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Friday, November 2, 2007

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

CONTENTS

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

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 2, 2007

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

• (1000)

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

FINANCE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Yesterday, in response to the Thursday question, the government House leader said:

Next week will be “Honouring our Veterans Week”, allowing members to be in their ridings during this important time.

That is a direct quote.

Apparently, the Department of Finance or the office of the Minister of Finance did not receive a memo in relation to that because, in response to an ongoing request for several weeks for a briefing on the purported side deal on the Atlantic accord with Nova Scotia, yesterday afternoon members received an invitation from the finance minister's office to be in Ottawa Monday for a briefing.

We all know that it would have been quite possible for the finance department to offer a briefing when the House was in session. If all members were to avail themselves of this briefing, we can imagine the cost of all members travelling back to Ottawa during a recess week in order to attend this briefing.

To make matters worse, this is a week, as the hon. House leader has said, and we should be in our ridings during this important time honouring our veterans. I was very sad to learn this morning of the passing of a dear friend and Canadian veteran, Cecil Nickerson, a great person who lived in Middle Sackville and who I represented for some time. His funeral is on Monday.

I would like to hear from the government that it would reschedule this briefing to save taxpayers dollars. Surely the Minister of Finance would want to do that, one would hope, in view of the vast expense this could entail and also so that members could be in their ridings, as suggested by the House leader for the government.

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that is a point of order that needs to be addressed in the chamber. I believe it is something that should be taken up with the members involved and the finance department. I do not think it is a government response. It was one of the ministers who scheduled

the meeting. We all have conflicts at different times in our schedules, as we know, so I think that is something that should be handled between the members involved and the minister's office.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the very reasons that have been mentioned by my friend for Halifax West, I wonder if someone on behalf of the government would undertake today, before the House adjourns, to raise this matter with the powers that be within the government, whoever they may be, to ensure that a satisfactory answer is given.

The member for Halifax West, who has raised this point, has raised it in a very sincere and honourable way and I would hope the government would respond accordingly.

Mr. Ken Epp (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC): What I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, is whether all hon. members would be satisfied with having a delay of over a week for that briefing? Would that be acceptable and should it then be the following week?

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, we have been asking for this for some time now. It has been over a month since the announcement of the side deal, so called, and I would have thought that the finance department and the minister's office certainly could have arranged this during the past few weeks when the House was sitting.

In view of the fact that they did not, we have waited this long and I would be prepared to wait until the House is sitting again because it would certainly save the taxpayers money and members could be in their ridings, as the House leader of the government has suggested they should be, honouring veterans next week.

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I respect the circumstance that the member has been caught in and I extend my condolences to the family.

Certainly, if the hon. member wishes a separate briefing, I will speak to the department and see if we cannot arrange that.

It is unfortunate that the briefing happened at this time. As all members are aware, there was a lot of effort put into making sure that our economic statement was complete and ready to present to the House, even though we were not able to present it in the House. That was probably part of the issue, but the department is doing its best to make sure that arrangements have been made for all hon. members who are involved or interested to have an appropriate briefing.

If the hon. member wishes to speak to me later today, we will see if we cannot arrange that.

Government Orders

●(1005)

The Deputy Speaker: I think we will leave it at that. It is not necessarily strictly a point of order, but I felt that it was important to have the issue aired. Hopefully, there can be some discussions either between the Department of Finance and the particular member or some further negotiations.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AERONAUTICS ACT

The House resumed from October 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: When the House adjourned, the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan had eight minutes left on debate. I do not see the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Vancouver Island North.

Ms. Catherine Bell (Vancouver Island North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the work done by my colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster on this file. His work and advocacy in opposing this bill is something that needs to be considered because of the people who have come to him and have approached our NDP caucus to tell us their stories about why it is important to make sure that the airline industry is safe, that the workers are kept safe, and that the travelling public can travel with certainty about their safety.

I want to tell a story this morning about my riding of Vancouver Island North where we do not have the ability to get from one town to another without the use of airplanes or water taxis. We have remote areas, a lot of places where our first nations live, up and down the coast, that are only accessible by air or water. There are no roads into these communities, so we rely heavily on small airlines to transport us.

I have had the opportunity on many occasions to travel in the riding. Even before I was an elected member I would travel on small airlines. My family lived in one of those remote communities for a time and I appreciated very much the fact that the pilots got us there safely. But sometimes it was not a fun experience. There has been nasty weather and one has to travel in the winter. As I have tried to let people know in the past, it is not all glorious out there.

Just this past year, in the spring, I was travelling to one of our small communities in one of our small airlines and the plane had to stop at many little places and pick up passengers coming in and out of the small logging camps. We had our earphones on so we could hear each other talk and I heard the pilot say: “Can you guys keep your eyes open, there’s heli-logging in this area and if one of those helicopters comes out of the clouds with a log, we need to get out of the way quick”, because we were flying fairly low.

It was a little disconcerting to think that we had to be the eyes and ears for the pilot in his small plane while he was wiping his window off with a cloth because the air system was not working properly and

we could see little cracks through the doors on the plane because they did not close properly. There are little things that make us concerned for our safety, but we get in those planes and we travel, and we trust those pilots. They do a great job for us. I really want to acknowledge that they are the ones responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their aircraft because most of them are owner/operators.

It is disconcerting that this bill would take away government oversight and put the responsibility into the hands of a corporation where profit is the bottom line, and where shareholders expect to see a return on their investment by the corporation. So quite often we see these companies cut corners to make ends meet or to make sure that they get a return on their investment. That does not help the travelling public. It makes us a little more uncomfortable when we have to get into these airplanes.

I hope that the story I am going to tell about an incident that happened in my riding a few years ago will help people understand the importance of safety for the travelling public.

Before I get to that, I also want to acknowledge that at least half, maybe more, of the members of the House do not even live in Ontario where they are able to drive to Ottawa. Instead, we have to take airplanes weekly or sometimes daily in the cases of some members who have to travel back and forth, such as ministers who are always travelling. We want to make sure we are safe. We also want to make sure that the workers, whose jobs are to make sure we are safe, are safe as well. It is for them that we are speaking about this issue and raising concerns as well.

●(1010)

As my colleague, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster, also mentioned, we have seen what has happened with rail safety in this country. We have seen more derailments and the industry is basically inspecting and regulating itself, and it has not done our environment any good. We have seen spills of huge proportions.

The devastation of the Cheakamus River in British Columbia on the coast will have repercussions for years to come on the ability to fish in that river. First nations are very concerned about their ability to harvest any of the fish that they would have had from that river. The communities that are along that river have to worry about their water supply. So many things have happened because of a train wreck and yet the industry seems to get away with it, basically. The trains are still travelling. It is still happening and nothing has been done.

To go back to my riding, the story that I want to tell is about Kirsten Stevens who is a young woman from Campbell River. Her husband worked in the forest industry. That is another reason that we use these small planes as I mentioned earlier. Loggers and people who work in the bush take these planes to get out to their camps.

Government Orders

The plane filled up with the workers one morning, took off and crashed into the ocean just off one of our small islands. It took a couple of years for Ms. Stevens to have the plane recovered from the ocean. She has been working diligently trying to get answers as to why this plane went down. There were questions of pilot error or malfunction of the engine. The authorities could not do an inspection because they did not have the wreckage. It took a long time for the wreckage to be brought up and it was only brought up because of the families of the people who were killed in that terrible accident. The accident left a woman without her husband and children without their father. I also knew one family fairly well who lost their son. It was a devastating accident and it touched a lot of families, and a lot of lives.

However, there was stalling and finger pointing from all sides of the government and from the Transportation Safety Board. It took several years for them to bring up that wreckage to carry out an investigation into what really happened. I find that quite sad because those families needed some closure into the death of their loved ones and also because they had to work so hard. Here they were in the grieving process and they were out there trying to get answers and nothing was forthcoming.

It just points to, I hate to say, a lack of caring but that is how these people felt when they were ignored or they were let down. There was a lot of back and forth. It was just sad. I really have to commend Ms. Stevens for her diligence and for not letting this go when she was under so much stress. So, in a lot of ways, it is for her that we also want to make sure this bill is opposed.

She has written to me on several occasions and one of the things that she has stated with regard to getting some answers is:

The standards, regulations and oversight are very different between these classifications, [meaning air taxi and airline], and when you add to that the lack of union, professional association, lobby group or any form of real OH&S protection for the air taxi worker, then the situation is quite frightening.

•(1015)

When she says it is frightening, I know exactly what she means. At least once a year small planes go down in the various areas of my riding. Quite often, those planes are recovered and the people may be injured but not seriously hurt and can go back to work, but every once in a while we have the devastation that happened with Ms. Stevens' husband and the others in that crash.

My colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster and others who have spoken on Bill C-7 are quite right to be concerned and to raise those concerns. We went through this back in the spring and here we are again in November raising the same concerns, so I hope the government is listening and will do the right thing and make sure the industry is kept safe.

The travelling public needs to know that and we all need to know that as we use airplanes more and more. Smaller airlines are popping up all over the place. We need to make sure that those airlines are strictly regulated, that there is oversight and that there are investigations when there are any signs of something going wrong. We do not want to see another Jetsgo fiasco in this country, with an airline that had a multitude of problems over several years and yet was deemed to be safe. We all know what happened with that.

We want to make sure the travelling public is safe and can travel with the certainty that they do not have to worry every time they get on an airplane. We also do not want to have another instance of what Ms. Stevens had to endure.

I thank my colleague again for raising these concerns so that we have an opportunity to speak to this legislation. I could go on for another half an hour and talk about the small airplanes and the commuters in my riding, but suffice it to say that the workers who travel on them and the communities that rely on them need to know that they are reliable and safe for the future.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on addressing the issues around the variations in the aviation industry across the country. One of the good things that we have in Canada is a consistent policy on aviation that covers the country. Mechanics and service technicians, whether they are in one part of the country or the other, are used to a system that is reliable, straightforward and transferrable across the country.

In many of our northern and remote locations, we rely on technicians and mechanics. They are not in a team and they are not in a group like Air Canada, which has thousands of employees. They are single mechanics. They are people who sometimes actually have to fly the planes as well. They are versatile. They are expected to do so much with very limited support, very limited access to spare parts and very limited access to all the things that make a successful aviation industry.

So what are we doing with this bill? We are destroying the conformity of the aviation industry across the country. I have a question for my colleague. When a mechanic in one of these isolated communities who is trying to fix a plane needs to understand the system, would he be better served by having the safety system distributed across the country without any central control, without the level of central control that we have brought to the system over many years?

•(1020)

Ms. Catherine Bell: Mr. Speaker, that question from my colleague from Western Arctic is very well put. He raises a lot of points.

He talks about mechanics and technicians. Something that we are also losing in this country is the opportunity for trades training. In my province of British Columbia, of course, we had a program called the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission, cut several years ago, that helped people get certified as mechanics, as technicians and in all kinds of trades. These people are now disappearing and we are seeing a shortage of skilled workers in this country.

The NDP has called many times for the input of dollars into trades training. We also want to make sure there are standard practices across the country, so that people working in one province or another have the level of training that allows them to use those skills in every province.

Government Orders

Some of the people who work on the small airplanes, the owner-operators, as I have said, may not be able to afford mechanics. They are doing a lot of the work themselves. I am trusting that they are well trained and have the ability to fix what is necessary, but I would hate to think that there are people out there putting things together with baling wire and chewing gum.

It is imperative that we have qualified technicians, mechanics and other tradespeople working on aircraft so we can be assured they are safe.

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for talking about what is so important and so essential about this bill we are looking at today, Bill C-7.

I want to start by talking a little about my community of London—Fanshawe. There is a wonderful airport in London—Fanshawe, the London International Airport. It is certainly not as grand as Pearson or the airport in Vancouver, but it is a remarkable little airport inasmuch as it has an impeccable safety record. The people who work there take great pride in keeping the public safe and doing their job in an exemplary way. They have remarkable community relationships and have made it very clear that safety is first and foremost when it comes to London.

We have heard about the experiences of my colleague in regard to the tragedies that have ensued for the people of her community. We most certainly do not want these kinds of tragedies to proliferate across the country. That is why the New Democratic Party is opposing this bill. That is why our critic, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster, has been so very clear and so very vociferous about the concerns here.

When we read through the flaws that he sees in Bill C-7, I am sure that all members of the House will agree that we need to take a careful look at this bill. We need to consider very carefully before we proceed.

According to my colleague from Vancouver, the bill is seriously flawed and still needs amendment. Among those flaws are those having to do with the new safety management systems, the immunity from prosecution for airlines that violate safety rules under certain conditions, the heightened secrecy and less access to information on the safety performance of airlines, and the fact that this information is out of the reach of the Access to Information Act.

That should send chills down the spines of everyone who has ever boarded an aircraft in this country or who is contemplating boarding an aircraft in this country. We cannot get the access we need to the information we need to know that we are indeed safe.

The irony of this, of course, is that we now have a government that is so determined to cuddle up to George Bush that it is willing to allow no fly lists. The government is willing to allow the Americans to have access to information about passengers who are boarding Canadian aircraft, but the government is not willing to look at the planes themselves. The government is not willing to say to the companies that they have to make sure the mechanics of the planes are absolutely safe, that the nuts and bolts and the things that truly reflect safety are in place.

As I have said, we oppose this bill. We have been remarkably fortunate in Canada, but the time is coming, if we allow this bill to

go forward, when we will not feel nearly so safe and we will not be nearly so fortunate.

I want to give some sense of the background here. Bill C-7 constitutes what my colleague calls a revolution in how aviation safety will be addressed in Canada for years to come, not just right now and not just in the next few months, but for years to come. It enshrines aviation safety management systems, SMS, as part of Transport Canada's agenda to implement SMS in all modes of transportation, sometimes with disastrous effects, as is the case with rail safety management.

We know about the numerous derailments since the privatization of rail safety. We constantly hear about them in the news. We know that the effect is not only a human effect, but an environmental effect. We hear of trains going into rivers and trains derailing. The cost in terms of the environment and human life is simply not acceptable.

• (1025)

We have experience with the privatization of rail safety, but apparently that is not enough. We cannot seem to learn from that. We now need to take the next step and risk safety in the air. As frightening and as dangerous as a train wreck is, it is on the ground. It gets a whole lot scarier at 30,000 feet.

The SMS is also designed to help Transport Canada deal with declining resources and high levels of projected inspector retirements. I find it interesting that apparently we need at least 100 additional inspectors to ensure the safety of our airlines. I guess the Conservative government cannot be held solely responsible here. It is very clear that the Liberals had a whole lot to do with cutting the service sector of Canada and crippling those who provide services to Canadians, underscoring the fact that apparently the Liberals were not concerned about the kind of services that Canadians receive, including safety on our railways and safety on our airlines.

We need these inspectors and nobody seems to be prepared to ensure they are there. If they are there, then we do not need to rely on the industry itself being the arbiter in terms of what is safe and what is acceptable.

I would like to give the House a little history on the bill. Originally, it was a Liberal bill authorized by former transport minister Jean Lapierre. Apparently, after a 45-minute staff briefing, the Conservatives and the Liberals were initially willing to let Bill C-6 pass without further amendment. However, that raised a lot of alarm bells. There was growing concern and opposition to Bill C-6 from a wide range of witnesses who appeared before the standing committee over a series of many months. These critics, and this is significant, included Justice Virgil Mochansky of the Dryden crash inquiry; two Transport Canada inspectors; unions; the CSPA; the UCTE; the Canada Safety Council; some smaller air operators; Ken Rubin, an access to information expert; the teamsters and CUPE representing flight attendants; as well as the IMAW.

Government Orders

The criticisms from those witnesses focused on the unprecedented and unacceptable decline in regulatory oversight by Transport Canada and the greater ability for the industry to set and enforce its own safety standards out of public sight and scrutiny and away from the critical eyes of our community. That is at the centre of all of this.

The airlines get to determine what is safe and what is not safe. It is kind of like bean counting. A corporation assesses how much it will cost to meet certain safety regulations compared to the lawsuits that would ensue as a result of accidents. If the corporation deems that it would be less expensive to simply allow the accidents to happen and face the lawsuits compared to the maintenance and safety costs, it opts for the bean counting, it opts for allowing the suits to go forward.

I would suggest that in a country where we pride ourselves on the restrictions, the controls and the oversights that keep our people safe, this is simply not acceptable.

In the face of this widespread opposition, the government was forced to make some amendments. In other cases, the three opposition parties united to force these amendments on the government.

We saw a number of amendments in the detailed clause by clause. The new legislation required the minister to maintain a program for the oversight and surveillance of aviation safety in order to achieve the highest level of safety and a new legislative obligation for the minister to require that aeronautical activities be performed at all times in a manner that meets the highest safety and security standards.

• (1030)

There were many more amendments. An amendment was added to ensure that the Canada Labour Code would prevail over the Aeronautics Act in the event of a possible conflict. An amendment was added ensuring employees and their bargaining agents would be included in the development and implementation of SMS, something that is certainly not happening today.

After extended debate, the government was compelled to introduce those amendments, as well as a form of whistleblower protection for employees who report to Transport Canada that their employer is violating the law.

A new definition of the safety management system was put into the legislation, emphasizing a reduction of risk to the lowest possible level, rather than just accepting or tolerating these risks to ensure the industry does not accept other higher levels of risk in its day to day operations.

The government then tried to kill this bill in committee. It wanted none of it. If we look back at these amendments, they make perfect sense and yet the government was quite willing to kill the bill to get rid of these amendments, instead of having the concern it should have for the people of our community.

• (1035)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for London—Fanshawe for dealing with the concerns we have with the bill in such a comprehensive way.

I, like other members of our caucus, want to thank our former transport critic, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster, for the tremendous amount of work he has done on this bill and for bringing to public exposure the flaws and the concerns that we have on this bill.

I thank the member today for reiterating and emphasizing some very key points that need to be brought forward in this debate and emphasizing why it is that we in the NDP moved this motion for the bill to go back to the committee. We believe that it requires a further examination by the committee and by witnesses who have concerns about the bill.

I have a question for the member for London—Fanshawe on one element of the bill. One of the concerns that we have on this bill is what is called a fatigue risk management system. This is a very big issue because we know in the airline industry, it is basically a 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year operation. Collective agreements are in place but the protection of workers from fatigue, measures that need to be prescribed clearly to ensure there is not overtime and overwork in terms of people getting into a position of fatigue, is something that is very important, and I think the travelling public would agree with that.

What we have learned from the bill is that this new fatigue risk management system is actually something that will move us away from the Canada Labour Code dealing with employment standards, which is part III of the Labour Code, and part II, which deals with occupational health and safety.

As people who work in the airline industry, they would be covered by the Canada Labour Code. The code exists for federally regulated employees. However, through this bill we would see a departure from that and we would see a special little system supposedly designed for workers in the aeronautics industry.

I wonder if the member would comment on our concern about moving away from the Canada Labour Code and setting up a boutique kind of proposal that will cover only this sector of workers. To me, that is something we should be concerned about because we are all worried about the amount of overtime people must do now. People are working way too many hours, and particularly in the airline industry this would be a concern, where issues of public safety are so prevalent.

