekends and shower multiple times just to get some of the sleaze off from what we see happening in this House because it is not in the best interests of Canadians. It is not in the best interest of this House or democracy, or this great nation, one of the greatest nations in this world.

What can we do? We should be concerned about the content of the actual piece of legislation, Bill C-48, because of what we have seen the government do with regard to other knee-jerk reactive measures and programs. If we want to know what individuals are going to do, look at what they have done and that will tell us where they are going.

If we look at the Davis Inlet project, the government's knee-jerk reaction was to relocate the Inuit natives at a cost of \$400,000 per individual. That did not solve the problem. HRDC was another scandal. The gun registry that was promised at a cost of \$2 million and that has ended up costing \$2 billion is an absolute disaster. That is continuing on a daily basis and a yearly basis. I think last year it cost 125 million more dollars.

Then we look at ad scam, the mother of all scandals, trying to buy off Quebeckers. No wonder Quebeckers are so slighted by what is happening because they take it as a personal slight. The government cheapened Quebeckers by the way it handled the ad scam.

Not only did the Liberals try to buy Quebeckers, in the last two months they tried to buy Canadians and then opposition members. It is an absolute abomination to this House and everything that is good about this place and good about Canada.

That is why the opposition is so upset with this piece of legislation. The piece of legislation is coming forward with no plan and no accountability measures. It will just go down as a \$4.6 billion ad scam or a \$4.6 billion gun registry because of what will actually happen.

If we want to know what will happen with this money, just look at what the government has done with past projects and that will tell us exactly where it is going. It is unfortunate that we see this sort of thing happen in this House because it is a terrible situation for Canadians.

How are we going to fix that? At report stage, we have an opportunity, after coming out of committee, to put forward some amendments in order to put some sanity around the ridiculous situation that we have seen in this House over the last couple of months.

We put forward a plan. We must repay the debt load that governments in the past have built up. We have to look at how we deal with that. We put forward an amendment for that one. We put forward an amendment to put a plan around this money so that we do not allow it to turn into another scandal. We want to put some accountability in there as well.

We moved three amendments that would address all three of those things and we hoped that the government would accept those as we moved forward in the debate at report stage, so that we could actually see some good come out of it.

I believe that Canada is the greatest nation in the world and I believe most people in this House and most people in this country do as well. However, it has not achieved what it should have achieved. The reason it has not is that we have a government that has not really taken the opportunity to develop, what I like to call, the Canadian dream. This cooked-up deal will take 3,000 plus dollars out of the pockets of every family in this country.

That is exactly what has happened. That is money that could have been used to raise the standard of living, money that could have been used to help every Canadian achieve their Canadian dream and be the envy of the world. I would challenge anyone to say what population of 32 million people has the amount of resources that Canadians have.

• (1715)

We should be the envy of the world. We should have the highest standard of living in the world, which we do not, even though we have the best of everything. The government should be leading this nation instead of being an abomination on some of the issues where it is not doing the job.

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

**Mr. Rob Merrifield:** That has raised a bit of a note with the Liberals, I see. I believe that is appropriate, because they should be feeling shameful about the way they have treated this country.

*Government Orders*

They should have used that money for better jobs and post-secondary education. It should be used to help people start families, buy a house or save for retirement. It was \$3,200 plus per year that came right out of the pockets of the families of this country. It is absolutely an abomination. It should stop. It is not about the money as much as it is the corruption. I have had enough of it.

• (1720)

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened quite attentively to what the hon. member had to say about the bill. He said that the priority in the negotiations between the government and the New Democratic Party, as he referred to it, was buying, or selling in the case of the New Democrats, their support. Under that rationale, presumably, since he agreed with Bill C-43, he was similarly selling his support because he was supporting something that he himself agreed with.

Perhaps he could explain to us why it is that something is immoral in his view when it involves two other parties supporting each other but the rationale is different if he himself is one of the parties involved. Perhaps he could explain to us how that particular construct works in his own mind, because this has some of us a little bewildered.

Second, the hon. member talked about the amendments that he and his party wanted to make to the bill. I am looking at some of the amendments. I would be very curious to hear him indicate to us how he feels that passing these amendments, which he said were with the view of improving the bill, would in fact make it better.

The third proposition I have to raise with him is this. He said that the priorities of the government, a government that he says has sold out to the NDP or however he put it, are wrong because that money is for the NDP.

As far as I know, when I look at the list of items here, (a), (b), (c) and (d), I do not think the NDP is going to get a cent of the extra \$900 million for the environment. There is money for supporting training programs, post-secondary education, aboriginal Canadians and so on, at \$1.5 billion. I do not think NDP members are studying now; they are doing their work in the House. On the issue of \$1.6 billion for affordable housing, does he not think these are Canadian citizens receiving these benefits?

Finally, on the issue of foreign aid, this is not an amount to be given outright. It is to be assigned to the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA. At one time I was the minister responsible for CIDA. It is to be assigned to CIDA to administer and increase the programs by which non-governmental organizations and others do good work on behalf of the people of Canada.

Worldwide, CIDA is one of the most respected international development organizations that exists. It has an excellent reputation. I have travelled around the world leading that group and I know its reputation. Does the hon. member not think that CIDA, which already administers over \$3 billion a year, cannot administer the funds in this budget bill?

**Mr. Rob Merrifield:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague's questions give me an opportunity to actually help him a little. I know that he has been here for some considerable amount of time, but perhaps he has missed some of what actually takes place in this place.

I have only been here since 2000, so I see things from a fresh perspective. Let us look at what happened with this piece of legislation compared to what happened with Bill C-43, which went through all the stages of the process. The committee members travelled and we dialogued with Canadians from coast to coast on Bill C-43 to see if it would address the situation of where to spend the money in this next year. Budgets are very important because they lay that out for Canadians.

This bill, Bill C-48, did not go through that process. It went through an amazing process: a hotel room with three individuals, four hundred words, no accountability, no planning and no deciding on how the money should be spent or what priorities should be set.

That is why this is an abomination. Because it did not go through the proper process, what it did was make a mockery of the budgets of this country. It also made a mockery of this place, because it was about buying votes. It was not about the Canadian people. As for anyone who gets up on the other side and says this is about the Canadian people, I will tell them that it is not. The money was spent there, but it was not for them. It was actually for buying favour to be able to keep a government illegitimately in power. That absolutely has to stop. It has to be addressed.

Who is going to address it? There is only one group that is powerful enough to address it. That is the Canadian public. Members of the Canadian public see what is going on. They understand exactly what went on here and they will address it at an appropriate time. In the next election, I look forward to explaining that to the people of Canada. The people of Canada are not fooled by this sort of thing. They will address it. I very much look forward to that.

The hon. member talked about some of the amendments. Our amendments were made to try to add some sanity to what went on in that hotel room. First of all, one amendment was about paying off the debt. That was in clause one. Clause two was to put a plan together to make sure that money was not wasted or misspent. Clause three was to add some accountability to what was going on with this piece of legislation and the dollars being spent.

That is the answer for my hon. colleague. I am absolutely appalled that he would ask such a question, because he has been around this place long enough that he should have known those exact facts.

• (1725)

**Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the opportunity to speak to Bill C-48 this evening. I have been reflecting on what impressions the Canadian people would have through what they are seeing with respect to this debate, particularly the last interchange and the comments made by the last speaker.

Something should be obvious in regard to the rhetoric that has been used in characterizing the government as corrupt and its record with respect to past budgets as abominable. To all of those informed individuals who are taking stock with respect to the impact on the Canadian public, they should be very honest in terms of recognizing that the members of the Canadian public have said two things.

*Private Members' Business*

First, they have said clearly that they want this government to establish clear priorities. Second, they want those priorities articulated through the budget and they want the budget dealt with. They will judge the government on the basis of that record of service through the budget to the Canadian public.

As for the polls, we do not do things solely by polls, but they are one of those instruments used to judge how people feel about what we are doing. It is clear from the polls that people want us to get back to basics with respect to reinforcing the institutions that Canadians have depended on, in particular through social programs and programs aimed at improving the environment.

Let us detach ourselves for a moment and talk to the Canadian people about what their priorities are, but not in terms of a continuous finger-pointing exercise with respect to corruption and so on. If we do this, the Canadian people in their collective wisdom will at some particular time take our record of accomplishment and our defence of those areas where we want to do better and we will be judged in totality.

I think that the fear on the opposition side, if I may say so, is the fear that we in fact will be relating better to the Canadian people than the opposition members will be. That will be based on how clearly we have articulated the needs of the Canadian people.

I find it very difficult to accept that these are not the issues the Canadian people want us to talk about when we talk about affordable housing and the impact of affordable housing as it relates to the homeless issues in the great urban communities across this country, or when we talk about post-secondary education and we have young people coming through here and reminding us. We had a lobby day, with the university students' association reminding us about the ever escalating debt that students are having to amass. When we talk about the concerns of post-secondary students, we are talking about the concerns of their parents in terms of being able to manage the aspirations and hopes that those people have.

Is that not getting back to the basics of what Canadians want to hear us talking to them about?

When we talk about the environment, look at Bill C-48 and see the extra \$800 million that has been put into it, as that is relating to the ability of cities to manage their transportation and planning agenda in a more sustainable way, is that not what the Canadian people want to see us addressing through every particular instrument that we can mobilize and deliver upon to match the aspirations of those many hundreds of communities? Those are the issues that Canadians want to see us address.

This not just sleight of hand using a political manipulation. This is talking to the Canadian people. I think the opposition is afraid that we are starting to talk the right language to and the same language as Canadians.

\* \* \*

• (1730)

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, discussions have taken place among all parties and I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, at the conclusion of oral questions on Thursday, June 23, 2005, the House shall hear a brief statement by a representative of each party to mark the 20th anniversary of the Air-India tragedy.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed a bill, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

It being 5:32 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

---

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

**SYMBOL FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

The House resumed from May 30 consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Bev Oda (Durham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Motion No. 228 put forward by a member of the Liberal government. The motion suggests that Canada develop and promote a new national symbol, under the guise of warranting a symbol for the House of Commons. I question why Canada needs a new national symbol.

Let us look at our existing symbols. I reviewed the symbols that Canada has, symbols around which Canadians can visualize their pride in their nation, symbols that draw Canadians across the country together, symbols that represent their sense of nationhood, common values and aspirations, not only domestically but internationally.

We all recall how our pride swells individually and collectively when we see the Canadian flag being marched into a stadium at the opening ceremonies of every Olympic Games, or when we see the maple leaf flag being raised behind our medallists on the podium.

People in my riding, as do many Canadians across the country, come to my riding office asking for Canadian made Canada flag pins to take with them when they travel abroad. These pins are sought after by citizens of many other countries as they represent a country that is admired around the world.

What value does our most important symbol, our flag, have to Canadians here in our cities, towns and provinces? For most, the flag is respected and proudly displayed, but this past weekend I was shocked to read an article in the Montreal *Gazette*, its headline being "Maplephobia a symptom of Gomeryitis". The article states:

Pity the poor Maple Leaf, the latest victim of the Gomery scandal.

*Private Members' Business*

Our flag's image has been so tainted by the sponsorship fiasco no one wants to be caught waving it at our city's Canada Day parade. Last Thursday, a front-page *Gazette* story said organizers are struggling to find anyone to sponsor floats with Canadian flags, because corporations are "spooked" by the sponsorship scandal.

Our once-proud national symbol now conjures up cash-filled envelopes. In the words of one parade organizer: "Companies are reluctant to sponsor a Canada Day parade float if it means being associated with a Maple Leaf".

Is it not ironic that a member of the same party that caused such disdain and reluctance to associate with our flag would now propose a new national symbol? The Liberal Party and its way of using taxpayers' dollars to bolster its own coffers and those of a favoured few is the root cause of this shameful situation.

Let me remind all of us that the sponsorship scandal came out of that party's government establishing a program to promote Canada and citizenship in the province of Quebec. To achieve that, we have heard through the Gomery inquiry that the government undertook its mission to promote Canada by imprinting Canada's symbol on everything, including golf balls.

We do not and cannot support substituting a new national symbol when our national flag itself is being shunned.

• (1735)

Before the opposition would consider a new national symbol, we believe that the government has a responsibility to accept this sorry state of affairs. The only way to rehabilitate Canada's flag in this country, particularly in Quebec, is to rehabilitate the government.

Before we need a new symbol to represent the House, we need to rehabilitate how the House works. We need to restore it on a foundation of integrity and accountability. We have to demonstrate that the House is about working on behalf of all Canadians and not just vote buying to stay in power.

If we do not restore a good honest government into the House, then we will have to adopt a symbol none of us would be proud of. In fact, the media has put forward its own suggestion in the form of farm animals feeding at a trough. This is not what Canadians want nor deserve.

The member's motion proposes a new national symbol to reflect the role, heritage and authority of the House. We have seen how the government implements its role, the heritage it will leave in our history and the authority it exercises. We can only imagine what symbols might be used to represent corruption and deception, the biggest scandal in Canadian political history and using its authority to spend billions of taxpayers' dollars at a rate of \$1 billion a day to buy votes. This is not a legacy we would choose to symbolically adopt.

Moreover, the motion asks for the protection and promulgation of a new national symbol. We have seen how the government uses Canadian symbols to spend tax dollars and how our tax dollars are not only wasted but misused in such activities.

For this and the fundamental reason that we see our first responsibility is to maintain and rejuvenate all Canadians' pride in this country, its institutions and its flag, before adopting any new symbols we must once again restore the pride of all Canadians in this House, this country and our national flag, so that every float in every

parade across Canada proudly carries a national symbol, our Canadian flag, on Canada Day.

• (1740)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish I could congratulate the member opposite on her speech, but if I did, I would be lying.

Just before Canada Day, she is claiming that the image of my country's flag has been tainted. I do not accept this.

Many members of the House have questions about the administration of a program. However, that does not give us the right to claim that our institutions and, even less, our country's flag have been soiled. If some outside the House say that, then it is the duty of everyone in here to debunk that myth and to ensure that our country's symbols remain dear to us all.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I know personally one of the two people who are the authors of that flag beside you. I am thinking here of Colonel Matheson who is the cousin of our Speaker. He lives in Kingston and might be watching these proceedings.

On Canada Day of the millennium year, His Honour Colonel Matheson, who was a judge after he ceased being an MP, was in my constituency at the opening of the Glengarry Highland Games. I had arranged with our Sergeant-at-Arms to give him the flag that had flown on the Peace Tower on Canada Day of the year 2000. The symbol to me was that John Matheson had given Canada its flag and on Canada Day of the millennium year, the least we could do was to give him back a little bit of what he had given us. That is the way I see this symbol of our country.

I do not think it is appropriate at all for us to put this in the debate that we are having today. I want to get back to the debate that we are having, although I am somewhat angry at the tone that was taken on the previous issue. I say that I support the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River in what he is attempting to do.

I do not think that Canada has a surplus of symbols. I am one of those who believe strongly in our heritage. I have a degree in history, which I earned by the way when I was sitting here in the House studying as an MP and for the last number of years as a cabinet minister. I believe very much in these symbols that form part of us.

The United Kingdom House of Commons has its very distinctive symbol. It is the gate with which we are familiar and which we find on all the material from the House of Commons.

The debate generated by our colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River is to ensure that the House of Commons of Canada has something similar. How it will manifest itself, we are already wearing a symbol. The hon. member across who gave the speech and I are wearing the mace and the maple leaf. It is part of the dress code around here that members are provided with the security badge which we all wear in the form of a decorative pin. I could see that as the basis of a symbol that we would want.

*Government Orders*

I have a copy of the McGrath committee report made by James McGrath, a Conservative MP who chaired one of the first committees on the reform of the House 20 years ago. Most of the recommendations were adopted, although the Mulroney government did not adopt all of them at the time, as we will recall.

On the cover of the McGrath committee report is an enlarged reproduction of the badge that we are wearing as MPs. I consult that report frequently. There is one in my desk, which of course I cannot pull out because we cannot use props in the House of Commons. It still remains that those kinds of designs are important symbols for all of us.

• (1745)

I wonder if any of our colleagues have read the book written by John Matheson about the history of our flag and the struggle to put together this very important symbol of our country. He speaks about how all members of Parliament had to take it seriously at the time because it deserved no less. He speaks about how he and others struggled to get the bill and the design of the flag approved, the one that is today recognized across the world. It is the symbol of the great country in which we live.

That was a wonderful thing for us. Prior to our Canadian flag, three or four designs had been previously used to identify Canadians. We all know where the maple on our Canadian flag comes from just as the maple leaf on our lapel pin. It comes from the symbol that was on the tombs of the soldiers in France and elsewhere after World War I. I visited many of these sites. I saw the maple leaf. That is largely where the idea came from for Colonel Matheson to produce the Canadian flag. It is that kind of inspiration and outlook that we should have when we design a symbol for the House of Commons to make this institution even greater rather than to belittle it in the way that I heard in the previous speech.

I had not even intended to speak on this issue. I am obviously not doing so with prepared notes. By the time we adopt this and get it done, I will not be here as an MP. As all my colleagues know, I am retiring. However, I still think it should be done. I still think it is a wise idea to prepare and institute these symbols that form part of our nation, whether it is the American eagle, the Canadian peace tower, the three colours of the flag of France or other symbols like that, countries are identified by symbols. Groups are identified by symbols. Various associations have their own flags.

[*Translation*]

Two years ago, the Ontario legislature adopted the Franco-Ontarian flag, thanks to an initiative by my provincial colleague. This flag will be raised at the legislature on June 24, a few days from now; it is a symbol.

The member for Scarborough—Rouge River is suggesting we adopt a similar symbol, as others have done, for this beautiful and great institution in which we have the honour and privilege to sit. I support him. I hope that, one day, he will be successful. I know that this is a long-term project. We can laugh all we want about the desire to adopt a new symbol but, ultimately, when it comes down to it, people will love it. It will not be happen overnight. Everyone has very fixed ideas about this. That is why it will take time.

I congratulate the member for Scarborough—Rouge River and everyone else who intends to vote in favour of this motion. I hope that the symbol he wants us to adopt will be adopted and that, one day, people will think it was a really great idea to give the House of Commons this distinctive symbol, which will forever be associated with this great institution in which we are called to serve on behalf of Canadians.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** Pursuant to Standing Order 93 the division on the motion stands deferred until Wednesday, June 22 immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

---

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1750)

[*English*]

### AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MINISTER OF FINANCE TO MAKE CERTAIN PAYMENTS

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-48, An Act to authorize the Minister of Finance to make certain payments, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in a previous incarnation the finance minister, the current Prime Minister prided himself on his prudent stewardship of the nation's finances.

In 1994 he stood up in this House and indicated that the days of extravagant promises and reckless spending were over, stating, "For years, governments have been promising more than they can deliver, and delivering more than they can afford. This has to end. We are doing it". That was once upon a time and a long time ago.



*Government Orders*

The Prime Minister has abandoned the notion of prudent fiscal spending. In its place, as reflected in Bill C-48, he has adopted a reckless spending approach to the budgetary process. Even worse, the Prime Minister decided to cut a truly bizarre backroom deal with the leader of the smallest party in the House for their support, effectively allowing the NDP to dictate the terms of the budget.

To quote the respected national columnist Don Martin:

What we have now is a prime minister who mocked Layton as the leader of a tax-and-spend party that would ring up huge deficits on the national credit card, now calling the NDP's budget a fiscally prudent document which proves Parliament works.

Consider the ramifications of that. For all we do as parliamentarians, for all the debates and all the votes and for all the legislation, nothing affects Canadian families more directly than the way we spend their hard earned money. The way in which government expenditures are allocated speaks to the priorities and values of Canadians.

The Liberal government this past February presented a budget it took great pride in boasting as "Delivering on Commitments". The introduction of the budget document praised what it described as "a balanced strategy to build a 21st strategy economy that would improve the well-being of all Canadians". Moreover, it went on to state that a "productive, growing economy creates jobs, boosts incomes and supports investments in the quality of Canadian life".

The Conservative Party was ready to work with the February budget. While not ideal, it did recognize the need to offset spending increases with some debt repayment and modest tax relief.

However, as the changing winds of political fortune threatened to cut short the Liberal government's rein, the Prime Minister completely ignored his own budget planning and altered it with an NDP budget that according to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, "squanders the budget surplus and flouts responsible budgeting in favour of irresponsible spending".

On the most important piece of legislation, one which will speak to the values and priorities of Canadians, the federal government decided to make a dramatic shift and embrace the priorities of the NDP, a party which received a mere 15% of the vote in the last election and the lowest of the three major federal political parties.

This was not a one time occurrence. Canadians have consistently rejected the NDP and its tax and spend philosophy throughout the years. Why have Canadians been so unfailing in their rejection of the NDP? I cannot speak for all Canadians, but many have seen the often disastrous behaviour of New Democrats in provincial governments.

Residents in my home province of Saskatchewan know all too well how an NDP government treats the public treasury. Indeed, an editorial just today in the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* was extremely critical of the current NDP administration in Saskatchewan. It stated:

—as a government with no real strategy for the province, whose intent is to do little more than squander every last nickel that rolls into the coffers, and let the tomorrows fend for themselves.

Indeed, as the editorial concludes, "taxpayers are unlikely to see much direct benefit as the government continues on an irresponsible spending spree".

The similarities between the federal government and Saskatchewan's provincial government are uncanny in this respect. Both have engaged in irresponsible spending sprees with no framework and with no tax relief for the taxpayer.

Every action has a consequence. Reckless spending by the state has a consequence. The Prime Minister used to know that. He spoke not long ago in the House of the trap of uncontrolled spending and how it contributed to, "the vicious circle in which our chronic deficits contributed to economic lethargy, which in turn contributed to even higher deficits, and then to greater malaise".

• (1755)

That vicious circle of uncontrolled spending and increasing economic downturns has a real and disturbing cost for hard working families and individuals trying to survive.

In Saskatchewan, the years of the NDP provincial rule have taken an immense toll. The province has one of the lowest per capita family income rates for any province, the lowest number of middle aged, high income earners in Canada, a negative personal savings rate for individuals over the past four years and, most distressing, 14 consecutive quarters of out-migration from the province.

I cannot underline the severity of the out-migration problem on the future of Saskatchewan. It is not only how many are leaving but also who.

According to a recently released report from Statistics Canada, the province's two biggest cities, Regina and Saskatoon, topped the list of Canadian cities to suffer from brain drain. Regina lost 7% and Saskatoon 6% of their 2001 university graduates to other Canadian urban centres. Excessive state interference, especially in the form of reckless spending in the economy, stifles everything from innovation to entrepreneurship. More important, it drains jobs, the very jobs that those new graduates were seeking in Saskatchewan in their fruitless searches.

Unfortunately, because the Prime Minister feels it is necessary to alter the budget to suit the NDP, we will likely have an NDP economy. Maybe the Liberals should have asked what that includes or, more correctly, does not before they so eagerly signed on.

The C.D. Howe Institute recently determined that the NDP modifications to this budget would cost the Canadian economy a whopping 340,000 jobs. The corporate tax cuts that the NDP are so adamantly opposed to would have left money in the hands of companies to produce more and better paying jobs for Canadians.

Likewise, according to Dennis Gartman, a well-known investment analyst, Bill C-48 is "the worst possible signal the Prime Minister could send to the capital markets.... Capital that might have come to Canada shall now, at the very best, think twice about coming".

*Government Orders*

Bill C-48 flies in the face of the universally recognized principle that to stimulate job growth we need competitive corporate tax rates. To quote Gartman again, he said it is "bad economic policy, plain and simple. It puts the lie to the Liberal claim that creating a competitive economy is a high priority in assuring our collective standards of living".

Knowing all this about Bill C-48, how can anyone support it? Indeed, does anyone honestly think the Prime Minister, circa 1994 or 1998 as the finance minister, would support this legislation? Most rational people would not endorse spending a few thousand dollars on a home renovation without a detailed blueprint, let alone nearly \$5 billion for major government initiatives without an adequate plan.

Will the Liberals, for instance, address the severe reservations the Auditor General expressed about the capacity of certain departments to deliver programs efficiently, the very same departments to which the Liberals want to give more money in Bill C-48? Is there an adequate plan to deal with these concerns? Was that discussed with Buzz Hargrove at the Royal York Hotel too?

It would be an insult to the millions of hard-working Canadians to endorse legislation that not only will cost billions but most likely will not meet its stated objectives. A rational approach would make certain, first, that existing money is spent efficiently and that programs can be sufficiently improved to merit further expenditures. Amazingly, the Liberal-NDP coalition is steadfastly opposed to this approach, voting against amendments in finance committee to make the spending in Bill C-48 more accountable to Canadians and to reflect a more prudent fiscal approach.

I cannot in good conscience support passage of this legislation and neither can most rational people.

● (1800)

**Hon. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to what the member had to say and I sort of got lost on the brain drain in Saskatchewan and the link between that and this budget, in particular, and this government over the last number of years.

I may have been watching the wrong channels on television but I seem to have seen ads promoting Saskatchewan as a place for R and D, as a place to do business now and as a proud have province to which people, entrepreneurs and scientists should come.

I do not have the figures here but at the University of Saskatchewan, Light Source has become a world centre of high tech science, not just high tech in the general sense but of big science, science that requires massive facilities which exist almost nowhere else in the world.

I also understand that the University of Saskatchewan has the best selection of health training programs in the country and probably in North America. If we look at the range from what we might call normal medical school through to the different types of nursing schools and health technology schools, the University of Saskatchewan is in a class by itself on this stuff. In veterinary science and other aspects of agriculture, if veterinary science is agriculture, the University of Saskatchewan is an extraordinary place.

I am less comfortable with talking about the University of Regina and the First Nations University which is in Regina. However I think if we were to look at the two of them we would see that they have both received a substantial number of Canada research chairs and a substantial amount of indirect costs of research. Both universities do wonderful work for aboriginal students in the province.

