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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1405)

[English]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the more than three years since I was elected as a member of Parliament, I have always been impressed by the courtesy and professionalism displayed by the staff of the House of Commons and the parliamentary precinct as a whole. They deserve the admiration and praise of all hon. members.

However, there is a group of about 40 dedicated staff here on the Hill who, although we listen to regularly each day here in the House and in committee, we seldom get the chance to meet face to face.

Just to qualify to work in this area, they need a Master's degree from the University of Ottawa, followed by at least one year of practical training. The transcription of their work becomes a testament to the presentations and interventions by hon. members and senators each day of each session of each Parliament.

By now I am sure members will know or will have guessed of whom I speak. I welcome all hon. members to join me in expressing our sincere gratitude and appreciate to the people of interpretation services.

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QUINTESSENTIAL VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the success of the Quintessential Vocal Ensemble from Newfoundland and Labrador, who represented Canada and captured three awards this past week at

the prestigious Florilège Vocal de Tours international choral competition held in France.

They won awards for the best overall renaissance program and received the prix du ministère de la culture for the best presentation of a French choral work composed after 1830.

The Quintessential Vocal Ensemble is conducted by Susan Quinn. It was formed in 1993 by the alumni of the award-winning Holy Heart of Mary High School Chamber Choir, my alumni, so that their musical experiences might continue. The choir has distinguished itself by winning prizes and awards both nationally and internationally.

The choir continued their successful tour of France this week, giving performances at Vimy Ridge, Beaumont-Hamel, Arras today, and Paris tomorrow.

I am proud to count these individuals among my constituents and friends, and offer my heartfelt congratulations.

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[Translation]

QUEBEC WEEK OF THE DISABLED

Mrs. Ève-Mary Thāï Thi Lac (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is Quebec Week of the Disabled. As members of Parliament, we can contribute to raising public awareness of the variety of situations the disabled experience. We are all aware of the daily struggle the disabled have as they strive to take their place in society and especially to win respect for their rights.

It takes only simple actions to support them in their efforts.

May I take this opportunity to salute the not for profit organizations in my riding, as well as all others that provide invaluable service to all those living with disability. I did volunteer work myself for a number of years and I know just how much needs to be done.

Today is an opportunity for me to invite my colleagues in the House to think about some one thing they can do for this Quebec Week of the Disabled. It is also an opportunity to salute all those people who continue to battle daily for acceptance in society.

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[English]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, health care is fundamental to us as Canadians.

Statements by Members

I am proud to be part of the New Democratic Party, a party that has led and continues to lead the fight on health care in our country. We recognize, however, that there is a lot left to be desired when it comes to Canada's health care first peoples, first nations.

Despite Canada's obligation to first nations in terms of health care, they face one of the lowest standards of living in Canada, challenges that many Canadians cannot imagine.

First nations need more doctors, nurses and health workers to meet the demand, preventing such tragedies as the death of Chace Barkman of Garden Hill who was misdiagnosed.

First nations need preventive supports, as we are now dealing with a possible outbreak of the flu in St. Theresa Point that could potentially be damaging.

First nations need health care infrastructure in their communities that fit their needs, whether it is Cross Lake, Opaskwayak Cree Nation or the Island Lake region that have been demanding health centres for some time.

Finally, first nations deserve access to housing, roads, water and sewer services, education and employment that so many Canadians take for granted.

* * *

SKIN CANCER

Ms. Dona Cadman (Surrey North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last evening I had the pleasure of co-hosting, along with the Canadian Dermatology Association, the third annual Chuck Cadman memorial skin cancer clinic.

I am pleased to announce that last night's event saw its highest turnout of over 150 guests. The doctors performed over 60 full examinations and many partial.

In 2009 it is estimated that more than 75,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with non-melanoma skin cancer, 5,000 will have melanoma, and 940 will die.

Skin cancers, including melanoma, are highly curable if detected and treated early.

I would like to thank my colleagues from all sides of this House, the Upper Chamber and staff for coming out and partaking in this important event.

This summer I will host a similar event in my riding in which I hope that together with the Canadian Dermatology Association, we can help save lives.

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[Translation]

MONTREAL'S MOUNT SINAI AND JEWISH GENERAL HOSPITALS

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to the historic anniversaries of two health institutions founded by the Montreal Jewish community and located in my riding.

[English]

The first is the centennial anniversary of Mount Sinai Hospital, a state of the art McGill University affiliated teaching hospital specializing in respiratory care, palliative care and long-term care, underpinned by innovative research and exemplary ambulatory services.

The second is the 75th anniversary of the Jewish General Hospital, one of the province's largest and most engaged cutting edge health care institutions, also affiliated with McGill University, that admits more than 23,000 patients a year together with at least 300,000 outpatient visits, 67,000 emergency visits and delivers more than 4,000 births on an annual basis.

I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to these two world class institutions providing comprehensive, accessible, innovative, responsive and patient-oriented health care to all Quebecers and beyond.

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● (1410)

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY OF EVRON

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in August 1909 eight women from the Sisters of Charity Notre Dame d'Evron in France arrived in Trochu, Alberta and established a hospital and a school.

One hundred years later we will honour them as they succeeded in bravely facing the many challenges of pioneer life on the prairies.

This August, Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Evron from all over the world including Africa, England, France, Peru and Canada will join us to celebrate in Trochu, Alberta.

The St. Mary's Health Care Centre in Trochu has served generations of families in need of hospital care in my riding.

We will name the new subdivision in Trochu "Evron Place" dedicating it to the memory of the sisters who came here to help build and serve our community.

The Knights of Columbus, the Communities in Bloom, the town council, local businessmen and school children are all pulling together to commemorate the 100th anniversary.

In Trochu we are thankful and truly blessed by the efforts and legacy of these eight sisters and the many who followed them.

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[Translation]

BILL C-306

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on June 1, I spoke to Bill C-306, An Act respecting the use of government contracts to promote economic development at second reading. This bill will make it possible to create hundreds of jobs and, we hope, to attenuate some of the negative effects of the economic crisis we are going through.

Statements by Members

What did the Conservative member and Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board have to say? “The year is 2009, not 1929. We live in a time when Canada no longer needs to prop up its industries with protectionist laws.”

As for the Liberals, they said they would not support Bill C-306 because “the bill seems aimed less at being passed than as a medium for certain partisan discussions.” Yes, let us send this bill to committee where it can be discussed. What a lukewarm reaction from the Liberals.

As for the workers of Quebec, they understand that one of the things a bill like C-306 is aimed at is economic recovery.

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[*English*]

CLEAN AIR DAY

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Clean Air Day.

Clean Air Day is an important part of environment week first championed by our great former Conservative Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker.

For too many Canadians air pollution is a significant health concern. That is why our government is continuing the Conservative tradition of cleaning up our air.

Our government is committed to reducing pollution and its negative effects. We are expanding the air quality health index launched in 2007. We are committed to solving the health impacts experienced by Canadians on poor quality air days.

We are also working with the provinces and other stakeholders to put in place regulations to reduce air pollution from industrial activities.

We are holding a formal dialogue with the United States to reinforce our efforts to reduce air pollution.

I challenge all members of the House to champion air quality within their own constituencies.

* * *

CLEAN AIR DAY

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is Clean Air Day, a chance to recognize the importance of the quality of air we breathe.

Even in tough economic times, we must make clean air a priority. Doing so is an investment in our future.

A recent poll commissioned by the Canadian Lung Association found that 54% of Canadians believe clean air should be a top priority for both provincial and federal governments.

Only 30% of Canadians said that their governments are doing enough to clean up dirty air. That is a strong message that we need to be doing more to protect the health of Canadians and the environment in which we live.