Mrs. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, the best answer to my colleague's question is to look at what has happened in this country in the recent past. I would go back to those accidents regarding rail freight and the impact those accidents had on not just the environment and the economy, but on workers. It seems to me that fatigue was an element in those accidents.

Within the past few months, we saw rail workers go out on strike trying desperately to get the attention of their government to say that working conditions were not right, that they were ripe for a series of accidents and that they were very concerned about themselves, their families, the travelling public and safety among rail workers.

Government Orders

The response of the government was to write back to work legislation. The response of the government was to dismiss the concerns of those very responsible workers and say that their concerns did not matter, that they should go back to work and that it has had complaints from people who matter far more to it than the travelling public and the workers who actually ensure that the freight and the economy continue to move.

When we start to apply this to airline workers, that theory is compounded. I know there have been in the past very clear rules in regard to the number of hours a crew could work. If they are tired and if they are excluded from the Canada Labour Code, then it behooves their bosses, I believe, to force more time upon them. We know that if there are fewer employees working more overtime, the overall cost to the employer is less. We simply cannot allow that. On our highways, truckers who are exhausted are creating a level of danger for the public.

I would say that this new regime, this fatigue risk management system, is simply unacceptable. We must have the Canada Labour Code in place to ensure that crews are safe, that passengers are safe and that our airways are safe.

• (1040)

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am so delighted to listen to the voices of those who have not studied the bill.

I am wondering whether the NDP position is now one that says that the government has fallen through on bringing a bill before the committee and giving the committee members an opportunity to shape the bill, which is what we do in a minority Parliament, we actually shape the bill.

I am wondering why the NDP members would say on the one hand that they applaud the work of their colleague on the committee, the tremendous work that the committee has done and then highlight the improvements that have been debated, discussed, voted upon, brought forward and now in the real bill, and then on the other hand say that even though all this has been done they will vote against it.

What is it about NDP logic that says that every time we take a step forward, we must take two steps back so that we can complain about the fact that somebody is moving forward?

I find it absolutely fascinating that the House leader for the NDP would repeat things that are totally untrue. Does she expect, in asking her colleague, who has never attended one of those meetings, that if she repeats something that is clearly untrue, the general public will believe it to be something that it is not? Is it part of the NDP approach to engage in debate for the next election and send out messages that have nothing to do with reality?

The reality is that we have an aviation industry and an industry that involves many owner-operated flights, small companies, all of them concerned with aviation safety. It is part of the business. We do not expand the exercise by ensuring that everybody suffers an incident or an accident. The NDP members do not seem to grasp that. They also do not seem to grasp that all the improvements that their critic participated in bringing forward are ones that the Canadian public wants.

Is it the NDP's position that it will thumb its nose at everything the Canadian public wants? Is that what it wants to go into an election with?

• (1045)

Mrs. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, I remind my colleague that I am not the House leader. If he has a question for the House leader, I suggest he ask her.

In response to his question, I was in the House and listened very carefully to the debate on this bill and the arguments made by my colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster. It seems to me that during the debate there was a rush of frenetic need to get this pushed through very quickly. The hon. member opposite was part of that.

I suppose when one undermines the safety of Canadians, by not ensuring 100 inspectors are available, one would like to push things through rather quickly so the Canadian public, which he seems to be so concerned about, will not notice. I find that quite reprehensible.

In response to the other part of his question about air safety, I am sure Mr. Hunter Harrison was very clear in terms of his vociferous assurances that when it came to rail safety, he would maintain the safety of that system. Yet we see very clearly that when push comes to shove, when the bottom line is affected, the profits of a company seem to have far more interest for those in charge than the safety of the people depending on it.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I never miss an opportunity to give the public another opportunity to understand what we are debating.

The bill is about aviation safety. I note the NDP members have focused as much attention on railway safety as they have on everything else.

Whenever members of Parliament are concerned with the security and safety of the travelling public, it is always to be commended. This is why the committee members should be commended. They studied a bill for more than six months.

It is true that we brought an exhaustive list of people before the committee, an exhaustive list of interested industry operators, of union representatives, of professional organizations and of interested third parties. It is true that many of them said they liked the bill. Some of them even said they wanted to add some more. Others even said that we could improve the legislation by doing certain things. Everyone of them was listened to with deference and respect, and their input was incorporated in the amendments, now the bill. They are all in the bill.

It is verging on the dishonest, but I do not want to use that word too heavily, to suggest that the input people had as witnesses in the committee, before the committee members looked at the amendments, is the view that should prevail today.

For example, referring to Judge Moshansky is not very direct or honest. Judge Moshansky said he thought we should do the following. We did what he suggested. It is in the bill.

Government Orders

It is unfortunate and verging on the dishonest to refer to the lack of inspectors when we have amendments in the bill that must ensure the financing, the training and the deployment of inspectors to guarantee the safety mechanisms that we propose as standards. The members have already acknowledged they are there. The standards have been upgraded. The resources to ensure they be in place and supervised appropriately are there. That is in the bill.

It is verging on the dishonest to suggest that we are now talking about a bill that would impose extra work on professionals. They are governed by collective agreements. They are governed by their own professional code of conduct. They are governed by the Canada Labour Code, which is not superceded by any proposed amendment.

If NDP members want to kill a bill in which they participated in shaping for six months, then they should say to the general public that they want to be obstructionists, that they should give themselves a different name. They can do that. It is okay. I do not have any problem with it. However, it is verging on the dishonest for the members of the NDP to make the suggestions they have about the members of the Bloc and the Liberal Party, who believe in making Parliament work, who listen to the general public and who take into consideration the voice of experts in the field and then structure legislation.

Yes, it was with the cooperation of the government members. I know there are those who think we should take partisanship to the extreme and say that everything the Conservatives do is bad. I commiserate with them because it is as a result of the NDP manoeuvring in the last Parliament that we have the government we have today. However, I will not fall into the temptation of getting into partisanship by believing that.

• (1050)

I only say that it is absolutely crucial, when members of Parliament gather together for more than six months and iron out all the difficulties, whether they are real or perceived, that we present the bill to the House and give it at least one more chance. We went through this, it is called report stage. The amendments that members did not like or did not think they could put forward, could have been brought in a committee of the whole to get support of other members of Parliament to give it one last chance. We did that.

This bill sailed through at report stage. Now we have all those complaints from members of the NDP, the new whine party. They are saying that notwithstanding everything the rest of the general public represented by legitimately elected individuals think, it does not matter. They want to hold up the bill. They want to ensure the bill does not get approval of the House. That is okay.

If members have a firm ideological position based either on a good solid footing or on whatever comes up on the day, that is okay too. However, we should not try to project it as being something more than that. It is nothing more than obstructionism and it cannot be thought of as anything else.

The NDP is not interested in aviation safety. It is not interested in the security and the job security of those people working in the aerospace and aviation industry. It is not interested in the business interests of Canadian enterprises, be they big or small. If it were, the bill would have passed the House last June. If it were, this bill would

have passed last week when it was reintroduced as part of the negotiation to bring back bills at the same stages when the House last adjourned.

Members of the House can disagree with each other. It is unfortunate that we have come to a stage where we want to express our differences by calling others liars. We are not. It is verging on dishonesty to suggest implicitly or explicitly that there was collusion, in private, in secrecy, on this bill. The minister who brought the bill forward appeared before the committee two or three times. I enjoyed giving him a hard time, but that is what the process is for. Therefore, if anyone had a problem with the minister's bill, we brought him and his officials before the committee over and over again. There was no secrecy.

The plan was to have members of Parliament structure this bill. Members of Parliament have structured the bill. The NDP, while it takes great credit for having done great work, has just said, with the last several interventions, that it is not part of the process. It certainly is not an honest part of the process. I wonder whether the members of the NDP will wake up and decide to make the House work. If they do not want to do that, perhaps they should all resign en masse and do the Canadian public a favour.

• (1055)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I had to smile a bit while listening to the diatribe from the member for Eglinton—Lawrence. He is very good at giving lectures to other members of the House about doing their job. That comes from a member of a caucus which at a critical moment when we had a job to do, and that was to decide whether or not to vote confidence in the Conservative government's direction and whether or not to vote for the mini-budget just a few days ago sat on their hands and did nothing. In effect, he abdicated his responsibility. Talk about not doing his job. There are some glaring examples.

I am astounded that the member would rise in the House and be cynical about the legitimate and good faith attempts of the NDP to hold up this bill. Yes, we did that in June. We fought tooth and nail to hold up this bill because we thought it was a very bad bill. Based on what our member had done in the committee, based on the witnesses that were heard, based on what we heard from workers who will be affected by this bill, we understood that this was not a good bill.

If the member opposite thinks that it is a fine bill, then that is his prerogative, but I find it to be the height of cynicism to attack our party because we dare to have the courage to stand up in this House and say that this bill is not a good bill.

We have given some very clear reasons why the bill is not good. It is not because we are not interested in the aviation industry or the people who work in that industry. It is precisely because of our concerns about the workers in that industry, about where the industry is going overall that we have decided we need to blow the whistle on this bill.

The member may disagree with us, which is fine. I totally respect that. But come on, his note of cynicism that somehow we are not doing our job or that we are lying is outrageous.

Statements by Members

It is only fair to say that we have legitimate concerns about this bill. Our role as parliamentarians is to stand in this House and voice our concerns, which is more than what the members of his party did when it came to the Speech from the Throne or the mini-budget. The Liberals were silent. When it came time for a vote they were silent. We take our responsibility very seriously and I am proud of that.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, I am reminded since we are getting into lecturing and sort of religious illusions that we also serve who wait and sit. She might think that is cynical, but the fact of the matter is I asked her and her colleagues to tell me why she would suggest that there are not going to be inspectors when in fact that is built into the bill.

Why does she suggest that the Canada Labour Code does not apply when that is an untruth of the worst variety? Why does she deliberately say that we did not listen to witnesses—and I am talking about us; I am not talking about the government side—as she indicated that the opposition members worked together in order to bring this to fruition?

Then she says we did not incorporate what CUPE or other labour unions or professional organizations suggested. We brought all of those amendments forward for the scrutiny of members who take their jobs seriously, and I dare say yes, even her party's member on the committee. That is why I am absolutely flabbergasted that on the one hand she praises his work, who worked to ensure that we came up with this bill and then on the other hand en masse members of that party would turn around and say, “We don't care what our member did; we don't care what anybody else did; we are going to vote against the bill”—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I hate to interrupt the member for Eglinton—Lawrence in full flight, but the time has come for statements by members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

ROBERVAL—LAC-SAINT-JEAN

Mr. Denis Lebel (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, among the citizens of Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean there are many workers, athletes and artists who contribute to the renown of our region throughout Quebec, Canada and the world.

In the worker category, Chantale Lalancette, from the artisan cheese factory L'Autre Versant d'Hébertville, was named woman farmer of the year by the Fédération des agricultrices du Québec.

In the athlete category, the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region racked up seven awards at the annual gala of the Fédération québécoise des sports cyclistes. The awards included a plaque for international organization of the year, won by the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup in St-Félicien, and an award for professional female athlete of the year, won by Josée Tremblay, from the Vélo2Max club in St-Félicien.

And in the artist category, Pascal Côté, conductor of Forestare and a native of Roberval, won the Félix award presented at the ADISQ Autre Gala for instrumental album of the year.

Congratulations to these constituents of mine, who represent our lovely part of the country beyond its borders.

* * *

[*English*]

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to have the opportunity to honour Canada's veterans as Remembrance Day will be upon us. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifices made by the men and women who have served our country so honourably. It is a time to honour those who have served before and those who continue to serve.

This year I had the opportunity to train with the Canadian army in Wainwright, Alberta. I saw the fierce commitment and the extreme dedication that our armed forces have for their jobs and to this country. It is for this reason I stand today to recognize their contribution.

Kenora riding has a proud tradition of sending soldiers and remembering their sacrifices. From Red Lake to Kenora, from Sioux Lookout to Dryden, our communities will gather at their cenotaphs on this day of remembrance.

Many communities in the north remember the important contribution aboriginal veterans have made to our country. It has been estimated that over 12,000 aboriginal people have served in world wars and peacekeeping missions throughout the world.

Our men and women in uniform make us proud. We have not forgotten. We will not forget.

* * *

[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Raymond Gravel (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to congratulate Ms. Armande Henri Amireault of Épiphanie in the Lanaudière region, who was named female farmer of the year at the Fédération des agricultrices du Québec's Saturne gala on October 20.

Armande Henri Amireault worked in the agricultural sector for over 40 years. Together with her husband, Yvon Amireault, she operated a mixed farm that included dairy, poultry, pork and field crops. Their two sons, Christian and Marc, have now taken over the farm work.

The award for young female farmer was given to Chantale Lalancette of Hébertville in the Lac-Saint-Jean region. Sylvie Lévesque of Saint-Denis-de-la-Butteillerie on the South Shore won the 2007 female farmer entrepreneur award. Last, but not least, the dedicated female farmer award went to Martine Laverdière of Armagh in the Bellechasse region.

Congratulations to all of these women who are passionate about working the land.

*Statements by Members**[English]***AMABILE YOUTH SINGERS**

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Amabile Youth Singers is a community choir from London and area comprised of 67 choristers from ages 13 to 22.

This accomplished choir has won the CBC national choral competition consistently since 1986. As well, it has won several international choral competitions in Europe, including winning two gold medals at the Choral Olympics in Bremen, Germany in 2004.

As a result of its international acclaim, the choir was invited guests of the Finnish government in September 2007 to participate in the prestigious Sympaatti Festival in Helsinki, Finland.

The choir's performances and workshops received standing ovations and high praise.

My sincere thanks to Lauren Toll, John Barron, Brenda Zadorski and the Amabile Youth Singers for representing our country and showing the world the talent that exists in Canada. Congratulations to all.

* * *

REMEMBRANCE WEEK

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, throughout Canadian history, Canadians have been on the front lines fighting for freedom and democracy. The sacrifices and bravery shown by Canadians is legendary, and we will never forget or take for granted the gift of liberty that they have given to us. Far too many have given the greatest gift of all, the gift of an unfinished life.

Remembrance Week is very important to this country. It is when we take a moment to honour those Canadians who have served and who are currently serving in the name of freedom, peace and democracy throughout the world. Fifty-nine of my constituents are currently serving Canada abroad, and I am very proud of their service, as are all members of the House.

As the annual parade passes by, we see the stalwart veterans marching straight and dignified.

We will never forget.

* * *

• (1105)

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, next week on November 11 Canadians from coast to coast to coast will pay tribute to our valiant veterans who fought and died to preserve our freedom, our rights and our democracy.

It is also important for all of us to offer our thoughts for our soldiers who continue to fight today. They are the brave men and women of the Canadian Forces, our veterans of tomorrow.

From Afghanistan to Bosnia, Haiti to the Golan Heights, Sierra Leone to Sudan, our soldiers serve with courage and distinction. Their sacrifice stands as a continuing reminder that Canada recognizes its responsibility to protect and will always stand on

guard for the principles and ideals that our country and our citizens cherish.

As we prepare to mark Remembrance Day, I know all members of the House will join with me in paying tribute to those men and women who continue to wear the uniform of the Canadian Forces and to remember the huge sacrifice of those who have led the way.

We will remember them.

* * *

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as Remembrance Day approaches, I am reminded that this year Remembrance Day will hold particular importance in my riding of Macleod.

On September 24 of this year, Corporal Nathan Hornburg was killed in action in Afghanistan. Corporal Hornburg had very strong ties to the riding of Macleod. His mother, Linda Loree, resides in Nanton and his family has farmed in the area for many years.

As a reservist in the King's Own Calgary Regiment, Corporal Hornburg believed that service in Canada's military to bring security to Afghanistan was the right thing to do. It is my hope that all my colleagues in the House of Commons will honour the memory of this soldier and the memory of every soldier who has worked to defend our values and protect those whose fortune does not guarantee their rights this coming Remembrance Day.

Remembering the sacrifices that Canada's brave soldiers have made in past wars and in current conflicts is important for all Canadians who enjoy freedom, safety and security granted by their efforts.

Lest we forget.

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*[Translation]***MANUFACTURING SECTOR**

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I recently learned about the imminent closure of the Basell plant in Varennes. This closure will result in the loss of about 100 high paying jobs and will certainly have a negative impact on many of the activities of the chemical industrial park.

Yet, the Conservatives prefer to turn a blind eye to these job losses, just as they turned a blind eye to the tens of thousands of jobs that have already been lost in the Quebec manufacturing sector.

Indeed, Tuesday's economic statement gives a very clear indication of the crisis facing the manufacturing sector. Thus, it is with full knowledge of the facts that the Conservatives chose to ignore our manufacturing industry's difficulties. Yet, the Minister of Finance knew he could count on a cushion of over \$100 billion over the next five years.

Meanwhile, the list of jobs lost continues to grow. Superficial measures are no longer enough. It is offensive to see the gifts being handed to banks and oil companies. Urgent action is needed immediately, not six months from now.

Statements by Members

[English]

SKILLED TRADES

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Skilled Trades Day in Canada. On November 5, Skills Canada will raise awareness through events across the country emphasizing that skilled trades offer rewarding careers for Canadians.

In the days that follow, I would encourage Canadians to take part in community activities and learn more about the skilled trades. We are committed to helping Canadians thrive in skilled trades. Our government has taken concrete steps through new initiatives, such as an apprenticeship incentive grant, an apprenticeship job creation tax credit, and a tradespeople tool tax deduction.

I would also like to inform the House that 29 talented Canadians will be representing Canada at the WorldSkills Competition in Japan from November 10 to 21. I would like to wish them the best of luck. We are also looking forward to Canada hosting the WorldSkills Competition in Calgary in 2009.

Finally, I would like to thank Skills Canada for helping us all focus on the fundamental role of the skilled trades in building a strong future for our country.

* * *

[Translation]

SILVER CROSS MOTHERS

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, next week, Canadians will mark Remembrance Day. We will remember those who made the supreme sacrifice, and we will also remember the mothers of those who lost their lives in the service of their country.

This year's Silver Cross Mother is Wilhelmina Beerenfenger-Koehler of Embrun, Ontario. Mrs. Beerenfenger-Koehler will lay a wreath of flowers at the National War Memorial on behalf of all mothers who children died while serving in the Canadian Forces or the merchant marine.

She will no doubt be thinking of her son Robbie, who was killed on October 2, 2003 while on patrol near Kabul, Afghanistan. Our thoughts are with her.

The role of Silver Cross Mother is an honour, but also a burden.

On behalf of my friends in all the parties in this House, I express our sincere condolences and our eternal gratitude to Mrs. Beerenfenger-Koehler and all the mothers who share her burden.

* * *

● (1110)

[English]

ECONOMIC STATEMENT

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, citizens of Brandon—Souris and throughout Canada will have more money in their pockets as a result of our government's fall economic statement, wherein we provided a historic tax relief package.

Since coming to office 21 months ago, we have reduced the tax burden of Canadians by \$190 billion, and that is billion, not million.