Would the member tell me what she means by the brain drain in Saskatchewan when it has been built up in this particular way? Could she tell me, for example, how many Canada research chairs the University of Saskatchewan received? How many millennium scholarships did Saskatchewan receive? How many Canada graduate scholarships did Saskatchewan receive? How much in indirect costs of research did the University of Regina receive? How much, between them, did those universities get from the granting councils, the social sciences, the physical sciences, NSERC and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research?

Could the member also explain this brain drain that she was discussing and explain why she cannot support a 2% addition to the budget, most of which adds to the sorts of things that I have just listed?

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich:** Mr. Speaker, I think I have to invite the member to Saskatchewan and he would see what I am talking about.

Our population has declined incredibly. There is a very depressed population out there because the budget does not address agriculture. Those who are following the equalization plan are feeling as if Saskatchewan has been left out. They are feeling very alienated. We are taxed to death.

What I am trying to say is that most people are moving out of the province because of the administration that is running the province right now which is very unfriendly toward any kind of business or industry. I have been told that most companies prefer to stay out of Saskatchewan. For example, oil companies prefer to have their headquarters in Alberta because it is so unfriendly to move into our province.

Yes, there are some good things happening, in spite of the NDP government. That is how good the people of Saskatchewan are and how hard-working they are. We are staying above water in spite of the NDP government and we can do it. However, I would invite the member to drive on our roads.

I am quite confused by those ads, too, because last year in Saskatchewan the parks were going to close down until July because there was not enough money to open them and staff them. Our parks are not being maintained and they are in absolute shambles. That is just one thing.

**An hon. member:** The federal government is trying to help with those things.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Lynne Yelich:** I am talking about an NDP government that has priorities. Its priorities are three brand new beautiful liquor board stores. It is closing schools in rural Saskatchewan. It is closing hospitals in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has the longest waiting lists of any province in the country. The member need only check our criminal justice statistics if he really wants to live in Saskatchewan or he really only needs to see what it is like to live under a communist rule.

• (1805)

**Hon. Hedy Fry (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have to smile when I hear hon. members opposite from the Conservative Party telling us about deficits and fiscal prudence. There is absolutely no way the Conservatives can teach us anything about budgets.

When we came into office in 1993 we were left with a \$43 billion deficit by the Conservative government. We were left with an enormous debt that had a huge percentage of foreign debt in it. We did the things that were necessary so that we can now post our ninth balanced budget. We have been paying down the debt every single year.

The Conservatives keep talking about the fact that we have surpluses. I do not know if anyone in the House recalls over the last two years SARS, the fires in British Columbia or the floods in Saguenay. We had to have money to help with all of those unexpected disasters without going back into a deficit. That is called fiscal prudence. Fiscal prudence is having money available to take care of the unexpected things that come up. This government has not been talking about fiscal prudence, it has in fact been doing that.

We are proud to stand here and talk about the fact that this country is one of the best performers in the G-8 under the watch of our government. How could those members talk about fiscal prudence and then have the gall to suggest that we are in bed with the NDP to move some agenda items forward that have always been our priorities.

We hear talk about the great public and how we must listen to the public. We listen to the public. It elected a minority government because in its wisdom it believed hon. members in this House could behave as adults and work together for the common good. That is exactly what the two parties on this side of the House are doing. We have come together and talked about things that will keep the government moving along and doing things in the best interests of the public good. We on this side of the House are behaving like adults. We are trying to do the things that the public elected us to do. Instead, we see game playing going on.

Before the finance minister had even finished speaking about the budget, the hon. Leader of the Opposition stated that there was no way his party would be able to speak against it. He said that his party would never be able to bring the government down on the budget because it was a good budget.

Around the middle of April things changed. All of a sudden, the actual greed, if I may use that word, and the actual grasping nature of that party came forward. It decided to go after the government and bring the government down. The Conservatives decided not to do what the people elected us to do, which was to form a minority

government in which we could work together. Instead, the games began.

Here they are now speaking to us about fiscal prudence and being very concerned about a surplus. I am surprised those people on the other side of the House know what a surplus is.

Let us look at the history of Conservative governments. I do not think the Conservatives know what a surplus is because they have never seen it before. When they do see one they do not know what to do with it. They must be upset with it because they keep going on about it.

It is the surplus that allows us to deal with unforeseen circumstances, such as those we have had to deal with over the last few years. A surplus allows us to take care of the things that nature and other circumstances foist on us while still maintaining a balanced budget and not go into deficit.

Let us talk about the Conservatives being against affordable housing. I heard a member speak not too long ago about the fact that people would rather have money in their pocket.

• (1810)

Somebody talked about violin lessons. There are a lot of people in my riding who would love to have violin lessons, but they cannot even afford to pay their rent, never mind violin lessons.

Let us talk about the reality of affordable housing. Housing is a basic necessity. Affordable housing is a fundamental tool by which people can afford to live, not lives of wondrous wealth, but just ordinary lives, keeping their heads above water, shelter, food, clothing. That is what affordable housing is all about.

This is not something that our government suddenly decided to adopt out of the blue. This builds on an affordable housing platform that we have had. We worked with the NDP to move this agenda forward faster. We have talked about affordable housing. We have spent over \$2 billion on homelessness. Since we have become government we have spent over \$2 billion on various types of housing. We are working on co-op housing, ensuring that it keeps going on and that there is new stock of co-op housing. We are fast forwarding it a little. We can afford to do that. That is what fiscal prudence did. It gave us the money in the kitty so that we can do this kind of thing without going into a deficit. This is not something new. We are doing the right thing for Canadians.

Regarding post-secondary education, if we are going to be competitive we need to understand that it is a skilled workforce that is going to give us the competitive edge that we need to exist in the 21st century. The generators, the engine of economic growth and development are people, human capital. We need to spend money on assisting our young people in getting the skills, the education and the learning they need to become productive members of society, to be able to earn good living wages and to make Canada competitive with the rest of the world.

*Government Orders*

We depend on trade for so much of our gross domestic product. Therefore, we need to have people who can work and produce. We see that there is a productivity crunch, not just in Canada but in all of the major industrialized nations. We are dealing with that now before it gets too bad. We are trying to move forward and upgrade the skills of the people in Canada, the young people and those whose jobs for various reasons are no longer valid in the new economy.

We are talking about getting a skilled workforce for the 21st century. This is something that we have been doing. We have put money into post-secondary education. We have provided for increased transfers to provinces for post-secondary education. Looking at the Canada social transfer, we have put \$5 billion annually into direct support for post-secondary education, among other things. The RESP that this government initiated allows families from the day of a child's birth to put money aside so that when it is time for that child to get post-secondary education, he or she can do it.

This is what we have been doing. We have been investing in people. By putting this budget forward, we are asking for \$1.5 billion extra dollars to fast forward this, to do this more quickly. Things are moving rapidly in the world and we need to be competitive and on top of education.

Regarding the environment, I am not surprised that the hon. members across the way do not accept the environment, but I am surprised that the Bloc members do not. They have always been very supportive of Kyoto and other environmental issues. Here are the people who stood up day after day in this House over the 12 years that I have been around here talking about how we need good science, when the rest of the world is moving on and recognizing global warming, recognizing smog and how many people it is killing and how many young people are getting asthma from smog. These people are saying, "Show me the science" as a sort of mantra. They are out of touch with the reality of life.

Proposing \$900 million in Bill C-48 to move forward on a clean fund, to help low income families energy retrofit their homes, this is good governing. This is again in keeping with our priorities. As a government we have put in \$1 billion over five years for the clean fund to encourage cost effective projects and actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We are talking about having worked with another political party in this House to do exactly what the people felt we should do in a minority government, to work together across party lines for their benefit.

•(1815)

I want to know if hon. members across the way will tell me that affordable housing is not for the public benefit and is not important for all the kinds of people, who obviously they do not have in their ridings because they do not even know that people need this. On the environment, the Canadian Medical Association was just talking about the number of children who are getting asthma as a result of smog in this country. On post-secondary education, we want our young people to have the tools they need to create something new for themselves and to make Canada competitive in the next generation.

We are paying off the debt. We have been doing this. After this, we still have \$4 billion left to put toward debt reduction. We have been doing this every year. We have been putting \$3 billion every year toward debt reduction. We have been trying successfully to undo the damage of the last Conservative government. We have brought this country out of the depths of despair in which people lived. People were losing their homes because of double digit mortgage rates. There was double digit unemployment. People were living in absolute despair because they did not know what they would do themselves.

Regarding leaving a debt, we are raising young people. The Conservatives would like us to leave the debt to young people to pay in the next generation.

I support this bill and I say shame to the members on the other side of the House if they will not.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member has really blown her cover. Talking about the environment, Kyoto deals with carbon dioxide and water vapour. As a result of the hon. member's speech, we got more of both in this place than we had before.

The member talked about double digit interest rates. I remember doing some mathematical consulting for people who were facing foreclosure on their homes at that time and who thought they were getting a bad deal. This did occur, as I recall, near the early 1980s, before the Conservatives came to power. It was under a Liberal government that it happened.

I am thinking also of the debt that members opposite keep talking about. They keep blaming the Conservatives. We need to remember that if the Conservatives in 1984 would have had no debt from the Liberals, there would have been no debt in 1993, because in those nine intervening years, the Conservative government had a balanced budget on program spending. The amount that was added to the debt is simply the compound interest on the debt that the Conservatives inherited in 1984.

At this point, I ought to say that this is accurate. The member will get up and try to refute it by a whole bunch of more hot air and moisture, but the fact of the matter is that mathematically it is correct. I know it is, because I did that particular mathematical computation at the time of my election in 1993. The Conservative candidate said this and I was going to blow him out of the water, but being an honest guy and being a math type, I checked the math and sure enough, take the debt that the Liberals gave to the Conservatives in 1984, add the compound interest at the rate of the day and we end up with the debt that the Conservatives had at the time. We could perhaps hold them responsible for not correcting the Liberal errors faster, but that is about as far as we can go.

Furthermore, in the intervening years, the years that the Liberals like to brag about, addressing the issue of the deficit and all that, they did it by taking \$30 billion out of the employees' pension fund and by robbing and raping the EI fund. That is how they did it.

*Government Orders*

Furthermore, we add things like the GST, which most Canadians do not like, but the Liberals have been raking it off. The Liberals ran in 1993 on the promise to kill it. Meanwhile they have been using it. They have been overtaxing on EI by huge amounts, \$45 billion. If we would have had a responsible government over there, the debt would have come way down instead of just the little bit that they have moved it. I call it just plain spin doctoring on their part. They are really not up to it in terms of financial responsibility.

I will concede that they are Liberals and they could have spent more than they did, so I suppose we need to give them just a little gentle congratulations for following our advice and responding when we pushed for balanced budgets and stopped the borrowing.

I remember we had a plan in 1993 which was the zero in three. The Liberals said they could not do it, that they had all this deficit, so they cut all these programs. We simply accurately read the economic statements. On economic forecasting the Liberals are total wipe outs. If I were their instructor, they would all get zero in that course.

As a matter of fact, we read it accurately. We said it could be done. The fact that they did it proves that it was doable. Meanwhile, they smeared us. I could go on and on, but I know I am on questions and comments and I have to give the hon. member an opportunity to respond, which I really do not want to do. I do not want to hear what she will say because it will be unbelievable.

• (1820)

**Hon. Hedy Fry:** Mr. Speaker, if it were not so funny, it would be sad.

The hon. member talked about how it took the Conservative government nine years to get out of the Liberal debt that it left and that it was all compound interest.

It took us three years to get out of the compound interest that the Conservatives talk about. It took us only three years of good management to do it.

There were nine lost years in which the Conservatives brought in the GST to help get rid of the deficit. It increased the debt. I call it something pretty simple: mismanagement. We see it wherever there is a Conservative government: mismanagement.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member from the other side made some colossal errors in his comments. I want to set the record straight on the history.

He said that Conservative Parties of the 1980s were left with a debt and by extension they had no choice but to massively increase the debt load on Canadians, which is what they did. When our party came to power in 1993, we too, by extension, would have had to increase the debt load massively, but it would not have been our fault. It would have been the fault of our predecessors.

In the 1990s we took the job of getting the fiscal house in order. Sacrifices were made. The current Prime Minister, when he was finance minister, had to make tough decisions and he got the fiscal house of our country in order. Today we are left with the most robust economy of any of the OECD countries.

We have very low interest and inflations rates and low unemployment. That is a result of making tough, decisive decisions

in the 1990s when we had to. Interesting comments were made by the then Reform Party at that time and I will remind the Conservative Party on the other side what was said.

Herb Grubel, who was then the finance critic for the Reform Party, said very clearly that he complimented the then finance minister for making the tough decisions to get the nation's house in order. This was not an easy task. As a result of that, he got into trouble from his party for stating the truth.

What has been the result of that? One of greatest threats to our social programs, be they our pensions, health care system, education or array of public expenditures, is deficit spending. If a government spends more than it takes in, it accrues a debt and the debt accrues interest payments that have to be paid on a yearly basis. The interest payments erode the very ability of any particular government to pay for the needs of Canadians.

That is why the Prime Minister, when he was finance minister, took the bull by the horns and made those decisions. He did that in order to save our social programs. He also did it to ensure that we would have an environment upon which the private sector could thrive. If private sectors do not thrive, capital flees. Companies leave an environment where inflation and interest rates are high and where governments do not do due diligence to ensure the finances of the country are in good stead.

One of the responsibilities of a government is to ensure that the prime generator of jobs in our country, which is the private sector, particularly small to medium sized businesses, have an environment of low interest rates, an inflation rate that is under control and regulations that do hinder to them. The current Prime Minister, when he was finance minister, created that environment. It is something that we as a government are obligated to do. That is what we have done in this budget. However, we have gone further than that.

One of the exciting interventions is in the area of smart regulations. All of us know that regulations can get out of hand and they can become onerous and unnecessary. The ministers have put their heads together and have worked with industry. They have established a smart regulatory pattern upon which we will work with the business sector and the provinces to ensure that we remove those rules and regulations that are a hindrance to the private sector. The private sector then can be liberated to work and compete not only within our country from coast to coast but and also internationally.

• (1825)

That is one of the things we seize from it. We intend not only to compete with our compatriots and our friends south of the border, but we also must compete internationally. Why? Because we are a trading country. Why? Because we have a population that is small and a country that is large. If we are to maintain our standard of living and improve of that, if we are to create the jobs for our people, if we are to have the tax base to spend on everything from defence to health and education and other priorities, then we must have an environment upon which we allow the private sector to thrive and compete internationally.

*Government Orders*

More than half of our GDP is due to our ability to trade. We are a trading nation. To continue to be a trading nation, we need to have competitive tax rates. We have to have an educated population. We need to have rules and regulations that are not onerous. We need to have a regulatory system that is not a hindrance to our private sector. We must be aggressive in going out in the world and competing with other countries on a level playing field.

We are engaging in a number of interventions to ensure that happens. For example, we are working with the international community, through the international regulatory bodies and through the WTO, to remove the rules and regulations and to establish a trading system that will be level. Therefore, we remove those obstacles and barriers to trade that have been a hindrance for a long time.

Also, with respect to this bill, we are making investments in the education system to ensure that students have the opportunities to have the education they require. We know that one of the greatest determinants of employability in the future is the ability of students to access post-secondary education. I say that not only for universities and colleges, but also for the trade sector.

We are working with the private sector and provinces to establish greater opportunities in the trades. One of our biggest problems is the ability to ensure future trades deficits will be filled. We are gripped with this problem and it is one that we have to pursue.

I am very excited to say that we are working with the provinces to try to ensure our students have those opportunities. Not everybody can or wants to pursue a post-secondary education in universities and colleges. However, we would like to work toward having opportunities to fill the deficits that exist within our trades. I know those who are involved in the trades in our country recognize the future demographic challenges we face. As we get older so too do the people in all professions. That is not only a problem in my profession as a physician, but it is a problem in the trades and in a number of other skilled areas.

One thing we are doing is working with our provincial counterparts to deal with it. That is why this budget is important. It will put more money in this area.

We certainly hope the moneys will be used to relieve the debt burden for our students. I know the NDP has been very interested in this, as all of us have been. How do we ensure we relieve the debt burden and ensure income and finances are not an obstacle to acquiring a post-secondary education? That has been happening over the last little while. In some professions it has become an obstacle for some people to gain access to a number of these professions.

One of the things we want to ensure is that people gain access to post-secondary institutions and to professions based on merit, not on the amount of money that they have in their pocket. We are very excited about this. We will work with our provincial counterparts to ensure this occurs.

• (1830)

**Hon. Larry Bagnell:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There is one particular member on the other side talking incessantly and very loudly. It is very rude. I am not sure if he is on substance abuse. I would ask the Speaker to have some—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

**Hon. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. friend and colleague for his intervention. It has been a little difficult. Members over there have been quite rude, talking over what I am saying.

The public knows very well that through the budget bill we have done our very best to try to address the concerns of Canadians and to put moneys into those areas that Canadians want.

That is why we have the budget. That is why we are making these expenditures. The sacrifices that Canadians have made for a long time have enabled us to have a surplus budget. We are targeting those finances toward for students, affordable housing, tax cuts, health care, defence, veterans and in an array of other areas that not only to do what we want but most important to do what Canadians want.

Those are their priorities and they are our priorities. We will continue to work to ensure we meet those priorities.

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to the comments of my hon. colleague on the Liberal bench about the affordable housing.

How does he feel about promises made in the past? I was frustrated to see that the original budget had no allowance in it for affordable housing. However all of a sudden in this new-found NDP budget, there is funding for affordable housing.

It is worthwhile pointing out that the promise made by the Liberal election red book 2000 was to build up to 120,000 units of affordable housing at a cost of \$680 million. An additional \$320 million was included in the 2003 budget. As a previous member said, there was also \$1.53 billion of homeless funding. One would expect homeless funding would be to help the homeless. How do we help the homeless best? We come up with some homes for the homeless. That is \$2.1 billion that has transpired over the last four years.

I have a release from the Minister of Labour and Housing where he claims that to date the government has built 16,000 units. If we do the math on \$2.1 billion, we come up with \$130,000 per unit of affordable housing that has been provided.

What good does it do to throw good money after bad, throw another \$1.5 billion into affordable housing when it has not produced what it was supposed to produce? Why does the government not do the homework on the amount of money, develop some proper plans that will produce housing and will produce the affordable housing that Canadians want?

• (1835)

**Hon. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. colleague has done a lot of work on the issue of affordable housing and his interventions have been welcomed and his solutions have been constructive.

*Government Orders*

It is too bad his party does not listen to those solutions. I hope at some time he will be able to bring forth some fine documents, as he has done in the past, on affordable housing in a more prominent way to the minister who is responsible for this. They would be very valuable.

As he correctly mentioned, we have put money into affordable housing. With the provinces, we have built more affordable housing.

Homelessness is a very complex issue, as the member knows full well. It is mired and involved in a number of issues not the least of which is health care.

I think one of the biggest problems that occurred was when some individuals who had psychiatric problems were removed from institutions and put into residential settings. However, the care was not there at the provincial level to take care of them. Unfortunately, we see some of these people now on the street. They are untreated psychiatric patients who are off their medication. They are people who fall through the cracks. They are lost souls and they are individuals for whom we must work better with the provinces to ensure they get the care they need.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to raise a question. I want to commend the parliamentary secretary who has just spoken and the member for Vancouver Centre who spoke previously for addressing the substance of Bill C-48.

I want to commend them for actually talking about affordable housing, access to education, public transit and the down payment on beginning to meet our international obligations for international aid, as opposed to being completely unconnected with both the bill itself and reality in that kind of stream of right wing reactionary verbiage from the other side.

I have a very specific question for the member, who is a medical doctor and has a lot of concern about what has happened to people's lives in the last 15 years. I think he would acknowledge the fact that there have been casualties in our society as a result of the massive unilateral cuts made to health, education and social welfare in particular.

I have a very particular question. Would the parliamentary secretary agree that with the elimination of the Canada assistance plan we have wiped out any notion of entitlement to the basic necessities in life and the concept that no one in our society should go hungry or homeless?

There is a strong, compelling argument to be made for re-establishing a legal framework consistent with our international obligations to the covenant on social, economic and cultural rights, consistent with the previous existence of the Canada assistance plan framework.

Would the parliamentary secretary agree that one of the things we need to do is re-establish the notion that people should not just be at the mercy of charitable responses, but that actually there should be some legal protection which would build a floor to enable people not to fall through and literally—

• (1840)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

**Hon. Keith Martin:** Briefly, Mr. Speaker, our mutual commitment is to ensure that nobody falls through the cracks, but as for legal frameworks, it was proven during the dark days of socialism in northern Europe that legal frameworks do not work at all.

We want to make sure that we accomplish the goals the member talked about. I know that the member is very interested in and committed to dealing with some of the most impoverished people in the world, as we are too. That is why we worked with her party on this budget. That is why we are putting more money into housing, education and international aid.

I will close by saying that the reason those cuts had to take place was to save the very social programs that she is talking about. If we had not made those cuts, if we had not put the country's house in order, it would have threatened the very social programs she is talking about and that would have been irresponsible.

**Mr. Jeremy Harrison (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents of Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River in northern Saskatchewan to talk about Bill C-48, the Liberal-NDP budget bill.

This is a bill that was cooked up in a Toronto hotel room late at night by a desperate Prime Minister, an unprincipled leader of the NDP, and Buzz Hargrove. We have seen the result, which is a document of approximately two pages and which I have in my hand. It has three sections to it, two of which are legalese, along with one that is about a quarter of a page long and purports to appropriate \$4.6 billion of taxpayers' dollars.

That is \$4.6 billion in a quarter of a page, with no accountability, no idea as to how this is going to be distributed and no plan. It is \$4.6 billion thrown into a slush fund. We have seen examples of this type of Liberal spending prior to this and it has not resulted in a positive outcome, whether that be the gun registry, the sponsorship scandal or the HRDC boondoggle. We could run down the list.

As I have said, it is a four page bill, two pages of which are actually blank. Will these be filled in later? What is the story with this? Is this where the hidden agenda of the Liberals and the NDP is going to be written into this unholy agreement they came up with?

I firmly believe that this sleazy backroom deal is bad for Canada and bad for Saskatchewan. It is bad for Canada in the sense that the corrupt and criminal Liberal Party has managed to cling to power for at least another few months to squander taxpayers' dollars and fleece Canadians from one end of the country to the other.

This is a bad deal for my home province of Saskatchewan. If the members of the NDP were truly serious about caring about Saskatchewan, this would have been different. We know, however, that the federal NDP does not care at all for Saskatchewan and particularly northern Saskatchewan, because there is nothing in this agreement for agriculture.

### *Government Orders*

We are facing a crisis in agriculture right across the country. Producers in my riding and across Saskatchewan have been incredibly hard hit by frost, weather conditions and BSE. The farmers have been hit very hard and this deal does absolutely nothing for agricultural producers.

Why is that? If we go down the list of priorities that the NDP claims to care about, we will not see one dollar for agriculture in this \$4.6 billion agreement. That is an indication of where the New Democrats' priorities lie. Their priorities do not lie with agricultural producers in this country.

I will also tell this House about another place where there is no money: in the deal with the equalization formula. We all know that Saskatchewan is treated more unfairly than probably any other province in the country. Non-renewable natural resources are included in the formula for Saskatchewan. They were recently taken out for Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia, in the Atlantic accord, an agreement which I fully support and fully agree with. Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia are now entitled to keep their offshore oil and gas revenue to use for the good of the people of those provinces.

Saskatchewan has not received that same deal. Saskatchewan is being treated unfairly. Every elected politician in my home province except one, who happens to be the finance minister of this country, agrees that the province of Saskatchewan is not being treated fairly.

Under the Conservative proposal, which would remove non-renewable natural resources from the formula, my home province would receive approximately a billion dollars more a year in equalization payments. That would make an incredibly huge difference for people in my province.

There has not been a word about that in this backroom deal cooked up by Buzz Hargrove, the member for Toronto—Danforth and the Prime Minister. There is not one word about any of this.

● (1845)

I want to quote a columnist named Andrew Coyne, who put together a piece the day before the May 19 confidence vote. It is very reflective of the point of view of many individuals from Saskatchewan and from my riding. He wrote:

I had thought the feeling of nausea that washed over me at the news was one of disgust. I now realize it was vertigo. The bottom has fallen out of Canadian politics. There are, quite literally, no rules anymore, no boundaries, no limits. We are staring into an abyss where everything is permissible.

Those exquisites in the press gallery who were so scandalized at the suggestion that the Liberals would stoop to scheduling the budget vote around Darrel Stinson's cancer surgery might now have the decency to admit: of course they would. It should be clear to everyone by now that this government—this prime minister—will go to any length to assure their survival in power. And I do mean any. All governments are loath to leave, all think themselves indispensable, but I cannot recall another that clung to office so desperately, so...hysterically.

The loss of a confidence vote is no longer to be taken as a fundamental loss of democratic legitimacy, but rather as a signal to spend more, threaten louder and otherwise trawl for votes on the opposition benches, for as long as proves necessary.

Indeed, it is an open question whether the Liberals would have even held the budget vote if they hadn't made this deal, or whether they would have promised one if it were not already in the works.

Impossible? Outrageous? But outrage depends upon a sense of where the boundary lines are, and a willingness to call people out when they cross them. The Liberals have been crossing these lines, one after another, for years, and their own conspicuous lack of shame has simply educated the rest of us into shrugging

complicity. It's only outrageous until it happens—then we forget we have ever felt otherwise.

For example: Last Wednesday, *The Globe and Mail* published a stinging editorial calling upon the Liberals to seek an "immediate" vote of confidence, to call an election "now" or to put its budget bill to a "quick" vote.

"With each moment they linger," the *Globe* wrote, "they will expose themselves as so desperate to hang on to power that they spit in the face of the Commons and call it respect."