Air quality affects everyone. Children, seniors, asthmatics and outdoor workers are particularly at risk. Dr. Menn Biagtan of the

British Columbia Lung Association has said that the link between air pollution and lung disease is often under appreciated.

I invite the government to use Clean Air Day 2009 as a reminder to take stronger action and ensure Canadians enjoy a cleaner environment, fewer smog days and healthier lungs.

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●(1415)

NUNAVUT OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party and its empty rhetoric on Canada's north.

On Monday, this House spoke with one voice and endorsed a motion recognizing the Nunavut Official Languages Act. This motion is the result of 10 years of consultations on the best ways to preserve the Inuit language and culture.

The motion also recognizes that the Inuit will proudly control their institutions, speak their language and manage their future. This was a historic occasion.

Unfortunately, on Tuesday, unelected and unaccountable Liberal Senators blocked the passage of this step forward for Nunavut. This is a disgrace and members of the Liberal Party should be ashamed of themselves.

Unlike the Liberals, we take the north seriously. We value its place, culture and creed within Canada. With Conservatives, our northern policy is more than just empty lip service. With Conservatives, it is real action.

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1989 TIANANMEN SQUARE PROTEST

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago, Ding Zilin's son went to Tiananmen Square to celebrate free speech, democracy, and to push against corruption. Along with other students, Jiang Jielian died that night on the square.

Since then, China's economic reforms have lifted millions out of poverty. However, a great country must allow for workers' rights and encourage human rights reform.

Let us redouble our efforts here in Canada to build a stronger relationship with China through cultural exchange and trade so there are more opportunities for dialogue on democracy and human rights.

Tiananmen mothers cannot mourn in public, but they can rest assured we will remember them and their children.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the opposition leader's fiscal agenda is clear: he wants to raise taxes. He himself has admitted that he will have to raise taxes.

Oral Questions

We would like to remind him once again that Canadians do not want tax hikes. It is clear that the Liberal leader is gradually falling into his party's bad habits. It is also clear that people across the country do not want to go backward.

Fortunately, the Leader of the Opposition has an alternate plan. He told us that if he were not elected, he thought he would ask Harvard University to take him back.

He seems to have his heart set on returning to Harvard. He can rest easy: more than ever, our government is committed to fighting these tax hikes and his centralist fervour and giving Harvard University a gift.

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LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, members will be called on to vote on my bill, which would require federally regulated companies to comply with Bill 101 in Quebec. The Liberals and Conservatives like to brag about recognizing the Quebec nation, but they refuse to give expression to that recognition by honouring that nation's only official language: French.

The leader of the Liberal Party can talk all he wants about being the first federalist in Ottawa to recognize the Quebec nation, but in actual fact he thinks like the Conservatives. He is ducking the issue and will be absent for the vote, and his fellow Liberals will vote against this bill. In 2006, the same Liberal leader said that recognizing Quebec as a nation within Canada did not mean making new concessions.

Quebeckers are not stupid. They know that there is no difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives and that these parties will never take real steps to recognize the Quebec nation.

The Bloc Québécois members, on the other hand, stand up to defend Quebec and the French language.

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7TH ÉTUDIANT OUTAOUAIS GALA OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on May 12, the 7th gala of excellence for the *Étudiant Outaouais* newspaper was held at the Maison de la culture in Gatineau. Over the course of the school year, more than 170 student journalists from 14 high schools tackled some formidable challenges. Three hundred texts were written as part of the competition for the 2009 journalism awards gala.

The 2009 gold trophy was awarded to Joé Charbonneau Laurin, a grade-ten student at Érablière comprehensive high school. The silver trophy was awarded to Gabrielle Falardeau, from Mont-Bleu high school, and the bronze trophy was awarded to Sarah Lemelin-Bellerose, from Versant high school.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to these three winners for their remarkable talent, their determination and their brilliant success. As well, I congratulate the student artists who also demonstrated exceptional talent.

I would also like to congratulate the Amis de L'Étudiant Outaouais group, and especially Martin Godcher, Sylvain Dupras and Marie-

Ève Bouchard, for their dedication and for generously volunteering their time. A special thank you to Jacques Blais, from Médias Transcontinental—

● (1420)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Oak Ridges—Markham.

* * *

[English]

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader will say anything and do anything to get what he wants. He came back to Canada simply to rule our country.

He is so focused on winning at any cost that he will actually say what the Liberal Party wants him to hide. On April 14, he said he would raise taxes. He would hike the GST. He is also the father of the job-killing carbon tax.

When out in B.C., he called the forestry sector a basement industry. He then criticized the auto sector out in B.C. to make up for that slip of the tongue. Once he got back to Ontario, he then defended the auto sector.

He will say anything, do anything, including blurting out that he will raise taxes—

The Speaker: Order. Oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when a minister loses a binder full of secret government documents, it is serious.

When the same minister does not try to get them back because she did not even know that they were lost, it is ridiculous.

When she blames her own employee, it is despicable.

How can Canadians believe this minister when she does not want to assume her own responsibilities?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious matter. Clear procedures were not followed in this case. Corrective action has been taken. I offered to resign if the Prime Minister felt it necessary and he did not accept it. The person responsible for handling the documents offered to resign and I did accept that resignation.

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that presumably is the same 26-year-old staffer who is responsible for spending \$1.7 billion since 2006. It is presumably the same staffer who is responsible for the isotope shortage. It is presumably the 26-year-old staffer who is responsible for the whole darn department.

Oral Questions

How are we supposed to believe such a fiction? When will the minister take her responsibilities seriously?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, this is a serious matter. Clear procedures were not followed. We have taken corrective measures in that matter.

As well, it is important to note that this government has invested \$1.7 billion in AECL since 2006 because we do believe in the 30,000 high-skilled jobs here in Ontario and supporting the Canadian nuclear industry.

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue here is an issue of competence, and not just competence in relation to this minister, but competence in relation to the whole government.

In 24 hours we have learned that the Minister of Natural Resources lost a binder of secret documents and did not even know the documents were missing. We have also learned in the last 24 hours that the Minister of Finance missed the mark on his five year deficit estimates by a staggering \$70 billion.

The issue here is that Canadians want competence in their government. When are they going to get it?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated already, this government has taken steps. We know that this is a very serious matter. The procedures were not followed and corrective action has been taken.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote the Prime Minister, who said last year: “The former foreign affairs minister admitted that he left classified documents in unsecured premises. That is the reason why he tendered his resignation and I accepted it.”

Does this standard still apply?

• (1425)

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the House already the steps that have taken place. We do treat it as a very serious matter. Procedures that we had in place were not followed by a member of my staff and corrective action has been taken.

As well, it is important to note that I did offer to resign to the Prime Minister and he did not accept my resignation.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's own guide for ministers says this:

The Prime Minister holds Ministers personally accountable—

—I repeat, personally accountable—

—for the security of their staff and offices, as well as of “Confidences of the Queen's Privy Council of Canada”... and other sensitive information in their custody.

Are these just words on paper? Why will the Prime Minister not apply his own rules?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated to the House, we do take this as a serious matter. In fact, that is why corrective action was taken

instantaneously, once it was discovered that the procedures were not followed.

I have offered my resignation to the Prime Minister, if he felt it necessary, but he did not accept my resignation. However, I have taken responsibility.

The person taking responsibility for handling these documents offered to resign and I accepted it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to the Prime Minister's office, it was the Minister of Natural Resources' aide who left secret documents at the CTV office. Although they may try to have her take the blame, the Prime Minister was very clear at the time of the Couillard affair: ministers are responsible for their secret documents.