Our fall economic statement provides an additional \$60 billion in broad based tax relief over this and the next five years for individuals, families and businesses. This includes reducing the GST to 5%, as promised. This includes cutting personal income taxes as well as cutting business taxes over the next five years.

These measures are in stark contrast to the policy flip-flop of the Liberal Party, which used to be in favour of eliminating the GST but is now saying it would raise it.

Once again Canadians have a clear choice: weak leadership and higher taxes with the Liberal Party or strong leadership and lower taxes with the Conservative Party of Canada.

* * *

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARDS

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of being present at the Governor General's residence this morning to witness one of my constituents, Rose Fine-Meyer, receive the Governor General's award for excellence in teaching Canadian history.

She created an interdisciplinary studies course entitled "Archives and Local History". It is accredited as part of the Ontario curriculum and couples an understanding of primary historical documents with first-hand research of communities and local history as they stand today.

This teacher being honoured today discovered that historical documents from World War I are not being scanned and housed electronically for safety. Rather, these old documents are being left to crumble with age. These precious documents tell the stories of many brave Canadians who gave their lives for this country.

We need to preserve the memory of our veterans and their sacrifices so that we can pass it on to our children like Ms. Fine-Meyer has done for so many years at Humber College.

The government needs to take urgent action so that our veterans' stories and the sacrifices of the past can serve as a lesson for future generations of Canadians.

* * *

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last Remembrance Day, 28 young Canadians serving in Afghanistan were among those who stood to honour fallen friends and a century of sacrifice by our nation's veterans.

This Remembrance Day, they are among those we pause to remember. They are among the more than 116,000 Canadians who have given their lives in the wars of their time so we could have peace in our time.

In their silent moment on November 11, Canadians should reflect on the price of the peace that surrounds them and remember that every year lived in freedom is a year owed to a veteran.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTERCULTURALISM

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the second annual Intercultural Week will be held in my riding of Vaudreuil-Soulanges from November 5 to 10, with the theme "Discover the colours of the world". It is with pleasure and great pride that I will be the honorary chair of this event.

Everyone has been working hard to provide workshops and highlight the contribution of immigrants in the region.

This week provides an opportunity to celebrate Quebec culture, to heighten awareness of a multitude of issues related to increasing cultural diversity, and to learn more about different cultures. Together, we will highlight the Quebec model of integration which hinges on interculturalism.

We want to share the best of ourselves to help new immigrants integrate into our beautiful region.

* * *

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Remembrance Day is a time to acknowledge the courage and determination of the men and women who have served our country with such dedication throughout its history.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask everyone to strive to preserve the peace for which they gave their lives.

Lest we forget, wars have often had a terrible impact on the Canadians who have taken part in them. People of all ages and backgrounds have lost their lives or been injured on the battlefield.

And many who have come back from the front have not returned unscathed. Everywhere they have served, abroad or here in Canada, veterans have answered the call to serve their country.

In remembering all those who have served in wartime, we recognize the many people who suffered for us so that we could live here in peace.

We thank them from the bottom of our hearts. Let us never forget.

* * *

• (1115)

[*English*]

ECONOMIC STATEMENT

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tax man cometh.

Yes, that is still true, but the good news is that he will not get nearly as much as he did when we had a Liberal government across the floor.

Oral Questions

The tax relief people felt when they filled out their 2006 tax forms was noticed and appreciated, but the tax refund my constituents will get when they fill out their 2007 tax forms will be a pleasant change indeed.

In fact, the Conservative government will leave \$190 billion in the pockets of hard-working Canadians over the next five years.

What was the Liberal response? The Conservative—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired. We will go to oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

AIRBUS

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear about this. Had the RCMP known in 1997 that Mr. Mulroney received \$300,000 in cash from Karlheinz Schreiber, Canadian taxpayers would not have had to pay Mr. Mulroney \$2 million.

The government must act on this troubling new information about Mr. Mulroney.

What is it waiting for? Will it call a public inquiry immediately?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have shown that they do not mind making serious accusations related to this issue in the House. However, outside the House, they did not mind telling journalists that they had "no evidence of any wrongdoing". I am quoting the member who asked the questions. He is the one who admitted that.

That says a lot about how the Liberal Party works. That is how the Liberals have dealt with everything in the House over the past few weeks. No honourable, respectable Canadian would expect that kind of behaviour from his or her elected representative.

[*English*]

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know this is very difficult for the Conservatives. Many of them are close personal friends of Mr. Mulroney. Some even served in his government. But that does not excuse the government from taking immediate action to clear up this matter.

Until it opens a full public inquiry, will the government immediately order the Canada Revenue Agency to investigate whether Mr. Mulroney declared the \$100,000 in cash when he returned to Canada from New York, as Canadian law requires?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat in English that on this issue the Liberals have shown they are quite content to come into the House and launch smears and accusations and then go outside the House and declare quite happily, as the member himself did, that they have "no evidence of wrongdoing". That is what he said.

Oral Questions

That tells us everything we need to know about how that Liberal Party operates. It is the same way that it has been operating throughout the past few weeks in the House and it is conduct that really is unbecoming of any elected member of Parliament.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what are they afraid of? If everything was above board, the government would be trying to help Mr. Mulroney restore his reputation. We must not forget that Mr. Schreiber also has friends in the current government. After all, the Minister of National Defence used to work for Mr. Schreiber.

Maybe the Conservatives do not want anyone to find out the whole truth. Why not call a public inquiry immediately?

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Because, Mr. Speaker, the last time those folks raised this issue it cost Canadian taxpayers \$2 million for false accusations. That is what they had to pay.

If they are in the business of wanting us to launch politically inspired inquiries, I was thinking there are some things we could do. We could continue to try looking for that \$40 million. That could be a special inquiry. Perhaps Shawinigate and that golf course could use a special inquiry. Perhaps the HRDC billion dollar scandal could use an inquiry. Perhaps the millions of taxpayers' dollars that went to Canada Steamship Lines are worth a public inquiry.

• (1120)

Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the government wants this Mulroney cash payment issue to simply disappear. Is it concerned that members of the current government could be drawn into a public inquiry?

Paul Terrien, who was with Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Schreiber in that infamous hotel in Switzerland, now serves as the transport minister's chief of staff. Faced with this new and disturbing information, the government must act.

Can the transport minister say what role his chief of staff played in the exchange of money between Mr. Schreiber and Mr. Mulroney?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am astonished that those members continue this line of questioning. They have decided to pursue it as a political vendetta from when they were in government. It cost Canadian taxpayers \$2 million. It was a settlement they entered into, not this government. Their government entered into that settlement to deal with the fact that they were pursuing false accusations.

Now they want us to pursue those false accusations.

Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week we found out that Brian Mulroney received \$300,000 from Karlheinz Schreiber in 1993. This is a fact that has been covered up for over a decade. Clearly the Department of Justice did not have all of these facts when it recommended a \$2 million settlement with Brian Mulroney in 1995.

Now we have the facts. Will the government instruct the Department of Justice to get taxpayers' money back from Mr. Mulroney?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will make the same point again.

It was the previous Liberal government that launched a political vendetta against one of its enemies and it had to pay the price for it. However, it was not the Liberals who paid the price for it. The Canadian taxpayers paid for it.

I invite the Liberals, if they want to pursue it again, to go outside the House and this time they can pay the price, instead of Canadian taxpayers, for making false accusations.

* * *

[*Translation*]

JUSTICE

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety justified his decision to not seek clemency for Ronald Allen Smith, a Canadian sentenced to death in the United States for murder, on the grounds that he was convicted by a democratic country. Yet, Canada refuses to deport refugees to their country of origin, whether or not the countries are democratic, if they risk facing the death penalty.

How can the Minister of Public Safety reject the same criterion when Canadian citizens, even if they have received a criminal conviction, are facing death in another country, although the death penalty was abolished in Canada some time ago?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, murderers who have been found guilty in a democratic country and convicted based on the rule of law are not brought back to Canada. To do so would send the wrong message.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this case calls to mind that of Stan Faulder, a Canadian executed in Texas in 1999. At the time, seeking to counter Canada's efforts, a Reform member even went to Texas to support the death penalty. The governor who rejected Canada's request for clemency was none other than George W. Bush.

Can the minister tell us if his real reason for not seeking clemency for Ronald Allen Smith, having his sentence commuted to life in prison, is because he does not want to bother his good friend Bush?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's policy is to get tough on crime. Murderers who have been convicted in a democratic country will not be brought back to Canada.

*Oral Questions***400TH ANNIVERSARY OF QUEBEC CITY**

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while Quebec City is preparing to celebrate its 400th anniversary and going all out to welcome visitors from throughout Quebec and around the world, a radio station is waging an advertising campaign that is aimed at dividing the people and is sulling the 400th anniversary celebrations.

How can the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who is responsible for the 400th anniversary, convince us that she is doing everything she can to make the festivities a success when the family business run by her spouse is running ads that denigrate the celebrations?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noticed that in his question, my hon. colleague did not mention the ethics declaration or the fact that the minister has complied with all the guidelines, does not hold shares in the company and so on. That said, I believe he will agree with me. He did not raise that issue.

However, he wants to know what the Government of Canada is doing to support the 400th anniversary celebrations. In fact, we are investing over \$100 million in these events. We are well aware that Quebec City is the place where Canada was literally born. Canada was born in French, and we celebrate that, my dear colleague.

• (1125)

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister should perhaps read the *Journal de Montréal*, the newspaper most Quebecers read. On August 17, the minister stated that “a way to connect with the people had to be found quickly” to get all of them on board and involved in the 400th anniversary celebrations.

Does the Minister of Canadian Heritage recognize that the smear campaign of advertising produced by her family business is not the ideal way to connect with the people?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, and all the members who were elected in greater Quebec City and clearly support our government's policies, are not only here to represent their constituents' and taxpayers' interests, they are also voices within our caucus and our government that celebrate the 400th anniversary of Quebec City.

We are proud of the 400th anniversary of Quebec City and its region.

* * *

[English]

ECONOMIC STATEMENT

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we lost 3,500 manufacturing jobs in October and over 63,000 in the past year. The government is overseeing the gutting of Canada's manufacturing sector and it will only get worse because the Liberals have rolled over and endorsed the corporate tax giveaway.

Why is it that the government has billions for corporate tax cuts but nothing for those families who have lost their jobs? Why did the minister forget Canadian workers and their families in his mini-budget? Why were they left behind?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to actually tell this House about the good news we have for Canadians who have lost their jobs, it is called “jobs”. Since this government took office, 655,000 new jobs have been created. More Canadians are working now than ever in Canadian history.

In fact, when the Liberals were in government in 2005, the unemployment rate was 6.8% and today it stands at 5.8%. That is progress for giving Canadians the jobs they need.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the minister conveniently ignored that we have lost over 300,000 manufacturing jobs in this country. Why does he not address that?

The minister knows full well that tax cuts do not build affordable housing. Corporate tax cuts do not create child care spaces. Corporate tax cuts do not create jobs. They create wealth for CEOs and rich investors.

Could the minister tell us just how many jobs will be created by giving \$7 billion in corporate tax breaks to the banks and to big oil? Where are those jobs going to come from? They will not come from his corporate tax breaks, that is for sure.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, it looks like cutting the GST does create jobs. We cut it 1% and we got 655,000 new jobs. If the member wants to know how many more, we cut the GST 1% again so I guess that means another 655,000 new jobs. Why? It is because Canadians have more dollars in their pockets to buy cars so that auto workers have jobs, to buy furniture so that furniture manufacturers have jobs and to buy food so that farmers have jobs.

Guess what? Everybody does better when they have more money in their pockets. That is why we are cutting taxes for everyone.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Justice tell Canadians whether the government opposes the death penalty?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the law is clear on that in Canada.

Oral Questions

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister's opinion but we already know what it is. The Minister of Justice declared in this House, "Capital punishment is necessary to restore public respect for the criminal justice system".

We know the Minister of Public Safety supports the death penalty, even for young offenders. Why are these ministers trying to make their personal views government policy when it comes to foreign executions?

• (1130)

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, the law is clear on this in Canada.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence said this about the death penalty, "I believe personally the option should be there".

Now we learn that Canada will not protest the use of the death penalty on Canadian citizens by foreign governments, this despite the fact that even democratic countries like Canada have had wrongful convictions, notably the Marshall, Milgaard, Morin and Truscott cases.

Is the former foreign affairs minister responsible for imposing his personal view when it comes to the execution of Canadians by foreign governments?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will not actively seek to bring murderers back to Canada after they have been convicted in a democratic country and sentenced under the rule of law. There is no death penalty in Canada, however, people should be held responsible for their crimes in other democratic jurisdictions. We will not interfere with their process when there has been a fair trial.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The issue before the House is a serious one and there are questions and there are answers and there is no need for all the yelling.

The hon. member for Halifax West.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is not what I asked.

[*Translation*]

If Canada's position is not consistent with respect to all countries, Canada will lose all credibility with those where the death penalty is applied systematically, like China.

On the same day when the government is turning its back on the execution of our citizens in foreign countries, the Canadian government is supporting an international motion at the United Nations for a moratorium on the death penalty.

Why is the government doing one thing and saying another?

[*English*]

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have already indicated, we will not actively seek to bring murderers back to

Canada after they have been convicted in a democratic country and sentenced under the rule of law.

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[*Translation*]

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Premiers Charest and McGuinty, together with the Bloc Québécois and the unions, are denouncing the government's lack of resolve and are calling for effective aid for the manufacturing industry. I would like to remind the House that the Conservatives have had in their hands since February 2007, the unanimous report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, which proposes 22 recommendations to help the manufacturing sector.

What is the minister waiting for to take action and support the manufacturing sector instead of the banks and the oil industry?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to remind the House that the president of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters has commended the economic update saying that it will create an interesting fiscal environment that will attract and retain investment in Canada.

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are not going to find solutions by burying our heads in the sand.

A few months ago, the Kruger company in my riding announced that 1,000 jobs would be temporarily cut. Yesterday, 180 jobs were added to the list. The Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec can claim all he wants that, as a general rule, the Prime Minister keeps his election promises, but to every rule there are exceptions and now the manufacturing sector is suffering because of the Prime Minister's inaction.

Does the minister realize that the manufacturing sector and its workers have been dying because of the Conservatives' broken promises since the last election?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I understand the concern of the people in the Bloc Québécois member's riding, after 17 years of his political party's inability to resolve a single problem in his region.

It is clear to us that only strong leadership could help these people in difficulty. We have that within our government.

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, on the airwaves in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, the Minister of Labour declared that the employment level that existed at Alcan would be maintained for the next three years, despite the sale to Rio Tinto. However, a senior management spokesperson from Rio Tinto Alcan would not confirm the minister's claims to workers' unions.

If the management of Rio Tinto refuses to confirm what the Minister of Labour said, can he tell us where he got the information?

Oral Questions

• (1135)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Australia, France, Quebec and Canada approved the Rio Tinto transaction. Rio Tinto has promised to uphold the same commitments as Alcan.

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of Labour must realize is that over the next three years, more than 600 workers will retire, not counting the 300 who will leave this year.

Since the level of employment is very important to the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region, can the minister guarantee today to the employees of Rio Tinto Alcan that it will be maintained for the next three years?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, the Bloc is in favour of having the federal government help the manufacturing and forestry industries in Quebec. But the leader of the Bloc voted against the economic statement and the Speech from the Throne; the Bloc voted against the workers of Quebec.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the death penalty carried out in other countries, the government has attempted to respond to those questions by suggesting that the questions imply that the accused person in another country would be brought back to Canada. That is not the question. No one is suggesting that the accused be brought back to Canada. The issue is the commutation of the sentence in the other country.

Will the government reinstate the long-standing policy of the Department of Foreign Affairs to seek commutation in the other country?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no death penalty in Canada. However, people should be held responsible for their crimes in other democratic jurisdictions.

We will not interfere with their processes when there has been a fair trial.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a variety of issues have arisen in respect of Canadians in Mexico and the judicial system of Mexico in the last couple of years. Will the government say, in terms of its privileged list of countries around the world, and apparently the United States in on that list, if Mexico is also on that list?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously there is a need to evaluate things on a case by case basis. I know the individual, for whom the Liberal Party is standing up these days, is an individual who 25 years ago was convicted of a double murder, two cold-blooded shots in the back of the head, to which he has openly admitted. I cannot imagine why the Liberals want him back in Canada.

[Translation]

MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE, STATUS OF WOMEN AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages is responsible for the Quebec region and Quebec City's 400th anniversary celebrations. Consequently she must promote the celebrations and manage the federal contribution. She has disclosed that she is the co-owner, together with her spouse, of LXB Communication Marketing, which just rolled out some despicable advertising against the 400th anniversary celebrations. The phrase "The 400th anniversary, it's sick" is placed next to a vomiting emoticon.

Will the minister cut all ties with LXB Communication Marketing?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages, had the opportunity to answer all these questions in this House yesterday. It is very clear that beyond the steps taken by the preceding government, this government assumes its responsibilities with regard to promoting the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City.

We have invested more than \$110 million in this program and we are certain that Quebec City, as the founding city of Canada, will have a spectacular celebration recognized not only throughout the country but worldwide.

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, LXB Communication Marketing is not satisfied with spewing its venom at Quebec City alone. In another ad from the same advertising campaign, the minister's agency gives Montreal the finger.

Does the minister use as much judgment in managing the Department of Canadian Heritage as she does with her communications agency?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows very well that the minister does not have any ties to this company. In addition, our colleague also knows very well that it is not the communications company that pays for this advertising but the radio station. This station has paid for advertising with questionable humour. However, we do live in a society where this is permitted.

This does not prevent my colleague and all the members from believing—

• (1140)

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lethbridge.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the recent news of layoffs in the auto manufacturing sector has Canadians concerned. Layoffs like these create real challenges for the workers and their families involved.

Oral Questions

While not understating the challenges facing the manufacturing sector, the overall Canadian economy remains strong. Today's employment figures reinforce that.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance update the House on Canada's employment picture?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while we are very concerned and taking action to support the manufacturing sector, today's employment figures confirm Canada's economy remains strong. Sixty-three thousand jobs were created in October. Employment is at a record high. Unemployment is at its lowest level since 1974.

Since we took office, over 655,000 new jobs have been created right across Canada, and full time jobs account for nearly 80% of these gains.

As a CIBC report said this week, "not only is job creation—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

* * *

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the mini budget's corporate tax cuts take Canada in absolutely the wrong direction. The headlines make it plain and clear, "Chrysler eliminates jobs in Ontario, more job loss expected".

The mini budget will make things worse for manufacturing. The oil and gas sector is driving the dollar higher. The higher the dollar goes, the harder it is for manufacturers.

Why did the minister choose to ignore our manufacturers and instead make things worse by helping his friends in the banks and the oil and gas sector?

Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that it is not easy for any Canadian who loses a job. This government shares the concerns of these individuals.

There is a range of government programs available to help people make a transition to another job. As other members have stated, the good news is there is a very hot job market for these individuals.