By Friday, the Liberals were still there, the government had been defeated two more times, the budget vote had not been held—and the *Globe* wondered what all the commotion was about. "To say the government has lost all legitimacy," it lectured the opposition, "is a wildly disproportionate response". Poof: all that outrage, down the memory hole. In two days.

Is it a constitutional crisis if no one understands it is?

A government without the support of a majority of Parliament has spent billions it has no legal authority to spend and dangled offices that are not in its power to bestow, in hopes of recovering that majority.

This is the type of government that the NDP is maintaining in office. It is a government corrupt to the absolute core, a government that cares for nothing except exercising power. It is a government that will lie, cheat and steal, and has, to maintain its hold on power. In short, it is a government that has lost the moral authority to govern our country. The NDP members should be ashamed of themselves.

Here is another issue. Today is national aboriginal day, as members know. I attended a service on behalf of aboriginal veterans from one end of the country to the other, a memorial service to commemorate the contributions of aboriginal war veterans who served in the first world war, the second world war, Korea and peacekeeping missions up to the present day.

This issue is incredibly important to me personally and to constituents in my riding. In my first act as an MP, I put forward a private member's motion that called on the government and the House of Commons to recognize the historical inequality of treatment that aboriginal veterans received when they returned from overseas conflicts. Unfortunately, all but two Liberal members voted against recognizing aboriginal war veterans. There was no reason for them to be voting against that.

Nothing in this deal recognizes the contributions of aboriginal war veterans. Nothing in this deal does anything to live up to Motion No. 193. The government and the NDP should be ashamed of themselves.

● (1850)

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to my colleague from Churchill River that I do not think there is anything more unconscionable than to hear in this House that any member of this House or any party would risk someone's life and play politics using someone's life. That was proven when an offer was made to pair, and that member should be ashamed that he would continue to do that.

I do not believe that any member in this House would do that and it is unacceptable. It is unacceptable to continue that kind of an indication to Canadians. It says very little for the humanity of each and every parliamentarian.



*Government Orders*

Let us put that one to rest right now. No one is going to allow that to happen. We might have partisan differences, but no one should risk someone's life for that, and to have it come about again in this House is not something that I am going to tolerate or sit and listen to and not address.

My colleague from across the way says there was nothing in that budget for Saskatchewan and nothing for his riding. What about affordable housing? I know the communities in his riding. I know there is a need for affordable housing. Why would the Conservatives not support Bill C-48 that has additional dollars? We have specifics for aboriginal housing, for areas with the greatest need. Why he would not support that is beyond me.

Are the Conservatives suggesting that somehow farmers and rural people in small and medium businesses will not benefit from the additional dollars for education for their families? The affordable housing dollars will mean construction in the communities throughout the country and everybody will benefit. It is unconscionable that the Conservatives would not support that, but they supported tax cuts for corporations. That is unconscionable.

**Mr. Jeremy Harrison:** Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas would be spinning in his grave if he saw the NDP crawling into bed with what is the most criminal and corrupt government in the history of this country.

I will tell members another thing that I find disgraceful. I know the riding that this hon. member represents, which is adjacent to my riding. She represents northern Manitoba; I represent northern Saskatchewan. People in northern Saskatchewan, and I am sure northern Manitoba, think that the gun registry is one of the biggest wastes of money in the history of this country. This hon. member voted for \$55 million more for the gun registry.

If people in Flin Flon knew that the member was voting for more money for the gun registry, they would not be very happy. The member thinks that she can sneak this by them, that she can simply vote for more money for the gun registry and they will not notice. Well she has another thing coming because they will know that she voted for more money for the gun registry.

In northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba, people do not support Bill C-38, the government's attempt to ram same-sex marriage down the throats of Canadians. The hon. member repeatedly made statements about how she did not support it and her constituents did not support it. What happens? When push comes to shove, the member votes do destroy the traditional definition of marriage.

• (1855)

**Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I heard my hon. colleague mention how unpopular the gun registry was in western Canada, Saskatchewan in particular, but northern Manitoba as well. Most Canadians are adamantly opposed to more funding for that ridiculous excuse for a government program, a black hole that does nothing to address crime but has everything to do with wasting hard earned taxpayers' dollars.

What does the hon. member think about the New Democratic Party's plan to not just stop at registration but to move on to

confiscation and take the guns out of the possession of ordinary, law abiding citizens. Could he speak to that?

**Mr. Jeremy Harrison:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle is correct. The leader of the NDP, when he was a council member with the city of Toronto, put forward a bill that would have essentially confiscated every gun in the communities of that area.

If we want to talk about a radical extremist, we can look at the leader of the NDP. The NDP members voted for over \$200 million more for the gun registry in Bill C-43 and at the same time the Liberal government is shutting down police stations in rural parts of Saskatchewan. The government shut down a police station in the community of Goodsoil in my riding in northern Saskatchewan. It is pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into the gun registry. It is madness. Where are the priorities?

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are probably very happy that they are going to be let out of this embarrassment which is related to the speech we just heard. It was not on the topic at all.

We saw member after member give a speech written by a researcher. I can recite the same words. They were in every speech. There were references to CIDA, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Auditor General, the lack of a plan, and the insults of course.

The opposition did not talk about the bill at all. We can understand why. It would be very embarrassing for any party in the history of the House to speak against urban transit; clean air for Canadians; foreign aid; children, who cannot even get one meal a day; affordable housing for families; and post-secondary education.

Can we imagine the Conservatives in an election campaign going door to door and saying, "I am sorry but yes, I am here to tell you that we are against clean air. I am here to tell you we are against people in other countries. I am here to tell you we are against housing for people who cannot afford houses. I am here to tell you we are against post-secondary education for aboriginal people".

Each member of the Conservative Party will have to do some soul searching in a few minutes. I see one potential member here now who is still in the progressive part of the party who would vote for things like clean air, foreign aid, housing and post-secondary education.

I want to make a prediction for the press on that party's political future. If there are no progressives there, this will be the beginning of the fading away of that party because it will be so far right, and as we know Canadians cannot support that. However, if there is actually some—

## Government Orders

• (1900)

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Marcel Proulx):** Order, please. It being 7:00 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, the question to dispose of the amendment to Motion No. 1 is deemed put, and a recorded division deemed requested, which division will be held immediately.

Call in the members.

• (1930)

(The House divided on the amendment to Motion No. 1, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 128)

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Batters	Benoit
Bezan	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Carrie
Casey	Casson
Chong	Cummins
Day	Devolin
Doyle	Duncan
Epp	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Forseath	Gallant
Goldring	Goodyear
Gouk	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)
Guergis	Harper
Harris	Harrison
Hearn	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Jaffer	Jean
Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kilgour
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon	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
Poillievre	Prentice
Preston	Rajotte
Reid	Reynolds
Richardson	Ritz
Scheer	Schellenberger
Skelton	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
Solberg	Sorenson
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Trost	Twweed
Van Loan	Vellacott
Warawa	Watson
White	Williams
Yelich — 93	

## NAYS

## 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	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
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	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)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McDonough	McGuinty
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLellan	McTeague
Ménard (Hochelega)	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)

*Government Orders*

St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Basques)  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 205

St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

Christopherson  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)  
Cuzner  
Davies  
DeVillers  
Dion  
Drouin  
Easter  
Emerson  
Folco  
Frulla  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
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

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  
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— 152

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment to Motion No. 1 defeated.

• (1935)  
[English]

The next question is on Motion No. 1.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting in favour.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this manner?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party will be voting no.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will vote against this motion

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP will vote in favour of this motion, and I would like to add the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie to the list.

[English]

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting for the motion.

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I vote no.

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 129)*

## YEAS

## Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Augustine  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélangier  
Bennett  
Blaikie  
Boivin  
Boshcoff  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Bulte  
Cannis  
Carroll  
Chamberlain

Alcock  
Angus  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Byrne  
Carr  
Catterall  
Chan

Abbott  
Allison  
Anders  
André  
Bachand  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Boire  
Bouchard  
Bourgeois  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Cardin  
Carrier  
Casson  
Clavet  
Côté  
Cummins  
Demers

## NAYS

## Members

Albonezy  
Ambrose  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Asselin  
Batters  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blais  
Bonsant  
Boulianne  
Breitkreuz  
Brunelle  
Carrie  
Casey  
Chong  
Cleary  
Crête  
Day  
Deschamps

*Government Orders*

Desrochers	Devolin
Doyle	Duceppe
Duncan	Epp
Faïlle	Finley
Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Forseth	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gallant	Gaudet
Gauthier	Goldring
Goodyear	Gouk
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Guergis	Guimond
Harper	Harris
Harrison	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Jaffer
Jean	Johnston
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour	Komarnicki
Kotto	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lauzon
Lavallée	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Loubier	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Marceau	Mark
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	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
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)	Skelton
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Sorenson	St-Hilaire
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Van Loan
Vellacott	Vincent
Warawa	Watson
White	Williams
Yelich — 147	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 carried.

The next question is on the amendment to Motion No. 2.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the amendment now before the House, with Liberals voting against.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there agreement 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 will vote against the amendment.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP will be voting no.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting against.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I vote in favour of the amendment.

[*English*]

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I vote yes.

● (1940)

[*Translation*]

The House divided on the amendment to Motion No. 2, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 130*)

## YEAS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Batters	Benoit
Bezan	Breitkreuz
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	Harper
Harris	Harrison
Hearn	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Jaffer	Jean
Johnston	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kilgour
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon	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
Poilievre	Prentice
Preston	Rajotte
Reid	Reynolds
Richardson	Ritz
Scheer	Schellenberger
Skelton	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)
Solberg	Sorenson
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Trost	Tweed
Van Loan	Vellacott
Warawa	Watson
White	Williams
Yelich — 93	

## NAYS

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	André
Angus	Asselin

Augustine  
Bagnell  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bell  
Bennett  
Bevilacqua  
Blaikie  
Blondin-Andrew  
Boivin  
Bonsant  
Bouchard  
Boulianne  
Bradshaw  
Broadbent  
Brunelle  
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)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
McTeague  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Owen  
Paquette  
Parrish  
Perron  
Petigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Plamondon  
Powers  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Saada  
Savage

Bachand  
Bains  
Barnes  
Bélanger  
Bellavance  
Bergeron  
Bigras  
Blais  
Boire  
Bonin  
Boshcoff  
Boudria  
Bourgeois  
Brisson  
Brown (Oakville)  
Bulte  
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  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Neville  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Patry  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)  
Poirier-Rivard  
Proulx  
Redman  
Robillard  
Rota  
Russell  
Sauvageau  
Savoy

Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Silva  
Simard (Saint Boniface)  
Smith (Pontiac)  
St. Amand  
Steckle  
Stronach  
Telegdi  
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tonks  
Ur  
Valley  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Scott  
Siksay  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Simms  
St-Hilaire  
St. Denis  
Stoffer  
Szabo  
Temelkovski  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Vincent  
Wappel  
Wilfert  
Zed— 206

### Government Orders

#### PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment to Motion No. 2 defeated.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 2.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that the members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting in favour.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there agreement to proceed in this manner?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Rob Nicholson:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party will be voting no.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will vote against this motion.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP are voting yes to the motion.

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish:** Mr. Speaker, I will be voting yes.

**Hon. David Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, I am voting against.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I vote no.

(The House divided on Motion No. 2, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 131*)

#### 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	Brisson
Broadbent	Brown (Oakville)
Bulte	Byrne
Cannis	Carr
Carroll	Catterall

*Government Orders*

Chamberlain	Chan	Demers	Deschamps
Christopherson	Coderre	Desrochers	Devolin
Comartin	Comuzzi	Doyle	Duceppe
Cotler	Crowder	Duncan	Epp
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Faille	Finley
Cuzner	D'Amours	Fitzpatrick	Fletcher
Davies	Desjarlais	Forseth	Gagnon (Québec)
DeVillers	Dhalla	Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Dion	Dosanjh	Gallant	Gaudet
Drouin	Dryden	Gauthier	Goldring
Easter	Efford	Goodyear	Gouk
Emerson	Eyking	Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Folco	Fontana	Guergis	Guimond
Frulla	Fry	Harper	Harris
Galloway	Godbout	Harrison	Hearn
Godfrey	Godin	Hiebert	Hill
Goodale	Graham	Hinton	Jaffer
Guarnieri	Holland	Jean	Johnston
Hubbard	Ianno	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Jennings	Julian	Kilgour	Komarnicki
Kadis	Karetak-Lindell	Kotto	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Karygiannis	Khan	Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Outremont)	Lastewka	Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lauzon
Layton	LeBlanc	Lavallée	Lemay
Lee	Longfield	Lessard	Lévesque
MacAulay	Macklin	Loubier	Lukiwski
Malhi	Maloney	Lunn	Lunney
Marleau	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Marceau	Mark
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse	Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Mathews	McCallum	Menzies	Merrifield
McDonough	McGuinty	Miller	Mills
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
McLellan	McTeague	Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Minna	Mitchell	Nicholson	O'Brien
Murphy	Myers	O'Connor	Obhrai
Neville	Owen	Oda	Pallister
Pacetti	Paradis	Paquette	Penson
Parrish	Patry	Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Peterson	Pettigrew	Plamondon	Poilievre
Phinney	Pickard (Chatham-Kent—Essex)	Poirier-Rivard	Prentice
Powers	Proulx	Preston	Rajotte
Ratansi	Redman	Reid	Reynolds
Regan	Robillard	Richardson	Ritz
Rodriguez	Rota	Roy	Sauvageau
Russell	Saada	Scheer	Schellenberger
Savage	Savoy	Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)	Skelton
Scarpaleggia	Scott	Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Sgro	Siksay	Sorenson	St-Hilaire
Silva	Simard (Saint Boniface)	Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Simms	Smith (Pontiac)	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	
St. Amand	St. Denis	Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
Steckle	Stoffer	Toews	Trost
Stronach	Szabo	Tweed	Van Loan
Telegdi	Temelkovski	Vellacott	Vincent
Thibault (West Nova)	Tonks	Warawa	Watson
Torsney	Ur	White	Williams
Valeri	Valley	Yelich — 147	
Volpe	Wappel		
Wasylycia-Leis	Wilfert		
Wrzesnewskyj	Zed — 152		

**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

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 2 carried.

The next question is on the amendment to Motion No. 3.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote previously taken, only in reverse, so Liberals present would be voting against.**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this manner?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on the amendment to Motion No. 3, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 132)*

## 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  
Harper  
Harrison  
Hiebert  
Hinton  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kilgour  
Kotto  
Laframboise  
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)  
Lavallée  
Lessard  
Loubier  
Lunn  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Marceau  
Ménard (Hochelaga)  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Oda  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Poirier-Rivard  
Preston  
Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 147

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  
Harris  
Hearn  
Hill  
Jaffier  
Johnston  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Komarnicki  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lalonde  
Lauzon  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
MacKenzie  
Mark  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Merrifield  
Mills  
O'Brien  
Obhrai  
Pallister  
Penson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Poilievre  
Prentice  
Rajotte  
Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
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  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
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

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  
Dossanjh  
Dryden  
Efford  
Eyking  
Fontana  
Fry  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
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- — 152

## PAIRED

Nil

*Government Orders*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment to Motion No. 3 lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 3.

**Hon. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent again to apply the previous vote on the motion now before the House, only in reverse, so Liberals will be voting yes.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this manner?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(The House divided on Motion No. 3, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 133)*

## 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
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
Thibault (West Nova)	Tonks
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Valley
Volpe	Wappel
Wasylcyia-Leis	Wilfert
Wrzesnewskij	Zed- — 152

## 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
Forsther	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain)	Gagnon (Jonquière—Alma)
Gallant	Gaudet
Gauthier	Goldring
Goodyear	Gouk
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Guergis	Guimond
Harper	Harris
Harrison	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Jaffer
Jean	Johnston
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour	Komarnicki
Kotto	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lauzon
Lavallée	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Loubier	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Marceau	Mark
Ménard (Hochelega)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	O'Brien
O'Connor	Obhrai
Oda	Pallister
Paquette	Penson
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Poileuvre
Poirier-Rivard	Prentice
Preston	Rajotte



*Government Orders*

Reid  
Richardson  
Roy  
Scheer  
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)  
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)  
Sorenson  
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Tweed  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
White  
Yelich — 147

Reynolds  
Ritz  
Sauvageau  
Schellenberger  
Skelton  
Solberg  
St-Hilaire  
Tilson  
Trost  
Van Loan  
Vincent  
Watson  
Williams

Drouin  
Easter  
Emerson  
Folco  
Frulla  
Galloway  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Kadis  
Karygiannis  
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  
Wasylcyia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

Dryden  
Efford  
Eyking  
Fontana  
Fry  
Godbout  
Godin  
Graham  
Holland  
Ianno  
Julian  
Karetak-Lindell  
Khan  
Lastewka  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Maloney  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McGuinity  
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 — 152

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 3 carried.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Finance, Lib.)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

• (1950)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 134)*

## YEAS

## 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

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

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

## 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

*Speaker's Ruling*

Gauthier	Goldring
Goodyear	Gouk
Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells)	Guay
Guergis	Guimond
Harper	Harris
Harrison	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Jaffer
Jean	Johnston
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kilgour	Komarnicki
Kotto	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lapierre (Lévis—Bellechasse)	Lauzon
Lavallée	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Loubier	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Marceau	Mark
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	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
Simard (Beauport—Limoilou)	Skelton
Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul)	Solberg
Sorenson	St-Hilaire
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Van Loan
Vellacott	Vincent
Warawa	Watson
White	Williams
Yelich— 147	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

When shall the bill be read a third time? At the next sitting of the House.

\* \* \*

● (1955)

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## GOVERNMENT MOTION NO. 17—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised earlier today by the hon. opposition House leader concerning the notice period for Government Business No. 17. I would like to thank the hon. opposition House leader for raising this matter.

The hon. opposition House leader argued that Government Business No. 17 could not be taken up until, at the earliest, 12:25 a.m. on Thursday, June 23, because the text of the notice had been

embargoed until the notice paper became available at 12:25 a.m. this morning, June 21. Only then, he maintained, would the 48 hours' notice required by Standing Order 54 have been met.

However, as Marleau and Montpetit states at page 470:

In practice, the 48 hours' notice requirement is not exactly 48 consecutive hours, but refers instead to the publication of the notice once in the notice paper and its transfer the next day to the order paper.

[Translation]

This practice has been confirmed by a ruling by Speaker Lamoureux on October 6, 1970, which can be found on page 1410 of the journals.

[English]

As hon. members are aware, Standing Order 54 states that 48 hours' notice shall be given for any substantive motion, and on Mondays, notices must be laid on the table or filed with the clerk before 6 p.m. for inclusion on the next day's notice paper. This is to provide members and the House with some prior warning, so that they are not called upon to consider a matter unexpectedly.

The time-honoured practice followed by staff in the Journals branch in respect of embargoed items placed on notice is that those items are made available upon publication of the notice paper, invariably after the House adjourns.

In recent times this has meant that items are available a relatively short time after the adjournment hour, often less than an hour after the adjournment. I should point out that in the days before technology allowed electronic publishing, it was not uncommon for interested parties to have to wait until the next morning to read the text of items placed on notice on any given evening.

[Translation]

This practice has served the interests of all parties in the House fairly. In other words, each party has benefited from it at one time or another.

[English]

That being said, very often members furnish copies of the items they are placing on notice to other members as a matter of courtesy, and that is certainly a practice to be encouraged.

With regard to Government Business No. 17, notice was given prior to 6 p.m. yesterday and the motion was placed on today's notice paper, pursuant to Standing Order 54. It will be transferred to the appropriate section in tomorrow's order paper, thus fulfilling the notice requirement according to our practice.

The Chair has concluded that no breach of the rules or practices of this House has occurred. Accordingly, it will be open to the government House leader to move Government Business No. 17 at the appropriate time tomorrow if he so chooses.

[For continuation of proceedings see Part B]





# CONTENTS

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Government Response to Petitions

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 7503

### Sale of Medals Prohibition Act

Mr. Stoffer ..... 7503

Bill C-415. Introduction and first reading ..... 7503

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) ..... 7503

### Export and Import of Rough Diamonds Act

Mr. Efford (Avalon) ..... 7503

Bill S-36. First reading ..... 7503

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time) ..... 7503

### Committees of the House

#### Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Warawa ..... 7503

Motion for concurrence ..... 7503

Mr. Szabo ..... 7504

Mr. Scheer ..... 7505

Mr. Lunn ..... 7505

Mr. Szabo ..... 7506

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 7507

Motion ..... 7507

Motion agreed to ..... 7508

### Petitions

#### Immigration

Mr. Siksay ..... 7508

#### Canada Post

Mr. Trost ..... 7508

#### Civil Marriage Act

Ms. Bonsant ..... 7509

Mr. Miller ..... 7509

#### Taxation

Mr. Miller ..... 7509

#### Great Lakes Water Diversion

Mr. Miller ..... 7509

#### Health

Mr. Miller ..... 7509

#### Diabetes

Mr. Miller ..... 7509

#### Canada Post

Mr. Batters ..... 7509

#### Immigration

Mr. Telegdi ..... 7509

#### International Aid

Ms. McDonough ..... 7509

#### Water Quality

Mrs. Gallant ..... 7509

#### National Defence

Ms. McDonough ..... 7509

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 7510

### Questions Passed as Orders for Return

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 7511

### Request for Emergency Debate

#### Devils Lake Diversion Project

The Acting Speaker (Hon. Augustine) ..... 7512

Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) ..... 7512

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### An Act to Authorize the Minister of Finance to Make Certain Payments

Bill C-48. Report Stage ..... 7512

Mr. MacKay ..... 7512

Mr. Casey ..... 7514

Mr. Watson ..... 7514

Mr. Boudria ..... 7516

Mr. Cummins ..... 7517

Mr. Trost ..... 7518

Mr. Fitzpatrick ..... 7519

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 7520

Mrs. Desjarlais ..... 7521

Mr. Trost ..... 7521

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 7523

Mr. Casson ..... 7524

Mrs. Desjarlais ..... 7525

Mr. Khan ..... 7526

Mr. Carrie ..... 7526

Mrs. Longfield ..... 7528

Mr. Day ..... 7529

Mr. Scarpaleggia ..... 7530

Ms. McDonough ..... 7530

Mr. Harris ..... 7531

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### *The 1918 Anti-Greek Riot in Toronto*

Mr. Karygiannis ..... 7531

### National Aboriginal Day

Mr. Harrison ..... 7532

### Canadian Forces Naval Sword

Ms. Torsney ..... 7532

### Carmel Paquin

Mr. Gagnon (Saint-Maurice—Champlain) ..... 7532

### Volunteer Firefighters

Mr. LeBlanc ..... 7532

### Health Care Provider

Mr. Fletcher ..... 7532

### National Aboriginal Day

Ms. Karetak-Lindell ..... 7533

<b>Gisèle and Jean-Charles Burelle</b>	
Ms. St-Hilaire .....	7533
<b>Anne-Marie Alonzo</b>	
Ms. Folco .....	7533
<b>Members of Parliament Staff</b>	
Mr. Rajotte .....	7533
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Mr. Boudria .....	7533
<b>National Aboriginal Day</b>	
Mr. Layton .....	7534
<b>Public Service</b>	
Mr. O'Connor .....	7534
<b>National Aboriginal Day</b>	
Mr. Cleary .....	7534
<b>Human Rights</b>	
Mr. Abbott .....	7534
<b>Etobicoke—Lakeshore</b>	
Ms. Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore) .....	7534

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

<b>Citizenship and Immigration</b>	
Mr. Harper .....	7535
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	7535
Mr. Harper .....	7535
Mr. Volpe .....	7535
Mr. Harper .....	7535
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	7535
<b>Gasoline Prices</b>	
Mr. Solberg .....	7535
Mr. Goodale .....	7535
Mr. Solberg .....	7535
Mr. Goodale .....	7535
Mr. Duceppe .....	7536
Mr. Emerson .....	7536
Mr. Duceppe .....	7536
Mr. Emerson .....	7536
Mr. Crête .....	7536
Mr. Emerson .....	7536
Mr. Crête .....	7536
Mr. Emerson .....	7536
<b>International Cooperation</b>	
Mr. Layton .....	7536
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	7536
Mr. Layton .....	7536
Mr. Goodale .....	7537
<b>Citizenship and Immigration</b>	
Mr. Hiebert .....	7537
Mr. Valeri .....	7537
Mr. Hiebert .....	7537
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	7537
<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7537
Mr. Pettigrew .....	7537

Mr. Bezan .....	7537
Mr. Dion .....	7537
<b>Broadcasting</b>	
Mr. Kotto .....	7537
Ms. Frulla .....	7537
Mr. Kotto .....	7538
Ms. Frulla .....	7538
Mr. Gauthier .....	7538
Ms. Frulla .....	7538
Mr. Gauthier .....	7538
Ms. Frulla .....	7538
<b>Technology Partnerships Canada</b>	
Mr. Rajotte .....	7538
Mr. Emerson .....	7538
Mr. Rajotte .....	7538
Mr. Emerson .....	7538
Mr. Schmidt .....	7539
Mr. Emerson .....	7539
Mr. Schmidt .....	7539
Mr. Emerson .....	7539
<b>Alberta Flood</b>	
Ms. Neville .....	7539
Ms. McLellan .....	7539
<b>Agriculture</b>	
Mr. Angus .....	7539
Mr. Mitchell .....	7539
Mr. Angus .....	7539
Mr. Mitchell .....	7539
<b>Health</b>	
Mr. Merrifield .....	7540
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre) .....	7540
Mr. Merrifield .....	7540
Mr. Dosanjh .....	7540
Mr. Fletcher .....	7540
Mr. Dosanjh .....	7540
Mr. Fletcher .....	7540
Mr. Dosanjh .....	7540
<b>Immigration</b>	
Ms. Faille .....	7540
Mr. Volpe .....	7540
Ms. Faille .....	7540
M. Volpe .....	7541
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Mr. Day .....	7541
Mr. Pettigrew .....	7541
Mr. Day .....	7541
Mr. Pettigrew .....	7541
<b>Aboriginal Affairs</b>	
Mr. Valley .....	7541
Ms. Blondin-Andrew .....	7541
<b>China</b>	
Ms. Guergis .....	7541
Ms. Carroll .....	7541