Consequently, will the Prime Minister ask for the resignation of the Minister of Natural Resources because of her negligence?

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, we treat this as a very serious matter and it is a very serious matter. Clear procedures in my office that had been set out regarding this material were not followed and as a result corrective action has been taken.

The person who had the responsibility for the documents offered to resign and I accepted it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are told that this situation is different than the one involving the former minister of foreign affairs. If I have understood correctly, leaving secret documents at a television station full of journalists is less serious than leaving them at a girlfriend's. They cannot be serious.

Either the Minister of Natural Resources is being given preferential treatment or the reason given by the Prime Minister for accepting the resignation of his former minister of foreign affairs was not the real one.

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have indicated and as the member has pointed out, this is a serious matter and we have treated it as such.

The procedures in place were clearly not followed and corrective action has been taken. I have accepted the resignation of the individual who was responsible for the documents.

I also offered my resignation to the Prime Minister, if he felt it necessary, but he did not accept the resignation.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

NUCLEAR WASTE

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, instead of stubbornly insisting on consulting the municipalities and going over the head of the Quebec government—which wants nothing to do with the project—the Prime Minister should take care of his own affairs and dismiss his minister who cannot keep track of her secret documents.

Will the Prime Minister ensure that Quebec's areas of jurisdiction are respected and put an end to all attempts to negotiate directly with the municipalities?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is referring to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization which is undertaking a very long process associated with finding a willing host and informed community for the repository of nuclear waste. This is a 30-year project.

What the NWMO is doing this year is inviting public review and comment on a discussion paper and holding a series of consultations in various provinces this summer. That is the extent of the consultation.

[Translation]

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife for Quebec, Claude Béchar, has been very clear: Quebec wants no part of any projects involving the disposal of any nuclear waste produced outside its borders. The Quebec National Assembly has passed a unanimous motion to that effect.

Will the government immediately commit to respecting the position of the Quebec National Assembly?

• (1430)

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization, which is a separate organization, is carrying out the mandate of determining a willing and informed community for the purposes of nuclear waste disposal and storage in the long term.

I invite the opposite member to give that feedback to this organization and it will take it as part of its decision making for a suitable community for this project.

* * *

[Translation]

MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is what the Prime Minister said exactly one year ago: “Minister Bernier has learned and informed me that he left a classified government document in a nonsecure location.”

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Outremont is well aware that the names of members cannot be used in the House. He must be more careful.

[English]

Mr. Thomas Mulcair: Mr. Speaker, one year ago, our Prime Minister said, “What matters here is that rules respecting government classified documents were broken”, and he had to resign.

“There is in this, obviously, a warning to all ministers”. All ministers? Really?

[Translation]

Why this double standard?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious matter. Clear procedures that were set out in my office with respect to the handling of documents were not followed and, as a result, we have taken corrective action. The individual who was responsible for handling these documents has offered to resign and I accepted it.

I also offered my resignation to the Prime Minister but he did not accept it.

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us look at what the Prime Minister had to say about this a year ago. He said:

...no matter what their personal circumstances, ministers must follow the rules concerning documents. The rules were breached in this situation and that is why the minister resigned.

He said that on June 3, 2008. That was then and this is now. The rules say that she is the one responsible, not some underling. How come a year ago the minister had to resign and today they are allowed to blame an underling, a subservient person, for all the responsibility of the minister? How is that acceptable?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am a little concerned with the language being utilized by the member opposite. He utilized the term “subservient”. The people who work for us on the Hill work very hard. Indeed, in this case, clear procedures were not followed and the individual took responsibility by offering to resign and I accepted it.

I am more concerned about the tone in which the hon. member has put this forward, indicating that perhaps only a woman could be subservient.

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is one for the record books. The person who resigned was a man.

She is still there and she is trying to claim that it has something to do with her status as a woman. That is pure, unmitigated nonsense.

The reason she is still there is that the Prime Minister publishes rules for confidentiality of documents and does not apply them. He said that it was a warning to all ministers. She is still there. It is unacceptable. She should resign and leave immediately.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the one thing I have learned in the House is that just because one yells louder does not make it any more compelling an argument.

This is a serious matter. Clear procedures were not followed and corrective action has been taken. The individual responsible for handling these documents offered to resign and I accepted it.

Oral Questions

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue is not a staff member. The issue is the minister and the oath she took. If the Minister of Natural Resources cannot even manage her secret documents, why should Canadians be surprised that we have an isotope crisis?

The minister needs to explain how a secret document could be missing for a week. Does the minister not have a tracking system for her own secret documents? Does she not understand the concept of ministerial accountability?

• (1435)

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, clear procedures were in place in my office and, as indicated, they were not followed in this case. We have taken strong and corrective action. The person who was responsible for the documents has offered to resign and I have accepted it. That is clear accountability.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, "Ministers are always responsible for the protection of classified documents". Who said this? The Prime Minister of Canada.

Could the minister answer this question? Why did she offer to resign unless she admits that she did something wrong and did not honour her oath as a minister?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have treated this as a serious matter because it is, indeed, a serious matter. Procedures that were set out in my office regarding the handling of documents were not followed. We did take corrective action and, as I have mentioned, I have offered my resignation to the Prime Minister, if he chose to take it, but he did not take it.

In the case of the staff member who was handling the documents, she has offered her resignation and I have accepted it.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MINT

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister does not hold himself to the same standards that he expects of everyone else.

The list of government mismanagement just keeps growing. Today we learned that gold and other precious metals are unaccounted for at the Canadian Mint and yet the police have not been called in to investigate.

Canada's reputation for confidence is taking a beating at home and abroad.

Is the Minister of Transport prepared to tell Canadian taxpayers how much gold and silver is missing? What is the value? Will he conduct an investigation? Will he make the findings of an external audit immediately available to the public?

Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Mint is a crown corporation at arm's length from the government.

However, I was in touch with the CEO of the Mint, Mr. Ian Bennett, earlier this morning to find out what has been going on. He has assured me that an external audit was started in early March and

that it will be completed within the next two weeks and will be public. I will not speculate on its outcome.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that nobody on that side is in charge and prepared to assume responsibility for what is going on.

We have had continuous faulty accounting of the nation's finances, security lapses and now lost gold and silver. We do not know if the affair at the Mint involves faulty accounting or a gold heist.

While the Minister of Finance is living in a world of fantasy numbers, could the Minister of Transport tell the Canadian public when this pot of gold will be found?

Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do take this situation rather seriously. The Mint brought in a third party to perform an external audit to examine exactly what has been going on. That audit will be completed within the next two weeks and it will be totally public.

I would encourage my hon. colleague not to speculate on the outcome because I do not believe he knows and neither does anyone else. We should just wait for the process to be completed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the London court, American lawyers used statements made by Canadian ministers suggesting that loan guarantees for the forestry industry are illegal. Statements made about loan guarantees by the Prime Minister and his ministers are being used against Canada in this case.

Does the Prime Minister realize that what he said about loan guarantees is sabotaging his own lawyers' work and is bad for the forestry industry and for Quebec?

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the loans issue is before the court, as my colleague said. I must emphasize that we will wait for the outcome. In the meantime, we have plenty of programs to support forestry companies. Just last year, we helped over 430 forestry companies in Quebec through EDC.

• (1440)

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that attitude is a great example of the Reform-based, anti-Quebec sentiment that still has such a strong hold over the Conservative Party. This reminds me of the time when Reformers leaked information to Embraer, a company that is in direct competition with Quebec-based Bombardier.