In addition to that, we brought in a number of measures to assist the industry. I can provide a list, though I am sure the Speaker will call me to account before I do that. We are very much involved in this, engaged in this, and we will continue to assist the industry.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government is sleepwalking through a crisis.

The Prime Minister has admitted that the manufacturing sector is "in crisis", but he will not do anything about it. Canadian auto executives have already told me that these corporate tax cuts will not help them because they are not in a profitable situation right now.

There are 1,100 good Chrysler jobs in the Brampton area gone. These are young people with families to support and mortgages to pay. For every one of their jobs, another three jobs in the auto parts sector will be lost.

Now that the government has finally acknowledged the crisis, how long will it take it to address it?

Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP is a little over the top on this. In fact, the government has taken substantial measures to prepare the industry through this and continues to do that.

We have made enormous investments in skills and training. We have made a historic \$33 billion investment in critical infrastructure and border crossings. We have given a substantial economic lift to all companies through substantial tax reductions. In fact, billions in new investments are being attracted to Canada by other auto companies.

There is opportunity to move from—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Halton.

* * *

INCOME TRUSTS

Hon. Garth Turner (Halton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, luxury car dealers in my area would like to thank the Minister of Finance because each buyer of a new Mercedes will now save about \$1,000 in GST. However, Dave Marshall, who is a retired truck driver, and his wife Lorraine will not be buying a Mercedes any time soon. They lost \$190,000 when the same Minister of Finance decimated their savings.

Will the minister explain to the Marshalls how long it will take, at \$13 a month in GST savings, to get that nest egg back?

• (1145)

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would see the day that the member for Halton would stand in the House of Commons and attack the concept of tax cuts, but his conversion apparently is complete.

Perhaps that is why he will not keep his own promise when he said, "I think anyone who crosses the floor should go back to the people for ratification". It has not happened yet. In fact, he is so afraid, it seems to have passed on to the whole caucus that is willing to sit on its hands to never face the voters again.

Hon. Garth Turner (Halton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the Marshalls will be very unhappy with that response, as all Canadians should.

When the Minister of Finance in his mini budget attacked income trusts, he said that he would lower taxes for pensioners on pension splitting, but 70% of Canadian pensioners do not have a pension to split.

Oral Questions

I am going to ask the minister this. How long is it going to take to restore \$190,000 in lost income trust savings because the government brought the income tax rate back down half a point to where it was two years ago? Let us have an answer this time.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the member finally goes back to the voters, as he promised, he can explain why he voted for that pension income splitting and why he voted for the income trust measures that we put in place.

I hear he is among those Liberals who are unhappy with their leadership's approach these days and I hear they going to do something about it. They are going to the Liberal leader's office to register their dissatisfaction in a way only the Liberal leader will understand. They are going to stage a sit-in.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thanks to the good fiscal management of previous Liberal governments, the new government is swimming in cash. Yet, while the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food describes the potential of the Atlantic beef plant, the only federally inspected plant in Atlantic Canada, he fails to deliver any financial support.

Atlantic ministers and livestock producers are calling for support now, today. When will the minister deliver his financial support to seize the opportunity that exists for the Atlantic beef industry?

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Secretary of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is well aware of everything that has been done to open up the markets for beef. Money has been transferred and agreements have been signed with the provinces. Eighty million dollars has been allocated to help the provinces move forward in this area. We have taken action, and this program will help the Atlantic provinces and all of the other provinces.

[English]

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, markets are at below the cost of production. How can the minister respond with such a callous disregard for Atlantic Canadian producers, producers who put high quality food on Canadian tables?

While our American counterparts support their industry, the new government will allow our beef industry to disintegrate before its very eyes.

Why is the new government putting Canada's food security at risk? With a government swimming in cash, how can the minister do nothing for slaughter plants, for producers and for our national food security? Why is he failing our country?

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Secretary of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague can go ahead and get worked up if he wants to, but we have taken action, and he knows that the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food is in talks with the sector.

[English]

One thing is sure. There were several measures in our throne speech. We spoke about going forward. We spoke about choice of marketing. We spoke about supply management. We spoke about biofuel incentives.

At least I can thank the member and his party for endorsing the throne speech last week by sitting on their asses—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Christian Paradis: —by abstention, I mean. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: I presume the hon. member meant hands, otherwise he would have been saying something unparliamentary.

The hon. member for Jeanne-Le Ber.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the sale of contraband cigarettes is once again in full swing. According to a number of studies, illegal products account for one-quarter of the market in Quebec and Ontario, and the federal and provincial governments are losing \$1.6 billion in tax revenues per year. Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada has determined that the lower cost of illegal cigarettes threatens progress in the fight against tobacco addiction, particularly among young people.

Is the Minister of Public Safety ready to demand that the RCMP to do its job and put an end to cigarette smuggling?

• (1150)

[English]

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members know, we have put additional funds into the border services. We are looking at ways and means to stop all contraband coming into the country. It is a serious issue and the minister certainly is well aware of it and is working toward an end to it.

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary did not answer the question.

We want the RCMP to do everything in its power under the law to put an end to the sale of contraband cigarettes. For example, it could impound vehicles belonging to people who buy cigarettes from the many illegal outlets in Canada, not across the border. That way, it could act on supply as well as demand.

Can the minister ensure that the RCMP will use all measures at its disposal?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has brought up something that is very illegal, seizing vehicles from people who are legitimately driving down the road. I have no way of knowing how he would know who has what in their vehicle.

We are well aware of the situation and steps are being taken.

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GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the in and out scheme is not the first time the Prime Minister has had an issue with campaign spending limits.

When the Prime Minister was the head of the National Citizens Coalition, he tried to break third party spending limits under the Canada Elections Act, but lost to two groups that were helped in their fight against him by the court challenges program.

Why is the Prime Minister holding official language and other minorities hostage to his emotional need for revenge?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is a ridiculous question from the hon. member.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The official opposition has asked a question of the government and the government is trying to respond.

The Minister of Justice.

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Actually, I was just corrected by my colleague, Mr. Speaker. He says that all their questions today have been ridiculous.

This government has been straightforward in its commitment to support minority language rights in the country. We stand on our record.

* * *

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Future Group called on our government to take concrete steps to address the issue of human trafficking in light of the upcoming 2010 Winter Olympics.

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration please inform the House what steps we have taken to address the issue of human trafficking while assisting the victims of these terrible crimes?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is taking real action to address human trafficking and to prevent the exploitation of women and children.

We have taken several initiatives, including a series of changes to the immigration guidelines that would address the unique needs of victims of human trafficking.

Yesterday, we reintroduced Bill C-17, legislation to help prevent the exploitation and abuse of foreign nationals seeking to work in Canada.

I would urge all members of the House to put aside their partisan ways, to do the right thing, get behind Bill C-17 and support it.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a six metre hole in the heart of downtown London. This hole left thousands of workers unable to work, including many federal employees. The power was out for more than 10 hours. The end result for many businesses is hundreds of thousands of dollars of lost revenue. That is the reality.

Will the minister provide the infrastructure money needed for London and the thousands of cities across this country whose streets are literally crumbling?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague raises a specific issue. That enables me to indicate that in budget 2006 and in budget 2007 we increased not the transfer payments but the amounts of money for infrastructure in this country.

We increased the gas tax to make it go until 2014. We increased and made more money available for building Canada. More recently, we were in the London area where we committed over \$40 million to help people get clean water.

The government is acting where the previous government did not.

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, clearly money is needed now. There is a giant hole in the middle of downtown London. The Finance Minister's unbalanced mini-budget on Wednesday clearly stated cuts to spending, a \$90 billion cut in funding capacity.

What we need is investment in our cities and in ordinary Canadians, and not big tax cuts for oil and gas. Crumbling infrastructure will hinder economic growth, not strengthen it.

Will the minister invest in our cities today, or will the government leave Canadians dodging holes?

● (1155)

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of the \$33 billion unprecedented investments, how much is going to municipalities and communities across this country? It is \$17 billion. That is what we are committed to do for our municipalities.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a statement to the United Nations in May 2006, this government held up the Kelowna agreement as a shining example of partnerships between government and aboriginal organizations.

Oral Questions

At the same time, the same government was killing the Kelowna accord and wiping out \$5.1 billion in funding. Boasting on the world stage about a cancelled initiative is the ultimate in hypocrisy.

Will the minister explain why Canada misled the United Nations?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question because it gives me an opportunity to talk about what our government is interested in doing.

Unlike that press release the hon. member speaks of, which the former government put forward in its dying days, we are interested in systemic reform.

This is the most important thing that faces first nations people throughout Canada, improving the very system that unfortunately keeps first nations people from being able to take advantage of all the economic benefits in Canada.

I hope the member is actually interested in helping us in another systemic reform, which is extending the Canadian Human Rights Act to first nations people. I hope she changes her ways and decides to support us in this reform.

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the one that needs to change its ways is the government over there.

In the same statement to the UN, the Canadian delegation boasted “—an active role in the negotiations of a UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. Instead of working to pass this historic accord, Canada actually voted against it, embarrassingly putting us offside with the world community.

Can the minister tell the House why the government delivered a further grossly misleading statement to the United Nations?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have actually been quite clear in relation to the UN draft declaration. It is something that we did not support because we believe that Canada actually is one of the most progressive countries in the world, in terms of acknowledging aboriginal people. They are right in our charter.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms acknowledges first nations people, Métis people and Inuit people. This ambiguous agreement actually does not impact aboriginal people in Canada like extending the Canadian Human Rights Act would. This is something that this member is against and is not supporting.

Hopefully, we will bring forward Bill C-44 very soon and hopefully she will support it this time.

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[Translation]

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Minister of Natural Resources stated that any decision regarding nuclear energy was strictly a provincial responsibility. This is not true. Atomic Energy of Canada comes

under the federal government, as do nuclear safety and management of nuclear waste.

I want to ask the Minister of Natural Resources this again: why, at all costs, promote nuclear energy, which poses serious problems with regard to waste, when he could put more effort into developing his expertise in safer, more cutting-edge forms of energy that also do not produce greenhouse gases?

[English]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the minister said the other day, it will be up to the provinces to determine their own energy mixes. We will be there to support them.

The other day, during the debate on the nuclear liability bill, the member's own colleagues talked about the fact that nuclear power will be here and will be expanding.

So, purely from an environmental point of view, we have to consider it as a clean, emissions free technology. It strengthens Canada's energy security to have a fully diversified energy mix. This is a smart policy for Canada.

* * *

● (1200)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week's Auditor General's report on the Inuvialuit land claim, the third in a series, shows that no matter whether it is the Conservatives or Liberals, they are missing in protecting and developing the north. Right across the north, failure to implement claims has dragged down the progress of aboriginal people and the north.

The Auditor General's call for a strategic approach to building the north is important. So far, the government has taken an ad hoc militaristic approach.

How can northerners believe that anything will change with this Conservative government?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my hon. colleague that our government has obviously looked at this report from the Auditor General quite closely. We are working toward progress with the Inuvialuit, and in this region, we are also assisted by the Government of the Northwest Territories and the regional bodies as well.

However, I would like to acknowledge that not since Prime Minister Diefenbaker has there been a prime minister that has been so interested and supportive of the north. I would like to commend our Prime Minister for all the action he has taken on behalf of northern communities.

*Routine Proceedings***JOB CREATION**

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our economy in Canada is booming under the leadership of our Prime Minister and this government. In my riding I know that jobs have been created, yet in the construction industry some contractors are having a tough time actually getting enough employees to fill these jobs.

I would like the minister to tell me, first, what have we done in creating jobs and what will we continue—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I had mentioned earlier, we have actually seen an increase of 63,000 jobs in October alone. I would like to raise the point that 32,000 of these were in Ontario. It is unfortunate that some Ontarians have lost their jobs, but there were 32,000 new jobs in Ontario alone.

The Deputy Speaker: That brings question period to a close. I am quite sure hon. members will return after the break in a quieter mood.

On a point of order, the hon. member for West Nova.

* * *

[*Translation*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during question period, the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities provided information that should perhaps be corrected, and I invite him to consider doing so.

He referred to the 400th anniversary celebrations for Quebec City as the 400th anniversary celebrations for Canada as well. We know that the 400th anniversary of the arrival of francophones in Saint Croix, New Brunswick, and Port Royal, Nova Scotia, was celebrated in 2004 and 2005. Many of our Quebec friends celebrated with us and many Acadians will join the people of Quebec City to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of that city.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: I am not sure that was a point of order, but it seems to have been well received.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACTS

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table, in both official languages, two annual reports.

First, I would like to table the 2006-07 annual report on the administration of the Privacy and Access to Information Acts within the Department of Justice.

COURTS ADMINISTRATION SERVICE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, second, I would like to table the Courts Administration Service annual report for 2006-07.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) of the House of Commons, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development entitled "Advancing Canada's Role In International Support For Democratic Development".

[*Translation*]

In the Speech from the Throne delivered on October 16, the current government clearly expressed the fact that Canada's international relations are guided by our shared values of democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law. In order to overcome the current obstacles to democracies, the current government will do more to support democracy.

It is therefore my pleasure to table this report.

* * *

● (1205)

[*English*]

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-18, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (verification of residence).

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

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs concerning committee memberships of the House, and I should like to move concurrence at this time.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

LAIBAR SINGH

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first petition has to do with the granting of permanent residence in Canada, on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, to Mr. Laibar Singh, who is an individual in British Columbia facing very serious medical conditions.

The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to allow him to stay in Canada on compassionate and humanitarian grounds.

ASBESTOS

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by many people across the country who are very concerned that asbestos is the greatest industrial killer the world has ever known. They call upon Parliament to ban asbestos in all its forms and institute a just transition program for asbestos workers in the communities they live in.

DRUGS AND PHARMACEUTICALS

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of mainly residents from Brandon—Souris but also others from across Canada.

The petitioners ask that the House of Commons amend the law to authorize any pharmaceutical firm to produce generic versions of any drug patented in Canada for export to any eligible developing country listed in the law; to allow any pharmaceutical product to be eligible for compulsory licensing; to simplify the exportation of a drug to any eligible country in any quantity; to eliminate the expiry date on a compulsory licence; and to make it easier for developing countries to benefit from that program.

LAIBAR SINGH

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition signed by thousands of my constituents.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to halt the deportation of Laibar Singh due to his fragile health and to allow him to stay in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

Mr. Singh is paralyzed by an aneurysm and has the support of many politicians of all political stripes, 13 independent doctors and over 50 organizations, including employees' unions, human rights groups and Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh religious organizations.

VISITOR VISAS

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Poland, a member of the European Union, has long been a close friend of Canada, and as a member NATO is actively promoting peace and security internationally.

This petition I am presenting represents many Canadians of Polish ancestry who call on Canada to establish reciprocity in our relations with Poland on visitor visa requirements.

This measure would bring greater education, cultural, business and scientific exchange and cooperation. The current policy places weeks in the way of this type of cooperation.

• (1210)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been asked by members of the Ardoch

Government Orders

Algonquin First Nation and of the Sharbot Lake First Nation in my constituency to present a petition that was presented to me on the grounds of Parliament Hill shortly before the House opened.

This petition concerns an area in my riding where a uranium mine, should it go forward, would be conducting mining activities on land where an aboriginal land settlement has not yet been achieved. All other economic development has been stopped on this land but the mining can potentially go forward.

The petitioners are understandably very concerned about this, as are a number of other private title holders in the area. They therefore have asked me to present this petition on their behalf to the House of Commons.

It is not in the prescribed form, but if there is unanimous consent, I would like to present this on their behalf.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is there unanimous consent that the petition presented by the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington be accepted?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AERONAUTICS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today unfortunately to express that we will not be supporting this bill. Substantial progress was made at the committee stage, but Bill C-7 still emphasizes cutting costs rather than improving safety standards. There can be no compromise when it comes to airline safety.

Government Orders

Bill C-7 constitutes a major change in how aviation safety will be addressed in Canada for years to come. It would enshrine in aviation safety the safety management system, or SMS, as part of Transport Canada's agenda to implement SMS in all modes of transportation, sometimes with disastrous effects as we have seen in the case of rail SMS with the escalating number of train derailments. We have all seen terrible examples of train derailments and other safety problems on the railway system. We believe that the introduction of SMS has been a factor.

Specifically, SMS is intended to allow the industry to increasingly decide the level of risk that those in the industry are willing to accept in their operations, rather than abide by the level of safety set by the minister acting solely in the public interest.

SMS is also designed to help Transport Canada deal with declining resources and high numbers of projected inspector retirements. As the former chair of the government operations committee, I know that there has been and continues to be an examination of the generational change in all of the public sector positions.

This is an opportunity now for the people who are in these jobs today to pass their skills, experience, knowledge and expertise on to the younger generation who are looking for more skilled and better paying jobs.

I spoke earlier today about the disastrous layoffs that are taking place in the manufacturing sector. Young people are trying to support themselves and their families. They are trying to pay their mortgages or their rent, but the jobs that would pay them enough to be able to do that are being lost. Quite frankly, while the government has said that lots of jobs are being created, a minimum wage job in the service sector does not pay the bills of the average Canadian family today.

We have an opportunity with a generational change in the public service to offer good jobs, interesting jobs, highly skilled jobs, decent paying jobs to a whole new generation of young people, but instead, the government is looking for ways to deny those opportunities. It is looking for ways to eliminate those job opportunities, to get rid of the need for jobs in what I would argue is one of the most safety sensitive sectors of our economy, the transportation sector.

Clearly, because Canada is such a vast country, airlines, rail, interprovincial trucking, shipping, all forms of transportation are fundamental to our economy. They are fundamental to who we are as a nation. They rest upon the absolute security that the utmost is being done to protect the safety of those who are using the transportation system, but also to protect the communities across Canada that would be very vulnerable to an erosion of transport safety, especially in the airline sector.

SMS will let the government increasingly transfer responsibility to the industry itself to set and enforce its own standards, because the government will have less and less of its own resources to do these activities.

• (1215)

Again I have to ask about the logic in cutting taxes for bank presidents and giving more money back to the oil and gas sector. The

government tries to hide an embarrassment of riches rather than investing in communities, investing in people, investing in social services, investing in infrastructure, and investing in the generational change that the government is facing. Baby boomers are retiring and young people are looking for decent and secure skilled jobs so that they can make a contribution to this country. This is an opportunity in the transportation sector that is being squandered by the government.

This bill was originally a Liberal bill sponsored by the former transport minister. The Liberal and Conservative members were initially willing to pass the bill without further amendments. Then the chorus of opposition began and there was real concern from the witnesses who were heard by the Standing Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities. Those witnesses included: Justice Virgil Moshansky of the Dryden crash inquiry; two Transport Canada inspectors unions, the CFPA and UCTE; the Canada Safety Council; some smaller air carriers and operators; Ken Rubin, an access to information expert; and unions representing flight attendants, the Teamsters and CUPE.