<b>Information Commissioner</b>	
Mr. Tilson .....	7542
Mr. Alcock .....	7542
<b>Veterans Affairs</b>	
Mr. Bachand .....	7542
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre) .....	7542
<b>Reproductive Technologies</b>	
Mr. Szabo .....	7542
Mr. Dosanjh .....	7542
<b>Vietnam</b>	
Mr. Kilgour .....	7542
Ms. Carroll .....	7542
<b>Points of Order</b>	
<b>Government Motion No. 17</b>	
Mr. Hill .....	7543
Mr. Valeri .....	7543
<b>Tabling of Documents</b>	
Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7543
<b>Question of Privilege raised by member for Ahuntsic</b>	
Mr. Anders .....	7543
Ms. Bakopanos .....	7543
<b>Request for Emergency Debate</b>	
<b>Speaker's Ruling</b>	
The Speaker .....	7544

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>An Act to Authorize the Minister of Finance to Make Certain Payments</b>	
Bill C-48. Report Stage .....	7544
Mrs. Redman .....	7544
Motion .....	7544
(Motion agreed to) .....	7544
Mr. Harris .....	7544
Mr. Bagnell .....	7545
Mrs. Desjarlais .....	7546
<b>Business of the House</b>	
Motion .....	7546
(Motion agreed to) .....	7546
<b>An Act to Authorize the Minister of Finance to Make Certain Payments</b>	
Bill C-48. Report Stage .....	7546
Mr. Boudria .....	7546
Mr. Komarnicki .....	7547
Mr. Gouk .....	7548
Mr. Mills .....	7548
Mr. Boudria .....	7549
Ms. McDonough .....	7550
Mr. Trost .....	7551
Mrs. Jennings .....	7552
Mr. Carrie .....	7553

Ms. McDonough .....	7553
Mr. Lunn .....	7554
Mr. Julian .....	7555
Mr. Wrzesnewskyj .....	7556
Mr. Bains .....	7556
Mr. Boudria .....	7558
Mr. Julian .....	7558
Mr. Merrifield .....	7559
Mr. Boudria .....	7561
Mr. Tonks .....	7561

#### Business of the House

Mrs. Redman .....	7562
Motion .....	7562
(Motion agreed to) .....	7562

#### Message from the Senate

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Proulx) .....	7562
---------------------------------------	------

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

##### Symbol for the House of Commons

Motion .....	7562
Ms. Oda .....	7562
Mr. Boudria .....	7563
Division on Motion deferred .....	7564

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

##### An Act to Authorize the Minister of Finance to Make Certain Payments

Bill C-48. Report Stage .....	7564
Mrs. Yelich .....	7564
Mr. Adams .....	7566
Ms. Fry .....	7567
Mr. Epp .....	7568
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) .....	7569
Mr. Goldring .....	7570
Ms. McDonough .....	7571
Mr. Harrison .....	7571
Mrs. Desjarlais .....	7572
Mr. Scheer .....	7573
Mr. Bagnell .....	7573
Amendment to Motion No. 1 negated .....	7575
Motion No. 1 agreed to .....	7576
Amendment to Motion No. 2 negated .....	7577
Motion No. 2 agreed to .....	7578
Amendment to Motion No. 3 negated .....	7580
Motion for Concurrence .....	7581
Motion No. 3 agreed to .....	7581
Motion agreed to .....	7582

##### Points of Order

<b>Government Motion No. 17—Speaker's Ruling</b>	
The Speaker .....	7582

**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Publishing and Depository Services

PWGSC, Ottawa, ON K1A 0S5

Internet: <http://publications.gc.ca>

1-800-635-7943 or Local 613-941-5995

*En cas de non-livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*

Les Éditions et Services de dépôt

TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Internet: <http://publications.gc.ca>

1-800-635-7943 ou appel local (613) 941-5995

**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:**

**Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :**

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Additional copies may be obtained from Publishing and Depository Services, PWGSC, Ottawa, ON K1A 0S5**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**

**On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les Éditions et Services de dépôt, TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5**

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant à : Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5**





CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 140 • NUMBER 120 • 1st SESSION • 38th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, June 21, 2005**  
**Part B**

—  
**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

All parliamentary publications are available on the  
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

[Continuation of proceedings from Part A]

## EMERGENCY DEBATE

[English]

### DEVILS LAKE DIVERSION PROJECT

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to an adjournment motion to discuss an important and determined matter which is of an urgent nature, that is, the Devils Lake project.

Pursuant to Standing Order 52, the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul has obtained leave to move her motion.

● (2000)

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC)** moved:

That this House do now adjourn.

She said: Mr. Speaker, the member for Selkirk—Interlake seconded the motion that this discussion be set forward tonight because the issue is of utmost concern to the people Manitoba.

I have to say at the outset that there is a great history with this Devils Lake diversion problem. The Devils Lake diversion is about to open. It was scheduled to open on July 1, but because of bad weather it will be postponed. We are grateful for a little time to keep pushing the matter. This is of great concern to Manitobans because of the potential contamination of the waterways in our province.

The member for Selkirk—Interlake has taken a real leadership role on this issue. The water systems affect his riding and my riding to quite an extent. Over and above that, as members of Parliament from Manitoba, it is our responsibility to stand up for the kind of protection of the waterways that is so drastically needed right now. There has been a myriad of problems around this issue.

Members on the other side of the House actually said that the stalling of the opening of the Devils Lake diversion was due to their negotiation with the United States. I found that quite appalling because that just is not true. The fact of the matter is that the governor of North Dakota has said quite categorically that the reason this diversion was not opened was simply because of bad weather.

Throughout our time here, we have done a lot to try to make this diversion not happen. The present government has fumbled and mumbled on this very serious issue. It has neglected the needs of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I will be sharing my time with the member for Selkirk—Interlake. I am very pleased to do that because of the

leadership role he has played in this very important issue for our province.

I tabled in the House today a letter dated May 21, 2002 which was written to Marc Grossman, the under secretary for political affairs at the Department of State in Washington, D.C. by the former ambassador, Michael Kergin. This letter quite clearly indicates there was a reference to the International Joint Commission and an offer was made for Canada to participate in that joint commission. It states:

I am writing in response to your letter of May 20 and other recent correspondence received from the Department of State inviting the Government of Canada to join the Government of the United States in making a reference to the International Joint Commission (IJC) on the compliance with the Boundary Waters Treaty (BWT) of the proposed Devils Lake outlet project.

We note in the letter from the Director of Canadian Affairs, Ms. Nancy Mason, dated 17 April 2002, that a Devils Lake outlet has not been recommended as the preferred option in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers draft Integrated Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), published on 26 February 2002.

Quite clearly red flags have gone up all over the place. Red flags have gone up about the potential danger and the lack of scientific data that is available and the lack of the environmental impact that was needed to ensure that our waters are kept safe in Manitoba. This lack of scientific procedure for our waters in Manitoba is going to be a great cost to the people of Manitoba.

● (2005)

The waterways feed a lot of industry and commerce and also mean enjoyment and recreation in our province. They support the fishery, tourism and a lot of things. People live along the river. There are a lot of things about the waterways that we hold very dear. We want to preserve them in the province of Manitoba.

Lake Winnipeg is under great duress. Some days there are warnings not to swim in the water. There are concerns about foreign species and bacteria. There is an initiative in Manitoba that centres on the waters in Lake Winnipeg.

It is very easy to put out a press release and use a lot of hyperbole about how the waterways are taken care of. Members opposite have done a good job of that. Unfortunately, they have not done a good job of preventing the diversion from being opened.

It has to do with foreign relations and the lack of interaction that the present government has with our neighbours to the south. There is a lack of goodwill. The proper scientific study has not been done. Many variables have come into play that have put our waterways in great danger.

*S. O. 52*

We have tried very, very hard in the House this past while. The issue started over eight years ago. The present government has been in government for over a decade. This issue is not something that just sneaked up and tapped the government on the shoulder. This was a grave concern a long time ago.

In February 2003 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released information that an alternate method of reducing flooding would be preferred to the Devils Lake outlet project and made some recommendations. A lot of red flags go up in our nation when there are issues as big as waterways. The Devils Lake diversion will affect Lake Winnipeg, the Red River and waters right up to the Hudson basin. It will have a huge impact.

We are having this emergency debate to waken the members opposite. Tonight we expect them to say with great hyperbole that they have great relations with the U.S. They will say that they are doing lots of things and that everything we have said is inaccurate.

The fact of the matter is that the diversion should not be opened. It should not be there. We are concerned about the lack of ability of the members opposite to do anything about this. The red flags are all up. To stand in the House of Commons and actually say in front of Canadians that the diversion was delayed because of their talks is an embarrassment to Manitobans and an embarrassment to all Canadians.

The fact is there has been bad weather. The weather is clearing up. In a couple of weeks' time the diversion will be opened and will dump all sorts of things into the Manitoba waterways.

Tonight we want to stand here and have this discussion. We want Manitobans and all Canadians to know that we are fighting for the well-being of our waterways all throughout Manitoba.

I have to commend the Manitoba caucus. I have to commend the member for Selkirk—Interlake and the member for Provencher, who has spent a great deal of time on this issue, as well as Senator Johnson and Senator Stratton. People in Manitoba are standing up on this issue. Tonight we hope to push the present government into doing something about it.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. While my hon. colleague was speaking, the President of the Treasury Board was calling her a liar. I would ask him to withdraw those comments.

• (2010)

**The Deputy Speaker:** During the debate there was some heckling. I did not catch any particular words. If that was the case and there was language like that used, perhaps the hon. member would withdraw it.

**Hon. Reg Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, that language seems to be the standard in the House coming from that side. However, what I said was I was tired of the lies. I did not call the individual a liar. It was the statements that were being made which are patently false. I think that is the standard the Speaker set.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is hard to distinguish between saying someone is a liar and saying they are telling lies. It is basically the same thing. I would ask the hon. minister if he would withdraw the word "lies" in order to get on with the debate.

**Hon. Reg Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, we have raised this point over and over in the House. The Speaker has ruled that as long as these sorts of allegations are not directed at an individual, they are allowed. However, if it would facilitate the debate, I will withdraw any reference to the individual.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the minister for that.

Questions and comments.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, are there questions and comments?

**The Deputy Speaker:** There are five minutes for questions and comments.

**An hon. member:** We were told there were not.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I believe there are questions and comments following the speeches, unless there was a special order passed saying otherwise. There are, as usual, five minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pardon the pun but we are being inundated with water problems in Canada these days. There is flooding in Alberta and now of course this issue that affects—

**Hon. Dan McTeague:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Speaker has made a ruling. I do not mean in any way to be difficult to the member who is speaking now. but it would appear to me, according to the Standing Orders of the House, that in fact under Standing Order 52 there is not an opportunity for questions and comments. I believe that was the prior agreement, but I defer to your second review of this matter.

**The Deputy Speaker:** There may be some confusion on the difference between a take note debate and an emergency debate. Standing Order 43(1)(b) states:

Following any speech by the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, a Minister moving a government order, or the Member speaking in reply immediately after such Minister, and following any twenty-minute speech, a period not exceeding ten minutes shall be made available, if required, to allow Members to ask questions and comment briefly on matters relevant to the speech and to allow responses thereto.

Regarding an emergency debate, Standing Order 52(13) states:

No Member shall speak longer than twenty minutes during debate on any such motion,—

—referring to emergency debates—

—provided that a Member may indicate to the Speaker that he or she will be dividing his or her time with another Member.

Therefore, members can divide their time and I believe there can be questions and comments, unlike a take note debate. We can proceed that way.

We will resume questions and comments with the hon. member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park.

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, what I was leading up to is that we have all of these water issues in this country now and they are very important. It involves the necessary supply of water in one case, and in some instances when it comes to flooding, a rather distinct oversupply.

*S. O. 52*

I would like to ask the hon. member to give us a very quick and brief summary of this diversion and what it means in terms of water supply and water management to the province.

• (2015)

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, this is about keeping our waterways in Manitoba clean. There has not been enough science on the issue. There has not been an environmental impact study on the Devils Lake diversion. There are solutions to the problem but the problem is that time is running out.

Suggestions have been made that a screen be put in at a cost and that our waters be protected as they come from the U.S. The problem right now is that the Red River is very high and the water levels in Manitoba are very high. When the Devils Lake diversion is opened, it causes the water to come down without knowing what is actually in that water.

We have a bad situation going on in Lake Winnipeg right now. I could go through all the details but I do not have time to do that. However there are very specific bacteria, nitrates and all kinds of things that are compromising the quality of the water in Lake Winnipeg.

Lake Winnipeg is the 10th largest freshwater body in the world and it supplies water to many people in the province of Manitoba. We have raised this issue in the House many times with the government. The flags went up eight years ago about the concerns.

Now that we are right on the brink of the Devils Lake opening, we want to work in a collaborative way with our neighbours to the south to problem solve and ensure that our water quality in the province of Manitoba is kept pure.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there was a point of confusion that made me concerned with one of the proposals. She mentioned that there was a myriad of proposals that she could put forward. One of the specific ones I heard from her party was with respect to the filtration system, which has also been put into question as to whether that would actually be effective as a solution to the diversion.

Even so, I believe her party said that the Canadian government should be paying for this. The precedence for this type of suggestion, when dealing with our American neighbours over something like water quality issues, it would seem to me, at best, circumspect and, at worst, terrible for the nation of Canada. To make a suggestion that we should pay to filter their dirty water before it arrives across the Canadian border seems to me to be erroneous and the wrong direction to go in.

Throughout this discussion the important things to keep in mind are the very explicit facts of this case. When was it that the Americans actually had a project that we could review and refer to the IJC? The date of that is extremely important. I was wondering if she could comment on that part of the process and then on the suggestion that Canada should be paying for the filtration system that may or may not work.

**Mrs. Joy Smith:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct one inaccuracy. I said that there was a suggestion, which came from North Dakota quite recently, that a filter could be put in. No mention was made of whether or not the Canadian government should or

would pay for the filter. I also said that not enough science was going on to ascertain what to do to ensure that our waters in Manitoba are protected.

I threw out the kind of proposals that came forward from down south and I am saying that we should look at all options. The present government is the government in power and it should be dealing with this. It has had over a decade to do that and the responsibility is squarely on the Liberals' shoulders. Some members from Manitoba have also stated their concern.

Unfortunately, the Province of Manitoba actually put a court case forward about this project. When we are talking about this today, we are talking about the fact that an environmental impact study has to be done. It has not been done. We do not know enough about what is happening in our water systems. We have some data that shows quite clearly that our water system could be compromised.

• (2020)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to again speak in the House to the Devils Lake diversion project and the impact it will have. I thank my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul for her leadership on this and in bringing it forward on behalf of the Manitoba Conservative caucus.

I also want to thank Senator Janis Johnson and Senator Terry Stratton for the work they have put into the boundary waters issue for the past 20 years, going right back to the Garrison diversion out of North Dakota and getting that one derailed.

I also have to thank all my Manitoba Conservative caucus colleagues for continuing on with this fight over the last number of years. I know that since I became a member of this House a year ago, this has been one of the issues that has been the most important to my riding.

The impact on Selkirk—Interlake, of course, would be enormous. We have to remember that my riding houses the 10th and 11th largest freshwater lakes, and that includes Lake Winnipeg which is the virtual ending point of the water coming out of Devils Lake. If this water is allowed to pump out into the Red River and ultimately into Lake Winnipeg it will have a huge impact.

It will have an impact on many commercial fishermen who reside around the lake. We have a huge tourism industry that is built upon the beaches and the water sports that can be enjoyed on Lake Winnipeg. My own family enjoys fishing on that lake and enjoys spending time on the beaches. We do not want to see the water quality in Lake Winnipeg compromised any further.

I want to go back a little and talk about the water quality of Devils Lake. Maybe the ministers across are not aware of it, but Devils Lake is a contained basin. Essentially, it has no natural water outlets. All the water that flows into the lake stays in the lake. It is isolated from the Red River basin and the Hudson Bay watershed, and it has been that way for over 1,000 years.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers did a study on the pollution problems associated with Devils Lake. We have to remember that there is foreign biota in there and biota is a parasite that can affect the fish populations. Devils Lake contains at least two biota that are different from those found in the Red River and in Lake Winnipeg.

*S. O. 52*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said that they needed to study the issue further to determine what other biota was in Devils Lake because the studies that have been done to date have been very poorly done. However, even with those poor studies, they still have been able to identify two biota species that are different from Lake Winnipeg.

We also know there are high levels of salt and sulphates and it has been estimated that 40,000 pounds of phosphorus will be discharged from Devils Lake when the outlet starts operation.

Lake Winnipeg has been fighting for some time with its own water quality issues. It has been compared to Lake Erie 25 years ago. It is a lake in crisis. We have these huge toxic algae blooms happening in the lake and we really need to ensure we are not putting more problems in there and try to clean up the problem that we have right now and try to divert this water coming from Devils Lake someplace else.

The other thing we have to remember with Devils Lake is that the fish populations in Devils Lake are all stocked fish. Devils Lake, in dry years and in normal years, before the drainage programs were started in North Dakota, all the runoff went into Devils Lake and the fish often would die. The lake often dried right up. In 1942 the lake was completely dry. All the fish stock died. More water had to be brought in through the changing seasons, wet and dry, and more fish were brought in to stock it. Some of the species that were put into the lake are not naturally found in the Red River basin, such as striped bass, but there could be other invasive species.

One thing that is still being questioned is the mercury levels in Devils Lake. We also do not need to be dumping more mercury into the Red River basin either.

I want to read a letter Stephen Mafhood, the director of the U.S. Department of Natural Resources, wrote on June 18, 2003, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He said:

In summary, we consider this project to be one of the most ill-informed and least plausible of all Corps projects ever reviewed by this agency. It makes no economic sense, it would create ecological and environmental damages far exceeding the supposed benefits, and would likely fail to achieve any of its objectives with the exception of offering comfort, actually false comfort, to those who are pleading for some action. Operation of the proposed outlet would likely prove harmful to the environment in the Sheyenne River, downstream rivers and, in the long term, Devils Lake itself.

He definitely saw the folly of going ahead with this Devils Lake diversion.

• (2025)

We have a bit of history here. Back in 1909, the two great nations of Canada and the United States decided to sit down and develop the Boundary Waters Treaty. That established the International Joint Commission, which gave us a dispute settlement mechanism to deal with issues of water that crosses our international border.

In 2002, the U.S. State Department invited the Canadian government to participate in a joint reference, because these references have to be done jointly, to the International Joint Commission. In the letter written by Ambassador Michael Kergin, who was the Canadian ambassador at the time, to Marc Grossman, who is the undersecretary of the U.S. State Department for political affairs, he stated:

In the view of the Government of Canada, it is inappropriate to refer to the IJC a proposal, such as the potential Devils Lake project, which is neither finalized nor recommended by the Army Corps of Engineers, to determine whether it would be compliant with the provisions of the Boundary Waters Treaty.

He goes on to say:

Furthermore, there are other Garrison water division and inter-basin transfer proposals, such as the Northwest Area Water Supply project, that also have potential transboundary effects, which will need to be addressed in a reference. In order to avoid multiple references to the IJC, it would appear sensible at the appropriate time, to discuss a reference that would be broader than that pertaining simply to the Devils Lake outlet.

I maintain that we had an opportunity here to have a reference made on the U.S. invitation. I always say that a bird in the hand is better than two in the bush and we went for the gusto. We wanted to do everything at once and now we do not have a reference at all.

Of course that sent a mixed message to North Dakota. It did not see any opposition so it went ahead and developed the diversion, and construction is almost complete. We are only a matter of days away from North Dakota actually opening the outlet and turning the pumps on.

The government has dropped the ball on this. The government has either been incompetent in the negotiations or it does not care about Manitoba, or are throwing caution to the wind here on our international treaties.

Governor Hoeven of North Dakota has said that Canada should actually go out and buy the sand filter recommended by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for \$20 million U.S.

The reality is that the project is built. I went to a conference in January in Fargo to talk to the people at the North Dakota water commission and hear more about the project. They are ready to go. The money is spent and they want to turn on the switch and start pumping. Of course, wet weather is what is holding this back.

There is no negotiated delay, as the government has led us to believe. The only delay is a rain delay. Water levels are high and it is too wet to finish off the construction but they will go ahead as soon as they have the opportunity to put the final touches on the project and complete it.

We are into the 11th hour here. We really need to think about protecting our Manitoba waterways. If we were to allow this project to go through without a referral this could set a dangerous precedent for all other transboundary issues under the Boundary Waters Treaty. We may as well just throw away the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 but I do not want to see that happen.

We need to do the full court press. We need to get a deal. We need to change the project and make whatever amendments can be made to protect Manitoba, our waterways and Lake Winnipeg.

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am interested in the member's interest in this project because the first time we heard him speak on it was in the last week, but better late than never.

S. O. 52

I am a little confused as to why he uses as his reference information that is provided by the proponent of opening the dam and sending the polluted water into Manitoba. That seems to be the position he is supporting. I do not understand how that serves the interest of his constituents.

Given that he claims some knowledge on this file and claims to be a bit of an activist on this file, perhaps he could tell us what the position of the state of Minnesota is on this. How many governors are actually supporting Manitoba on this?

Could he tell us what the positions are of the Great Lakes Council, the province of Quebec and the province of Ontario? Could he tell us why he is so opposed to the actions of Premier Doer who has been doing an absolutely stellar job at presenting this case? His colleague, who spoke earlier, said that was the position of her party on Premier Doer's ill-advised court case.

If the member is so involved in this, could he perhaps give us a few facts other than simply repeating the misinformation that has been put on the record to date?

• (2030)

**Mr. James Bezan:** Actually, Mr. Speaker, the source of my information is largely from the province of Manitoba. It is not coming out of North Dakota at all.

I meant to say this during my speech but unfortunately ran out of time. The province of Manitoba is of a different political stripe than I am, but it has been fighting this battle by itself. The state of Minnesota of course has been cooperating with it recently and I believe the state of Iowa stepped in to help as well.

However, in the original court case that went on in North Dakota, which was referred to the Supreme Court, in a joint submission between the state of Minnesota and the province of Manitoba, the Government of Canada was not there to help.

We need to look at the real facts here. The facts are that there was an opportunity when there was a reference to the IJC offered back in 2002. The Liberals sat on their hands instead of doing what was right, instead of going ahead and making sure that we were able to get everything done to take care of the needs of Manitoba, the needs of people in my riding, the needs of my fishermen and my tourist businesses.

We needed to have that referral, but the answer was no. Canada went for the gusto instead of going and getting what we actually needed done at that time. We could have derailed the whole project back in 2002. Now we are sitting here, without any opportunity. The horse is out of the chute, we are riding and I do not think we are going to make the eight seconds.

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for bringing this motion forward for debate this evening and also the member for Selkirk—Interlake for the excellent job he is doing.

Tonight the timing of this motion certainly shows where the government has been over the last decade. This is the eleventh hour. This is the time when the pumps are going to be turned on.

The government has had over a decade to deal with this problem. I remember hearing about this problem before I was a member of

Parliament. After becoming a member of Parliament, I remember hearing previous foreign ministers debating and talking about this.

Unfortunately, the government missed the opportunity to do something about the water. At a minimum, it could have had this referred to the International Joint Commission. I still remember going to a meeting where then foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy made a presentation to the Canada-U.S. friendship association, I believe, on this very topic. He was struggling at that time on having it referred to the International Joint Commission.

Here we are, at the eleventh hour, and the pumps are ready to be primed to dump water into the Sheyenne River and into this country's water courses. I have a question for the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake. What went wrong? Why over the last 12 years did the Liberal government not do something about it and not get us to this point?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette makes a good point. The reality is that Governor Hoeven of North Dakota holds the switch and he is about to pull that lever. We had the opportunity to go back and have that referral. The government has dropped the ball too many times on this file.

Some members like to ask where have I been in the past. I am new to politics and have only been here for a year, but I have been up on this question a number of times. I have also made statements in the House. I also will tell members also that this is one thing that I have worked hard on in my riding. I have been down to North Dakota talking to the North Dakota water commission when the Liberals have been sitting around here and not making the job happen.

We have to make sure that we have the opportunity and that we have two-way dialogue with our friends in the United States to get this resolved and resolved quickly.

• (2035)

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to this emergency debate on the Devils Lake outlet.

[*Translation*]

I will be sharing my time with my colleague and friend, the Minister of the Environment, who is also very committed to this important issue for our government.

Canada believes the Boundary Waters Treaty is fundamental to the management and protection of the boundary and transboundary waters between Canada and the United States. We are very determined to defend the integrity of the treaty and the role of the International Joint Commission.

[*English*]

The government has conveyed Canada's concerns regarding the North Dakota Devils Lake outlet to the highest levels of the United States government on many occasions over the past number of years. We have worked diligently with the government of Manitoba and all Manitobans to present our concerns to the U.S. government.

*S. O. 52*

We have garnered widespread support in the United States for our position on Devils Lake. The governors of Minnesota, Missouri and Ohio and congressional representatives from Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Washington and Arizona have all supported Canada's position on Devils Lake.

The Assembly of First Nations, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mayors, the Great Lakes Commission and Premiers McGuinty and Charest of Ontario and Quebec have all voiced their concerns about the Devils Lake outlet.

Why has there been overwhelming support for Canada's position on Devils Lake? It is because everyone recognizes that a remarkable percentage of the border we share with the United States is made up of water. In fact, some 3,500 kilometres of the border, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean, is made up of boundary waters. That is a lot of water, and consequently, people on both sides of the border recognize the importance of binational management of the border waters. This is why so many diverse organizations and political leaders have supported Canada and our stand against the Devils Lake outlet.