Does the Prime Minister not understand that the best way to counter the United States' claims is to give loan guarantees to the forestry sector?

Oral Questions

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since 2008, forestry companies in Canada have received over \$14 billion. Over \$9 billion of that has gone to companies in Quebec. Quebec companies have received more help and support than companies elsewhere in Canada. Is EDC against the rest of Canada? I do not think so. EDC's job is to help forestry companies during times of financial crisis.

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GOVERNMENT ASSETS

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are not even trying to conceal the fact that they are contemplating selling off federal government assets with the sole aim, as we know, of reducing the size of the state to a minimum. The Minister of Finance said yesterday that in Canada's economic action plan, Heritage Canada is not on the list for asset review "this year".

Does this then mean that the CBC might well turn up in a future list of asset sales in a few months, and that the minister does not dismiss the idea of selling off the CBC and Radio-Canada?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Let us be clear, once again, Mr. Speaker. We made a promise during the election campaign to maintain or increase the budgets of CBC/Radio-Canada and we have done so in each of our four budgets. I have the Bloc Québécois platform, its assistance plan, here before me. In its 21 pages there is not a single mention of the arts, not a single mention of culture, not a single mention of CBC/Radio-Canada.

If CBC/Radio-Canada is really a priority for the Bloc Québécois, why is it not included in their platform?

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the federal government's shares in General Motors, the Prime Minister has said that these would be sold at the appropriate time, and that is completely logical and reasonable. At the same time, he has announced that he wants to dispose of certain federal government assets immediately. As if the economic situation were not the same in both cases.

Are we to understand that the government would be prepared to sell off corporations such as VIA Rail and the Old Port of Montreal Corporation now, for purely ideological motives?

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): What is clear is what I said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and that is we have identified certain departments for asset review this year and we will proceed with that.

What is odd is the position taken by the opposition, including the Bloc, when they say to the government, "Spend more, but be fiscally responsible and don't increase the deficit". Part of being fiscally responsible is reviewing assets and making sure that those assets continue to perform in the best interests of the Canadian people.

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the finance minister.

The TD Bank's analysis shows that the government will add \$170 billion of debt to ordinary Canadians over the next five years. The finance minister, in his fall economic statement, said that over the next five years he will be booking \$2 billion from asset sales each year.

Will the minister inform Canadians across the country which specific assets, and from what departments, he intends to sell this year to fill a \$2 billion hole in his balance sheet?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, TD economists have presented one view. It is on the low side. There are other economists who are going to present other views. We are going to hear lots of views about the economy in an uncertain time.

With respect to asset review, it is prudent for any large organization to review its assets from time to time. In fact, that is the position of the Toronto-Dominion Bank's economists.

• (1445)

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have a hard time believing the minister, who a few years back was the architect of deficit in Ontario. He shut 26 hospitals, laid off 8,000 nurses and cut half of the water inspectors, leading to the Walkerton crisis. These institutions affect Canadian lives and Canadian identity.

Will the minister set aside his reform ideology and be honest with Canadians about what he intends to sell?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): This is more hypocrisy on the other side, Mr. Speaker. They are the same Liberals who in the mid-1990s cut transfers to the provinces. They cut funding for schools. They cut funding for hospitals. They cut funding for universities. They cut funding for the elderly. They cut funding for children.

This is the hypocritical position of the Liberal Party of Canada: cutting spending on the weakest in our economy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has plunged Canada into a disastrous economic situation. Jobs are being lost, the deficit is growing, and the government is just making it up as it goes along.

Now the government has come up with a new idea. Some genius somewhere has decided to hold a fire sale of government assets—our institutions—and privatize them.

This includes CBC/Radio-Canada and the National Arts Centre. They have decided to sell some of the essential components of our very own culture.

Is the minister going to understand that our culture was not for sale yesterday, is not for sale today, and will never, ever be for sale?

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Let me try to understand the Liberal opposition, Mr. Speaker. Liberals voted for the budget, Canada's economic action plan. The asset review is set out in the budget. Now they are saying they do not like an asset review.

Oral Questions

The Liberals are saying they want fiscal responsibility, but they are saying, “Do not review expenditures. Do not review assets.” They say they want to spend more on EI but they say not to increase spending. Who in Canada can take any of them seriously?

* * *

ARTS AND CULTURE

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that nobody believes him any more.

[*Translation*]

Loving culture means defending that culture. Loving culture means appreciating its importance. Loving culture means investing the necessary funds into it.

Today the government is imposing a strategic review, and thus cuts, to some of our national flagships, some of the most important programs for our artists and creative people.

The government is engaged in a full-scale attack on the NFB, the Canada Council, Telefilm Canada and CBC/Radio-Canada.

Why do they have such a hatred of culture?

[*English*]

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member can yell and scream all he wants, but the facts in the budgets that we passed in this House of Commons, which the member voted for, are crystal clear. This Conservative government made promises in election campaigns to maintain or increase support for arts and culture. We have increased funding for the National Arts Centre. We have increased funding for the Canada Council for the Arts, up to a record amount, \$181 million. Those are artists supporting artists for the future, to support our creative economy.

When the Liberals ran for office and were elected, they promised not to touch arts and culture. They gutted arts and culture, they cut CBC by a third, and now they are pointing fingers to us and saying that we are not doing our job. We kept our word. We have delivered. It is the Liberals who have failed.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government reduced taxes on Canadian families by \$20 billion, yet the leader of the Liberal opposition wants to reverse proactive tax measures. Can this be true? The Liberal leader wants to reduce the amount of money hard-working Canadian families have to spend. In fact it is true. It was proven when the leader of the opposition stated, “We will have to raise taxes” and that he was “not going to take a GST hike off the table”.

Canadians have a right to know. Does this government believe the Liberal leader's statements?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the words have meaning and the hon. leader of the opposition has said, “We will have to raise taxes”. He has described himself as a “tax-and-spend Liberal”.

Canadians want to know from the Liberal leader exactly what his plan is for the economy, which taxes he would like to raise, how much he would raise them, and who will have to pay. Does he have a serious plan for the economy, or is he just visiting?

* * *

● (1450)

CANADA PENSION PLAN INVESTMENT BOARD

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, CPP Investment Board members lost a staggering \$24 billion, wiping out four years of CPP contributions. They will get millions in bonuses, while retirees will get on average a mere \$500 a month. This is an unethical abuse of power.

What is the response from the government? A letter from the minister, asking them to respect a vague set of G20 rules. That simply is not good enough.

Will the minister finally find the courage to do the right thing and demand that the executives pay back these outrageous bonuses?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not a vague set of rules. These are very specific rules that were developed by the Financial Stability Forum of the G7, which have now been adopted by the G20, by all of the leaders when they met at the London summit. They are very specific.

We have asked the CPPIB and the others who are responsible to the Crown to report back with respect to those principles, whether they are in compliance, and to confirm steps they will take, if necessary, to be in compliance.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the G20 rules deal with fund managers, not with their innocent victims who are the Canadian pensioners.

The rules the minister is referring to are not specific enough, and simply writing a letter is not courageous enough. Canadians demand better and they deserve better. These executives need to be told in no uncertain terms that what they are doing is irresponsible, shameful and wrong.

Will the minister stop protecting his friends and hiding behind the G20 rules and stand up today to publicly denounce their actions and demand the money back?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the global recession, the G20 internationally has taken the leadership role, ensuring that we are coordinating our stimulus efforts, ensuring that we address issues like appropriate executive compensation.