Their criticism focused on the unprecedented and unacceptable decline in regulatory oversight by Transport Canada and the greater ability for the industry to set and enforce its own safety standards out of public sight and scrutiny, among other issues. It is unfortunate that the only time transportation safety seems to make the front pages of the newspapers is when a disaster takes place. If the average Canadian knew that this bill was transferring responsibility for safety regulations and enforcement over to the very companies that increasingly are engaged in the incredibly fierce competition in the airline sector, they would be concerned. Canadians would be concerned that perhaps the temptation would be too great in some instances that the needs of the operation, the need to have the business imperatives would take precedence over public safety.

Having said that, we have some of the best airlines in the world. We have award winning airlines. We have an excellent record of safety, but that is because we have had stringent safety requirements.

I remember the debate around the deregulation of the airline industry. What was stated by the government of the day was that fundamental in a deregulated airline environment was the requirement to make safety absolutely paramount. It was argued at the time as a way of reassuring Canadians that there would be no compromise to safety. Under no circumstances would safety requirements be slackened or would there be any undermining of regulations or safety inspectors that protect Canadians in the transportation sector.

Here we are many years later and I fear that is exactly what is happening. The people who work in this industry, the ones who are closest to it who see airline operations every day, are the ones who are expressing concerns about this bill. As parliamentarians we have to listen to their concerns and take their concerns very seriously.

As I said, this bill has been amended. Some amendments were adopted unanimously, but unfortunately, the amendments only go part of the way.

Government Orders

● (1220)

The other half of the work has been left undone and it represents serious flaws in the bill that continue to jeopardize Canadian aviation safety and the safety of the travelling public and aviation workers. We have been proposing further amendments that would actually improve aviation safety, not reduce it.

Part of the problem with the bill, which I will highlight, is that it heightens secrecy. When there are public regulations and enforcement, there is public scrutiny. When safety requirements, their determination and enforcement are left to individual companies to determine, then a veil comes over the safety provisions and we will not have access to safety information.

Our amendments would have preserved the operation of the Access to Information Act in key areas but that proposal was defeated at the committee stage, which makes us very concerned about the secrecy provisions.

We are also concerned about the lack of whistleblower protection. While a form of whistleblower protection has been introduced, there is no effective redress mechanism for employees who face reprisals taken against them, other than a warning or possible fine.

However, it is small comfort to a person who, out of concern for the travelling public, raises an issue of public safety and then is penalized for doing so, potentially even losing his or her job, which is disastrous. It is a potential outcome that most people would simply not risk. I would hate to think that safety concerns are not brought to the attention of the public, especially if they have been brought to the attention of the airline and no action is taken.

Employees are granted immunity from prosecution for reporting violations only under certain conditions but conditional whistleblower protection is really no protection at all and this ought to be of great concern to all Canadians.

The bill would provide the airlines with the same opportunities as whistleblowers to divulge breaches in SMS regulations with impunity, but under the new hands-off enforcement policy of Transport Canada under SMS, no action will be taken against corporate offenders if the problem is corrected in a timely fashion. It is like someone travelling down the highway at 150 kilometres and, even though it comes to the attention of the police, by deciding to voluntarily slow the car down under the speed limit no action will be taken. It is not the way the law of the land should work.

The government contends that companies will no longer divulge safety problems without this provision. This is unconvincing. It is kind of an unwillingness to enforce what ought to be strict, visible, clear public regulations that assure Canadians and the travelling public of the utmost in safety.

I want to quote Dave Ritchie, the president of the machinists union, which represents mechanics and ramp workers who are very concerned about safety. Mr. Ritchie says:

Without constant and effective public regulation, corporations will constantly push the limits of safe operations, at growing risk to the traveling public.

While the government's intention to download the regulation and monitoring of safety to the private sector is dangerous, we are particularly concerned about the use of SMS in foreign repair stations. If the effective monitoring by Transport Canada of SMS in Canada is problematic, it is even more unlikely at foreign worksites.

● (1225)

Canadians rely on transportation and they have confidence in their transportation system. I believe we must maintain that integrity but that is not the case with the bill. I regret that the proposed changes that would have made the bill acceptable have not been adopted in their entirety. Canadians will be the worse off for it.

I regret to say again that we will not be supporting the bill. It is a real missed opportunity to reassure Canadians about their transportation safety.

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague on the very clear concerns that she has articulated with regard to the secrecy surrounding the bill, the lack of whistleblower protection, the lack of oversight and the maintenance shortcuts.

I know the member was once an airline employee and, therefore, has a real insight into what happens and what will happen to the employees who are profoundly concerned about the impact of this legislation. I wonder if she could comment about the effect this would have on the people who work on airplanes.

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, airline employees have been through incredible turmoil over the last 20 or so years with the deregulation of the airline sector and incredible cut throat competition. We have seen bankruptcies in some companies and layoffs in others. We have seen real attacks on the wages and working conditions of airline workers.

I fear that this legislation may create a climate where people will be unwilling to raise their concerns because they do not believe that their voices, as the people closest to airline safety, will be listened to. It is a genuine concern that all MPs and, in fact, all Canadians ought to be concerned about.

● (1230)

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have sat and listened to this debate for several months. As the chair of the transportation committee, I would like to advise the members who are speaking today that this was not something that was hidden from the public, as suggested by members opposite. It was not done without consultation, as suggested by members opposite. The bill was brought forward to committee and was hashed over many times until all people involved and impacted were heard from directly. Most, if not all, of the recommendations that were brought forward by the public were adopted into the bill. The bill has been through the entire scrutiny process.

Members opposite had a member who sat on that committee, which spent hours discussing the bill. I just wonder if the members who are speaking here today are aware that the unions and associations that initially had concerns actually endorsed the bill at the end of the process. I would like the member to please comment on that.

Statements by Members

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, while many of the proposed amendments that we made and many of the witnesses made have been adopted, clear concerns remain among many of the workers and their organizations who presented before committee. They may have endorsed some of the changes that were made but they do not endorse transferring responsibility for setting safety requirements and enforcing safety to the companies that are in fact in a hyper-competitive environment right now in the airline industry.

In responding to my colleague's question, I must ask him if putting the companies themselves in this position is not a little disingenuous. I do not believe that they are asking for it. It is a way to solve the problem for the government, which really does not want to pay to do enforcement itself. Canadians may like privatization of some things but I am not sure they like the privatization of safety enforcement.

I disagree with my colleague that this is widely known by the public. I do not believe it is.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I, too, am concerned about aircraft safety. It has been a part of my life through my years of living in the north and travelling through very many different conditions. However, that is not what I am focusing on here. I am focusing on what the guiding reasons were behind the development of this bill.

Was it to reduce the government's cost in providing a regulatory oversight to the industry? Was it to reduce the cost to the consumer? Was it to harmonize the Canadian regulations on aircraft safety in the industry across North America so that perhaps in the future we could see that our skies would be open within Canada to competition from foreign carriers?

What were the guiding principles that brought this bill forward at this time?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, I cannot pretend to know what was in the minds of the government members who initiated this bill. However, we have to ask ourselves: What is government for?

Surely one of the key roles of government is to protect its citizens from harm. After the fact, to say that we should have done this or perhaps we should have been responsible for that is cold comfort to people.

I believe that part of the rationale is simply a transition in the public service, a generational change. It will be costly and there is always a strategy that needs to be worked out to do that transition. I believe the government has not planned adequately for that. This is a very cut rate way to get out from under the responsibility of generational change in our inspectors. It is transferring responsibility to the private sector, to the companies themselves, surely something that is one of the fundamental responsibilities of government. It is of great concern to the members of this caucus and, if Canadians knew about it, I think it also would be of great concern to them.

My colleague raised the issue of harmonization with U.S. laws. If that is a rationale, then I would argue that it is a poor one.

• (1235)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Parkdale—High Park has a long history and association with the airline industry as someone who was a member of the CAW, who worked for the airlines and then within her union. I

think she is someone who is very familiar with this industry right on the ground, not someone at the executive level, but someone who was immersed in the day to day operations.

I think the member has voiced the real concerns that we have heard in the NDP from ordinary workers who work in this industry and who are expressing their concerns about safety. One of the issues that has come up is that they are going to change the way they deal with fatigue and work hours. It is called the fatigue risk management system. I think one of the concerns is that it will sort of take us away from the established practices under the Canada Labour Code, both part II and part III.

I wonder if the member has any concerns that we are setting up some sort of separate program or entity that would take us some distance away from the Canada Labour Code.

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, the issue of work hours and fatigue are fundamental in the transportation sector and have been an issue of debate and negotiation over the years. There has been a push of late to lengthen the work hours and to reduce the number of personnel, which is a safety concern.

I would remind the members of the House of the Air France fiery crash in Toronto where, due to the quick action of the crew, not one person died. That is the kind of job that airline workers do.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

CLOCK MALFUNCTION DURING STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During members' statements earlier today, there was a clock malfunction, I understand, at the Speaker's chair. We have discussed this. I would like to present my member's statement now, as it was interrupted earlier.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): I am aware of the fact that there were some technical glitches with the microphones at the time. I recognize the hon. member for Vegreville—Wainwright who will now make his statement under Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

ECONOMIC STATEMENT

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tax man cometh.

Yes, that is still true, but the good news is that he will not get nearly as much this year as he would have two years ago under the Liberal government.

The tax relief people felt when they filled out their 2006 returns was noticed and appreciated, but the tax refund that my constituents will get for the 2007 tax year will be a pleasant change indeed.

Government Orders

In fact, this Conservative government will leave \$190 billion in the pockets of hard-working Canadians over the next five years.

What was the Liberal response? The Conservative government reduced the GST from 7% to 5% and the Liberals promised to reverse that reduction should they get into government again.

That is right. They want to increase taxes. Why?

Because they consider taxes to be like Maxwell House coffee: it is good to the very last drop.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AERONAUTICS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my comments on Bill C-7, I want to ask you a question about the statement that was just made, not that we would have objected to it. I did not understand that there was a problem with the timing on the clock.

Was that done as a point of order or was it something that would have required unanimous consent because we were in effect intervening in a debate? We would not have objected, I want to make that clear, but just as a matter of process, could the Speaker advise us? I actually was waiting for a motion to be put so that the member could make his statement.

• (1240)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member has a point. It was my understanding that there was an implied unanimous consent. Next time I will be more prudent.

The hon. member for Vancouver East is recognized to resume debate on Bill C-7, I hope.

Ms. Libby Davies: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your response and I do want to make it clear to the member that we would not have denied unanimous consent, because obviously making our statements in the House is important to all members. If there is a glitch with the clock, that should be corrected, but maybe next time we will do it through unanimous consent.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-7. As we know, this bill was in the last session of Parliament and was then known as Bill C-6.

I want to say right off that NDP members were very instrumental and worked as a very tight group in the last days of that session to fight the bill and try to keep it from going through the House. It was at third reading then. I am sure that my colleagues will remember that we rose in those last few days and kept the debate going.

In the House today, I have heard a number of members raise questions about that. What is the NDP doing? Why is it trying to hold up the bill? Some members are saying that it is a great bill and it

had a great hearing in committee, that all those witnesses were heard and the bill has been fixed if there were problems. As we know, the government is obviously supporting the bill.

The Liberals, who first initiated the bill when they were in government, of course are supporting the bill, just as they now support a number of things from the Conservative government, including the Speech from the Throne and the so-called mini-budget. It is no surprise to us that they are supporting the aeronautics bill. The members of the BQ also have been supporting the bill.

However, I do want to put on the record that the reason we wished to hold it up in June, the reason we fought it, is that we think the bill is flawed. We think the bill has not had the scrutiny it deserves. We have had repeated concerns brought to us, particularly by the labour movement, people who work in this industry and who have a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge. They work on the ground, just like the member for Parkdale—High Park said when she spoke about her knowledge of this industry.

I can tell members of the House that we take this very seriously. In our humble opinion, and we are one party in the House, we believe we have a responsibility: if we do not think a bill is good enough, if we think a bill is not right, we should not just roll over and let it go through.

That is why in June we debated the bill and tried to hold it up. In fact, we did hold it up. It would have gone through. Then, as we know, the Prime Minister prorogued the House. It is ironic. We are told by the government that these bills are so critical and they are being held up by the opposition, and, in the case of this bill, by the NDP. Yet it was the government itself and the Prime Minister himself that prorogued the House and in effect killed all of the bills that were before the House of Commons.

That was the tactic the government employed to buy some time, to see out the byelections or the Ontario election, whatever the reasons were. We obviously were not privy to what government members had in their minds, but the government itself decided to prorogue the House, delay the return of Parliament and in effect kill the bill in its former version, which was Bill C-6.

As we know, the bill has now been brought back. It is still at third reading. We in the NDP successfully put forward an amendment, or what is called a hoist motion, to have the bill sent back to the committee. I want to assure members of the House that we did so on the basis of our concerns. We did that on the basis that we really do believe the bill should go back to the committee.

It may well be that other members are satisfied. It may well be that other members think this is a fine bill and that is the end of the story. We do not. We think there are significant concerns that should be addressed. From our point of view, we are doing our job as parliamentarians to debate the legislation, to defend the public interest, to represent the public interest and to represent the interest of public safety, particularly as it relates to airline safety.

Government Orders

•(1245)

On the record, I do want to mention the tremendous work of our former transport critic, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster. He almost single-handedly raised the issues around the bill and alerted people out in the broader community so they could come before the committee. He has gone through the bill with a fine-tooth comb, looking at the changes that are about to take place.

This is where we have a very strong difference with other members in the House. We think the changes proposed in Bill C-7, the aeronautics bill, are not in the public interest. They will not improve and strengthen safety provisions in the airline industry.

We are extremely concerned that, overall, this is the beginning of a slippery slope. In fact, one might argue that the slippery slope began a long time ago with previous Liberal governments. They began with this massive environment of privatization and deregulation.

We know it is something that the big airline industry has long coveted. We are now in that environment where deregulation and privatization are the victim of the day. However, when it comes to safety, I truly believe that Canadians, whether they live in large urban centres and mostly access airline travel through large airports such as Pearson, Vancouver or Montreal or wherever it might be, or live in smaller communities and rely on regional airports that maybe do not have the same kind of equipment and technology that is available in the larger centres, absolutely rely on us as parliamentarians to go through this kind of legislation. If there is a shadow of a doubt that it does not meet a strong and high standard around safety and protecting the public and the people who work in that industry, I think they expect us to not allow this legislation to pass.

We are attempting to bring those concerns forward. As the member for Parkdale—High Park said, what is the government for? What do we do in this place?

We do many things. We all have issues that we represent in our riding. However, overall we have a responsibility to represent that broader public interest against all kinds of pressures, from big corporations, from offshore interests, from people who have an agenda, the CEOs who have an agenda to only look at the bottom line. Our job is to make those balances and to overall represent the public interest.

I want to speak a bit about the specific concerns I have about Bill C-7. I know they are shared by my colleagues in the New Democratic Party. They revolve around really three key questions, one of which is the new safety management system, the SMS as it is being called. The second involves the immunity for prosecutions from airlines that violate safety rules under certain conditions. The third is the heightened secrecy and the fact that there will be less access to information on the safety performance of airlines under this bill than we had previously.

It raises the question as to why. Why would the bill take us in that direction? I am not sure I know the answer to that, other than I know it is a really bad direction and we should not allow it to happen.

It is part of this bigger picture of deregulation. It is part of a bigger picture that the Conservative government has adopted; that it is better to have no rules, that it is better to allow self-regulation by

industry, and there may be some instances where that is warranted. By and large that is not a good direction to take, particularly with the airline industry.

I will speak on the first point, the new safety management systems. This is at the heart of the bill we are debating today. We believe it will affect the safety of the travelling public and crew members.

•(1250)

New Democrats are very concerned that the SMS system is supposed to be a management system that has been developed to allow air operators to improve safety levels by building on existing safety regulators. We know Transport Canada, both in committee and elsewhere, has insisted that this new safety management system is not a deregulation, but we think it is. There we begin our entrance onto the slippery slope.

We believe it is part of a deregulation and a significant change for two reasons. First, there will be a new role for the regulator that will increase the level of delegation previously performed by Transport Canada and that role will be delegated to the airlines.

Many members of the NDP have spoken on this issue over the last few days. We are very concerned because it was a function that was carried out by a government department, Transport Canada. Even though there might have been issues and concerns over various situations that arose, overall one has some level of faith in a government agency performing the function of a safety management system.

To now shift it to the airlines and make them, in effect, self-regulating in terms of safety rules and self-monitoring is something we should be very concerned about. We need to ask the question as to where this will lead. If we allow this to happen in this industry, in what other industries or instances will it also happen? This is the direction the previous government was taking and now it appears the Conservative government is also taking that direction.

Related to the question of the safety management system is a transfer of the determination of appropriate risk levels from Transport Canada to the airlines. The NDP would argue that this is again shifting the rules and responsibility from a public government agency, which is accountable to the House of Commons and the people of Canada, to the airlines. The public interest becomes a little less clear. We have to question whether that shift in the safety management system will mean that there is a greater interest in terms of what the interests are of the private shareholders. Those are very serious questions.

I was not in the committee, and I will be the first to say that. The member for Burnaby—New Westminster was. After speaking with him, I know that there were very detailed discussions. Witnesses came forward and expressed their concerns about this function of the safety management system.

I realize there are members in the House who are satisfied with what they heard from the department and what they see in the bill, but the NDP is not. On that ground alone, the safety management system, we are not satisfied that the public interest test has been met.

Government Orders

We are very skeptical about this movement of responsibility from the government to the airlines. We are also very concerned about what the consequences of that might be in the long term for the travelling public, as well as for people working in the airline industry who are all of a sudden in an environment that becomes a self-regulating situation.

● (1255)

It is more preferable to have an outside body that clearly establishes rules, regulations and benchmarks in terms of what the risk and safety levels are for people who work in that industry and who may feel the pressure from their employers to cut a little corner here, cut a little something there. There are those pressures in the workplace, so having the clear mandate of Transport Canada to lay out that level is very important for the workers in the industry. They have something on which they can call. That is our first concern.

The second concern, as I mentioned, has to do with what we understand to be the immunity from prosecution for airlines that violates safety rules under certain conditions. Again, this is something about which the public should be very worried. We need to be very clear that under this proposal, Transport Canada has not granted whistleblower protection to employees who may report that their air operator is not following the law.

I find this very ironic. The government brought in Bill C-2, the Federal Accountability Act. It was its first bill after its election to a minority Parliament, and the NDP supported it. The act was meant to be about setting out broad parameters and very specific provisions and regulations to ensure there was accountability, that there was whistleblower protection, that people could be protected in their workplace.

Therefore, it seems to me rather ironic that now under Bill C-7 we have a number of provisions that will provide immunity from prosecution. It does not have whistleblower protection, so that really creates a very uncertain environment for people who may be in the know. They may have information they think is important. They may feel they have an individual obligation to report violations or situations that are not safe. Yet they will not be protected.

We think this is another serious issue and flaw in the bill. This is another reason for it be sent back to committee.

The third issue has to do with the fact that there will be less access to information on the safety performance of airlines.

From time to time, we read about serious incidents that take place in air travel. It is something that alarms people.