Our work on Devils Lake began a number of years ago. We have consistently and repeatedly expressed our concerns that an outlet from Devils Lake would pose an environmental risk to the waters of the Red River and Lake Winnipeg.

Our position is quite simple. In 1909 Canada and the United States signed the Boundary Waters Treaty, under which both countries agreed to protect water resources on either side of the border. To quote from article 4 of the treaty:

—waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other.

To date, the Boundary Waters Treaty has proven extremely valuable to both countries. The independent, binational International Joint Commission, the IJC, was established by the treaty to provide the principles and mechanisms to help resolve disputes and prevent future ones, primarily those concerning water quantity and quality along the boundary between the United States and Canada. Preserving the integrity of the Boundary Waters Treaty is critical to both countries.

Canada first raised concerns about a possible state funded North Dakota outlet in 1999. We have consistently expressed our concerns about biota transfer from Devils Lake into the Red River and Lake Winnipeg. We have raised questions about the impact of the Devils Lake outlet on water quality in the Red River basin and what the socio-economic impact will be to downstream water users in Manitoba.

● (2040)

[*Translation*]

In 2002, the United States made a referral to the IJC, but concerning an entirely different reservoir proposed by the United States federal government.

[*English*]

The Conservatives are plain wrong when they say that the United States proposed a referral to the IJC for this project. It was for another project completely. It was about an outlet proposed by the

federal authorities of the United States, not the one by the state of North Dakota. Things must be clear in the House.

[*Translation*]

Canada said at the time that it would be premature to send it to the joint commission as long as the environmental assessment had not been completed.

The 2002-03 environmental assessment was very contentious. The project was strongly opposed, particularly by Minnesota, Missouri, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Canada and Manitoba.

Canada announced it was prepared to discuss several North Dakota water diversion plans being developed at the time, which may have repercussions under the Boundary Waters Treaty.

[*English*]

When the state of North Dakota began construction of the Devils Lake outlet, we made our concerns known and we sought assurances from the United States that the Boundary Waters Treaty would be respected. This is why in April 2004 we asked the United States to join with us in referring the Devils Lake outlet project to the International Joint Commission for an independent, scientific assessment of the outlet.

The International Joint Commission has a proven track record in helping the governments of Canada and the United States resolve difficult and contentious issues along our shared waters.

Over the past number of months, the government has pulled out all stops in our effort to reach a resolution on Devils Lake. Ambassador McKenna has called on congressional leaders and met with governors to discuss Canada's concerns with the outlet and to seek their support in referring this to the International Joint Commission. The Prime Minister has spoken to the president to underline the importance of Devils Lake to Canada. This type of leadership is making a difference and is welcomed and recognized by our supporters.

Let me quote from an article authored by the Friends of the Earth. It states, "To his credit, Canada's Prime Minister...has raised Canada's concerns about the Devils Lake scheme directly with [President Bush]". Not only has the Prime Minister intervened, but cabinet ministers have spoken to their U.S. colleagues to ensure that everyone is aware of Canada's concerns.

Although we are still working hard to find a resolution, our efforts to date have met with some success. We have been able to dramatically raise awareness about our concerns with the outlet and, more important, we have reached out and obtained the support of dozens of members of Congress, mayors, governors, environmental organizations and U.S. editorial writers.

Because of our intensive efforts, we now have the White House Council of Environmental Quality involved in the discussions. Those discussions are continuing and this government is committed to pursuing a solution that protects Canada's environment and respects the Boundary Waters Treaty.



*S. O. 52*

[*Translation*]

Canada is determined to find a solution that respects the Boundary Waters Treaty, that commits both governments to cooperating in order to prevent transboundary pollution. Whether through the International Joint Commission or any other mechanism that works with the treaty, our goal is to find a solution to prevent the migration of invasive species from Devils Lake.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, tonight I have listened to that speech that was read from the podium, with the member standing there with all the predicted political lines, when the fact of the matter is that July 1 is the day when the diversion is to be opened.

I commend the government of Manitoba. We are of different political stripes, but it has stood alone and has done its best to do whatever it can without any help from the present federal government on this issue. The fact of the matter is that this government has been in power for over a decade and at this time the outlet is being opened without the science.

I have a question for the minister. If the relations were so good and all the support was given from all the states and everybody around, why in the world was this not referred to the International Joint Commission long ago and why was the science behind this not done? The minister's words are very hollow.

• (2045)

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew:** Mr. Speaker, I can say that it is certainly not because of the interest of that member or of the Conservatives, who have shown absolutely no support for this government or any interest in the government taking any action on this issue.

This is absolutely a catch-up exercise for them, with the Conservatives trying to catch up at this time while we have been at work for years. We have garnered a lot of support.

That is typical Conservative propaganda. The lady stands in the House and asks what support there is. I have been very proud to see all of the support that the Canadian position has garnered in the United States.

The Conservatives say, "What is this?" They say, "We do not believe that". One cannot confuse the Conservatives with the hard facts. That is the problem. They have absolutely no true interest in this except scoring cheap political points.

We want a resolution for this. We will want a defence of the Boundary Waters Treaty. We have engaged with the White House and the environment commission. There are discussions going on right now to make sure that we will avoid the transfer of species into Lake Winnipeg and the Red River.

We want action and concrete development over this and we are going to get there with the support of Manitobans, all Canadians and a lot of Americans. That is what really counts on this issue.

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the tone of this debate worries me. We are only an hour into it and the partisan jabs are taking away from the seriousness of this issue.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs is right that the government has been on this file as long as the Government of Manitoba has been on this file. I personally went to Washington with the former minister of foreign affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, in 1999 to make our case at that time. We stated that whatever model the Americans were proposing would be catastrophic because the interbasin transfer of water is something we have to speak out against and we have to demand respect for the Boundary Waters Treaty.

We are at the 11th hour and this is not a time for partisan bickering from the Tories. I was hoping that we could stand united as the Canadian House of Commons and send that united message to our negotiators in the United States, federal and provincial, so that they can convince their American counterparts that Canada is seized of this issue and that our Parliament is speaking with one voice to implore them to reverse this catastrophic decision.

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Winnipeg Centre is absolutely right. It is important that, in Washington and in North Dakota, we register that the House of Commons is absolutely serious about the discussions that are ongoing with the White House at this time.

We do not want this outlet be opened before we have made progress on a scientific basis. My colleague, the Minister of the Environment who will be following me, will be developing these elements that are so important to us.

The House can count on us. I agree that it is the 11th hour. We must ensure that we succeed in delaying the opening of the outlet until we have all of the guarantees and the appropriate tools to protect our waters. I am sure my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, will be very articulate in describing exactly what it is that we are doing.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** I encourage all hon. members to address their comments to the Speaker instead of to other hon. members.

• (2050)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to defend a lake in my country, and what a lake!

[*English*]

Lake Winnipeg is the 12th largest freshwater lake in the world and the sixth largest lake in Canada. It is the third largest lake located entirely within Canada, and number one in the hearts of Manitobans.

This Parliament has a responsibility to Manitoba, to Canada as a whole, and to the planet quite frankly, to protect Lake Winnipeg. It is a superb lake and a world class tourist destination. Its watershed and drainage basin includes parts of four provinces and four U.S. states. The Lake Winnipeg drainage basin is nearly one million square kilometres in size and is home to five million people. It has a large fishing industry.

The state of North Dakota has embarked on a project to discharge water from Devils Lake into nearby Sheyenne River. The Sheyenne River flows into the Red River and subsequently north into Lake Winnipeg.

*S. O. 52*

The Governments of Canada and Manitoba are deeply concerned about the possible threats to Canadian waters posed by this project, which is nearing completion. We are concerned about possible effects on the ecological integrity of our waters and the economic consequences that could be caused by diverting Devils Lake water into the Red River watershed.

Let me tell the House why the Government of Canada is so vigorously engaged in efforts to resolve the Devils Lake outlet dispute. Thanks to the leadership of the Prime Minister, the White House is engaged in exploring possible solutions with us. Let me tell the House why Canada is so committed to finding a solution that protects our environment and reflects the spirit of the Boundary Waters Treaty.

This project is proceeding without a thorough environmental review. We believe that the Devils Lake outlet should not operate until appropriate safeguards are in place. There are good reasons to be concerned with the outlet currently being built by North Dakota.

Devils Lake has no natural inlet or outlet, meaning that it is isolated from the broader Red River basin and has been for approximately the last 1,000 years.

Indeed, in the 1940s the lake was essentially dry meaning that all of the larger orders of life, such as the fish now in the lake, have been introduced by people since that time. Canada is very concerned about the possible transfer of species which may now be living in Devils Lake but which are flowing to the Red River and Lake Winnipeg.

Such biota transfer can have devastating environmental and economic impacts. Canadians and Americans are well acquainted with the harm caused by alien invasive species in the Great Lakes by the introduction of foreign species such as zebra mussels.

A commitment to the principle of precaution means that we must be careful. We must ensure that we have done the science and have the necessary safeguards in place before the outlet starts operations, if the outlet is the solution. Once alien invasive species enter a new system and establish themselves the damage is done and there is no undoing it.

The science concerning Devils Lake biota is insufficient, a view shared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who have identified a number of species of concern for baseline monitoring. In fact, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers remains concerned about biota transfer even if the state of North Dakota apparently is not.

The Army Corps of Engineers is developing a plan and processing biota sampling in Devils Lake focused on biota of concern and designed to identify the presence of species that could spread to other areas of the Red River watershed. The gaps in the science need to be filled in order to understand the full extent of the risks posed by the biota in Devils Lake and how best to address that risk.

● (2055)

The Canadian position is clear. We must ensure we have sound science, determine the mitigation that is required and then install the necessary safeguards to protect the watershed against any additional possible biota transfer. Canada is also concerned about the discharge of poor quality water into the broader basin.

Canada and the United States have agreed to a set of water quality objectives. Environment Canada monitors the chemistry of the Red River as it crosses the border at our station at Emerson, Manitoba. My department has increased the frequency of monitoring at the border. Right now monitoring is done every minute.

It is my goal to support Canada's efforts by ensuring that we have the best information possible regarding any changes to water quality. As well, I have announced that we are enhancing monitoring and data gathering efforts to ensure detailed information on water chemistry, and plant and animal life available for Lake Winnipeg and the Red River.

Devils Lake water is very salty. It has a high concentration of totally dissolved solids, including sulphates. Discharging this water into the Sheyenne River and Red River system will increase the number of times that IJC water quality objectives are exceeded at the border and will likely violate the Boundary Waters Treaty.

In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has indicated there would be increased loads of phosphorous and nitrogen in Lake Winnipeg from Devils Lake waters at the time when the depletion of lake oxygen is a recognized problem. In fact, the additional phosphorous from Devils Lake, as much as 40,000 pounds per year, could create a thick layer of algae on nearly 10 miles of Lake Winnipeg beaches.

It is important to remember that everything from Devils Lake will ultimately end up in Lake Winnipeg. In this respect, the threats to Canada are very different when compared to downstream communities in North Dakota and Minnesota. While the water passes through those states, it accumulates in Lake Winnipeg. This is why Canada is so committed to pursuing a solution that will protect our environment, reflecting the spirit of the Boundary Waters Treaty.

The treaty calls on both countries to cooperate in preventing transboundary water pollution before it occurs. Whether it is through the International Joint Commission or another mechanism, although IJC references are preferred solutions, any other mechanism consistent with the treaty fits our goal to work toward a solution that addresses Canada's environmental concerns to protect the Sheyenne River, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the Boundary Waters Treaty.

[*Translation*]

I therefore appeal to my colleagues' sense of responsibility so that Parliament may, with one voice, work to find the right solution for the Sheyenne River, the Red River, Lake Winnipeg and the treaty that, for over a century, has served the two countries so well.

S. O. 52

[English]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are not here to argue about the science or the importance of the Boundary Waters Treaty. We all understand that.

On our side of the House and I think everybody in my riding who is going to be detrimentally affected by this decision in North Dakota if it unilaterally decides to turn on the switch and start pumping water, we want to know what plan is there in place? We need to know what we are doing right now today in our negotiations with the U.S. state department. Where are we at with Secretary Condoleezza Rice in ensuring we get the referral from the U.S. to go ahead to the International Joint Commission.

We need to know if that fails, if the Americans for whatever political purposes internally decide not to make that reference to the IJC, what is our next step?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Speaker, it is never too late to be positive and to work together. I hope his party will change its tone because up to now it has been more involved in partisan politics than anything else. It is not too late and I welcome the question.

Indeed, we are working very hard. I am very pleased that since the intervention of the Prime Minister with the President, the White House is now involved in the discussions. Our officials are exchanging information and data.

Our case is so strong which gives me confidence; however, we will see. I cannot commit myself to anything because I have no capacity to predict what will happen, but I can give my colleague the assurance that we are doing everything to pass on all the information to White House officials to ensure that at the end of the day they will help us to find a good solution.

Our preference is still a reference to the IJC. It is what we are pushing, but there are other solutions that will come forward with the same result, which is to protect the quality of the water and the biota.

• (2100)

**Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of the Environment would care to comment on the claim which was made by the member for Kildonan—St. Paul that the delay, the idea that the water will not be turned on July 1 as originally designated, is only due to the weather and not due to the negotiations. If that were true, it is something we would want to know and have confirmed. Or is it the case that it may well be weather, but it may also be the negotiation because July 1 is not that far off.

Could the minister tell us if he has a firm commitment from the United States that the tap will not be turned on until such time as this process concludes itself, one way or another?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Speaker, we understood that it was the case. The governor since then said no, it is the weather. If he wants to say it is the weather, it is fine with us as long as we have the capacity to have the time to find a good solution. I will prepare the submission this week. I am sure the hon. member understands that there is a lot of local politics involved and I do not want to hurt this cause at all. We have time to meet and to find a good solution.

If the governor is so sure that there is no problem about the biotic and the quality of the water, why would he resist taking the time to have a sound environmental assessment with good science backing his case? It is what we are saying. We do not want to create any problems for him locally. We want to find a good solution for everyone. The Cheyenne River is part of his state. He needs to be very responsible and we want to work in a very positive way. I am sure this Parliament wants to carry this message.

[Translation]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the minister. When he speaks of the right solutions, what does he plan to do if the United States refuses to make a joint reference? Would Canada make a reference alone and obtain an advice or a recommendation, which in reality has almost the same weight as a decision in the past?

I am well aware that the joint reference is preferable. However, if the United States refused, does he foresee Canada making a unilateral reference?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that if we go it alone, if Canada makes a unilateral reference—which is a possibility, I am not ruling out any possibility today—it would not resolve anything. In any case, once the water goes through the canal and reaches the river and then the lake, the damage from the invasive species is done. This is not really a direction we want to go.

We are monitoring water quality very carefully. As I mentioned earlier, we are sampling every 11 minutes. We have upgraded our monitoring and are preparing for every eventuality.

I am not saying we are ruling out my colleague's hypothesis, but I do see it as a positive solution. It would really be the last resort. It would be a symbolic gesture.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Chair, I rise today to speak in this emergency debate on an important issue affecting Lake Winnipeg, the Sheyenne River and the Red River. Not only national but also international solidarity is essential when it comes to water. The problem caused by the desire of the state of North Dakota to build this 22 kilometre canal from Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River, the Red River and ultimately Lake Winnipeg.

I want to give a bit of context. Any Quebecers listening may not be familiar with the problem, which can occur in other areas and at other times. That is why it is important to develop this awareness and this solidarity.

First, I must say that environmentally concerned people in Quebec are already well aware of this problem. The members of the Bloc Québécois did a tour about water from the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. We were told that it was imperative to urge the federal government to make a joint reference, with the United States, to the International Joint Commission about the possible diversion of water from Devils Lake into the Sheyenne River, the Red River and Lake Winnipeg.

*S. O. 52*

People concerned with the environment and water know that we cannot allow such a precedent to occur, by which polluted and salty water from a lake in North Dakota would be diverted. There must be opposition, and not only from the various levels of government. It started with public opposition. I heard the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake who was angry. I can see why. The public has the impression that the government has been dragging its feet.

There was already considerable awareness in May when we met with a number of environmentalists. As you have no doubt heard, on May 26—I am pleased to underscore this—the mayors of cities on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence attended a large meeting. This was a new coalition called the International Association of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Mayors. These mayors adopted a resolution calling specifically for the U.S. Secretary of State and the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs to refer the Devils Lake dispute to the International Joint Commission so that it might examine the economic and environmental impacts of this controversial diversion plan.

Toronto Mayor David Miller made the following statement at that time, “If we lose the battle of Devils Lake, it sets a precedent that could allow the diversion of the Great Lakes.” That was one of the important conclusions that came out of this 19th conference of the International Association of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Mayors, which was held in Quebec City.

I should point out without further ado, for those listening who may not be aware, that there has been a boundary water treaty between Canada and the United States since 1909.

• (2105)

That treaty addresses all the problems relating to waters originating along the Canada-U.S. border.

Under the treaty, no diversion of boundary waters on either side of the border which affects the natural level or flow of boundary waters on the other side of the border shall be made without the prior approval of the International Joint Commission.

By signing that treaty, the United States and Canada also committed to no contamination of boundary waters or cross-boundary waters which would be harmful to the health of those on the other side of the border.

When they note a problem that violates their obligations, the United States and Canada do have a recourse. I must point out, however, that the recourse is stronger if it is joint. When it is, the International Joint Commission can make use of its power to impose a ban or demand corrective action. When the request does not come from both sides together, the commission still undertakes a study. The recommendation in this case still has a powerful moral force. It is not worthless but, understandably, a joint reference has more weight. The role of the International joint commission is, therefore, an extremely important one.

Let me come back to Devils Lake. This lake is located in North Dakota. For about a decade, this state has had a problem because of record high water levels, which have practically tripled the size of the lake. As a result, farms and fields close to the lake have been flooded, forcing the evacuation of several families. The problem gets worse every spring.

The North Dakota authorities began building a canal—a fairly sizable one—22 km in length in order to divert some of the water from Devils Lake and to stop it from flooding. This \$28 million project consists in linking Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River, which is a tributary of the Red River, which flows into Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba.

The canal was initially scheduled to open on July 1, 2005. The reason the public was alerted and environmentalists were up in arms, as I mentioned earlier, is that the waters from Devils Lake in North Dakota are highly polluted and extremely salty.

On the other hand, Lake Winnipeg is one of the aquatic gems of Canada, Manitoba even more so and even the world, as the Minister of the Environment just said. In 2003, the Manitoba government had decided on a plan of action to restore the water quality to early 1970s levels. All that work would be compromised, to say nothing of all the drawbacks related to foreign species entering Lake Winnipeg, and the pollution and salinity I already mentioned.

• (2110)

What was done?

It is an interesting fact that the Canadian and Manitoban governments were already putting pressure on North Dakota in 1999 to block water diversion projects. That is clear. In fact, ambassador Raymond Chrétien and the Manitoba premier met with senior American officials and representatives of various groups. In July 2001, despite the fact that the environmental assessment had not been completed, North Dakota called for tenders to develop a temporary diversion project.

In 2004, the Government of Canada, alone, requested that the Devils Lake diversion matter be referred to the International Joint Commission. As I said earlier, an isolated request has little impact. The North Dakota government opposed estoppel claiming that it had proposed to Canada that it submit the Devils Lake matter in 2002, but that Canada had refused.

I tell people in Quebec following this debate that our Conservative colleague is complaining because the Government of Canada refused North Dakota's call for a reference in 2002. The Government of Canada had said at the time that it was premature to make a reference to the commission, since regional authorities were still being consulted about the diversion canal.

By that I mean that I understand the anger of the member for Selkirk—Interlake, but the government can defend itself. However what counts here? What counts is that there be unanimous agreement to bring more pressure to bear on the American government and on American colleagues, who should in turn put pressure on the government. In this instance, the disaster that would follow the opening of this famous diversionary canal affects not only Manitobans, Canadians and Quebecers, but, ultimately, everyone.

Once again, I point out that the mayors of Canada and Quebec met in Quebec City and said that if the canal were allowed to open, it would be tragic, because, afterward, it would be impossible to oppose any of these diversions, which, however, are banned under the treaty of 1909, if the International Joint Commission does not give its approval.

The Prime Minister says it is he who awoke President Bush to the matter. What counts is that the States is refusing to refer this matter jointly. Like me, Mr. Speaker, you no doubt received a letter from American senators calling on us to put pressure on our government. They say they are doing the same thing with theirs.

That is the kind of action in which parliamentarians are useful. I do not know if this has been done, but what if, as parliamentarians, we send a fax tomorrow and the day after to all parliamentarians in all the states affected so that they can put on some pressure, too. Perhaps this would be one way to push the American government and ensure our colleagues in Manitoba that they are not alone. They are right to be fighting this tooth and nail.

• (2115)

I am speaking this evening to tell them that we are aware, that we know that they are 100% right to fight this battle and we offer our cooperation. That is basically what I wanted to say. I know that I am speaking on behalf of many people.

However, I repeat, even if we have a lot of water—a lot of good quality water, we believe—polluted waters anywhere will pollute others, because of climate change. So we need to develop a new solidarity with regard to the issue of water. I hope that this serious problem will raise everyone's awareness about the need for solidarity on such issues that go beyond the environment. They are, in fact, a matter of life or death.

• (2120)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her very insightful comments. The reason this issue is before the House tonight is because of the gravity of the situation. The frustration is we are now in the ninth hour.

I commend the member for Selkirk—Interlake. I commend the hon. member for her comments. I commend the members in our Senate who have been working so hard. We heard the comment of the hon. member that everybody needs to work together. That is frustrating. People on the American side and on the Canadian side are concerned about this issue.

My hon. colleague is very correct that if this goes through, it will affect all our waters. We cannot stand by and let it happen. It impacts on our beautiful province, as well as all of Canada.

Would my hon. colleague comment on the fact that the diversion was due to open on July 1? It is now in the ninth hour and it is all set to go. The information we have received is from North Dakota is from the man who has his finger on the switch to open the diversion. Could my hon. colleague comment, particularly centred around some of the things she said earlier about referring this matter to the IJC for an environmental impact assessment.

*S. O. 52*

The frustration is many red flags have gone up prior to this. What do we do? Do we sit here and let it happen? We cannot do that. The debate has been brought tonight to the House of Commons on these very serious issues of the environment. Could my hon. colleague comment on that?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know if someone can pick up on the proposal I made a while ago. We all have our caucus meetings tomorrow, and if a letter was already drafted, it could be faxed or e-mailed to the various U.S. legislatures. You could, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, accommodate us with the addresses of the various state legislatures along the border.

It would seem to me that this would at least be an extremely positive and concrete action instead of just waiting, as you say. We cannot wait, in fact.

I have heard one of the interpretations of the issue. My colleague asked a question on this. What are the grounds for saying that if it is stopped, it is because the Sheyenne river level is higher and so the diversion cannot take place? Is that the reason, or is the pressure from Canada? We do not know. I do think, however, that this is no reason to halt the pressure. In fact, it is a reason to continue it. I can see now that this pressure can be done through members of legislatures. It is a pity we did not have the opportunity to speak together earlier on this in order to see how we could combine our efforts.

• (2125)

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I must thank my colleague from the Bloc for her excellent speech. I noted her considerable experience in matters relating to international joint commissions and protection of our waters.

The question I would like to ask her concerns the International Joint Commission. If we cannot submit the Devils Lake problems to this body, will that establish a precedent? Could it be very dangerous for other subsequent decisions? If the International Joint Commission cannot find a solution, will that be a problem? That is my first question.

The second concerns water quality. If we cannot stop the diversion of the waters of Devils Lake into Canada's rivers, as far as Lake Winnipeg, can we imagine the serious problems this would create for the quality of water in general in Canada?

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I do not have enough information to answer the second question. I cannot therefore accurately describe the consequences.

What I understand, however, from the information I do have worries me. It is quite worrisome. Lake Winnipeg is a large body of water playing an important role for ecosystems. It cannot be allowed to become polluted or inhabited by new species or have its salinity altered without major consequences.

*S. O. 52*

I come back to the member's first question. The environmentalists we met were very concerned. Up to now, the International Joint Commission has been the ultimate authority in water matters. Both countries have invested significant resources. Each has, on the International Joint Commission, scientists and experts in all areas to carry out studies. It is a big operation. This is the commission responsible for assessing water quality. In my opinion, a lack of rigour in the management of water quality would create a very important precedent, since, in the future, the abandonment of this management could be allowed.

For this reason, I am saying we must at least try to mobilize the elected representatives in other legislatures. If other plans are proposed, I am sure the Bloc members will be prepared to study them.

[*English*]

**Hon. Bill Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my colleague from the Bloc for her suggestion that we give some thought in the days ahead to how this House might express itself unanimously with regard to the Devils Lake outlet. Perhaps there could be some collaboration, I would suggest, among the House leaders tomorrow for a unanimous motion that could be passed by the House and communicated to the U.S. Congress, both to the House of Representatives and to the Senate. It would seem to me that if that message could be conveyed and an appropriate motion drafted in order to convey that message, that would indeed be a good thing. It would convey a spirit of unanimity and solidarity here in the House, which unfortunately was sadly lacking at the beginning of this debate.

I had certainly intended initially to rise in my place on behalf of the NDP and commend the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for making possible this emergency debate. It is certainly something that we considered on a number of occasions. We have been very active on this issue, as anybody who is in the House knows. I have raised this a number of times, my leader has, and other NDP MPs have. Therefore, I was very disappointed with the tone of the initial presentation. If one listened to the member for Kildonan—St. Paul, one would have thought it was only the Conservatives who cared about Devils Lake.