That is exactly what the leaders did when they met in London not that long ago. They approved these three rules with respect to executive compensation. They are to be followed by all of the G20 countries, including Canada, and we are extending that to the public institutions in Canada.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development continues to surprise us. She said that it was not necessary to change the employment insurance criteria, because the recession means that more people have access to it. Like the conservative economists who rely on the invisible hand to regulate the market, the minister thinks that the recession, all by itself, will settle the problem of accessibility to employment insurance.

What is the minister waiting for to do what everyone is calling for: to make comprehensive changes to the employment insurance system to meet the challenges of the current crisis, and, most importantly, to meet the needs of the unemployed?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois members certainly do not know how much money we are putting towards supporting our workers while there is a recession and other major economic difficulties. This year, we have put \$7.3 billion towards supporting workers. Furthermore, we have taken action to make changes, by adding five weeks to EI, among other things. They were offering two. We offered five, and they even voted against it.

Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, announcing the same program twice is one thing, but making sure it produces the expected results is another.

The minister prides herself on having put \$500 million towards a training program. But more than one week after her program was announced, we still have unanswered questions. The only tangible thing to come out of her announcement is false hope.

What will it take for the minister to realize that, without comprehensive changes to the employment insurance system, all of her short-term solutions will not do?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, this is a perfect example of the work we are doing to support people who are losing their jobs. During an economic crisis, a person could have worked 20 years for a company, when it is suddenly shut down. These people need much longer training. We are offering them this training through the program we set up this week. That is \$500 million that will ensure that workers are paid for two years while they receive training.

In addition, there are 3,300 companies that take advantage of job sharing right now. We are taking action. We are helping our workers and people who lose their jobs.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, American black liquor subsidies may spell the end for many struggling Canadian pulp and paper mills.

On June 8, the Fraser Papers plant in Edmunston will close its doors and hundreds of workers will be unemployed for an

indeterminate period. What has our government done? Absolutely nothing.

The Conservative government is again abandoning our forestry sector and its thousands of workers.

Why wait for people to lose their jobs before taking action? Why must more workers and families suffer before this Conservative government decides to act and save Canadian jobs?

• (1455)

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in terms of aid to the forestry sector, in our unprecedented cross-country consultations we spoke to both industry and communities about the best way to support them through Canada's economic action plan. We have developed the \$1 billion community adjustment fund that is beneficial for that.

With respect to the black liquor, it is important to note that this was the result of a U.S. green tax and the utilization of mixing diesel with black liquor in order for paper companies to take advantage of it, which we find unacceptable, and we want the United States to know.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, cross-country consultations will definitely not bring back the thousands of jobs that have been lost and save those at Fraser Papers in Edmunston.

[English]

The American black liquor subsidy could be the final nail in the coffin for many struggling Canadian pulp mills. After having done nothing on the closure of AbitibiBowater in Dalhousie, now it is Fraser Papers that will be affected.

The Conservative government is letting down hundreds of workers while other countries are helping their industries. What is the Conservative government waiting for? How many other jobs have to be lost before it helps the industry?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, further on the black liquor tax credit for pulp producers in the United States, my colleague, Minister Day, of course has been working—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I am sure the hon. minister's whip will explain that the use of members' names in the House is contrary to the rules and that she will try to avoid that kind of reference, distinguished though the minister she referred to is.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources has the floor.

Hon. Lisa Raitt: Mr. Speaker, I will be more careful with respect to names.

I want to indicate that the black liquor subsidy in the United States is of great concern. My colleague, the Minister of International Trade, has been working with the United States and bringing attention to the detrimental effect it has on the industry and what a distortion it is.

We are working across the border with our colleagues there, and we are working internally to determine the best options.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Xstrata workers are again getting dinged by the government. This winter the Conservative government failed to enforce a signed agreement with the company not to lay off workers for three years. To soften the blow, Xstrata and CAW negotiated a sub-plan that would add an additional \$175 a week on top of the worker's regular EI, but now the government is planning to claw back the first two weeks of this plan.

Why is the government taking money away from the unemployed when they need it most?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of the situation that the member describes, but we will look into it.

However, what I can tell the chamber is that as a result of our intervention, plans by Xstrata, which were mere promises, obtained the efficacy of a contractual obligation to the people of Sudbury and to the people of Canada to continue its investments and to reinvest in Sudbury.

That is the kind of negotiations we do. We do not get on our high horse and engage in rhetoric. We actually get the job done for the workers and the people of Sudbury and Canada.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what about EI? The Catalyst Crofton pulp mill is laying off workers again. This is on top of forestry suppliers selling off equipment, timber companies going under and layoffs at sawmills.

There will be no severance package for Catalyst workers. Instead the employer is negotiating a plan to top up EI benefits, just like in Sudbury.

Could the minister explain whether these sub-plans will trigger clawbacks? If yes, why is the minister penalizing these laid-off workers?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, whenever there is a threat of a company doing mass layoffs, Service Canada immediately moves in to work with the company, with the employees and union, if there is one, to try to reach a situation that will help all of them to get through these times. It may be work-sharing. It may be advising them of potential benefits, including the option for them to continue with long-term work studies so they could upgrade their skills.

We are doing everything we can to help particularly those workers who have been in the workforce a long time and who need new skills for the new jobs to look after their families.

* * *

● (1500)

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Mr. Bob Dechert (Mississauga—Erindale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the CIDA-INC program was intended to encourage private sector engagement in developing countries to promote economic growth

Oral Questions

and poverty reduction. However, a recent review of the program found it was outdated and ineffective.

Considering today is Trade Day, could the Minister of International Trade tell the House what the Conservative government is doing to ensure Canadian tax dollars are spent responsibly?

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a very well-intended program and it is designed to allow private sector companies or individuals in Canada to invest in countries that are emerging in terms of their developing economies. However, it was found, upon review, that it would be more effective to have this under the international trade area, where there are some 150 trade offices around the world with over 950 representatives who can work with private sector companies in Canada to guide them and also to give resources to allow them to invest in emerging countries to help poverty issues in those countries and also benefit Canadians at the same time.

* * *

MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Natural Resources be just a bit more forthcoming?

First, do the secret documents, which she lost at CTV, reveal commercially confidential information about dealings between the Darlington nuclear plant and the Ontario government? Second, when did she first know the documents were missing? Third, were they merely a staffer's documents or were they her own documents, personally as minister?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have indicated, this is a serious matter and clear procedures were not followed in the handling of these documents. Corrective action has been taken. I offered my resignation to the Prime Minister, but he did not accept it. However, the individual who is responsible for the documents that day has tendered a resignation and I have accepted it.

* * *

[Translation]

SRI LANKA

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Tamil diaspora in Quebec and Canada is worried and with just cause. The UN must be allowed to conduct a real investigation into human rights violations committed by both sides in the Sri Lankan conflict.

Does the Minister of Foreign Affairs intend to increase pressure on the Sri Lankan government to allow the UN to do its job and conduct a credible investigation?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our honourable colleague has identified two issues. The first is to ensure that an independent tribunal is set up by the Sri Lankan government in order to shed light on this matter.

The other is to allow the United Nations to provide aid to those displaced by this conflict.

Canada, my colleague the Minister of International Cooperation and I are working very hard on this.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister has tabled his empty 2009 climate change plan. Incredibly it is a plan to do nothing, no binding reduction targets and delayed action on coal-fired. He will repeat the last 15 years of consultations, more delay, more hot air.

On National Clean Air Day, where is the long promised action on clean electricity?

Last year the Canadian Medical Association reported air pollution hospitalized an estimated 92,000 Canadians with 21,000 deaths. In whose interest is the minister delaying action on clean air and climate change?

Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct. This is Clean Air Day and we are moving forward with the regulations that I previously described with respect to climate change. In addition, the air quality health index is being expanded in a way that it has never previously been expanded by any other government.

With respect to the pollution agenda, we have re-engaged with the provinces and with other stakeholders to put in place a regulatory approach that will deal with air pollutants, which will be parallel to and integrated with our approach to clean air as it relates to climate change.

* * *

• (1505)

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC): Mr. Speaker, contrary to the opposition's inaction, and thanks to our Prime Minister's leadership, our government is taking steps to create jobs, stimulate the economy, and support Canadian families and workers.

Can the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities tell me what the infrastructure stimulus fund will do for Quebec?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question.

We are continuing to work with the Province of Quebec to finalize agreements that will get projects off the ground.

In Quebec City yesterday, our colleague, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, announced an agreement with

Quebec to invest over \$2.75 billion in the province over the next two years. That money will create jobs now, tomorrow, and in the future.

Our government is taking action and getting real results, not just for Quebeckers, but for all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: To commemorate the 65th anniversary of D-Day, I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Mr. Stanley Fields, a veteran who landed on Juno Beach on D-Day and served Canada until the end of World War II.

Members will be interested to know that prior to joining the armed forces, Mr. Fields served as a page in the House of Commons when Mackenzie King was prime minister.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

The Speaker: It being 3:07 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2 the House will now proceed to statements by ministers.

* * *

D-DAY

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, Mr. Fields, on Saturday, June 6 Canadians from across our great country will gather to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Later today veterans and their families and grateful others will begin their pilgrimage to France to visit the graves of our fallen heroes and honour their sacrifice.

It is appropriate for the Canadian House of Commons to mark this historic occasion. In so doing, we again pledge ourselves and the country to honour the promise made in the act of remembrance. We will remember them.

Let us each in our own way learn of the great deeds and the sacrifices made by Canadians and Allied men and women, so-called average Canadians, performing extraordinary acts of courage and commitment.

There are few who would dispute that the events of June 6, 1944, were to be one of the most significant events of the 20th century. In marking its anniversary, we must not forget other military actions which equally cost Canadians and Allies dearly.

Routine Proceedings

For personal reasons, I think particularly of the Italian campaign, which resulted in the liberation of Rome, 65 years ago tomorrow, June 4.

On June 5, the following message was transmitted on BBC radio.

[*Translation*]

The long sobs
Of the violins
Of autumn
Wound my heart
With a monotonous
Languor.

[*English*]

Those cryptic words borrowed from the French literary giant Verlaine signalled by Churchill to the French underground and the allied forces that the D-Day invasion was about to begin.

The 6th of June is one of those pivotal dates, landmark dates, etched in the minds and memories of veterans and those who served and their families. It is also etched in stone on hundreds of cenotaphs across our country and on bleached dignified tombstones throughout Europe, for most of Europe had languished under the iron fist and the racist rule of Hitler. D-Day and the campaign that followed in Normandy would at a long last signal the beginning of the end of the enemy who was making its last desperate stand in the European theatre of war.

● (1510)

[*Translation*]

Sixty-five years ago—perhaps Mr. Fields was here—the prime minister made a statement to the members of this House in which he said the following:

At half-past three o'clock this morning the government received official word that the invasion of western Europe had begun. Word was also received that Canadian troops were among the allied forces who landed this morning on the northern coast of France. Canada will be proud to learn that our troops are being supported by units of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The great landing in western Europe is the opening up of what we hope and believe will be the decisive phase of the war against Germany. The fighting is certain to be heavy, bitter and costly.

[*English*]

Indeed, the toll was costly. The headstones of Beny-Sur-Mer and other Canadian cemeteries, the monuments to those who died at sea, the Books of Remembrance housed here in the House of Commons, in the Memorial Chamber of this building, are stark testimony to the heroism and sacrifices of our armies, airmen and women and navy. A great history was written that day.

Humanity entered into a great debt when a previous generation embarked on the D-Day mission. That debt is our duty to never forget the deeds of those who gave their all on Juno Beach.

In the days that followed June 6, the fighting continued to be bitter and costly. Units across the country were involved. From my home province, the North Nova Scotia Highlanders worked with Quebec's storied Sherbrooke Fusiliers and suffered severe losses over two days combatting the elite 12th SS Panzer Division.

[*Translation*]

Far too many young Canadians died that day on Juno Beach. In the 10 bloody weeks that followed, soldiers from the First Canadian Army—with vital support from the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Canadian Navy—battled a powerful enemy and suffered and inflicted heavy losses. Nearly one-third of the soldiers involved in the fighting never saw their beloved Canada again. On August 3, when the Normandy campaign ended, the enemy had suffered a crushing defeat, mainly thanks to the efforts of Canada's land, sea and air forces.

[*English*]

Those who survived the war returned home, raised families, got on with their lives and built a new Canada. Without effort, what they did on Juno Beach might fade with the passage of time. New generations may not know what happened on June 6, 1944. It is our responsibility to tell their story, our story, our history, our legacy.

I compliment our veterans who have been so generous in sharing their individual histories. It is difficult for some, impossible for others, and that is understandable. Yet their story, our story, must be told, and it is through the marking of these anniversaries that the next generation learns of its heritage.

I praise our heritage minister for the attention that he is giving to this important task.

[*Translation*]

Our Prime Minister will be in France to mark this anniversary. The Minister of Veterans Affairs is leaving today for France and will lead a delegation of Canadian veterans returning to Normandy. He will travel with them to the places where they fought and to other locations as well. They will gather in war cemeteries and in front of Canadian cenotaphs. They will pay tribute to those who gave their young lives for our freedom. I know that all Canadians will think of them that day.

Two young ambassadors will accompany the veterans and listen as they tell their stories. When they return, they will be able to talk about what they saw and heard. They will share the veterans' stories with others and keep the torch of remembrance burning for future generations.

● (1515)

[*English*]

As we pause to commemorate those Canadians of the Normandy campaign, I also want to bring attention to another deserving group: the men and women of today's Canadian Forces. The first Sunday in June has been declared Canadian Forces Day.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the sacrifice and accomplishments made here at home and around the world by our current men and women in uniform. They carry on the proud tradition of answering the call of their country to serve, to stand for our values and to defend freedom and democracy and human rights whenever that call comes.

Routine Proceedings

I consider it a distinct honour to rise in this place, to be with members of Parliament in this storied chamber to pay respect to veterans. As the Minister of Veterans Affairs said yesterday in the other place in an eloquent and stirring address to senators as well as a large assembly of veterans who were there:

—of all Canadians, no one owes our Veterans more than Parliamentarians do. It is only because [our veterans] have served our country that we as Members of Parliament and Senators can serve—freely, in a truly democratic country.... And, when our world leaders gather in France later this week, they will recognize that. It has been said that great countries are those that produce great people. And no nation has produced finer men and women than Canada. Our troops have always been the best in the world.

Going overseas has been a way of helping us understand the great debt that we owe our country's truest heroes. That is why it is so important that we do go back to the shores of Normandy, as a Canadian delegation will this week, to see how other nations still remember what it was like to have their countries occupied by a foreign army. They pass down the memories from generation to generation as powerful reminders so that the peace and freedom within their borders will never be taken for granted.

I would like to share a story with colleagues of the House. The Minister of Veterans Affairs and I were in Afghanistan just 10 days ago and we met with the Dutch commander of Regional Command South in Kandahar province, General de Kruif. Upon meeting him and hearing that we were Canadian, he insisted on telling us a story. He explained that whenever he returned to Holland, to his family, after serving in Afghanistan, he would meet people who would ask him, "Why are Dutch soldiers serving in Afghanistan today?" He said, "I would always respond the same way, with a question: Why was Canada in Holland during the second world war?"