Like other members of the House, I travel a lot. I mostly travel between Vancouver and Ottawa, and I do not particularly like using air travel. I do it however because I am from Vancouver and it is the way I get to work and get home. We have this faith that the pilots, the flight attendants and the ground crews know what they are doing, and I do. I have a lot of confidence in those people.

In fact, I was on a flight the other day, leaving from Pearson to go to Vancouver. We were zooming down the runway and about to take off. Just before takeoff, the pilot slammed on the brakes and it became clear we would not be taking off. Everyone was wondering what was happening. Over the public announcement system, the

pilot said that there was something wrong. He did not know what it was so he aborted the takeoff. The 300 people on the plane were hugely relieved he had made that decision.

We went back to the gate. We sat around for an hour, which nobody really minded, because they were checking out safety provisions. In the end, the aircraft was grounded. We all had to scramble around for other flights. However, I was glad because I sure as heck did not want to fly in a plane that might be unsafe.

People worry about this. They rely on those professionals to make the right decisions, even at the last minute, even at the last second.

● (1300)

With this bill, we believe there will be less security on those issues. There will be less access to information to find out what is going on. For example, there are seven sections of the Aeronautics Act that will be added to schedule II of the Access to Information Act to ensure that there is no access to information. Why is that? Why would there be this shift?

I do have other issues to raise but those are some of the concerns that I put forward from my party and the reason we believe the bill should be sent back to committee and given a thorough review.

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have sat here patiently all day listening to the NDP filibuster on this bill.

The member's comments at the end of her speech actually speak volumes in support of the bill. The very fact that the pilot had the authority to stop the plane before it took off is exactly what safety management systems are all about. They empower every person within the system to shut down a plane if it is not safe. That is what the people of Canada want. That is what Canadian travellers want. That is what travellers want all over the world. They want the people who work every day in the system to have the authority and some control over the safety issues regarding flying in Canada.

Would the member please advise her caucus to stop the filibuster, support this bill and move it through? Canadians demand and want the safety that it provides.

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the member would see this as a filibuster. In actual fact the rules have changed so much that members actually cannot filibuster in this place any more. We are actually debating in a regular way, during a regular, routine legislative process, third reading, a motion that was legitimately moved by the NDP because of the concerns we have.

With respect to the idea that we are holding up the bill, or filibustering, first of all filibustering itself is a time honoured process that has been used by all parties in this House. It was actually the former government that clamped down on it and changed the rules so that it is almost impossible to do. Even on that principal point alone as to what filibustering is about, filibustering is very much a part of the parliamentary process, very much a part of the tradition of democracy, but that is not what we are doing here.

Government Orders

I would like to throw a question back to member, why is the government so intent on rushing through legislation that requires a proper review by committee and by the House? That is our right to do that here. I respect the member's view that he thinks the bill is terrific. I respect his conclusion on that, but he should respect our conclusion that we do not think that the bill is right.

In terms of the issue of safety, the situation I outlined is under the existing process and yes, captains do have control to make that decision, but what we are talking about in the bill is going to be a very dramatic shift in terms of the way these rules work. We will be relying more on the airlines themselves to do the regulatory inspections and safety checks and mechanisms that are now in place through Transport Canada.

If the member is right in his assertion, then why do we have the bill before us? It is clearly because there are significant changes taking place. We believe that those changes are not in the right direction and that there would be consequences for both the industry and the public. Therefore, we uphold our right to debate in the House what those changes are about and the fact that we do not agree with them. We will do that. It is not filibustering. We will do that at third reading as we did in June and we hope that the bill will be sent back to committee.

• (1305)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague and chair of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities was brilliant.

As for the example my NDP colleague gave earlier concerning what happened at Pearson airport, that is precisely what we hope to avoid. I would like the NDP to understand something. The safety management system is currently operational. In the case referred to by my colleague, if someone had decided to sue the major airline, one of the employees—the one who decided to stop the aircraft and keep it on the ground because there was a safety problem—might not have been protected. That is precisely what the bill aims to prevent, because safety management systems are already in operation. However, the employees who use this system must be properly protected. That is the goal of this bill.

I also have a very hard time understanding why the NDP blocked the passage of this bill, which has been improved by the opposition and would truly protect the system, and especially the employees, who would be able to make voluntary reports, as in the example she mentioned earlier.

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I think the member and I share some of the same concerns about the protection of workers and their ability to carry out their jobs without reprisal. Maybe we have come to a different conclusion on the bill. My understanding is that members of the Bloc are satisfied with the bill. They think it contains enough provisions to address their concerns. We have not yet come to that conclusion.

If I might add to what the member said, in addition to the concerns that I put forward about the safety management system, the

immunity from prosecution and the deletion of seven sections from access to information, there is another area that we are concerned about and that is the fatigue risk management system, which deals with employees who work long hours and have very onerous and serious responsibilities.

We are concerned that rather than sticking to part II and part III of the Canada Labour Code, this new system will be a differentiation. The Canada Labour Code protects federally regulated workers, which would include the airline industry. There are issues with the code. The Arthurs report, which was two years in the making and was sitting on the minister's desk, deals with issues about employment standards and occupational health and safety. There are issues within the Canada Labour Code that need to be improved and the Arthurs report is one demonstration of that.

Nevertheless, we do have concerns about the introduction of the fatigue risk management system. It will be a departure from what has been established as overall procedures, regulations and policies that protect workers on the basis of safety, on the basis of reporting information, on the basis of their work hours, fatigue, overtime, those kinds of issues. This bill is creating a different kind of entity. This is another concern that we have with the bill.

• (1310)

Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after what happened in my city of London, Ontario, it seems to me that infrastructure and the things that keep people safe are very much in trouble. Last Wednesday there was a \$190 billion cut to the government's capacity to make sure that safety elements were in place.

I wonder if the member could comment on the fact that this \$190 billion funding cut could seriously impact on the government's capacity to ensure airline safety.

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I understand there is a big hole in the middle of London which the member is dealing with, which certainly is very symbolic of the massive gap in terms of federal funding for infrastructure that affects local communities.

I have to agree with her that the mini-budget that we saw a few days ago and the huge loss of fiscal capacity from the federal government is going to have a massive impact on our local communities. Her community of London is a glaring example of that. It has a huge impact in my riding of Vancouver East where we are facing infrastructure issues. It also will impact on the operation of government and the ability to provide a full measure of safety.

There have been cutbacks in the federal civil service in various departments. This diminishes the capacity of the government to represent that public interest, to protect the public, to ensure that safety standards are being fully met.

On the one hand, there is this bill which looks as though it is going to go through at some point that will be a huge shift in how safety is conducted. On the other hand, there is a greatly diminished federal capacity through a conscious decision to give massive corporate tax breaks that will affect the very operation of government itself.

Government Orders

It seems to me that is very bad news for Canadians.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-7 because I come from a northern environment where air traffic is essential to the very nature of the communities.

As well, I grew up on an airport. My father was an airport manager and worked for the Department of Transportation for 30 years. I think right now he would be very annoyed with me if I did not stand up and speak out on the issues surrounding air safety.

For my hon. colleagues in the Conservative Party who seem to think that a voice in the House of Parliament is something that is not important, that someone showing a side of Canada that perhaps is not fully represented here is somehow degrading to the House, is an unfortunate turn of words. I am here to represent my constituents as best as possible on a matter of serious significance to them.

When we think of aircraft safety, we think of maintenance safety, and when we look at those issues we can look at anecdotal examples. I can think of what happened last week in Sweden where corrosion on a part of the landing gear on one of our Canadian built planes resulted in the plane collapsing on the runway. Luckily there were no civilian deaths but it was a situation that happened because of maintenance schedules that obviously were not adequate for the situation the plane was in.

When we talk about maintenance schedules on aircraft, we have a great concern with that process.

I will give another example. I was at the Edmonton airport last year in the winter waiting to go north on a scheduled aircraft carrier. We all trooped aboard the plane and then we sat and waited. The pilot finally did an inspection and found a football sized dent in the rear aileron. This, obviously, was missed by the maintenance staff even though they did have a maintenance schedule in place. The plane was emptied and on we went.

I, as well as everyone else on that flight, would like to understand why that happened. With the absence of the proper ability to access that information we will not have those answers. Without careful attention to a regulatory and inspection process that can guarantee that we have high standards of maintenance, we can see this sort of thing occurring all the way down the line.

I will take a step backward and speak to the aircraft industry as a whole. In the north especially we are being impacted by changing climate conditions. This fall alone we have seen major problems in airport shutdowns in Norman Wells and in Inuvik for a whole four days. Our diamond mines lost four days of production.

We see these problems all over because of the changing climatic conditions and yet the past government reduced the federal government's role in maintaining aviation weather reporting. Many of our airports across the north do not have adequate weather equipment or observers on the ground providing information on a regular basis even though these conditions are changing. The travelling public is at risk.

Last year I flew out of Inuvik on a plane when the weather had changed. There is enormous pressure to fly in the north because

people are trying to meet schedules, industrial activity is ramping up and everything is going much faster.

● (1315)

When the plane left Inuvik we flew 50 miles and never went more than 200 feet off the ground. I was not too concerned because I was flying over the delta where there are no hills higher than 200 feet. Although I knew it probably was not legal, we went along with it.

When we returned to the airport in Inuvik, I found the same weather system had resulted in a tremendous tragedy for that airline company about 200 miles away. One of its airplanes flew into a hill in the same weather system and under the same kinds of pressures to deliver passengers when the weather conditions were so difficult.

What we did with eight aircraft and weather safety as a cost cutting measure with Transport Canada when its policy impacted on us for many years is something that is an object lesson that we should apply to aircraft maintenance as well. We need to have a strong system in this country that is run by the government and one that guarantees aircraft maintenance is carried out in a proper fashion.

Of the 27 public airports in the Northwest Territories, only 6 have paved runways, the other 21 have gravel runways and 23 airdromes are certified. The others are registered airdromes.

The Northern Air Transport Association called on the government to increase the length of northern runways and to improve the instrument landing systems available everywhere. We may talk about northern sovereignty but most of our military planes cannot land anywhere in the north because the runways are too short. The instrument landing systems are not adequate. It is the federal government's responsibility to maintain a standard for all Canadians across this country. We have privatized airports. We have caused these issues by our relentless concern over the bottom line.

The Prime Minister is proposing a deep seaport at Nanisivik. He should consider that the airport at Nanisivik has difficulty with fog conditions many times during the year. Once again, the condition of aviation in the north has deteriorated with the changing climate. We need a different response other than the government saying that it is getting out of inspecting the maintenance conditions of aircraft.

Government Orders

In 2004, a total of 93,000 aircraft arrived and departed N.W.T. airports. That figure is up almost 15% from the year before and 25% from the year before that. We are seeing an enormous increase in traffic in the north and yet we have small carriers that rely on maintenance staff that are transient in nature. If we had a strong Canada-wide system, the transient maintenance system may not be that bad, but when we start breaking down maintenance systems by individual aircraft companies, when we start setting standards in a fashion where the technicians and mechanics who service these planes will need to re-learn every time they join a new company, these are difficult issues for aircraft maintenance and safety. Bill C-7 would create these difficulties.

We can say that we have kept some inspectors, and I understand that is the case, but if we degrade the inspection system in Canada by reducing the personnel, we will not have the same quality of system at the end of the day.

Yes, I stand up and ask questions about Bill C-7, absolutely. I support the work of our previous transport critic, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster. In his discussions with me, he indicated that the bill was moving in the right direction. However, he felt that the work they had done in bringing the amendments forward at the last moment had changed. He felt that all the good words and all the goodwill that was on that committee evaporated at the end.

That was the problem last June. Our former transport critic asked us to stand up and talk about this bill because many of the issues that we had assumed would be included and taken care of through amendments were just not happening.

• (1320)

The level of air safety achieved in commercial aviation is, in no small part, the result of adding levels of responsibility. The delegation or devolution proposals of Bill C-7 go directly against this principle of redundancy. By removing regulatory oversight, we effectively remove a fallback position. However, that does not seem to be of concern to some members of Parliament, to the two larger parties that have such a strong principle of laissez-faire business in this country.

By reducing the inspection level and eliminating the ongoing development of a federally controlled and regulated air transport system, the government is going in a direction that we in the NDP do not consider appropriate. I am sure most Canadians would support us if they were to look at what the bill would create and the direction in which it would move us, just as we have seen in the rest of the deregulation of the aircraft industry across this country.

Transport Canada's own documents admit that the level of air safety has not substantially improved during the past 10 years. This is a reversal of the past history of commercial aviation where safety records were constantly improving. What is happening, why is it happening and how would this bill change that?

The bill is going to change it for the worse. It is going to continue the process that is going on now, where, through the deregulation of the industry, more and more of the decisions are being taken by people on the ground in situations where cost becomes a factor. How

can we support this bill? How can we be assured that what we are doing is in the best interest of Canadians?

Studies have shown that the European community has an enviable aviation safety record and yet Europe has not and is not delegating or devolving its safety responsibilities to private designated organizations. The United States, which was the first to engage in economic deregulation, is not deregulating safety.

After Enron, Hollinger and WorldCom, governments are strengthening their regulation and enforcement of corporate governance. If we cannot rely on corporate directors and their audit committees to regulate financial activities with shareholders' money rather than when public lives are at stake, how can we count on the boards of directors of private aviation concerns, whose legal duties are to shareholders, to take full accountability for previously regulated areas of passenger safety? These are questions that the bill skirts. These are questions that Canadians do not want ignored.

There can be only one goal in aviation safety. It is not to understand how we can nickel and dime the system in order to provide a lower cost to compete with other carriers. The only goal should be the highest possible level of safety, which is what we are after and why we are standing up one after another speaking to the bill. It is not because we have any other interests at heart at all. It is not because we have the interests of large businesses or of large unions. It is because we have the interest of public safety in our minds.

Euphemisms, such as risk management, best practicable level of safety and commensurate with cost effectiveness, are not the kinds of words that we use. They are not the kinds of words that work for northerners.

• (1325)

We northerners have a difficult enough time travelling throughout the north. We do not want it made more difficult. We do not want our airline companies to be pushed to the limit even more through competition, through larger companies coming in, where they are taking risks that they know are risks and where they are taking risks that perhaps they do not know are risks.

This bill does not answer the questions for me. This bill does not answer the questions for northerners.

When we stand up here, we stand up for a good reason. We stand up for a purpose. We will continue to stand up on this. For all those who are flying in airplanes across this country and who may be listening to this debate, I urge them to speak to their MPs and ask their MPs to tell them whether this bill is going to increase their safety in the air. If those MPs can give them a good answer, then those MPs should be saying it here in the House of Commons.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Western Arctic has made some very fine remarks today. He and other colleagues in the NDP have put forward some of our very serious concerns about this bill and I think the member has brought some of his personal experience to this debate, which I think is a very legitimate thing to do.

I would like to ask the member if he is concerned at all about the fact that this bill, as well as moving to a separate safety management system outside of Transport Canada, is moving to a separate system for purposes of fatigue risk, which is the amount of time employees are working on the job. As I outlined in debate earlier, there is concern about the distance from the Canada Labour Code that is being created with this bill. Would he comment on that?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member for Western Arctic, although he has nine minutes left, should know that there is only one minute left today.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention that the working conditions for mechanics and for technicians on aircraft vary considerably across the country. I have seen mechanics out working with Herman Nelson heaters under tarps when fixing aircraft, because of course their airlines do not have the luxury of a heated hangar.

These are people who ensure that aircraft fly at all times of the day and night in very bad conditions. I grew up with many of them and my heart goes out to them because they are sincerely trying to do the best job. However, when I spoke to them about this bill, they all had serious concerns. When I spoke to senior mechanics about the nature of this bill, they said no to it.

• (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

When Bill C-7 returns to the House, there will be eight minutes left under questions and comments for the hon. member for Western Arctic.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.) moved that Bill C-378, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act and the Food and Drug Regulations (drug export restrictions), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to discuss with my colleagues from all parties Bill C-378, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act and the Food and Drug Regulations (drug export restrictions), although I wish that I did not have to do this bill again. It would have been very simple for the government to deal with this during the prorogation and actually make this bill unnecessary, but it still refused to act.

My bill is aimed at controlling the cross-border trade in prescription drugs and vaccines. The bill would amend the Food and Drugs Act to prohibit the export of drugs set out in schedules D and F to the Food and Drug Regulations, vaccines and prescription drugs, except as permitted under the regulations.

The bill would make it an offence under the Food and Drugs Act to export prescription drugs in prohibited circumstances. By

Private Members' Business

amending the Food and Drugs Act, the legislation will protect Canadians.

My bill is constructed to protect the Canadian pharmaceutical supply from being bulk-exported south of the border. There is such a large price differential between American and Canadian pharmaceutical prices that there is great pressure on the U.S. at this time to import cheaper drugs from Canada.

With over 35 million members, AARP is the leading non-profit, non-partisan membership organization for people aged 50 and over in the United States. It wields an enormous amount of power and is at this time launching a very major communication initiative.

However, during my meeting with the organization in Washington in the spring, it was clear that its real intention was not to import pills from Canada but to import prices from Canada and to make Americans very angry that they were paying too much for brand name prescription drugs.

Let me put it plainly: Canada cannot become America's discount drug store. Canada needs to protect itself from the dramatic expansion of importation by the U.S. of drugs intended for our patients.

The prospect of the U.S. legalizing large-scale purchases from our domestic supply is real. In fact, every Democratic Party presidential candidate is in favour of importation legislation.

The threat to Canada's drug supply increased on January 10 of this year after some U.S. politicians stepped up their efforts to facilitate bulk imports of prescription drugs from Canada with the introduction of the pharmaceutical market access and drug safety act of 2007.

The legislation was introduced by Senators Dorgan and Snowe and Representatives Emanuel and Emerson, who are co-sponsoring the companion house legislation. The legislation, which has the backing of key U.S. Democrats and Republicans, would allow individuals to directly order medications from outside the U.S. It would allow U.S. licensed pharmacists and wholesalers to import FDA-approved medications from a number of countries, including Canada.

In May, senators both approved the measure and then voted to require U.S. health authorities to certify drug imports were safe. Since the U.S. federal drug administration already had made it clear that it would not provide certification, the bill was dead on arrival.

However, on Wednesday, the U.S. Senate adopted U.S. Senator David Vitter's drug reimportation amendment to the U.S. Senate labor, health and human services and education department appropriations bill. In addition to foot traffic, Vitter's amendments would also allow mail order and Internet importation for Canada.

Private Members' Business

Several steps remain in the U.S. Congress before such a bill is signed into law, but influential lawmakers are on the march on this issue. It is like a voodoo from a video game: it just will not be killed.

In addition, the House budget office has recently completed a budgetary impact analysis demonstrating the savings that would follow the adoption of importation legislation. The announcements will give additional incentives to pass legislation in the context of the budget negotiations.

Any of these measures pose an imminent and serious threat to the security and integrity of Canada's drug supply and a genuine threat to the health of Canadians. It may have been good short term politics, but it is terrible long term policy.

American seniors are rightfully outraged by the high prices of pharmaceuticals in their country, but outsourcing price controls is not a responsible approach. In Canada, we have addressed price control with the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, which regulates drug prices to ensure that the prices of patent-protected brand name drugs are not excessive.