She talked about the Manitoba caucus and she went on to list the members for Provencher and Selkirk—Interlake and whoever else she mentioned, but it became rather transparent after a while. I know the Conservatives sometimes talk about transparency, but I am not sure that is the kind of transparency they are looking for. It was rather transparent that instead of this being the kind of debate that I had hoped it might be, at least in its initial stages it was a form of political catch-up on the part of the official opposition when it comes to this issue. The Conservatives are making up for the fact that perhaps they felt they had not been as active on this as they should have been, although I know the member for Selkirk—Interlake has been interested in this for a long time, and I do not want to take anything away from him on this, but he should be because Lake Winnipeg is smack dab in the middle of his riding.

He went to the conference in Fargo in January. I almost went to that myself but I did not get there. I know he has been concerned about this issue, which is why I do not understand why he would allow himself to be part of a debate, the tone of which I hope is

changing now. Certainly his last intervention was much more helpful than the initial interventions. It hope this becomes a debate by which this House could express itself in a unanimous way and in a way that is helpful to the government. It is not helpful to suggest that somehow the project which is now about to be opened, the Devils Lake outlet, is the project on which Canada once had an opportunity to have an IJC reference and did not, because that is not true.

I do not think anybody would accuse me of being easy on the Liberals. I do not really have a reputation of being easy on the Liberals. If I thought that somehow they had made a mistake, I would be the first to say so, although I might not say so tonight because hindsight is easy and it may not be useful. Even if the Conservative analysis were right—and I do not think it is; I think it is wrong in this case—but even if it were right, it would not be useful to be bringing that up tonight and giving the North Dakotans and others who want this outlet to go ahead something to pick at and say, “The Canadians cannot even agree among themselves. They had a debate in the House of Commons the other night and all they did was argue with each other”. That is really helpful, and I hope I do not have to emphasize that I am being sarcastic.

I remind the hon. member, who chose this particular strategy for reasons that are just beyond me, of a letter from the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development that went to Condoleezza Rice on June 9, 2005, just several days ago. It is a letter that was agreed to by all members of the committee, including the Conservative member.

• (2130)

I will read one paragraph from the committee letter:

The Committee is aware that the United States asked Canada to join in referring to the IJC a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers diversion project in 2002. Canada at that time suggested that it was premature for such a referral since the USACE project—

—that is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project—

—was undergoing domestic assessment. The state sponsored project under question now is not—

—I repeat from the letter sent by the chairman of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development:

The state sponsored project under question now is not that of the USACE and does not include any provisions for safeguarding water quality as was contained within the USACE proposal.

The fact of the matter is, as I understand it, the Army Corps of Engineers' proposal was dropped by North Dakota because of the very things that the Army Corps of Engineers said about the project when it did its analysis. I will review some of the things that it actually did say.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers confirms that an outlet “would have adverse effects in downstream receiving waters, including degraded water quality, increased erosion, increased sedimentation, reduced aquatic habitat value, loss of aquatic resources, loss of riparian habitat, effects on water treatment facilities”, et cetera.

*S. O. 52*

It went on to say that there is about a 75% chance that if an outlet were built it would not be economically beneficial. It said that the present operating plan does not meet all downstream water quality standards and objectives, and that any revised operating plan that attempts to reduce water quality effects would likely result in less economic feasibility.

The North Dakotans did not want to have anything to do with this analysis, so they went ahead and did their own project. They designed a project to escape the possibility of environmental assessment. If they had to run this pipe across wetlands, instead of running it over top of the wetlands because that would have triggered an environmental assessment under U.S. law, they would run it under the wetlands which did not require an environmental assessment.

I am trying to point out the difference between the two projects, the one that is about to open and the one that we are worried about, and the one that was on the table earlier as a result of the work of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Someone, some student who is doing a Ph.D. thesis or something, might want to argue at some point about whether or not the acceptance of an IJC reference on that earlier project that never came to pass might have brought forward information that might have been helpful, that might have been this and might have been that. But tonight, on the eve of the United States having to make a decision about whether or not it should heed the Canadian call for an IJC reference, the last thing in the world we need to have reinforced is any argument that says, "You Canadians had your chance and you blew it".

That is real solidarity. That is real strategic thinking. That is real tactical thinking. That is just straight political thinking in the worst possible way.

I just had this sinking feeling as I sat here tonight that this is why I sometimes just hate politics. What should have happened here tonight initially was an opportunity, an emergency debate, a good idea gone bad, which hopefully will get better as the evening goes forward, because we have lots of time left. It is a good idea gone bad because someone wanted to make political hay on this. It is not making political hay on anyone because, as far as I am concerned, it is pretty transparent what is going on.

It would have been so much better and the member for Kildonan—St. Paul would have been in a better political category, if you like, if she had just stuck to facts and pressured the government. I do not think the government has been perfect on this. I think it took a while to get the Prime Minister's attention on this issue. We worked hard at getting the Prime Minister's attention on this. There is nothing wrong with pressuring the government on this.

However, there is something wrong with giving comfort to the position of those who would open this outlet on July 1, or on some subsequent date if the negotiations that are now going on fail.

• (2135)

We brought pressure to bear on the government. One can never prove these things, but I think some of the questions that we asked helped the Prime Minister to focus on the fact, particularly when we thought that there might be an election coming. I remember asking a

question and saying that the worst thing that could have happened in some ways, leaving aside all the other questions, would have been for us to have been in the middle of an election as we approached that July 1 date and have had no focus at all. People would obviously be focused on other things.

I asked a question of the Prime Minister in the House and I spoke to him personally after. I said, "You have got to call the President". He said, "I will". I understand that he did. We are waiting for the phone call back. When is the President going to show the kind of respect that he should show a Canadian Prime Minister and call us back, hopefully with the news that the White House has been able to bring North Dakota around and provide for the joint IJC reference. That is what we are hoping for. I think the government does owe us not just a rendition of everything that it has done, but what is the government's plan in the next few days and in the weeks to come?

I am convinced that the Minister of the Environment is sincere about this and is working very hard on this file. Sometimes I feel that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is too ready to tell us everything that he has done without telling us exactly what the plan is and what is going to be done in the next little while to make sure that we do not end up with the worst of all possible worlds.

The worst of all possible worlds for Manitobans, and not just Manitobans because I think the Minister of the Environment was right when he said it really has to do with the planet. If this can happen to one ecosystem, a huge, giant ecosystem, the Hudson Bay basin, then it can happen to any ecosystem. If one state can decide unilaterally to pollute an entire half continent in order to solve a local problem and that is not referred to the International Joint Commission, and that is something that state is allowed to do on its own, this sets a terrible precedent. It is a precedent that Canadians, and perhaps sometimes even Americans, might come to regret.

It is for that reason there are Americans on the Canadian side on this. That is why it is inappropriate to speak of Americans generically when it comes to this. We are reminded, as we should be, that the state of Minnesota has worked hand in hand with the Government of Manitoba.

There are other governors, other states and other mayors working toward an IJC reference, including, I believe, the governor of Ohio, Mr. Taft, who is the grandson of the Taft that set up the IJC to begin with. These are all political victories, but they are only political victories that count if in the end they result in an IJC reference, if in the end they result in a situation where that polluted water with the foreign biota and heavy phosphorus content and God knows what else does not make its way from Devils Lake into the Sheyenne River and into the Red River and ultimately into Lake Winnipeg and into the Nelson River and Churchill River and into Hudson Bay.

This water in Devils Lake has been there by itself for a thousand years. It should stay by itself. Interbasin transfers of water such as this are simply wrong.

S. O. 52

I plead with my North Dakota neighbours not to do this. I have been in North Dakota many times in my life. This is not how a neighbour acts. A neighbour does not solve his or her particular problem by dumping it over the fence and letting someone else deal with the consequences. That is basically what this amounts to.

I was also disappointed, I might say, and the member for Kildonan—St. Paul might want to correct the record on this if she did not mean what she seemed to say, because at one point she said, “Unfortunately, the Manitoba government took this matter to court in North Dakota”.

• (2140)

Did she mean that the outcome of the court decision was unfortunate? That is true. Was there an implied criticism of the Manitoba government for taking the matter to the North Dakota supreme court? Perhaps she could make that clear. When someone suggested she had done that, she seemed to be rather active in her seat, claiming that was not what she said. I listened carefully to what she said and she used the word “unfortunate”.

Perhaps she could clear up whether she thinks the Manitoba government has been going about this in the wrong way. There has been a great deal of solidarity in Manitoba about this. I do not remember the Conservative caucus and the provincial legislature or for that matter, up until the other day in the House, there being any of this “You should have done this” and “You should have done that”, arguing about the past.

Some of us have been asking “what are you going to do now”, “when are we going to get an answer” and “time's running out”, and that is all appropriate. However, to take this sort of argumentative view of what has happened, particularly with respect to the so-called IJC reference that the Canadian government turned down, I think is a very unfortunate way to go about it.

I do not have a whole lot more to say but I could quote extensively various things that have been said about the Devils Lake project. I think we all agree that it is bad. I do not need to persuade people here that it is a bad thing. We need to persuade people in Washington. In order to do that, we have to be together. I guess that is the message that I am leaving.

I do not mean we have to be uncritically together. It does not mean that we cannot step up to the Prime Minister, the President of the Treasury Board, the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister of the Environment and ask them why they are not doing this, or say to them that we think it might be better if they do this and ask why are they not. Then they will give their argument. However, we should not do this in public. We should be trying to put our best foot forward in these dying days.

There is a lot of talk these days in the United States about security. What could be more a question of security than the integrity of an entire ecosystem? I understand and appreciate the fishing industry on Lake Winnipeg. I like to go up to Gimli and lay in my annual supply of pickerel just like everyone else. The idea that the pickerel fishery might be destroyed ultimately by foreign fish species entering Lake Winnipeg I cannot even begin to contemplate.

I think of what could possibly happen to Lake Winnipeg, and it is only possible, but that is why we want the IJC reference. We want to

do the science. We want to do the reference. We want the precautionary principle to apply and then let it follow from there. I cannot imagine the United States, a Christian country, allowing this to happen.

The President is always talking about America as a Christian country. There are things I learned in Sunday school like “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. I do not think this is the way the United States would want other people to treat it. I do not think this is the way the United States would want Canada to treat it in a similar situation.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say indirectly to the President, as I am sure he is not listening, Christian action is not just a matter of individual morality. It is not just about marriage, abortion and all the other issues that are sometimes referred to as moral issues. How one treats one's neighbour's ecosystem is a moral issue. How one treats the environment is a moral issue. How one treats creation is a moral issue. If one treats creation without respect and if one does not exercise the kind of stewardship that humankind was charged with in Genesis for looking after the earth, then that person is as subject to criticism from a biblical point of view as anyone else.

• (2145)

Therefore, I implore anyone who is listening from the American embassy on TV, because they obviously are not here, to take this message back to the White House. Let us have a reference to the IJC. Let us do it properly. Let us do it the way good neighbours do things and let us take it from there.

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are couple of things I would like to question because the member opposite has also been here for over a decade and there has been ample opportunity in that time to have this kind of debate in the House.

I am a new member of Parliament, but it is very important, whether one is a new member or not, that this debate be brought to the House of Commons. I said that the Manitoba government unfortunately felt it had to go to court. I commended it for the fact that it is standing alone. Even though we are of a different political stripe, I commend the premier for his fight in this matter. In my opinion, he has done a very good job, and I will put that on record.

I do not know what the members opposite have done in particular because they are not the government in power. The government in power is the Liberal government. Therefore, we all need to ensure that our voices are known in opposition to get things done when they need to be done. We have a grave concern about the Devils Lake diversion.

I want to quote from the *Winnipeg Sun* Monday, June 20 before I ask the final question. Premier Doer of Manitoba said:

This is a test for the federal government...If Canada can't implement a treaty on water with the United States, what does it say about any other treaty in the world?... It's a real breakdown for the public of Canada and the public of the U.S.

I would agree that we could all stand in the House together on this issue. I like the member's suggestion about sending a letter to all the parliaments. However, we are here tonight in the House when this should have been done a long time ago. The concern is there.



S. O. 52

I commend the member for Selkirk—Interlake for his leadership role in this important initiative. It has been in his heart because it has affected his riding, as it has mine. I have had many letters on this issue. I have had many meetings on this issue. There are many things that I have been involved in around this issue.

From what I have heard in the province of Manitoba, the members opposite from the NDP have put a lot of effort into this. I commend them for that and I apologize if I left the member out of that acknowledgement. What I am centred on tonight is not that.

I am centred on the fact that the Devils Lake diversion is soon to open. We are now in the eleventh hour and we have to ensure we have a very strong voice for making that diversion stay put, before anything else happens, until we get a proper environment impact assessment.

This needs to be referred to the IJC. If tonight the present government members say that they have such good intentions and relationships within the United States of America, why then has this referral not occurred? Why has the environmental impact assessment not been done? Why are people in Manitoba not assured that the waterways there will not be compromised?

● (2150)

**Hon. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for correcting the record with respect to the Manitoba government taking the matter to the supreme court of North Dakota. It seemed to me that was an appropriate course of action and one that we all wish would have succeeded.

I also thank her for her compliments on the work of Premier Gary Doer, who I have kept in close touch with on this issue. We have tried to be respectful of the fact that there is a time and a place for things to be on the floor of Parliament and then there is a time for them not to be. This is often a matter of difficult political judgment when negotiations are ongoing.

I remember when the Conservative government was in power and I remember what happened with respect to the CF-18. That is a different issue all together but a good example. I remember going over to Conservative backbenchers and cabinet ministers and asking them if I should raise the issue on the floor of the House of Commons. They told me not to raise it because everything was going okay. They felt that if I raised it, I might wreck it. They thought I might say something that would harm the negotiations so I did not say anything. Then the government did not get the CF-18 and we were raked over the coals for never saying anything. That is the dilemma of the political process sometimes. I just mention that as an example.

Premier Doer is right to say that it is now up to the federal government. He has said that it is between the President and the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is not the first prime minister to have difficulties with the United States of America over environmental problems.

I was here in the House during the time of the acid rain tensions between Canada and the United States. Each government agreed to appoint a special envoy. Bill Davis was the Canadian special envoy and a man by the name of Drew Lewis was the American special envoy. They were both charged with coming up with a solution. I

would suggest to the frontbench of the Liberals here tonight, which at the moment is the President of the Treasury Board, that one option might be to appoint an envoy from either side to come up with a way to deal with this.

What is important is that we come out of this tonight with the unanimous message that the Parliament of Canada is very concerned about what will happen to Canada-U.S. relations if this goes ahead without an IJC reference. What will happen to a major Canadian ecosystem if this goes ahead? We can argue about a lot of other things later, but for now we need to speak with one voice. I hope that we will all go back to our House leaders early tomorrow and tell them that this issue came up on the floor of the House tonight.

The member said that she was a new member. I was not implying there was anything wrong with her bringing this motion forward as a new member. I intended to compliment her for doing this. I was just not happy with the initial tone of the debate, but I think that is changing. I hope we can proceed from here.

● (2155)

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make an observation. The member for Elmwood—Transcona, who used to be my MP, was somewhat critical of my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul, and I think unfairly so.

I listened to his speech very carefully and he started to give an implicit criticism of the President of the United States after chastizing the member for Kildonan—St. Paul about working together in a cooperative fashion. He was somehow suggested that the President's Christianity was somehow less worthy than others. Quite frankly, I do not think there is a place for religion in this debate.

I would think the better approach would be to ask what the IJC does. What are the principles involved here? This is a legal dispute. Let us not get into the morality of one individual, even if he is the President of the United States. We as parliamentarians, and I hope that he as the President of the United States, believe in the rule of law and that is what we should focus on. That is where this debate should be going.

**Hon. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, at one level I think the member for Provencher is really stretching it. I was exhorting the president. I was not criticizing him. I was exhorting him to do a certain thing, which I think is consistent with the best principles to be found in the biblical tradition that both he and I subscribe to. I do not see anything wrong with that.

What I do see wrong with this is the implication by the hon. member for Provencher that somehow this is not a moral issue, not a religious issue, but just a legal issue.

When all the religious arguments were made on the committee that the member just recently served on, he probably did not say to those people, "This is just a legal issue. It is not a religious issue. We do not want to hear your religious arguments".

This is precisely what is wrong with the current role of religion in politics: that it is constricted to two or three different issues.

*S. O. 52*

I say that the care of creation and the environment is a religious and a moral issue. I disagree with the member and I think most people in his religious community would too.

• (2200)

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking the member for Elmwood—Transcona for the very constructive tone that he has brought to this debate. I absolutely agree with the position he has taken and I think it would be very interesting to see what could be constructed in the House by way of a unanimous resolution on this issue.

Part of the problem we face right now is that as this issue has progressed, as it has gotten closer to the completion date, the rhetoric around it has risen. There has been a great deal of misinformation put on the record. I think it has led some people to be a little confused about what is going on.

I should say, Mr. Speaker, that I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg South Centre.

I worked with a group that was working on and raising concerns in 1980 about the Garrison project, a project that was designed to bring water from the Missouri watershed. At that time there was a great deal of concern because that was an absolutely complete interbasin transfer, moving water from the Mississippi water system across the continental divide and into the Red River.

The state of North Dakota was doing that because it had a problem. North Dakota was in a very dry area and thought that if it could bring some more water into what was essentially a dry lake, it could create a pool of water that could be used for irrigation. There was a great deal of concern raised because of the interbasin transfers.

After a great deal of time and advocacy, that project was stopped by negotiations between the two countries.

Since then, the state of North Dakota has undertaken to drain a number of its wetlands and turn previous wetlands into agricultural land, which has led to the gathering of a great deal of water in the basin. It has risen and has flooded surrounding towns and communities. They have had a great deal of damage and have had to respond to that and try to correct the damage created with the draining of those wetlands.

The misinformation that is carried into this House does not originate just from some of the members on the other side. It is contained in a letter from some of political proponents of the project in a letter to the President of the United States on June 10. On the question of whether or not the water is polluted and whether it poses a danger, the proponents themselves make the statement that “if uncontrolled overflows occurred, something that has happened several times in the past centuries, the effects would be catastrophic, causing serious environmental and health problems for downstream communities”.

That is the position of the proponents on the quality of the water that they now wish to send north to us. They talk about this famous Army Corps of Engineers project, but members have read the letter from 2002. I have the letter from 2004, which was written to Governor Hoeven by Paul V. Kelly, Assistant Secretary for

Legislative Affairs, in which he makes it very clear that the remarks relative to the federal Army Corps of Engineers did not apply.

While Governor Hoeven has said that federal government under Secretary Powell had provided additional assurance that an outlet would not violate the treaty, in fact he was specifically written to in order to: “draw his attention to the fact that the Secretary of State’s June 20, 2004, assurance concerned only the federal project under discussion for Devils Lake. The secretary has not reviewed the state project and has expressed no view”.

We heard the information from the member for Elmwood—Transcona, who went further with the concerns that were raised about what an uncontrolled project would do to the watershed in Manitoba.

The solution is clearly to respect a treaty that has served our two countries very well. The solution is clearly to move this to the IJC, as we have done some 53 times in the history of that treaty. The inability to get it there is what poses the problem. The suggestion by the proponents, as they say in their letter to the president, that it takes eight and a half years to do an IJC reference is just nonsense.

• (2205)

For the 1997 reference on the protection of the Red River, the interim report was completed in six months. The 1999 reference to examine water uses and diversions in the Great Lakes was completed in a year. The 2004 reference on Missisquoi Bay was completed by the IJC in less than a year. Also, Premier Doer and Ambassador McKenna approached the IJC to see whether it would take a time limited reference, which it was only too willing to do, for it too is concerned about the impact of this transfer.

It goes on. There are statements that the Army Corps of Engineers concluded that an outlet is the best means to address the flooding problem. Yes, in the Army Corps project it was. It was a much larger project, moved a much larger volume of water and came equipped with a number of mediation steps such as sand filters, ultraviolet treatment and sedimentation devices, none of which have been included in this particular project.

Therefore, to say that this is an acceptable solution to this is just simply wrong. In fact, here is what the hydrology on this particular project suggests. It is proposed as a solution to this lake that has big surges in water, that this will be a means of controlling that, but the hydrology says it will reduce the overall volume of the lake by about two inches a year, hardly the stuff that controlling a lake that is moving in feet is going to cause.

Having said all of that, there is a real problem. North Dakotans are our friends. North Dakotans are not our enemies. As we characterize this as a battle between the two groups, I think we do ourselves a disservice. They come up to visit us. We go down there to visit them. Our hockey teams beat theirs and their baseball teams beat ours. It is all about being a neighbour. It is a tragedy that this has come to the point where the sides are drawn up and even willing to contemplate the pollution of the other side.

*S. O. 52*

The North Dakotans have a problem. This lake is causing the problem, but they have time. The latest meteorological information from the U.S. weather service suggests that the chance of there being growth in the lake, because of low snow pack in recent years, is about 20%, so they have time to wait until we complete the review. They have time to wait until we get the proper remediation in.

I think we have a responsibility to be sensitive to the concerns they have. We cannot stand idly by and watch while our neighbours are flooded and their homes destroyed and all of that without trying to do something to be of assistance, but to solve their problem by simply moving it north to us is not an acceptable solution. To do as was suggested by some of them, to simply let the water flow and then deal with the pollution on an after the fact damage claim, is clearly inappropriate in a modern society that is concerned about the environment.

So what to do? I have been engaged in this and I think Premier Doer deserves enormous credit for the leadership he has shown on this file. He has pursued this on a state to state level. He has pursued this in the courts in North Dakota directly. He has pursued this diplomatically in Ottawa with the various governors. I have been down with him to Washington. We went around together on one of the trips and I was down on others. I have met with and talked to all four proponents of this project.

Frankly, while some members do not like to hear it, the action taking place right now is a result of the conversation directly between the Prime Minister and President Bush. That has given me some hope. I want to commend both the Prime Minister and President Bush. There are some political forces at play in the U.S. that make this very difficult. President Bush could have simply thrown up his hands and said it was a state problem. He did not. He has his office actively involved and we are looking at ways that may find solutions. There are discussions going on. I think all the actors are acting responsibly.

The political rhetoric is up so high that it is very difficult to talk about this without resorting to the image of a battle, but in reality I think that people of goodwill and good minds are trying to find a solution which offers some hope to the people in North Dakota that the tremendous damage they are suffering will be dealt with and that it will be dealt with in a way that does not simply move the problem north to those of us who live in Manitoba. I remain very hopeful of that.

Ambassador McKenna has done a tremendous job at getting this around. The Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have been equally very strongly engaged, and those discussions go on.

● (2210)

As the member for Elmwood—Transcona suggested, a very clear, unanimous message of solidarity from this House would be very helpful to continue to impress upon the political leadership of the importance of this issue.

There is another problem, if a state can violate an international treaty with impunity, then we have no treaty. What is to prevent British Columbia on the Flathead River?

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has been some concern over some of the comments that were made earlier tonight. The House has to understand that this is an issue that I am quite passionate about. It is an issue that is going to have a detrimental effect on the people living in my riding. More importantly, their concerns are being expressed by me tonight here in this House.

I want to follow up on some of the discussion that we are having now on the possibility of having a unanimous decision made by this House and bringing that forward, so that we can take that in good faith to the U.S. administration to hopefully get that IJC referral.

I would even challenge the minister one step further. Would he also be interested in ensuring that we have representation from all parties in this House to go down to present that motion and letter to U.S. Secretary Condoleezza Rice. We could also meet with the appropriate people in the senate and congress on this very issue and convince North Dakota not to work unilaterally here and make a decision that will violate the Boundary Waters Treaty.

We must ensure that these treaties that we have in place are respected. We must stay away from setting a very dangerous precedent.

I too, like the minister, feel sorry for the people who live around Devils Lake. Due to decisions made in that state, they are now undergoing high waters year after year. In a wet season, such as we are having this year, they will be relocating probably another 20 or so residences. They actually go in and move entire yards, all the homes, to a higher and dryer location.

That is not sustainable either. We must realize that they have a flooding problem in North Dakota, as the minister noted. I understand why they are under pressure to do something about it.

As the science has dictated and as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has said, and as I stated earlier in my speech and quoted from the letter from the director of the U.S. department of natural resources, it is an ill-founded project.

The fact remains that the North Dakota government wants to throw the switch. Whether or not it has the patience that is required to get an IJC referral is another matter.

Will the President of the Treasury Board commit to going ahead with a joint recommendation from this House, presented by representatives from all parties, to the U.S. administration and get the IJC referral that we so desperately want?

**Hon. Reg Alcock:** Mr. Speaker, certainly, should we get a unanimous resolution of that sort from this House, I would encourage a number of ways to get that message down there.

The only caveat I would put on it is that I am not the lead minister on this. I defer to the knowledge of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the ambassador who is right at the point of contact. I would seek their advice on what would be the best way, whether a parliamentary delegation or some form of all party group or whatever. It is not for me to comment on that. Certainly, I would think it would be a very welcoming show of solidarity from this House on this particular issue.

*S. O. 52*

There is a much more serious outcome to this if we do not get purchase on this. I am deeply concerned about that. I have said that I am encouraged right now by the tone of the talks and what is going on, and the fact that there are still talks going on and meetings being called.

If this House were to come together and unanimously support the reference to the IJC and urge the U.S. to do that, I think it would be of assistance in this debate. I would encourage the member to do what he could on his side to bring his members to that conclusion.

• (2215)

**Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to this issue. When we take a look around the House, we see that it is not totally but predominantly members of the House from all parties from Manitoba who are speaking to it. We are speaking to it because this issue is of grave concern not only to ourselves but to all Manitobans.

I would like to speak to some of the myths and misconceptions about the proposed project and as it relates to the IJC. There have been a number of statements made both in and outside the House that need to be clarified. My colleague from Elmwood—Transcona has certainly addressed it as has my colleague from Winnipeg South.

However, I am going to reiterate some of the comments because it is important that the record be put on the table so that Canadians know what has and has not happened.