All these years later, the Dutch, the French, the Belgians, many throughout Europe and around the world whose nations were once occupied, have not forgotten. They know instinctively that when the world calls, Canada answers, as we have today, because this is the Canadian way. It is the way it has always been and always will be.

This is the heritage, the national identity we have inherited from the D-Day and Battle of Normandy veterans for a way of life they stood up to protect, but their service came at a terrible price, a price paid with many young lives cut short and so many comrades buried on distant lands.

Finally, I would like to close by saying it is impossible for any of us to say thank you enough to those who fought on June 6. What we can do is remember, and we do.

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 65 years ago, 14,000 Canadians waded through the murky Channel and into enemy gunfire at Juno Beach. Many were cut down before they reached the shore.

On this day, in this House, we celebrate our country's hard-won victory during the Allied invasion of Normandy.

[*English*]

In June 1944, Juno Beach was one of the most heavily defended stretches of shoreline on the coast of Hitler's fortress Europe. The 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, reinforced by the 2nd Canadian

Armoured Brigade, were given the task of capturing it, and they did so.

What happened 65 years ago on Juno Beach, and on the American and British beaches that flanked it, began the push toward Berlin that ended the most terrible war in human history.

Today we celebrate Canada's role in that victory. We celebrate our troops, whose valour earned a place in history. We remember the 359 Canadians who perished among the dunes and the surf, and the men whose bravery tipped the balance of war.

As we commemorate D-Day, we pay tribute to a great generation, one that is slowly leaving us with the passage of time. We make to them a simple promise: that their story will be our own and that their memory will never fade.

[*Translation*]

The sacrifice of war is a national endeavour. The remembrance of war must be no less.

Today we celebrate not only the Canadians who fought at Juno, but also the tradition of which they are part. Our servicemen and women have always stood ready to lay down their lives to defend our freedom—and the freedom of others: from Vimy Ridge to Juno Beach to Kandahar.

We honour those who served at Normandy—and on all the battlefields of our shared past.

[*English*]

Today in this House we feel the weight of a shared responsibility. We recall the parliamentarians who came before us, who provided civilian leadership in times of crisis, and who stood in this place to send Canadian troops into battle.

We recognize that for our soldiers in Afghanistan, that responsibility falls on our shoulders. While there may be differences in this House about the mission, our respect and our support for these soldiers transcends all our divisions, all party lines, and all sides of the House.

As we remember the invasion of Normandy, the fight for European liberation and the still ongoing struggle to protect our common humanity, our respect for our military tradition, incarnated by the word "Juno", transcends all time, transcends all generations.

Today, 65 years after Juno Beach, we stand together here in this House as one, proudly, in admiration.

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured to rise here today to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, in commemoration of the Normandy landing.

The Normandy landing began in a rather special way, with a verse from Verlaine. The BBC broadcast a coded message indicating that Allied troops would be landing the next day. That message was as follows:

The long sobs
Of the violins
Of autumn
Wound my heart
With a monotonous
Languor.

That was the signal that the next day, 24 hours later, many soldiers and all their equipment would be landing in Normandy.

People say that it was probably the largest military landing in history. Some 156,000 men landed on the beaches of Normandy that day, including 15,000 Canadians with many Quebeckers among them. They brought with them 6,000 vehicles, 900 tanks and 600 guns. It was an incredible operation. Seven thousand boats, including 4,000 landing craft were also used, as well as 130 war ships. Twelve thousand planes were used to ensure air support and the success of the landing, and 5,000 tonnes of bombs were dropped.

We need to keep in mind that weapons at that time were not as precise as today, and so the plan was for a massive bombardment. That was the doctrine of the day, anyway. Before the landing, air strikes were used to break down resistance so that the Allies landing on those beaches would be less of a target for enemy fire.

I also need to point out that this invasion was a long time in the planning. In Casablanca in January 1943, Winston Churchill met with Roosevelt and Stalin to analyze the war, which was not going at all well at that point. Moreover, the Germans were engaged in the siege of Leningrad, and everyone agreed that it was very important to open up a second European front to divide the Germans. The Russians had adopted a very good tactic by letting the German forces penetrate far into their territory, but a second European front was necessary and that was what the Allies agreed to. A year after came the Normandy landing.

A person needs to try to put himself into the skins, the minds and the hearts of the men who were headed for the Normandy beaches. The Channel crossing was a very difficult one because the weather conditions were very bad. To put ourselves into that scenario, there we are in a landing craft headed for the beach, with bullets whistling all around us, shells landing in the water right beside us. When the landing craft hits the beach and the ramp door opens, afraid or not, seasick or not, terrified or not, we have to move out. Many of our comrades may already be lying on the beach dead or dying, and it is terrible.

A lot of things go through a soldier's head at such a time. They think of family and friends, they think of the importance of protecting democracy and freedom. They carry out their duty at the risk of their lives. These people must be saluted. We must remember the sacrifices they made, some of them the ultimate sacrifice.

As I said earlier, the night before the landing, there were air strikes on German positions. The Germans were therefore considerably weakened, but they were still there waiting for the Allies when they landed.

We cannot forget the navy. There were 109 ships ensuring that the German navy did not make it out of the harbour. The Allies could not afford to have the German ships intervene and derail the battle.

Routine Proceedings

The work was done. We also cannot forget the minesweepers. Since the Germans had scattered mines all along the coast, the Allies had to make sure they were not caught by these mines.

The battle is more or less the same today. I agree with those who spoke before me: the Bloc Québécois naturally has reservations about some current missions, like the one in Kandahar, but we have never questioned the dedication, bravery and courage of the soldiers. That must be said loud and clear. I am happy that there are many witnesses here today, and I hope that there are many people watching us. We have never questioned the work of the soldiers, even though we have some reservations about the mission.

● (1530)

Once again, these soldiers courageously defend our democracy and our freedom.

I would like to thank a number of divisions and brigades that distinguished themselves at the time of the landing: the 3rd Infantry Division, the 2nd Armoured Brigade, the 1st Parachute Battalion, and the 48th Commando.

For those who lost their lives, there are words we say here each Remembrance day, and they are appropriate today: at the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to join with the Minister of National Defence, the Leader of the Opposition, and my colleague from the Bloc Québécois, to recognize and honour those brave Canadians who played such a significant role in the Allied invasion of occupied France 65 years ago this week, in June of 1944.

D-Day was the beginning of the liberation of France after four years of bitter occupation, after the fall of France in June of 1940, and the beginning of the end of the most horrific war in the history of the world.

The successful invasion of Juno Beach was part of a massive invasion of Normandy. Fourteen thousand Canadian soldiers landed on the beach, 450 landed by parachute or glider, 10,000 members of the Royal Canadian Navy were involved in the landing, and we had the support of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

It was, as the minister said, a magnificent but horrific invasion. It was successful, but many lives were lost. Fifty-four hundred Canadians are buried in Normandy. Over 1,000 Canadians lost their lives in the first six days alone of the D-Day invasion.

Government Orders

Let me digress a moment to talk as a Newfoundlander and Labradorian. We were not part of Canada during the second world war. We did not send our own Newfoundland regiment overseas as we had done in World War I, but Newfoundlanders participated. Over 20,000 Newfoundlanders served in World War II, 3,000 of them with the Canadian Armed Forces, including 500 women. Over 8,000 Newfoundlanders served in British regiments. Another number served in the Royal Navy. However, in the British land forces, there were in fact three Newfoundland regiments, one of which served in Normandy, the 59th (Newfoundland) Heavy Regiment, and the Newfoundland 125th Royal Air Force Squadron.