Canada has regulated drug prices for the past 15 years. The United States does not have a similar control mechanism and the problem is exacerbated by U.S. drug companies spending millions of dollars every year to defend their higher prices.

• (1335)

Every year U.S. drug companies spend hundreds of millions of dollars on political influence, including lobbying, campaign donations, and extensive ad campaigns to defend their high prices and fight against price control. The American drug industry employs over 600 lobbyists in Washington alone, more than one for every member of Congress. This system drives U.S. prices even higher.

[*Translation*]

Another important difference between the Canadian and American systems is the regulation of advertising.

Prescription drug advertising is one of the most controversial practices in the American pharmaceutical industry. During the first nine months of 2002, American pharmaceutical companies spent over \$6 billion promoting their products to physicians and consumers. This kind of advertising drives prices up and is prohibited in nearly all other western countries.

[*English*]

In Canada, the therapeutic products directorate strictly regulates prescription drug advertising.

I would also like to discuss how drug importation legislation represents a threat to American patients by allowing relinquishment of necessary community-based medication monitoring and management at increasing risk for potential counterfeit drugs.

The incidence of counterfeit drugs is small, but is growing in developed nations. The recent tragic death of a British Columbia resident, determined by a coroner to have been caused by counterfeit medicine in her possession, serves as a reminder that North America is not immune from this global phenomenon.

The counterfeiting of medicines is an issue that threatens the quality and integrity of Canada's drug supply, a problem that will be greatly exacerbated if U.S. drug importation legislation is passed into law without a clear and effective Canadian prohibition on bulk drug exportation.

I was pleased to see the public safety committee's report, entitled "Counterfeit Goods in Canada—A Threat to Public Safety", which included this recommendation:

—that the Government of Canada institute a campaign to raise awareness of counterfeit and pirated goods to make the public aware of the economic and social costs associated with this scourge, and emphasize the public health and safety hazards they represent. The campaign should also raise Canadians' awareness of the involvement of organized crime in the counterfeiting and piracy of goods.

Internationally, the WHO is very concerned about counterfeit drugs. The WHO has struck the international medical products anti-counterfeiting task force, tasked with increasing international collaboration to combat counterfeiting.

I would also like to point out that allowing bulk prescription drug imports would not significantly reduce U.S. prescription prices for very long.

Even a recent University of Texas study concluded, based on the worst case scenario, that Canada's stocks of prescription drugs would amount to about a 38-day supply for the United States, assuming all U.S. medications were Canadian sourced. Once U.S. demand depletes Canadian stocks, prices will almost certainly rise, narrowing or even possibly eliminating the difference between U.S. and Canadian pharmaceutical prices.

Some may argue that Canadians should just increase manufacturing of pharmaceuticals to meet the U.S. demand.

[*Translation*]

Canada's innovation-focused pharmaceutical industry develops, manufactures and distributes drugs designed to meet the needs of Canadian patients and the Canadian market. It bases its production on the size of the population and the incidence of the illness or condition to be treated.

Manufacturers produce sufficient prescription drugs to meet the expected national demand. Consequently, if one country imports its prescription drugs from another, it diminishes the exporting country's stock of drugs to meet the needs of patients in that country.

Labelling regulations also differ from country to country. As a result, prescription drugs produced for the American or South American markets cannot just be sent to Canada to meet an unexpected need.

Private Members' Business

Given the complexity of calculating annual estimates of the needs of Canadian patients, not to mention the management by drug companies of their inventory to respond to patients' needs, it is unrealistic to think that products manufactured for Canada could meet American demand.

• (1340)

[English]

Cross-border trade is not only detrimental from a public policy perspective, it is almost virtually impossible to do. I would like to underline again that Canada cannot meet the prescription drug needs of approximately 280 million Americans without putting our own supply at risk.

Take, for example, the events during the fall of 2005, when in November Roche Canada took the unprecedented step of suspending sales of Tamiflu to the Canadian market. There were reports that Internet pharmacies were busily filling foreign prescriptions at a significant profit. One B.C. pharmacy alone was reported filling 400 orders a day from the U.S. That is a significant number, when according to the Canadian Pharmacists Association only 4,000 Canadians received that drug that September. Another Internet pharmacy in Montreal issued news releases promoting to U.S. customers its Tamiflu stocks.

The Canadian Pharmacists Association reacted to the Tamiflu incident by saying that the government should have acted to protect the country's supply of the drug. Again, when supply gets siphoned off to the U.S., it is Canadians who come up short.

This situation is a perfect example of the types of scenarios Canadian patients will face if Canadian governments continue to allow drugs to be diverted to the U.S.

This is not an issue unique to North America. In April of this year the European Union passed resolution 31 stating:

Is concerned about the intention of the US Congress to authorise parallel imports of medicines from the EU Member States, that may create obstacles to the EU patients' supply and favour counterfeiting of medicines; asks the EU, therefore, to raise this issue at the forthcoming Summit;

I would also like to take the opportunity to commend my colleague, the member for Vancouver South, who in 2005, when he was health minister, anticipated this problem and put forward legislation, Bill C-28, in order to reach consensus in the House. Unfortunately, an election was called before the bill went forward.

Current Canadian policy is to use only reactive measures and seek to manage shortages once they have already occurred. This is not enough and it may well be too late.

The issue of bulk exports to other countries of medicines and vaccines destined to Canadians should be an issue of concern to all of us. It is of particular interest to the Canadian Pharmacists Association and the Ontario Pharmacists Association.

I believe the passage of Bill C-378 is essential to protect the supply and integrity of prescription drugs here in Canada and will send a strong message to our American colleagues of the futility of their shortsighted legislative initiative.

I urge all colleagues to support my private member's bill, Bill C-378, or to call upon the government to make it unnecessary.

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary for Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's comments with interest. I note that her comments began by criticizing the current government. I find this very hypocritical because when the issue of drug exports from Canada to the United States was at its peak, it occurred under the previous Liberal government, a government in which the member was a minister.

The peak was in 2004 and the former minister of public health and the former health minister did nothing at that time. The peak flowed by and they continued to do nothing. The member mentioned that the Liberals brought forward a bill. Not only was it poorly worded and unnecessary, it just again showed how the Liberal Party was all talk and no action.

At the time, in 2004, it should also be noted that the Canadian dollar was in the 70¢ range. Today it closed at over \$1.07. So a lot of the economic benefit has been eroded due to the increase in the Canadian dollar.

Moreover, the Internet pharmacy business has collapsed. As far as the U.S. regulations are concerned, the White House opposes the bill, Congress is dividing. It has little chance of passing and even if it does pass there is a poison pill within the bill.

Canadian drugs are not under threat today and it is really a lot less under threat than they were under the Liberal regime when the Liberals did nothing. If this member is so concerned about the issue, why did she not do something in the 13 years that she was in government in 2000 or 2001? Why is she raising it now?

It is just another example of Liberal hypocrisy. That is my question: why now and not then?

• (1345)

Hon. Carolyn Bennett: Mr. Speaker, I am shocked that the member opposite does not understand the gravity of the situation right now.

The Liberal government did act and the former minister of health did table a bill when it seemed there could be problems, particularly with respect to pandemic preparedness and shortages in flu vaccine like Tamiflu. The bill was tabled and even the Conservative member, who is a former chair of the health committee, actually supported the bill at that time.

It is the ultimate in hypocrisy to say, "How come you did not do then what clearly needs to be done now?"

It has been the political climate in the United States, the pressure from the bills before Congress and, indeed, the endorsement of all presidential candidates now that puts the drugs supplied by Canada under severe risk and Canadians at severe risk from the kind of counterfeit drugs that would come to backfill the shortages.

The price of the Canadian dollar is indeed different, but the idea that we in Canada have for 15 years properly controlled the price of patent medicines in this country is really the risk.

Private Members' Business

Even today, the costs of patent medicines are very much cheaper in Canada than the United States, and they are still an incentive for Americans to import cheaper drugs from Canada. Why would the Senate and Congress of the United States still be wanting to do this, as the member was suggesting, if indeed the problem was just the price of the Canadian dollar?

This is a huge threat to our country. We need the minister and the government to act. I do not think Canadians are too amused by the hypocrisy of saying that the previous Liberal government did nothing when we actually tabled a bill and the present government is so stubborn that it refuses to bring it forward, even though it knows it is necessary.

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary for Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of the key factors to consider with respect to cross-border drug sales.

First, let me just touch on some of the comments the member just made. The peak of the cross-border drug sales occurred many years before the bill to which the member referred was tabled. If the previous government had been really serious about dealing with the issue, it would have dealt with it at that time.

The political climate in the United States is actually quite contrary to what the member is suggesting because there is very little likelihood that the bill will actually pass.

Let me go into some other aspects. I hope to usefully inform the hon. members as to the current status of the issue, and how and to what extent this affects the interests of Canadians.

Let me begin by saying that the sale of Canadian prescription drugs to Americans is by no means a new practice. For years a limited number of Americans in border states have crossed into Canada to obtain prescription drugs from Canadian physicians, so that they could fill their prescriptions at lower Canadian prices. This activity is referred to as cross-border foot traffic.

Until recently, the number of individuals purchasing drugs from Canada was limited by the physical distance to the U.S. patient's place of residence and our clinics and pharmacies, not to speak of the need to cross the border. This foot traffic has been relatively stable at about \$500 million a year.

In contrast to foot traffic, cross-border Internet pharmacy transactions are a relatively new phenomenon ushered in with the advent of Internet commerce.

The introduction of the use of the Internet to facilitate prescription drug sales significantly lessened the importance of the border as a barrier to sales. Internet pharmacy transactions went through an initial rapid growth and then a dramatic recent decline.

The sales volumes were small in 2001, at about \$70 million, but grew tremendously to \$840 million per year in 2004, when the Liberals were in power, at a growth rate of over 1,100%. Combined with border foot traffic, total sales to the U.S. amounted to approximately \$1.35 billion in 2004.

The majority of the Internet pharmacy industry has been concentrated in the western provinces, particularly in Manitoba. In

2004, Manitoba accounted for nearly \$400 million in annual Internet pharmacy sales representing close to half of the industry's business.

Other provinces with a strong industry presence have included Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. These four provinces have consistently combined to account for more than 95% of the Internet pharmacy activity.

As well, at its peak it has been estimated that the Internet pharmacy industry has been a source of employment for up to 4,500 people.

Internet pharmacy sales peaked in 2004 at a value of \$840 million, but annual sales decreased by 25% from 2004 to 2005 and there was a further reduction of about 50% in 2006. Presumably there will be another huge reduction given the rapid appreciation of the Canadian dollar.

The drop in sales volume is due to many factors, including the introduction of a drug benefit for seniors under the U.S. medicare program. The decline in sales has been most pronounced in Manitoba, originally the largest volume Internet pharmacy province.

It is important to note that when the Internet drug sales to the U.S. were at their peak in 2004, there was no evidence of any impact on the Canadian supply.

It is not unreasonable to think that a three-quarter drop in sales would equate to a similar drop in the potential impact on the Canadian supply, but some members are suggesting that the risk to the Canadian supply is rising. This is very difficult to understand.

• (1350)

Cross-border drug sales, including both Internet and foot traffic sales, now amount to about \$700 million per year. At the peak of the Internet sales, the total sales volume was \$1.3 billion.

In the meantime, proposed U.S. legislation to legalize drug imports, bulk imports in particular, has the potential to impact on the volume of drug exports from Canada to the United States, but for reasons that I will explain in a moment, it is, I believe, highly unlikely that that situation will materialize.

In evaluating the risks for the Canadian supply, it is useful to have a good understanding of the underlying drivers of cross-border drug sales to the United States. The primary motivating factor is drug price differentials between the two countries.

For patented drugs, Canadian prices can range from 35% to 55% below those paid by Americans. This is in large part due to the fact that Canada has legislated the price of patented drugs. The federal Patented Medicines Prices Review Board was created in 1987 under the Brian Mulroney government through the Patent Act with the regulatory mandate of ensuring that patented drug prices in Canada are not excessive.

Private Members' Business

Combine our lower prices with those Americans who have only partial or no drug insurance and we have a market. There is also interest from smaller drug plans without significant negotiating power with drug manufacturers.

However, overall demand has been reduced dramatically in the last couple of years. This is primarily due to the introduction in the United States of Medicare Part D, which provides drug benefits for seniors and others, such as disabled Americans who previously were under-insured or uninsured.

State governments and many municipalities are also involved. Drug importation is effectively prohibited under U.S. federal law, with the exception of a 90 day personal import provision, but despite the legal considerations, the import option has received significant support from state and municipal governments. A number of states have considered, or in some cases, actually pursued some sort of state facilitated drug import program. That said, such activity seems to have also been moderated by the medicare drug benefit.

In the case of municipalities, the interest has been either on behalf of their own municipal employees or their residents at large. Many of these initiatives have been launched despite warnings from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration of possible contraventions of federal law.

Clearly, this level of interest in drug imports would not exist if Americans were not facing the twin problems of high drug prices and inadequate or non-existent drug coverage. However, I believe that any concern about impacts on the Canadian drug supply needs to be balanced with a calm and considered examination of the situation.

First, the Americans are looking at solving this issue domestically.

Second, a number of factors have combined to dramatically reduce the volume of Internet based cross-border drug sales, including Medicare Part D and the rising Canadian dollar.

Third, imports of prescription drugs via Internet pharmacies are officially not permitted in the United States and we have not seen the floodgates open as a result. In fact, there was a sharp decline in the last quarter of 2006 of 20% of cross-border shipments due to U.S. customs.

Fourth, despite recent changes in the makeup of the U.S. Congress, we are a long way from a bill legalizing bulk imports being approved by the White House without such a bill including major impediments to actual imports in practice. In other words, the White House does not support the importation of drugs and therefore, the bill would have very little chance of passing.

The Canadian drug supply is safe. There is no danger in the short, medium or long term. This bill is not necessary and therefore, I do not support it.

• (1355)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Lussier (Brossard—La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for St. Paul's for her speech. I understand that the purpose of the bill she introduced today is to make it possible to prohibit the export or sale of prescription drugs

and medications set out in a schedule to the Food and Drugs Regulations. There are currently no drugs listed in the schedule.

The bill has two specific goals. The first is to establish the principle that exporting any drug listed in the schedule should be prohibited if such activity could compromise the supply of that drug in Canada. The bill's second goal is to make it illegal to export prescription drugs. Bill C-378 is a kind of insurance policy against bulk exportation of prescription drugs in case of shortages in Canada.

To better understand the issue, we need to look at the pricing mechanisms for prescription drugs. In the United States, the power to set prices for prescription drugs is in the hands of pharmaceutical corporations. They can price their products as they see fit. Under pressure from American lobbyists, the Bush administration allows the pharmaceutical industry complete freedom to set its prices.

In Canada, except in Quebec, the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, the PMPRB, which was established in 1987 in accordance with the Patent Act, sets maximum prices for medicines. The PMPRB is responsible for protecting the interests of Canadian consumers by ensuring that prices charged by manufacturers for patented medicines are not excessive.

Quebec has its own drug review process, the Conseil du médicament. The drug policy includes measures to ensure that Quebec is paying fair and reasonable prices for drugs.

It would be interesting to find out why the price difference is so big that Americans want to buy their medicines in Canada. Because prices in Canada are fixed by independent agencies, prices for identical products are often 30% to 60% lower here than in the United States.

It was pointed out earlier that the price of prescription drugs exported to and paid for by Americans fluctuates according to the value of the Canadian dollar. As the Canadian dollar rises, Canadian drugs become less profitable and attractive to Americans. Today the Canadian dollar was trading at \$1.07 U.S., or 7% higher than its U.S. counterpart.

So how can we ensure the security of supply for Canada? Cross-border sales of pharmaceuticals to the United States have become an important source of trade for Canada. Since the Americans can take advantage of lower prices here than at home, they try to stock up in Canada. The potential is considerable, given that 37 million people aged 55 and older want to buy their pharmaceuticals here.

Private Members' Business

According to the Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec, the on-line pharmaceutical market has reached over \$1 billion a year in Canada. Although all Canadian pharmacies must obey Canadian laws, the legislation is not airtight everywhere. While on one hand, the federal government has the authority to legislate exports, on the other hand, the provinces and territories are responsible for regulating medical and pharmaceutical practices through, in Quebec, the Collège des médecins and the Ordre des pharmaciens.

Thus, trade is particularly lucrative in Manitoba, where the laws surrounding the sale of pharmaceuticals are more flexible. According to estimates by a company called Secor, in 2003, nearly 20% of pharmacists in that province worked mainly to sell to Americans. That was the infamous peak year that was mentioned earlier. Also according to the same source, the majority of pharmacists in Canada who sell to the United States happen to be in Manitoba.

• (1400)

The Canadian Pharmacists Association warned of the following:

Canada needs to protect itself from having our drug supply drained, which will occur if the US passes this legislation. The cross border drug trade does not appear to be on the agenda of the current [Conservative] government. We believe that acting only after US bills are passed and Canadians are experiencing drug shortages is not an adequate response on the part of the Canadian government. The government will have to act sooner or later – and sooner is preferred. An important first step would be to pass Bill 378.

In Canada, neither international trade obligations nor domestic law prohibit such exports. However, Quebec and the provinces must follow rules with respect to these export transactions. Someone can speak about Ontario, but I will limit myself to the situation in Quebec.

As in so many other areas, Quebec is way ahead in terms of monitoring sales of prescription drugs and has taken steps to prevent the online sale of prescription drugs to Americans.

Under the Pharmacy Act, a pharmacist can sell drugs only to patients who have prescriptions written by a person authorized under Quebec legislation or the legislation of a Canadian province that authorizes that person to prescribe that drug if that person practises in Quebec.

The Quebec Code of ethics of physicians stipulates that in order to write a prescription for a patient, a doctor must evaluate the patient, establish a diagnosis, formulate a treatment plan, provide information to the patient and obtain consent. Some Quebec doctors have already been struck from the Collège des médecins du Québec for illegally selling drugs on the Internet to Americans they never met. I have with me a newspaper article that mentions the name of four such doctors who were fined between \$5,000 and \$25,000, in addition to being banned from practising for six months for signing prescriptions for U.S. patients without meeting them. I was quite surprised to see the name of a doctor from my riding on that list of four doctors. They operated on the Internet at myprescription.com, which means that Internet pharmacies are right next door.

Physicians practising in Quebec are not allowed to countersign a prescription from another physician without complying with the requirements that apply to the prescription. A Quebec physician who countersigns a prescription from an American physician therefore risks being sued, not only in Quebec, but also in the United States.

In terms of online business, Quebec already has the necessary tools to protect pharmacies' supply and ensure that patients receive the appropriate medication for their condition and information on how to use it properly.

In conclusion, the Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-378 in principle. The bill answers concerns about the possible reduction in inventories of drugs meant for Canadians. Although there is no shortage at present, we need to look at preventive measures before such a situation occurs. By setting strict criteria to regulate bulk drug exports, Bill C-378 would prevent an unfortunate situation from arising.