First, we heard that Canada refused a U.S. request in 2002 for an IJC reference on Devils Lake. Again, my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona has spoken to it indicating that somehow our concerns over the U.S. proposal meant a rejection by Canada of a reference to the IJC. The devil truly is in the details on this file.

It is easy to stand up and point to letters and claim that Canada turned down a reference. It is easy to do when we are listening to only one story, and when we are more interested in scoring points perhaps than working constructively to solve the problem. I too am pleased to see a consensus emerging tonight that would work toward a joint initiative by the House.

However, it is important to note that Canada did not refuse a U.S. request for a reference in 2002. The request in 2002 was indeed for a different outlet, one that was to be constructed, as we have heard by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and one that was going to have some environmental safeguards that are not currently present in the outlet that the state of North Dakota is constructing.

In 2002 the U.S. request was premature. A U.S. environmental assessment had not been completed. The proposal to build an outlet to address flooding in Devils Lake was not determined in fact until October 2003. Canada did not refuse the reference requested in 2002, but simply said that as per the joint commission tradition, the United States domestic approval process should be completed first.

I want to remind all members that in April 2004, 15 months ago, Canada asked the United States to agree to a joint Canada-U.S. International Joint Commission reference for the state funded Devils Lake outlet.

The talk of a 2002 reference is in fact a red herring. In April 2004 Canada proposed to the United States a specific reference on the state funded project. Had the United States agreed to the reference in 2004, the study would have been completed, and Canada and the U.S. would be making an informed decision today based on recommendations from the International Joint Commission.

We have heard from different areas that the IJC takes too long to make its recommendations, that a reference on Devils Lake could not be completed in less than eight and a half years. That is nonsense. As my colleague from Winnipeg South Centre has indicated, it is simply not true.

The International Joint Commission has now for nearly 100 years provided governments with reports and recommendations based on independent sound science.

• (2220)

The commission has proven time and again that it is able to carry out references on a complex environmental issue in a timely manner. As we heard, in the 1997 reference on the protection of the Red River, the commission delivered its interim report on flooding in the Red River basin within six months of having received the reference.

The 1999 reference to examine water uses and diversion in the Great Lakes which was a comprehensive study that involved both federal governments, eight state governments and two provincial governments, was completed by the commission in one year after it was given its reference. The IJC is able to carry out references in a timely manner, and is anxious and willing to do so in this instance.

We have also heard that Devils Lake has overflowed in the past and, as we all know, we have great compassion for those who live in a flooded community for a community in our own country is facing that tragedy at the moment. But again, the facts tell a different story.

Devils Lake is a closed basin. It has no natural outlet and has been isolated from the Hudson Bay drainage basin for over 1,000 years. We have heard from some that North Dakota has undertaken hundreds of studies on Devils Lake and that it has examined all the potential environmental impacts of the outlet.

Again, the reality is somewhat different. There was no environmental assessment done on the state outlet project. The North Dakota department of health issued a permit under the U.S. clean water act based on insufficient water quality baseline data that did not include monitoring of the environmental impacts or requirements for monitoring foreign biota.

These conflicting assertions underscore the importance of why we must work with the United States to reach a solution that is acceptable to Canada. It is in the interests of both our countries that we come to an amicably negotiated resolution of this issue.

Canada is committed to pursuing a solution that protects our environment and respects the Boundary Waters Treaty, a solution which would call upon both governments to cooperate in preventing transboundary pollution. This is an important issue because in the future we may have issues that affect the United States so it is important that we honour and respect the International Boundaries Commission.

Our goal is to find a solution that would protect Canada's environment. Our goal is to find a solution that would protect the Lake Winnipeg water basin, which is so critical to the economic and social well-being of Manitobans.

I urge my colleagues to come together in a resolution from this House that we can take forward. It is time that we worked together. The hour is late. We must come to a common position, if not a solution, from this House.

• (2225)

**Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could give me her specific understanding of what is going to happen, as far as the precedent-setting case in this particular circumstance.

We have in front of us the International Joint Commission that may or may not look at this particular issue. If it does not look at this issue, the ramifications of setting a precedent, especially with our unique interests between our borders, could be amazing and dramatic. I wonder if she could comment on that.

**Ms. Anita Neville:** Mr. Speaker, if the Boundary Waters Treaty is not honoured today, a treaty that has been in place since 1909, its effectiveness would be certainly in question and future issues that come to the fore on either side of the border would be called into question as to whether they in fact should be referred to the IJC.

This is an important issue, not only for Manitoba, Lake Winnipeg and the Hudson Bay water basin but it is an important precedent that could have an impact right across the country.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, although I think the member's comments are reasonably justified, I take some issue with the significance of this and with the people who are here this evening.

This issue is a phenomenally important one with regard to the Great Lakes and, in particular, with some of the issues that have been going on for the last four or five years where eight of the Great Lakes states in the U.S. are very interested in accessing the water in the Great Lakes and exporting and diverting the water out of the Great Lakes.

I want to say to my colleague from Winnipeg that if in fact the Devils Lake diversion is allowed to go ahead without IJC involvement, it will have a major impact, so that the Great Lakes region is very much watching this issue.

Being that the member is on the government side of this, I am very concerned that I am not hearing an alternative strategy from the government. We have pushed it as far as I can see it can be pushed with the federal government and certainly with North Dakota. Is the member aware of any alternative the Government in Canada has if we cannot reach an agreement to resolve this issue?

*S. O. 52*

**Ms. Anita Neville:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is quite right. This is an important issue for the Great Lakes and I should have acknowledged that, as well as acknowledged the presence of other interested members in the House.

The immediacy of the Devils Lake decision affects those of us from Manitoba and as we can see by the presence in the House tonight of so many members from Manitoba, we are very concerned about the immediacy of the decision.

The government at the moment is negotiating hard to come to some resolution on this issue. I am not privy to all of the details but what I do know is that there are intense negotiations ongoing at the moment to resolve this in the interests of both countries. I think that would be the best solution to this issue.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this important issue and I thank the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for bringing this matter before the House.

It is an issue that is of great concern to the constituents in my riding of Provencher, which takes up most of southeastern Manitoba, stretching from the American border up to Pine Falls and from the Ontario border to the city of Winnipeg. The Red River flows through my riding, around the city of Winnipeg, back into the Red River north of Winnipeg and ultimately into Lake Winnipeg.

I had an occasion this weekend to spend some time on Lake Winnipeg and on the beautiful Victoria Beach. Many people know the area of Victoria Beach and Grand Beach. The area has some of the most beautiful beaches and recreational areas in the world.

This issue would have an impact on my riding in terms of the quality of water. It would also have an impact on the environment, not only in respect of humans but animal life as well. The threat to the ecosystem is undoubted. Indeed, many have grave concerns about this particular issue.

Manitoba is primarily concerned with not only increasing the flow of water through the Red River and Lake Winnipeg, which will add to the risk of flooding, but it is also concerned about the environmental impact of this particular project.

Over the last number of years my riding has been subjected to a lot of flooding. Some of it has been due to rainfall, as it is this year, but at other times there is a concern that it is water being drained out of the United States.

I want to add for the record that I am sharing my time with the member for Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia.

The problem of water coming from the United States creates tensions with our American neighbours. I know concerns have been expressed about the unilateral action of the Americans on this particular file. I want to stress again the fact that we have good relations with the Americans generally speaking. My own riding depends very heavily on the manufacture of goods that are then sent into the United States. I do not think my riding is unique in that respect but approximately 80% our manufactured goods would cross the line into the United States.

*S. O. 52*

From time to time we have concerns with our American neighbours, not only on water quality but on issues like softwood lumber in the northern part of my riding. We have, of course, the BSE issue and things like tariffs on pork. Farmers in my riding are heavily involved in agriculture and the raising of hogs and the transporting of pork across the line is a very important mainstay of my agricultural community.

All of these issues raise disputes from time to time. The point is, though, that as good neighbours we need to always be respectful. That is part of the problem now. We have come to this situation where, unfortunately, our relationships with our American neighbours have not always been what they should be. Rather than adopting a respectful tone with our neighbours, we have been sometimes critical. I think many of our constituents have been angry at the Americans but it is incumbent upon the people in this House to rise beyond that anger.

● (2230)

I had grave concern when I heard the member for Winnipeg Centre talk about using trade sanctions against the Americans as a reaction. As a knee-jerk reaction that may sound wonderful to some individuals until they realize how much of our goods would be affected by that kind of trade sanction. Making those kinds of threats and comparing North Dakota with North Korea is not helpful. I hope the member has made it clear to the Americans that he spoke in anger and in haste but that he was simply trying to reflect the very real concerns of our constituents.

The lessons to be learned here are that we should minimize our confrontations with our American neighbours and that we should seek legal alternatives.

The member for Elmwood—Transcona indicated that I did not think the issue was a moral issue. Of course it is. What I suggest is that instead of comparing our morality, because we all have different codes of morality that we abide by, that we focus on the rule of law, and in this particular case, the treaty in question. I suggested that we try to resolve our disputes through that particular treaty because it does encompass a certain morality. It is the morality of good neighbours working disputes out together.

I did not think it was particularly helpful that we thought that somehow Mr. Bush had a morality that was somehow less than that of Canadians. We have a mechanism to resolve these disputes without making these kinds of inferences. We need to move along.

I found it very curious to hear the President of the Treasury Board express his concern about what may be damaging to our environment, and I think there is a real possibility that there will be damage to our environment, and that this artificial influx of water is not in the best interests of Canadians. I believe that as well.

At the same time, we have been criticizing the Americans and the President of the Treasury Board has been critical of the Americans in terms of not coming to the table and talking.

The truth is that in my own riding of Provencher right here in Canada, where that same water is flowing along the Red River and sometimes causes serious flooding, as it did in 1997, the President of the Treasury Board is unwilling to speak to some of the mayors of the municipalities that are being affected by the expansion of the

Winnipeg floodway. These mayors are saying specifically that with the operation of the floodway there will be artificial movement of water that will artificially create flooding that will cause damage.

I recently read a letter from the mayor of Ritchot, a municipality just south of the city of Winnipeg that was severely impacted by the 1997 flood and in other years when the floodway was used. The mayor of Ritchot has been asking the President of the Treasury Board to sit down and talk with him. However, for one reason or another, the same standard that the President of the Treasury Board expects of the Americans he is not willing to do for Canadians in his own home province.

I am very disappointed and I think the President of the Treasury Board should attend to that matter immediately and sit down with the people in Manitoba and talk about these issues.

● (2235)

These matters begin by practising those principles at home. I look forward to working together with all members in the House to resolve this difficult issue.

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to be here this evening to participate in this important debate on the situation with Devils Lake and the degradation that the diversion of that lake could cause if it is diverted into the Red River and Lake Winnipeg and indeed the whole Lake Winnipeg watershed. That affects so dramatically the central part of this continent and our country.

People in my riding of Burnaby—Douglas are somewhat removed from Devils Lake and from Manitoba, but they are concerned about this issue as well. I have heard from a number of my constituents who know the importance of this issue and know the very important points that are at stake in this whole discussion. There are the ecological concerns, the environmental concerns, but also the concerns around international relations and how our relationship with the United States works, and the importance of respecting the International Joint Commission and its processes as well.

In British Columbia we have waterways that travel across the border. We know the importance of this situation. It is something that demands our attention right across the country, not just the folks in Manitoba.

I listened with care to the member for Provencher. I heard him talk about the need to have a respectful discussion with our American neighbours about this issue. It seems to me we are getting to a crunch point in all of this. The spigot was going to be turned on on July 1, and I gather that has been delayed for some reason. I appreciate the need to be respectful. He said that sometimes we come across as just critical, but it seems to me it is possible to be both critical and respectful at the same time.

I want to ask him, is there not some urgency now to see this situation resolved? Do we not need to be a little clearer and perhaps more direct in our search for a lasting solution to this very important question?

• (2240)

**Mr. Vic Toews:** Madam Speaker, the point I was making is that we can be forceful without being disrespectful. In the press in Manitoba, I have heard members from the member's party refer to North Dakota as North Korea, as though our good neighbour North Dakota could be anywhere near what North Korea is. I have also heard reference to the Americans as bastards. It is simply not an appropriate term to be using.

I know this issue is coming to the crunch. I know that tensions are high in our province on this issue, but we can be forceful without being disrespectful. That is all that I was urging in that respect.

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague on his presentation tonight. It brought forward some very new and important points on issues that we have discussed within our caucus.

Some of the comments he made about Canada-U.S. relations were extremely important. The hon. member mentioned that to work in collaboration with our neighbours to the south is of paramount importance. In the House the current government in power is responsible to take care of these issues. With that, it is our responsibility as the opposition to push, to support, to work on these kinds of issues.

As of July 1, the Devils Lake diversion project was supposed to be opened. Those waters are headed toward the province of Manitoba. Could the hon. member elaborate more succinctly on how the government could better negotiate with our neighbours to the south to ensure that we have that trust between Canada and the U.S. which is so important to all of us?

**Mr. Vic Toews:** Madam Speaker, the governor of the state of North Dakota gave us a very concrete example. He indicated that if we were that concerned about the quality of water that was going to come out of Devils Lake, why would the Canadian government not invest in the \$20 million sand filter? It is a \$20 million cost. When I see the money that is being spent by the House, why would the government not simply say that it will come up with the \$20 million and have it installed in order to preserve half of the water supply of the northern half of the North American continent?

That is a very simple proposal and something we could say to the Americans, "Let us do it right now. Here is the \$20 million. Let us do it".

• (2245)

**Mr. Steven Fletcher (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for bringing forward this motion for an emergency debate tonight. I would also like to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake for his continued interest in pressing the government on this very important issue.

The fact that we are here tonight is as a result of Devils Lake growing in surface area due to an increase in water flow to its water basin. I really feel for the people around Devils Lake because their homes are being flooded. In Manitoba we share a certain sensitivity to that predicament. However, it is also clear that there needs to be a solution found that can protect the environment in North Dakota and also in Manitoba.

*S. O. 52*

We have heard a lot about Lake Winnipeg and the Red River, but the fact is that this affects my constituency in Manitoba as the Assiniboine River which is a tributary to the Red River is in my riding. It affects other rivers in Manitoba, the Canadian Heritage River, the Bloodvein River which is a well-known canoeing river, the Hayes River, the Echimamish River, the Nelson River and the Saskatchewan River system. It affects not just Manitoba but also Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It may even cross over into other watersheds all the way over to Quebec.

That brings me to the next point. It is interesting to see all the different stakeholders that support this issue going to the IJC. Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Missouri all support this going to the International Joint Commission.

I know it is not appropriate to comment on who is in the House, but maybe I will because there is no one on the government side of the House to raise the point of order. On such an important issue as this, it is too bad there is not more interest from the people who are actually involved in having an impact on international relations with the United States. They are the people in government.

This seems to be a consistent theme with the government. It drops the ball on issue after issue. We saw this in 2002 when the government had the opportunity to have the IJC look at this issue. It could have dealt with it at that time, but instead the government decided to delay and postpone and now we are in a crisis situation. We have two weeks before the valves will be opened and our Canadian water system could be contaminated with the pathogens and other aquatic life due to government neglect.

We see this in other issues, in dealing with health care, in dealing with our military, in dealing with the sponsorship scandal and corruption. The government just delays and delays and does not do anything until there is a crisis. I think most members from all the opposition parties would agree that the government does not take action fast enough. Actually it creates many of the problems in which we find ourselves.

• (2250)

I would like to quote from the Bournday Waters Treaty of 1909. It provides equal protection for the U.S. and Canada and I would like to quote it. It says:

— waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other.

That is in article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. Clearly the Devils Lake project would do that. It have would be helpful, when this became obvious that it would become an issue, if baseline studies would have been undertaken. They were not.

We need to ensure that the government pushes for these things, not just now but also in the future. We need to learn from what has occurred here due to the government dithering. We need to ensure that we do not allow this type of thing to happen again. That also leads into the precedent which other members from the other opposition parties have raised. I think it is a very valid concern.

*S. O. 52*

This time we are dealing with Devils but next time we might be dealing with the Columbia River, the Great Lakes or some other issue. It is a slippery slope. If we do not have this treaty enforced, if we let it slide by, who knows where it will lead us. It is disturbing how the government has allowed our sovereignty to slip away in this respect.

What do we do? It is unfortunate that some Liberal members have antagonized the Americans. I am thinking in particular of one of the Winnipeg Liberal MPs. However, let us look beyond that. I believe it is very important that this issue is raised with the IJC and that there is a delay in the opening of the valves is undertaken.

I have a geological engineering degree and I have looked at issues of the hydrology. As the surface area of Devils Lake increases, it takes more water per centimetre of increase in lake level for the lake to go up. That may mean the lake will not rise at the rate it has in the past and therefore allow more time to bring the issue forward to the IJC. On the suggestion that it could take eight and a half years, let us apply the common sense test and say that we will expedite it.

It is in the interest of the Americans and it is certainly in the interest of Canada to do that and move forward on a good faith basis and within the framework of the Boundary Waters Treaty. That would serve the people well.

I commend the province of Manitoba. The provincial government stepped in when the federal government failed to do so. It is again disappointing that the federal government, which has the constitutional obligation to ensure our relations with other sovereign states are protected, has failed to do that and the provincial government came in to fill the void. Again, that shows the lack of leadership of the Liberal government when it comes to Canada-U.S. relations and Canada's role in the world.

I hope, for the sake of the environment and our water supply in the go forward basis, that the Devils Lake issue is resolved in a manner which will protect our water supply. We can also show empathy to our friends in North Dakota that we understand the flooding issue is indeed a problem and there are other ways to skin a cat.

• (2255)

I encourage that this goes forward to the Boundary Waters Treaty framework and that the government does everything possible to ensure that occurs.

It is unfortunate, again, that the government missed the opportunity many years ago, but let us go on, on a go forward basis. I am sure the opposition parties would agree.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Madam Speaker, this may be a bit unfair to the member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, but the last speaker from the Conservative Party advocated right to the very end. I did not get a chance to ask him if Canada should take on the bill, in effect, for dealing with the pollution that is coming from the U.S. side of the border.

Is that the position of the member's party? Because that is not the first time I have heard it. I have heard it informally before this. If so, will it also to take the position that we will start to pay for the clean up of the coal-fired plants on the U.S. side of the border, the

transboundary air pollution which is literally killing a number of people in my riding in southwestern Ontario?

**Mr. Steven Fletcher:** Madam Speaker, the answer to that is the Conservative Party does not advocate paying for filtering processes in the United States. It is the responsibility of the United States to ensure that its waters are clean, especially when it affects other countries. I am thinking of our country specifically.

I would like to share this with the member. It is my understanding that the water from Devils Lake is not even used in irrigation in the United States. I think that sends the message home that there are potentially really bad things in the water and that we need to protect our Canadian water supply. That needs to be the number one priority.

I would also like to point out and remind the members that it is not just Manitoba and it is not just Canada. I listed half a dozen states that also agree with our position. That is the right thing to do. We have to respect each other's environment. As a member said previously, there is only one Earth and we are all a part of it.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just want to compliment my colleague and friend from Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia for his intervention. My colleague has been a long time activist in ensuring that environmental issues are taken care of. He also has training in engineering, majoring in hydrology. He knows this issue very well. I appreciated his comments today and the insight he brought to the discussion.

The thing we have to take a look at, and that he alluded to, is our friends in North Dakota are facing some flooding issues. However, they are also, in trying to alleviate that problem, going to create some violations of the Boundary Waters Treaty, which was established back in 1909 and sets out parameters as to what we can do in the aspect of water quality.

Could he speculate on what might occur if the North Dakota government decides to go ahead and violate that treaty?

• (2300)

**Mr. Steven Fletcher:** Madam Speaker, first, my degree was in geological engineering and my specialty I guess was groundwater hydrology specifically. What we are talking about is surface hydrology.

The member for Selkirk—Interlake raises a very interesting point. What will the impact be? Given that there has not been baseline studies undertaken, it is difficult to pin that down. That is why the science needs to be done. That is why those studies need to be done to see what is in the waters in Devils Lake and what is in the waters in Manitoba in our watershed. We have to be able to compare the two. I am not convinced those studies have occurred.

Assuming there is significant nasty stuff coming from Devils Lake into ours, over time it will affect the watershed right from the Rocky Mountains into Ontario and maybe even across watersheds and peripherally across the country, as we have seen with the zebra mussels.

It could be a big problem. That is why we need to solve it now.



**Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would first of all like to make it very clear that the Minister of the Environment has raised this issue on many occasions, and certainly the Prime Minister recently raised this issue directly with President Bush. We are very pleased that the White House has become directly engaged.

This is not a partisan issue. This is a Canadian issue. This is an issue in which all Canadians have a stake because of what could happen. That is why it is important that we work collaboratively to ensure, in the discussions the Government of Canada is having with the White House and with other American politicians, that at the end of the day we have a resolution that is good for Canada and good for the United States and that protects and preserves the ecological integrity of the system and certainly of the environment.

The spirit of the Boundary Waters Treaty is extremely important. Since 1909 it has been the keystone in terms of how we have resolved issues with the IJC. I know that my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with whom I will be splitting my time, will be elaborating on that.

We have worked very closely with the government of Manitoba for years. I want to praise the government of Manitoba for the work it has done; there is no light between the government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada on this issue in terms of what we are trying to achieve.

I would mention that there have been many meetings where we have raised these concerns. More meetings are going on, but particularly in April of this year the President of the Treasury Board, the Premier of the Province of Manitoba, Ambassador McKenna and provincial ministers from Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec held meetings with senior U.S. officials.

The Minister of the Environment continues to bring this issue to the attention of his U.S. colleagues, particularly the White House Council on Environmental Quality, for example. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of course has raised this issue with the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. The Minister of the Environment has never let an opportunity go by where he has not brought forward these concerns, because if this project were to go ahead it would be extremely important that the environmental integrity be protected.

This is not, as I say, a partisan issue. I was a bit disappointed with the last speaker's characterization of the 2002 issue, the so-called reference. I want to again point out that the reference was based on a federal project, not on a state project, that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had not finished its environmental assessment, and that there was not even certainty as to whether the project would go ahead. It was not even sure that there would be funding at the time. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers never recommended an outlet as an alternative.

It is important that we should be looking at and concentrating on where we are going and how we can achieve a successful conclusion. Those who would suggest that Canada missed an opportunity in 2002 are not, with all due respect, providing the facts.

The fact is that we are prepared to have this referred to the International Joint Commission. We are prepared to ensure that in the end the integrity of the ecological system is protected and that

bodies of water such as Lake Winnipeg are protected. It is in all of our interests, whether we come from British Columbia, Newfoundland, the Arctic or anywhere in between.

Clearly over the last few months we have built a broad coalition of all stakeholders, whether they be NGOs or whether they have been political leaders on this side or the other side of the border, provincial, municipal, et cetera.

The all party House of Commons Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development had a press conference in which all parties said that we must act with one voice on this issue. We cannot allow partisan politics to deflect from the fact that at the end of the day if we do not do this right we will have a major environmental problem. That is why we have to work very closely together.

• (2305)

Obviously it is important to work with people in the United States Congress such as Senator Mark Dayton of Minnesota or Senator Mike DeWine of Ohio. It is important for us to work with these political leaders, such as Senator Richard Lugar in Indiana.

We saw the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence cities initiative, a coalition of mayors, including the mayors of Toronto and Chicago and mayors from Quebec and Ontario and eight Great Lakes states, pass resolutions, all of course supporting the call for action.

There is no question that at this time negotiations are going on and they are very sensitive. I would hate to think that members in the House would say or do something which would in fact provide ammunition for those who would take a shortcut in terms of dealing with a sensitive environmental issue.

This government is concerned, and I know all members in the House are concerned, about the possible effects on the ecological integrity of our water and the economic consequences that could occur. We are concerned about the possible introduction of foreign species. Having listened to some of the speeches this evening, I note that this has been a common thread.

We must ensure that we have done the science and have the necessary safeguards in place before, if the outlet were to start. I can certainly assure everyone, and I know the Minister of the Environment has made it very clear, that we will not rest until we have a satisfactory conclusion to this.

The preference, of course, is the reference to the IJC, but we want to make sure that the end result is going to be in the interests of both parties, because it is not just this particular issue. There are other issues that may come up down the road and we would want to be sure that the mechanism which in fact has served this country and the United States well since 1909 is protected and utilized.

There is no question that the efforts that have been undertaken by all governments, all NGOs and all parties have in fact clearly put this on the radar screen for people to say, "Stop. Let us do the right thing". We only get one opportunity and this opportunity is to ensure that no stone is left unturned until we reach a resolution. I think that is what all members want. I commend the member opposite for raising this issue this evening.

## S. O. 52

The Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development came together. In a minority Parliament sometimes we hear a lot of political rhetoric as people take different positions. The committee was very clear, saying it wanted to make it very clear to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. A letter was sent from the committee, which all members supported, to also make sure the White House was engaged. Again I refer to the Prime Minister's discussion with the President of the United States.

We have worked together and we will continue to work together because we know that in the end it is in all of our interests to do so. I trust that at the end of the debate this evening we will all speak with one voice and say that this project cannot and must not go ahead without the full environmental assessment that is needed.

I believe very strongly that we have the mechanisms in place to deal with it. I also believe that the pressure and the actions of the Department of Foreign Affairs, on which my colleague will elaborate, as I have said, have been very helpful and very constructive in ensuring a resolution of this situation.

● (2310)

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his intervention this evening and for his emphasis on the non-political nature of this issue.

I too was somewhat disturbed by the comments of the member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia which had a tone similar to the member for Kildonan—St. Paul, a partisan edge and a political spin that just does not seem to be warranted this evening.

I would like to draw on the strength of the words posed by my colleague, the member for Elmwood—Transcona, who urged us to rise above that kind of bickering and to realize that this was an issue of public interest. This is a matter that threatens all of our lives and it is something on which we have to fight together.

In fact, there is strong representation from all quarters on this issue, whether we are talking about Premier Doer's government in Manitoba or the efforts by members in this House from all sides, as well as the environment committee which came forward with an all party statement and plea to Condoleezza Rice.

My question for the member has to do with the urgency of this issue. Earlier this evening it was suggested that we might actually work toward a resolution adopted by this House that would be unanimous and sent to our counterparts in the United States. I would like the member to think about the following words and tell me if he thinks this would have the support of his colleagues. I would like all my colleagues to think about this overnight and come back tomorrow with a willingness to do this.

This is the suggested resolution:

That this House unanimously request the United States House of Representatives and Senate, pursuant to the Boundary Waters Treaty, to call for an immediate referral to the International Joint Commission for independent assessment and review of the Devils Lake diversion project.

I wonder whether the parliamentary secretary could give some indication of support or at least of seek the support of his colleagues overnight.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her suggestion and welcome it. Anything we can enunciate with one voice from this chamber to the United States Congress would be helpful and I certainly would take it under advisement. She has made some very good comments and they articulate what we are trying to achieve, which is a resolution based on science and a strong environmental assessment.

I think those are the kinds of comments and the kind of non-partisan wording that are helpful. Certainly we, as a government, are prepared to look at anything that will move the yardstick in that regard.

● (2315)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I note that the parliamentary secretary has gone back to saying that the letter that was referenced earlier today in question period and again in the House is wrong.

Maybe the member will understand some of the frustration that I have as the representative for Selkirk—Interlake, the home of Lake Winnipeg, and the frustration that I am feeling from my constituents. We are quite upset that there seems to have been an opportunity to make a reference to the IJC about a Devils Lake outlet.

Regardless of what project that might have been, I am at odds wondering why we would not want to make that representation, why we would not want to have the IJC look into the possibility of what the water quality is in Devils Lake versus that of the Red River basin watershed.

We have a situation where North Dakota wanted to go in some way, in some fashion, with some project a few years ago on Devils Lake and we had the opportunity to look at that. I would like to know why we would not have gone down that path then.

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert:** Madam Speaker, when I referred to this issue in my original comments, it was a federal project not a state project. In fact, it was questioned whether it would even go ahead because it had not been recommended by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This is like dealing with apples and oranges. We are talking about two different things here. Therefore at the time it was premature to suggest that we would do a reference. The environmental assessment, which was recommended by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, had not been completed. When that assessment was proposed by the Corps, North Dakota found it very expensive and decided to go on its own. However it was a federal not a state project, and therefore that is why. I hope that helps clarify it for the member.

[Translation]

**Hon. Dan McTeague (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a great honour for me to take part in this debate. I must point out a conflict of interest for me in this great debate. I stand by my colleagues from Manitoba, as I am a Manitoban by birth. I was born in Winnipeg in 1962. I know that I look a bit older. The many important issues we are called to address in the House of Commons make us age prematurely and make us seem a little older.

First, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment said, I am sharing his time. I thank him for that. I will be speaking about a very important topic. I want to commend the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul for her initiative.

Cooperation between Canada and the United States on water resources is essential. Major bodies of water straddle the border between the two countries and the water flows in both directions. The Great Lakes and other transboundary bodies of water represent more than 20% of the world's fresh water supply. Bilateral cooperation has contributed to a series of successes resulting from the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty and the International Joint Commission, also known as the IJC.

The IJC is an effective dispute settlement and water resource management mechanism that has proven itself a long time ago. Some 52 of the 54 referrals to the commission have resulted in consensus reports based on an independent review and sound scientific data.

The quality and quantity of water resources, as well as invasive species, remain major challenges for both countries and will require more intense bilateral cooperation in the future when it comes to flooding, drought and pollution, for example.

Without an effective dispute settlement mechanism that uses shared analyses and sound scientific data, both countries are at risk of seeing the situation deteriorate.

In March 2005, President Bush and the Prime Minister publicly promised to “enhance water quality by working bilaterally and through existing regional bodies such as the International Joint Commission”. This promise was made in Waco, Texas, on March 23.

● (2320)

[English]

Fluctuating water levels have clearly led to hardship for our friends the North Dakotans, but the state outlet has the potential, as we all know and as has been so eloquently expressed here, to do serious harm to Canada. There is obviously a simple matter of dispute of the facts and the data needs to be provided as soon as possible.

What do we know? There was no environmental assessment on the state outlet project. Rather, North Dakota has relied mainly on environmental assessments prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed outlet, a different project from the state's outlet.

Further, North Dakota then chose to ignore findings of the corps' environmental assessments that highlighted potential risks to even then Secretary Powell's mitigation requirements. The state's outlet project creates risks as far as we can tell in three areas: biota transfer, water quality impact and socio-economic impacts, degradation of water quality and foreign biota transfer, which would have obvious socio-impacts on the Lake Winnipeg watershed.

Lake Winnipeg is the world's 10th largest freshwater lake and it is the sixth largest in North America. It is home to a very viable commercial and sport fishery worth over \$100 million per year. About 80% of that commercial fishing is done by our first people. It supports a vibrant tourism industry worth another \$110 million per year and of course Lake Winnipeg and Red River are a source of

S. O. 52

drinking water for nearly 40,000 people in Manitoba. Invasive species that enter Lake Winnipeg could spread to the larger Hudson Bay basin.

North Dakota has suggested that Canada's request for IJC reference is a delay tactic. It questions why our request comes at the last moment. We have heard this expressed by others. Canada first raised concerns about the state outlet as early as 1999 and regularly thereafter.

I know because I dealt with one of those questions in the House not too long ago. Canada formally proposed a joint reference on the state funded outlet 14 months ago in April of 2004. Using the one year timeframe, it is conceivable that it is quite likely that the reference would have now been completed by this date.

Moreover, we have received repeated assurances from U.S. government officials that any outlet project would conform with the Boundary Waters Treaty's obligations. There is some confusion over Canada's alleged refusal to pursue the reference in 2002.

I understand the member for Selkirk—Interlake had an exchange with the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment on the question of the difference between the state outlet and the federal project. It is clear that the proposed reference was premature as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had not finished its environmental assessment.

A further concern, and it may be an allegation by North Dakota but it is one that has to be challenged, is the reference that it has made that it would take eight and a half years. The IJC has told Canadian and U.S. governments that it could complete this case in a matter of a year.

[Translation]

Our embassy, along with Manitoba, is coordinating our efforts. Appeals are being launched on behalf of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Environment, Justice, and the President of the Treasury Board. Embassy officials are meeting with members of Congress and the heads of bordering states. This is the biggest letter-writing campaign ever.

Ambassador McKenna wrote an editorial published in the *New York Times*. It resulted in supporting articles in American newspapers and letters to the Secretary of State, Ms. Rice from Senators Lugar, DeWine and Voinovich, the Governor of Minnesota, Mr. Pawlenty, and the Governor of Ohio, Mr. Taft; from numerous American representatives of the Great Lakes Commission; and from mayors and major NGOs.

The White House's council on environmental quality held a series of discussions to see if a negotiated settlement could be reached.

Canadian officials met twice with the council on environmental quality to express our concerns about invasive species and impact on water quality. At present, the experts are analyzing the data on the conditions in Devils Lake.

*S. O. 52*

We are encouraged by the evolution of this situation and by North Dakota's interest in finding a solution acceptable to both sides under the international boundary waters treaty.

Canada feels, however, that the Devils Lake outlet should not open until the necessary measures have been taken to ensure the project complies with this treaty.

• (2325)

[*English*]

We are working hard with the government of Manitoba to ensure that we are able to reach a conclusion that is acceptable to all. I would encourage members on all sides of the House to work together to affirm and to support our efforts to find a resolution on this important issue.

Once again, I thank the hon. members for cooperating and having the desire and the will to put this matter very much before this House of Commons, so that at the end of this, consistent with what the member for Winnipeg North has just said, we send an undeniable message of support that this project should not go through.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we are actually going through negotiations here to develop a resolution. The Conservatives had already drafted one to bring before the House. It is a resolution that would probably find unanimous consent. I think we will be able to work out a resolution with my colleagues across the way. We did have one prepared. We will work together to come up with wording that is acceptable to all and include our friends from the Liberal Party.

I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for his intervention and I want to follow up on some of the discussions. Perhaps this is where we have some of the confusion happening out in the countryside and in this House. It is how the Boundary Waters Treaty comes into play when there are federal projects in the U.S. and Canada versus state projects on both sides and provincial projects.

It is extremely confusing that we have a state project in North Dakota that is going ahead without any federal blessing. It started construction back in 2002-03, completely violating everything that was recommended by the environmental impact studies that were presented and done at that time.

We cannot seem to get the Americans to honour the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. We cannot seem to get them to consider any of the environmental recommendations that have been brought forward from the U.S. government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

One of the reasons that we have not been advocating this issue over the last couple of weeks on Devils Lake is because we had hoped that there were good negotiations going on. Then we were presented with this letter and heard challenges from the governor of North Dakota in the last week. This reminded us that we had to start talking about this again in the House of Commons, since it was pushed to the side with all the other issues that the government is facing.

Essentially, how can we have faith that the IJC can intervene here and stop the state government when it seems to have a mind of its

own and wanting to do whatever it pleases? The state has already proven that by building the project.

We are only a couple of weeks away from the state being in the position to throw the switch and start the pumps. Can the parliamentary secretary explain to me, and to any people who are watching, particularly back in Manitoba, that the concern is that North Dakota will not honour the treaty.

Further, it may not even be bound by the treaty since there was the reference made earlier saying that the reason that we never made a referral before is because it was a state project rather than a federal project. That does not seem to wash in both hands.

• (2330)

**Hon. Dan McTeague:** Madam Speaker, the state projects, while subject to International Joint Commission treaties, are enjoined by the treaty between two nations. Specifically, the point at which the outlet would have an impact may only be at the time in which it is discharged.

This is not because we have competing jurisdictions between the federal authority in the United States and the state authority. In fact, it would appear that any state could undertake to remediate a particular problem within its own geographic boundaries. It is only when it dumps into a river that carries itself north, as the hydrogeology of the area would indicate, that it suddenly becomes a national matter.

It would appear that using this as only a state driven outlet allowed, in my view, this issue not to follow its normal channels. We have heard and have received strong signals from the White House and from the President that they are indeed interested in this issue and, in fact, that there ought to be a reference to the International Joint Commission.

More importantly, a proper assessment must be done in this process which by any measure of conclusion, or any measure of regard, could only but conclude that this will have an impact on the water supply as it flows into Canada thereby affecting the treaty and inviting a response by the International Joint Commission.

I think it is a very important case at a very critical time. It is not the first time certainly since I have been parliamentary secretary that we have dealt with the International Joint Commission.

[*Translation*]

This was done with regard to Lake Memphrémagog and the Coventry site where the water flowed in various directions.

[*English*]

However it is very important for us to recognize and to understand that a state may very well have the ability to build something within its own jurisdiction and its own boundaries, notwithstanding the wider, longer term natural implications geographically as this water flows north. We cannot wait for that to happen because by the time that happens the damage may have already been done.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure this evening to take part at this late hour of 11:30 p.m. in this important debate on the potential dangers of this project to divert water from Devils Lake into the Red River and, more specifically, Lake Winnipeg.

It is a pleasure to speak in this debate. Not only could this project have a serious impact on Lake Winnipeg, but it could set a real and dangerous precedent for other international boundary waters near the Quebec—United States border.

First, it is important to remind Quebecers who are unfamiliar with this project—if the truth be told—of its potential impact. This ambitious project was first undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Then the state of North Dakota sponsored and headed the project. Its aim, in theory, is to prevent the flooding of various farms and lands around Devils Lake.

In recent years, the water level in Devils Lake has risen dramatically. Some say it has even tripled. This increase, which occurred over a 10-year period, was caused by runoff, but also by significant spring flooding. As a result, as I said, the water level in Devils Lake has risen dramatically.

So the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers planned to build a 22-km channel to divert the water. At \$28 million, this was an ambitious and costly project to divert overflow to the Sheyenne River, the Red River and ultimately, Lake Winnipeg. As I mentioned, the aim of this project was to prevent lands and farms around Devils Lake from being flooded.

This is a major project: it cost \$28 million to build a 22-km channel. We can say, today, that, for all intents and purposes, this project has been completed, since over 90% of the channel has been built.

Why did we need to hold an emergency debate so late this evening on this plan? Because the diversion canal is scheduled to open in a few weeks. Some say it will open on July 1, others a little later. What we know for sure is that the plan is to open the diversion canal so that these waters and additional levels of water can divert directly into Lake Winnipeg.

Why should we oppose this plan? There are basically two reasons for imposing a moratorium on this plan. The first reason has to do with the environment.

● (2335)

Those who know Lake Winnipeg will say without a doubt that it is one of the most beautiful lakes here in Canada and that for many years, considerable efforts have been made by the governments to restore the quality of the water in this lake to 1970 levels.

The quality of the water in Lake Winnipeg has varied considerably over the past few years. Intense restoration and action plans were developed to make sure the water in Lake Winnipeg could be restored to its 1970 quality. Considerable efforts were made by the community, the government and stakeholders. We were in the process of restoring the quality of the water in Lake Winnipeg that the public was right to demand.

*S. O. 52*

Those who know Devils Lake can say without fear of error that it is among the most polluted. This lake, which is in Dakota, contains phosphorus, nitrate and other contaminants. What would this project do? It would mean that these contaminants from one of the most polluted lakes could end up in Lake Winnipeg, whose water quality stakeholders and the government have expended considerable effort in recent years to improve.

Is it right, then, when one community works to improve the water quality of its lakes, for parliamentarians to approve a project that provides for the transfer of phosphorous and nitrate contaminants from Devils Lake to Lake Winnipeg, through various tributaries, either the Sheyenne River or even the Red River? The answer is no, because in environmental and community terms, it is unacceptable.

Furthermore, in environmental terms, this project runs the risk of having significant negative consequences for Lake Winnipeg, because of the transfer of invasive species. We know what it is, when we talk to people living around the Great Lakes, who have worked hard to keep the numbers of these invasive species from growing. So we must not wish for people living around Lake Winnipeg to find themselves in the same situation as people living on the shores of certain rivers in Ontario, with regard to the proliferation of invasive species in the Great Lakes.

Therefore, in environmental and community terms, the project is unacceptable because it risks, first, transferring contaminants from Devils Lake to Lake Winnipeg and, second, increasing the proliferation of invasive species in Lake Winnipeg.

There is another basic reason for opposing this type of project and that is for economic reasons. In the case of Lake Winnipeg, we know that the activities of commercial fishing are vital. Commercial fishing in Lake Winnipeg represents some \$25 million. We can ask ourselves the following question: what impact would this project have, in view of what I have just said, on the economic activity of commercial fishing in Lake Winnipeg?

There are grounds for concern. When one believes in sustainable development and knows that environmental protection is directly tied to economic and social development, it is clear that this project does not in any way respond to the issues relating to development, which we want to be sustainable development.

● (2340)

From the moment there are environmental and economic risks related to this project, energetic action must be taken.

In my opinion, there are two things that must be done promptly. Diplomatic action, of course, The government and the Prime Minister have interceded with U.S. President George Bush to ensure that this project will not come to pass.

*S. O. 52*

My colleague has already addressed the importance for us, as parliamentarians, to make the state of Dakota aware of the considerable risks surrounding this project.

The Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development has passed a motion, in fact, calling for this project not to take place without the International Joint Commission being informed of it. This, in my opinion, is the kind of diplomatic action that we, as parliamentarians, can take promptly.

Secondly, we must not be afraid to use legal means against certain states that do not respect the most fundamental historical element in Canada-U.S. relations, the Boundary Waters Treaty, signed in 1909. Under that treaty, when plans for diversion from one country to another have an impact, the International Joint Commission must be informed of the issue. When there is a risk of contaminant transfer, the international joint commission must be informed. This is, in my opinion, a treaty which respects the concept of sustainable development in an atmosphere of reciprocity.

We do know, however, that Canada was informed of this project. As far back as 2002, a plan, then described by the government as being at the embryonic stage, was submitted by the U.S. corps of engineers. In principle this submission included mediation measures to ensure the least possible environmental impact.

We were told at the time—as the parliamentary secretary said this evening—that this was not a project of the state of Dakota, but rather one that involved the U.S. army corps of engineers. Yet the offer was made to the Canadian government to refer this matter to the International Joint Commission.

As far back as 2002, the most basic principles of prudence and caution ought to have prompted the government to submit this matter to the IJC immediately. We on this side of the House are well aware that, for a question to be referred to and examined by the IJC, both parties are required, that is both nations. Yet in 2002 Canada refused the U.S. invitation to submit it to the IJC.

There is one thing that is food for thought. It is true that Canada is today using diplomatic pressure and following the motions from the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development, which may go as far as legal proceedings, but it had the opportunity in 2002 to submit this matter to the IJC in keeping with the U.S. proposal. It decided to turn its back on its responsibilities at that time.

This project means there is still a chance. The government—reading the Boundary Waters Treaty properly and being familiar with the IJC—knows that Canada can make a unilateral request for the IJC to look into the issue. The commission's response, however, will not be a decision, of course, just an opinion or advice.

• (2345)

At least the matter will have been referred to International Joint Commission. I think that is fundamental. We must therefore make sure that this project is not allowed to proceed until the matter has been referred to the IJC. In a system like ours, we cannot permit such projects to take place without an independent environmental assessment. Today, one can even wonder whether this diversion project is a good thing.

When we review the assessments and see that the project in question will only provide a reduction of 1.5 inch per year of the water level in Devils Lake, this raises questions about the very basis for the project scheduled to get under way in just a few weeks. Could the state of Dakota not have contemplated other options? Could restoring the wetlands around the lake have been an alternative to this type of project? Could sand filtering equipment not have been installed as an alternative to this project, which has cost \$28 million and, at the end of the day, might only provide a reduction of 1.5 inch per year of the water level in Devils Lake?

The project itself has to be called into question in terms of its efficiency, as well as its environmental impact and negative externalities.

Beyond Devils Lake, this project will set a dangerous precedent which will affect not only Devils Lake and Lake Winnipeg, but also all boundary waters between Canada and the United States. There is indeed a risk that, should this project proceed without the International Joint Commission having had the matter referred to it, Quebec could be next, and such a project could take place in Quebec without a referral to the IJC. It is important to tell Quebecers today that what is happening in this case today could very well happen in Quebec tomorrow. The true role of the International Joint Commission, as well as the very basis for the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and its true influence on the capacity to deal with water diversions, have been seriously prejudiced.

Accordingly, as I have a minute left, I will conclude by saying that I support the diplomatic and legal efforts of my colleagues in the House, unreservedly, because there is no partisanship associated with a project of this type, today. I know that my NDP colleague has worked very hard in the parliamentary committee. In my opinion, this is a common cause, and there is a common danger. Regardless of what political party we belong to, the very issue of Canadian sovereignty and environmental protection is being called into question. This risks affecting Canada—U.S. relations markedly.

So, we have the task of seeing that communities around Lake Winnipeg, which have implemented substantial measures to improve water quality, are not bullied about overnight. In addition, all the efforts to have the quality of Lake Winnipeg water restored to 1970 levels must not be wasted because of this project, which would transfer not only pollutants but invasive species from Devils Lake, which is in a terrible state, to Lake Winnipeg, where the community has worked extremely hard.

• (2350)

[English]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague from the Bloc is a very learned individual who has done a lot of great work on the environment committee. I appreciated his comments on the IJC, his recognition of the beauty of Lake Winnipeg and the importance of the commercial fishery and how it could be negatively impacted. The fishery in Lake Winnipeg is the largest for pickerel outside the Great Lakes region. It is a resource that we have to protect.

He said that this is going to set a very dangerous precedent on all other environmental treaties we have across this country and that we should ensure we make use of all legal means.

I want to thank all participants tonight who took the time to be here to talk about Devils Lake. I appreciate all the input and the interventions that were made. Hopefully, unanimous consent will come out of this and we can move ahead on the issue.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Madam Speaker, naturally, in my remarks, I made a point of listing the environmental dangers associated with this type of project. There are also economic dangers and impacts associated with such projects.

This is an excellent example of how sustainable development, which brings together the protection of the environment, economic development and social development, must go hand and hand with any project.

We had and have always had an interesting treaty: the Boundary Waters Treaty. This treaty gives the International Joint Commission an authority which one might criticize from time to time. Nevertheless, this treaty has to be respected to the letter. This requires efforts from both sides.

In 2002, the suggestion was made to the Canadian government to refer the issue to the International Joint Commission. But at the same time the Government of Dakota has to understand that acting unilaterally, as it is about to do, is wrong.

Today, we have to hope for a moratorium on this issue. We also have to hope that every effort will be made to ensure this project does not go ahead.

• (2355)

[English]

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Madam Speaker, just before the clock strikes midnight, I am pleased to have a few minutes to discuss this very important matter.

I want to begin by thanking the member for Selkirk—Interlake and the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for initiating this debate tonight. I want to acknowledge the fact that members from all parties have stood in this place to commit to working toward a solution that requires all of our attention. It is particularly fulfilling to see so many of my Manitoba colleagues here this evening because this issue is so critical for the province of Manitoba, in terms of the future of our water supply and our ecosystem. But it is something that affects all of us. As my colleague from the Bloc just said, what happens in this instance will have huge ramifications for similar issues all over

S. O. 52

North America. It is very important for the future of all of our watershed and ecosystems.

It has to be said that so many folks in this place have worked hard to make a difference. I think about my colleague on the environment committee, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley. He worked with all of his colleagues on the environment committee to come forward with an unparalleled decision by the committee to work together with one voice to find a solution to a problem that affects, for now, one province. That was a historic development and I want to give him credit for his work. My other colleagues, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh and the member for Elmwood—Transcona, have also worked diligently on this matter.

We are here tonight because the danger is so imminent and the threat to our water system is so real. We are talking in plain language about the possibility of waters being diverted from Devils Lake into the Sheyenne River from which it will flow into the Red River, across the border into Canada, and finally into Hudson Bay.

As the environment committee report said, the waters of that lake have not flowed into the Red River for over 1,000 years. We also know from some of the studies, including that by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, that we are talking about the possibility of degraded water quality, increased erosion, increased sedimentation, reduced aquatic habitat value, loss of aquatic resources and so on.

Numerous independent individuals have suggested that the water coming from Devils Lake into Manitoba will include parasites and foreign species. It will cause all kinds of problems to the quality of our water and to the ecosystem as a whole.

That is the state of affairs. That is the urgency. That is the national interest issue that we are talking about.

Tonight we have to grapple with how we fix it, how we get a solution. The Premier of Manitoba has worked diligently day in and day out on this matter. It is clear that the premier, the environment committee here in Ottawa, members of the Liberal government, all the NGOs and environmental organizations and citizen advocacy groups have spoken with one voice. They are saying that there must be a referral to the International Joint Commission under the Boundary Waters Treaty to ensure that there is an independent assessment and review of the dangers posed by the Devils Lake diversion project. That is the only way to ensure that we have taken the utmost care to protect our water system. We have to ensure that we do not set any dangerous precedent for the future.

In closing my remarks, tonight's debate has provided some possibility, some goodwill and determination to come back tomorrow in this place and agree on a resolution that would show to our country and the world that we are serious and that we want to take the most relevant action possible. Tomorrow I am hoping that all parties will agree to some wording, and it does not have to be the NDP wording or the Conservative Party wording, but some wording that this House calls on our counterparts in the United States Congress, the House of Representatives and the Senate, to call on the International Joint Commission to have an independent assessment of the Devils Lake diversion project.

*S. O. 52*

• (2400)

That gives us great hope that we can in fact find a solution and work together on a cooperative basis.

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** It being midnight, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Acting Speaker (Hon. Jean Augustine):** Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until later this day, Wednesday, at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12 a.m.)

---







# CONTENTS

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

## EMERGENCY DEBATE

### Devils Lake Diversion Project

Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7583	Mr. Toews .....	7597
Motion .....	7583	Mr. Alcock .....	7598
Mr. Epp .....	7584	Mr. Bezan .....	7599
Mr. Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley) .....	7585	Ms. Neville .....	7600
Mr. Bezan .....	7585	Mr. Jean .....	7601
Mr. Alcock .....	7586	Mr. Comartin .....	7601
Mr. Mark .....	7587	Mr. Toews .....	7601
Mr. Pettigrew .....	7587	Mr. Siksay .....	7602
Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7589	Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7603
Mr. Martin (Winnipeg Centre) .....	7589	Mr. Fletcher .....	7603
Mr. Dion .....	7589	Mr. Comartin .....	7604
Mr. Bezan .....	7591	Mr. Bezan .....	7604
Mr. Blaikie .....	7591	Mr. Wilfert .....	7605
Ms. Lalonde .....	7591	Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis .....	7606
Mr. Dion .....	7591	Mr. Bezan .....	7606
Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7593	Mr. McTeague .....	7606
Ms. Lalonde .....	7593	Mr. Bezan .....	7608
Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis .....	7593	Mr. Bigras .....	7609
Mr. Blaikie .....	7594	Mr. Bezan .....	7611
Mrs. Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul) .....	7596	Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis .....	7611
		(Motion agreed to) .....	7612

**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Publishing and Depository Services

PWGSC, Ottawa, ON K1A 0S5

Internet: <http://publications.gc.ca>

1-800-635-7943 or Local 613-941-5995

*En cas de non-livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*

Les Éditions et Services de dépôt

TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Internet: <http://publications.gc.ca>

1-800-635-7943 ou appel local (613) 941-5995

**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:**

**Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :**

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Additional copies may be obtained from Publishing and Depository Services, PWGSC, Ottawa, ON K1A 0S5**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**

**On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les Éditions et Services de dépôt, TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5**

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant à : Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
TPSGC, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5**