The bill should reassure the pharmaceutical industry and prevent it from raising drug prices, as American companies were tempted to do in retaliation.

The bill does not place a total ban on drug exports. It provides for a mechanism based on known criteria that can be produced in evidence.

• (1405)

[English]

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the bill, which is aimed at protecting the Canadian pharmaceutical supply from bulk exports south of the border.

Canadians need to have a secure supply of the pharmaceuticals they need. This is not to say that we do not understand that the health care system south of the border leaves much to be improved. More than 50 million Americans have no health coverage. Many other Americans have substandard coverage in the sense that they think they are covered by health care insurance, but when they become ill, they find out their hospital stay or drug coverage is not there to protect them.

We understand the need. Americans have been facing very high drug prices. That is why Canadian pharmaceutical companies have been appealing to Americans who have been accessing bulk exports of Canadian pharmaceuticals.

We do not want to be locked into a path where the security of supply for export supercedes the security of supply for Canadians. When Canadians need pharmaceutical drugs, whether for catastrophic care, or for an epidemic or pandemic of some kind, we need a policy to ensure we have the security of drugs we need. While we recognize the situation of Americans, the bulk export of Canadian drugs is not the solution.

My colleague, who introduced the bill, has explained that there are many drawbacks to relying on Canadian bulk exports, such as the scarcity of some ingredients that limit the amount of supply needed for some drugs. Many of them are time dated, so they cannot be stockpiled in a warehouse somewhere in case they might be needed by our neighbour south of the border.

We know what happens in a time of scarcity. During the SARS crisis a few years ago in Toronto, there was a great deal of panic about the cause of the epidemic and a great concern about how people could protect themselves from the spread of this disease. In a situation like this there is always the danger of hoarding. People will do what they think is in their best interests to protect themselves and their families. Some people also hoard because they think they can make some business from this situation. If there is a crisis situation, we want to ensure that Canadians will have access to the drug supply they need.

We also know there have been problems with counterfeit medications. Our border inspectors do not inspect every shipment that goes across the border. I have heard that 1% of shipments are physically inspected. This then leaves open the possibility of counterfeiting, which not only endangers the health of Americans, it also diverts production that could be put to beneficial use rather than counterfeit use.

It is important to safeguard the Canadian supply and to avert going down the path where we open ourselves or our neighbours to the south to the risks of bulk drug exports. The Government of Canada must do what is necessary to ensure that Canadians are protected.

● (1410)

I also want to speak about drug coverage in Canada. While Americans may think we have a more desirable situation here, because of lower drug prices, primarily through generic brand pharmaceuticals, we also have a problem with drug prices on this side of the border.

The drug patent laws have been giving brand name pharmaceutical companies more and more patent protection over the years. The Conservative government extended patent protection up to eight years now for brand name drugs. This will see hundreds of millions more dollars of costs added to our pharmaceutical costs in Canada. We also have the problem of evergreening of drugs under patent protection, which has not been addressed.

What it means is higher drug costs for Canadians. They are so costly that in fact many Canadians simply cannot afford to have their prescriptions filled as it stands today. It adds to the financial stress that many Canadian families are under. We can all imagine the situation of people who go to a drug store to fill their prescriptions. They find out the price and they simply cannot afford to have the prescription filled, which would help them regain their health.

It is time Canada had a national universal drug plan to promote better health for Canadians without breaking the bank. We have an opportunity while we have surplus budgets, surplus funds federally, if the government does not give it all away to the banks and the oil companies, to invest in Canadians. We can pool our resources to bulk purchase drugs for Canadians. We could do that through a universal pharmaceutical program.

Private Members' Business

We have seen with our universal health care program, medicare, that our costs are far below costs south of the border, by pooling our resources and ensuring that everyone is covered, rather than leaving too many people behind.

The government has dropped its promise to deal with wait times when it comes to health care. That has been a shameful oversight. Here is an opportunity for the Conservatives to introduce something positive with respect to health care, and that is a national pharmacare program.

An important step is to secure our supply of drugs for Canadians and to ensure we do not export drugs south of the border that could jeopardize supply in Canada. I believe a more fundamental, an important step and a necessary step for Canadians is to ensure they all have access to the pharmaceutical drugs they need. We have to keep costs down as a country. I believe a national pharmacare program is long overdue. It would make a huge difference for Canadian families.

● (1415)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this bill is about one simple thing. It is about meeting the needs of Canadians who want to feel secure that their prescription drugs and vaccines are there for Canadians. Let me re-emphasize that. This bill talks about security of supply of drugs and vaccines for Canadians.

I will not get into a lot of the technical details of the bill. The member of Parliament for St. Paul's went to great lengths to explain some of the technical details of the bill, but I want to talk about it in layman's terms.

I congratulate the member for St. Paul's for bringing forward this bill. Previously she was a minister of public health and therefore she understands the needs of Canadians on the ground. She is a medical doctor and therefore she knows first hand how important it is that Canadians are able to get not just drugs, but the most recent drugs, the most effective drugs in terms of meeting Canadians' needs. This bill is about meeting Canadians' needs.

Bill C-378 is about Canada not becoming America's drugstore. By amending the Food and Drugs Act, this legislation would protect Canadians.

The bill would amend the Food and Drugs Act to prohibit the export of drugs set out in schedules D and F to the Food and Drugs Act regulations, which are vaccines and prescription drugs, except as permitted under the regulations.

Private Members' Business

The bill would make it an offence under the Food and Drugs Act to export prescription drugs in prohibited circumstances. The exporter would be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine of up to \$50,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, and on conviction by indictment, to a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years.

Simply put, this bill would push the Canadian government to stand up for Canadians. It is something the Conservative government very seldom does.

We heard in the House today that it is not standing up for a Canadian citizen who is facing execution in the United States. The excuse is that a democratic decision was made in the United States. Canadians have always stood up for human rights. That is why we are respected around the world. How can the government go to China and talk about human rights any more when it is allowing a Canadian citizen to be executed in the United States?

That may be a little different story from this particular drug and vaccine issue, but it is all about standing up for Canadians, and the Conservative government is failing to do it. In terms of opposing this bill, it is clearly not standing up for Canadians.

This bill would push the government to stand up for Canadians, rather than just allow the export of drugs that would enhance American health and ignore the need for Canadians to be absolutely sure that the necessary drugs are available for Canadians. The government is opposing that.

I was shocked when I listened to the Parliamentary Secretary for Health. He went on at great length to say that the White House is opposed to the importation of drugs and therefore, we really do not need to deal with it.

I know the Conservatives love George Bush and love to hug him, but if they would just look a little beyond him to the candidates for the next presidency, they would see that most of the candidates support the importation of Canadian drugs into the United States because the drugs are cheaper.

● (1420)

We can understand why those presidential candidates are doing that. It is because the American health care system does not work. Over 40 million people do not have access to health care. It would be a great cover for the Americans to import cheap Canadian drugs, even if it shorted Canadians in terms of their supply, to kind of cover up the failures of their own health care system.

There is no question that the new government would stand by idly and risk the drug supply for Canadians. This bill is basically challenging the government, the companion of George Bush, to actually stand up for Canadians for a change and protect their supply of drugs and vaccines.

I have to ask this question. How often do we need to have Canadians subsidizing the United States?

The United States is our great friend. I spend a fair amount of time down there and the U.S. is our greatest trading partner. However, I think every Canadian is bothered when they learn that we are exporting oil and gas to the United States, a great Canadian resource,

and what it is being used for in the United States. It is a cheaper supply. It is subsidizing its industrial plants so they can compete against Canadian industrial plants with cheap Canadian energy.

Why do we always need to be more supportive of the United States economy than our own? Now the government is going to put Canadians at risk by not being proactive and supporting Bill C-378.

Some will argue, as they always do because they like to use the trade agreements as a great crutch, that this will violate the trade rules. I say to the Government of Canada that if the trade rules do not make sense for Canadians then they need to be challenged. If this bill means there needs to be a challenge to the trade rules, then let us challenge the trade rules. That would only make sense because then we would be standing up for Canadians.

The parliamentary secretary raised a number of points. He basically said that there was no imminent drug shortage and that the United States Congress has not adopted legislation to legalize the bulk importation of drugs. That is true for the moment but why can we not be proactive?

The fact of the matter is that the government should be proactive by banning bulk exports to the United States rather than waiting until after shortages of prescription drugs and medications occur.

As a coalition of Canadian pharmacists, distributors and patients said in a letter to the health minister on January 12:

We believe it is incumbent on the Government of Canada to respond proactively to this threat, with actions driven by a commitment to prevent harm and protect the public interest.

Why will the Government of Canada not listen to Canadians, to pharmacists, to distributors and to patients and be proactive? These people are concerned. Instead, the parliamentary secretary takes his advice from the White House. That is unacceptable.

He also talked about the Internet pharmacy sales having decreased significantly in the past two years. We really cannot be sure of that. It is difficult to determine the extent of Internet sales to the United States because many of them are being made offshore.

The bottom line is this. This bill is all about protecting the security of the drug and vaccine supply and medications for Canadians. The Canadian government should be proactive in terms of supporting this bill, even if it means it needs to stand up to the United States in terms of its agenda and its wishes. The government should stand up for Canadians, be proactive and support this bill to ensure that protection is there.

● (1425)

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the constituents of Fleetwood—Port Kells to participate in the debate on Bill C-378.

The bill has been proposed as a response to developments in the United States. I think it is important that we understand the U.S. situation before deciding how to address it.

This proposed U.S. legislation to legalize drug imports is motivated by shortcomings in the American health care system. These deficiencies have left a sizeable number of Americans exposed to unmanageable prescription drug costs.

As Canadians, we value social supports and health care that seeks to be inclusive of all Canadians. So, while we are not unsympathetic to the issue of Americans without drug insurance, I think we can agree that importation of Canadian sourced drugs is simply not an adequate solution.

I would like to talk about the important role that prescription drugs play in our health care system.

There can be no denying that drugs have brought tremendous health care advances that benefit all Canadians. However, in addition to protecting an adequate supply for Canadians, we must also be vigilant in ensuring that costs remain manageable.

In recent years, drug costs have accounted for an increasingly large portion of expenditures in the Canadian health care system, with expenditures growing faster than any other component of health care. Drugs are now the second largest expenditure in our health care system.

According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, total expenditures on prescribed and non-prescribed drugs in Canada is estimated to have exceeded \$35 billion in 2006. This includes public

Private Members' Business

and private insurance, as well as out of pocket expenditures. Spending on prescribed drugs in 2006 was estimated at more than \$21 billion. This represents almost 84% of total drug expenditure and is nearly 20% more than in 1985. Spending on all drugs in 2006 amounted to an estimated 17% of total health expenditures in Canada, outstripping what we spend on doctors.

That said, Canadian patented prescription drug prices are in line with other major industrialized countries, except—

• (1430)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It is with regret that I interrupt the hon. member but the time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

When Bill C-378 comes back for study, there will be seven minutes left to the hon. member for Fleetwood—Port Kells.

[*Translation*]

It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

HON. BILL BLAIKIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ROYAL GALIPEAU

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

MR. MICHAEL IGNATIEFF

MR. JAMES MOORE

MR. JOE PRESTON

HON. KAREN REDMAN

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Thirty Nine Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage..	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill.....	Alberta	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga.....	Ontario	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Ontario	Lib.
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Allison, Dean.....	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	BQ
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard.....	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior.....	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry.....	Yukon.....	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	CPC
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	Québec	BQ
Barnes, Hon. Sue.....	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Batters, Dave	Palliser.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Beaumier, Colleen.....	Brampton West.....	Ontario	Lib.
Bélangier, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Lib.
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn.....	St. Paul's.....	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon.....	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories....	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake.....	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Black, Dawn.....	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker.....	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blais, Raynald.....	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooog, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	Ind.
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	CPC
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	BQ
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la- Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	Québec	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Manitoba	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity)	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	BQ
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloney, John	Welland	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Pallister, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shiely, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	Ontario	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	Ind.
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Ontario	Lib.
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	York—Simcoe.....	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages	Louis-Saint-Laurent.....	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert.....	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest.....	Ontario	Lib.
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River.....	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex.....	Ontario	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon.....	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John.....	Edmonton—St. Albert.....	Alberta	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country....	British Columbia	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre.....	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development.....	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Zed, Paul.....	Saint John	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
VACANCY	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River.....	Saskatchewan	
VACANCY	Toronto Centre	Ontario	
VACANCY	Willowdale	Ontario	
VACANCY	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Thirty Nine Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity) ...	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont ...	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (35)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	Lib.
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	NDP
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	Lib.
VACANCY	Vancouver Quadra	
MANITOBA (14)		
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Bruinooge, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pallister, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche.....	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Hubbard, Hon. Charles.....	Miramichi.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic.....	Beauséjour.....	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest.....	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	Lib.
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Byrne, Hon. Gerry.....	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East.....	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.....	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	CPC
Manning, Fabian.....	Avalon	CPC
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott.....	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor.....	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis.....	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brison, Hon. Scott.....	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Ind.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark.....	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	CPC
McDonough, Alexa.....	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West.....	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore.....	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Lib.
NUNAVUT (1)		
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut.....	Lib.
ONTARIO (104)		
Albrecht, Harold.....	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alghabra, Omar.....	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Barnes, Hon. Sue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	CPC
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	CPC
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Lib.
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Lib.
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform.....	York—Simcoe.....	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph.....	Eglinton—Lawrence.....	Lib.
Wallace, Mike.....	Burlington.....	CPC
Wappel, Tom.....	Scarborough Southwest.....	Lib.
Watson, Jeff.....	Essex.....	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon.....	Richmond Hill.....	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys.....	Etobicoke Centre.....	Lib.
VACANCY.....	Toronto Centre.....	
VACANCY.....	Willowdale.....	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Hon. Wayne.....	Malpeque.....	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence.....	Cardigan.....	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe.....	Egmont.....	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn.....	Charlottetown.....	Lib.

QUÉBEC (75)

André, Guy.....	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	BQ
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard.....	Manicouagan.....	BQ
Bachand, Claude.....	Saint-Jean.....	BQ
Barbot, Vivian.....	Papineau.....	BQ
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska.....	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of Foreign Affairs.....	Beauce.....	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.....	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec.....	Jonquière—Alma.....	CPC
Blais, Raynald.....	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.....	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse.....	CPC
Bonsant, France.....	Compton—Stanstead.....	BQ
Bouchard, Robert.....	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.....	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women.....	Beauport—Limoilou.....	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane.....	Terrebonne—Blainville.....	BQ
Brunelle, Paule.....	Trois-Rivières.....	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities....	Pontiac.....	CPC
Cardin, Serge.....	Sherbrooke.....	BQ
Carrier, Robert.....	Alfred-Pellan.....	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis.....	Bourassa.....	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin.....	Mount Royal.....	Lib.
Crête, Paul.....	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska— Rivière-du-Loup.....	BQ
DeBellefeuille, Claude.....	Beauharnois—Salaberry.....	BQ
Demers, Nicole.....	Laval.....	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne.....	Laurentides—Labelle.....	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition.....	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville.....	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles.....	Laurier—Sainte-Marie.....	BQ
Faille, Meili.....	Vaudreuil—Soulanges.....	BQ
Folco, Raymonde.....	Laval—Les Îles.....	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	BQ
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Ind.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
SASKATCHEWAN (13)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Batters, Dave.....	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.....	CPC
Trost, Bradley.....	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	CPC
VACANCY	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River .	
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of November 2, 2007 — 2nd Session, 39th Parliament)

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Jean Crowder

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Yvon Lévesque
Anita Neville

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

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Mr. Deepak Obhrai	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
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Hon. Jim Abbott	for Canadian Heritage
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CONTENTS

Friday, November 2, 2007

Points of Order

Finance Department Briefing

Mr. Regan	733
Mr. Casson	733
Mr. Goodale	733
Mr. Epp	733
Mr. Menzies	733

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Aeronautics Act

Bill C-7, Third reading	734
Ms. Bell (Vancouver Island North)	734
Mr. Bevington	735
Mrs. Mathysen	736
Ms. Davies	737
Mr. Volpe	738
Mr. Volpe	738
Ms. Davies	739

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean

Mr. Lebel	740
-----------------	-----

Remembrance Day

Mr. Valley	740
------------------	-----

Agriculture

Mr. Gravel	740
------------------	-----

Amabile Youth Singers

Mrs. Mathysen	741
---------------------	-----

Remembrance Week

Mr. Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	741
--	-----

Remembrance Day

Mr. Savage	741
------------------	-----

Remembrance Day

Mr. Menzies	741
-------------------	-----

Manufacturing Sector

Mr. Malo	741
----------------	-----

Skilled Trades

Mrs. Yelich	742
-------------------	-----

Silver Cross Mothers

Mr. McGuinty	742
--------------------	-----

Economic Statement

Mr. Tweed	742
-----------------	-----

Governor General's Awards

Ms. Nash	742
----------------	-----

Remembrance Day

Ms. Guarnieri	742
---------------------	-----

Interculturalism

Ms. Faille	743
------------------	-----

Remembrance Day

Mr. D'Amours	743
--------------------	-----

Economic Statement

Mr. Benoit	743
------------------	-----

ORAL QUESTIONS

Airbus

Mr. Thibault (West Nova)	743
Mr. Van Loan	743
Mr. Thibault (West Nova)	743
Mr. Van Loan	743
Mr. Thibault (West Nova)	744
Mr. Van Loan	744
Mrs. Redman	744
Mr. Van Loan	744
Mrs. Redman	744
Mr. Van Loan	744

Justice

Mr. Guimond	744
Mr. Van Loan	744
Mr. Guimond	744
Mr. Van Loan	744

400th Anniversary of Quebec City

Mr. Laframboise	745
Mr. Cannon	745
Mr. Laframboise	745
Mr. Cannon	745

Economic Statement

Ms. Davies	745
Mr. Van Loan	745
Ms. Davies	745
Mr. Van Loan	745

Foreign Affairs

Ms. Sgro	745
Mr. Nicholson	745
Ms. Sgro	746
Mr. Nicholson	746
Mr. Regan	746
Mr. MacKenzie	746
Mr. Regan	746
Mr. MacKenzie	746

Manufacturing Sector

Ms. Brunelle	746
Mr. Gourde	746
Ms. Brunelle	746
Mr. Gourde	746
Mr. Bouchard	746
Mr. Gourde	747

Ms. Davies	756
Points of Order	
Clock Malfunction during Statements by Members	
Mr. Benoit	756

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Economic Statement	
Mr. Benoit	756

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Aeronautics Act	
Bill C-7, Third reading	757
Ms. Davies	757
Mr. Tweed	759
Mr. Laframboise	760

Mrs. Mathysen	760
Mr. Bevington	761
Ms. Davies	762

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Food and Drugs Act

Ms. Bennett	763
Bill C-378, Second reading	763
Mr. Fletcher	765
Mr. Fletcher	766
Mr. Lussier	767
Ms. Nash	768
Mr. Easter	769
Mrs. Grewal	770

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