So, there was fact significant participation by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. In fact, we have to acknowledge that Newfoundland was a front in the second world war, and I will get to that a little later.

As parliamentarians, we are often asked to talk to young people, and we do talk to them, about the significance of events that occurred before they were born. This is an event that occurred before most of the members of this Parliament were born, so it is hard to find the right words to underscore the importance of what happened 65 years ago.

It is no exaggeration to say that if these brave Canadians did not do what they did then, we would not be here today, enjoying the fruits of their sacrifice in a democratic Parliament.

Let us not forget that the enemy was at the door. In 1943, over 200 people, mostly civilians, were killed by enemy action in Newfoundland and Labrador. Four iron ore carriers were sunk by a German submarine attack while docked at Bell Island, in Conception Bay, and the passenger and railcar ferry, the *Caribou*, was torpedoed and sank on a normal run to Port aux Basques from North Sydney.

So, we must all give thanks to those who served and honour those who lost their lives in the defence of our country and our beliefs, and who died and fought to put an end to tyranny that had a plan to take over and dominate the world and impose an ugly dictatorship.

It was a war that may not have been won, but the commitment, the determination and the sacrifice of the men and women of Canada and our allies eventually prevailed.

We must always remember the sacrifice and the debt we owe to them, and to all our soldiers who fight for our country and our ideals, including those who are serving today in Afghanistan.

● (1535)

The Speaker: I invite the House to rise and observe a moment of silence to commemorate the 65th anniversary of D-Day.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA-PERU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed from June 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-24, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between

Canada and the Republic of Peru, the Agreement on the Environment between Canada and the Republic of Peru and the Agreement on Labour Cooperation between Canada and the Republic of Peru, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

The Speaker: Order, please. It being 3.38 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the previous question at the third reading stage of Bill C-24.

Call in the members.

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 73*)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Arthur
Ashfield	Bagnell
Bains	Baird
Bélanger	Bennett
Benoit	Bernier
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brisson
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Coderre	Cotler
Crombie	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davidson	Day
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dhaliwal
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Easter
Eyking	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Folco
Foote	Galipeau
Gallant	Gameau
Glover	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guarnieri	Guergis
Hall Findlay	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Ignatieff	Jean
Jennings	Kania
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)

Kennedy
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Lee
Lobb
Lunn
MacAulay
MacKenzie
Mark
Mayes
McColeman
McLeod
Mendes
Merrifield
Minna
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Murphy (Charlottetown)
Neville
Norlock
O'Neill-Gordon
Oda
Pacetti
Patry
Pearson
Poilievre
Preston
Rae
Rajotte
Rathgeber
Richards
Rickford
Rodriguez
Russell
Saxton
Scheer
Shea
Silva
Smith
Stanton
Strahl
Szabo
Toews
Trost
Tweed
Valeriot
Van Loan
Volpe
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Wong
Yelich
Zarac— 203

Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Komarnicki
Lake
LeBlanc
Lemieux
Lukiwski
Lunny
MacKay (Central Nova)
Malhi
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McCallum
McGuinty
McTeague
Menzies
Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murray
Nicholson
O'Connor
Obhrai
Oliphant
Paradis
Payne
Petit
Prentice
Proulx
Raitt
Ratansi
Regan
Richardson
Ritz
Rota
Savage
Scarpaleggia
Schellenberger
Shipley
Simms
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Tilson
Tonks
Trudeau
Uppal
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to

Wilfert
Woodworth
Young

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Ashton
Atamanenko
Beaudin
Bevington
Blais
Bouchard
Brunelle
Carrier
Chow
Comartin
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver East)
Demers
Desnoyers
Duceppe
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Gagnon
Godin
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)
Harris (St. John's East)
Hyer
Laforest

Angus
Asselin
Bachand
Bellavance
Bigras
Bonsant
Bourgeois
Cardin
Charlton
Christopherson
Crowder
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
DeBellefeuille
Deschamps
Dorion
Dufour
Faille
Gaudet
Guay
Hughes
Julian
Lafraimboise

Government Orders

Lalonde
Lemay
Lessard
Malo
Marston
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Mathysen
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Nadeau
Paillé
Plamondon
Roy
Siksay
Thi Lac
Vincent

Lavallée
Leslie
Lévesque
Maloway
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Masse
Ménard (Hochelaga)
Mulcair
Ouellet
Paquette
Pomerleau
Savoie
St-Cyr
Thibeault
Wasylycia-Leis— 76

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht
Freeman
Lebel

André
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Mourani— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[English]

The next question is on the main motion.

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it I believe you would find agreement to apply the vote from the previous motion to this motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 74)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Aglukkaq
Allison
Anders
Andrews
Ashfield
Bains
Bélanger
Benoit
Bevilacqua
Blackburn
Block
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)
Cadman
Calkins
Cannis
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Coderre
Crombie
Cuzner
Davidson
Dechert
Devolin
Dhalla
Dosanjh
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra
Eyking
Finley
Fletcher
Foote

Ablonczy
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambrose
Anderson
Arthur
Bagnell
Baird
Bennett
Bernier
Bezan
Blaney
Boucher
Braid
Brisson
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge
Calandra
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannon (Pontiac)
Casson
Clarke
Coady
Cotler
Cummins
D'Amours
Day
Del Mastro
Dhaliwal
Dion
Dreeshen
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
Fast
Flaherty
Folco
Galipeau

Government Orders

Gallant	Garneau
Glover	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guarnieri	Guergis
Hall Findlay	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Ignatieff	Jean
Jennings	Kania
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lee	Lemieux
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Malhi
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayes	McCallum
McColeman	McGuinty
McLeod	McTeague
Mendes	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Oda	Oliphant
Pacetti	Paradis
Patry	Payne
Pearson	Petit
Poillievre	Prentice
Preston	Proulx
Rae	Raitt
Rajotte	Ratansi
Rathgeber	Regan
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Rodriguez	Rota
Russell	Savage
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shiple
Silva	Simms
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Tilson
Toews	Tonks
Trost	Trudeau
Tweed	Uppal
Valeriot	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Volpe	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	Wilfert
Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth
Wong	Young
Yelich	
Zarac— 203	

Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dorion
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Faillie
Gagnon	Gaudet
Godin	Guay
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Julian
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Mathysen	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mulcair
Nadeau	Ouellet
Paillé	Paquette
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Roy	Savoie
Siksay	St-Cyr
Thi Lac	Thibault
Vincent	Wasylcia-Leis— 76

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT

The House resumed from June 2 consideration of Bill C-15, An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of Motion No. 1.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at report stage of Bill C-15. The question is on Motion No. 1.

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you would find unanimous support to apply the vote from the previous motion to this motion, with the votes being reversed.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this way?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 75)

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Beaudin	Bellavance
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Comartin	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Beaudin	Bellavance
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson

Government Orders

Comartin	Crowder	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Lauzon	LeBlanc
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille	Lee	Lemieux
Demers	Deschamps	Lobb	Lukiwski
Desnoyers	Dorion	Lunn	Lunney
Duceppe	Dufour	MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Faille	MacKenzie	Malhi
Gagnon	Gaudet	Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Godin	Guay	Mayes	McCallum
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)		McColeman	McGuinty
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)		McLeod	McTeague
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes	Mendes	Menzies
Hyer	Julian	Merrifield	Miller
Laforest	Laframboise	Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Lalonde	Lavallée	Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Lemay	Leslie	Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Lessard	Lévesque	Neville	Nicholson
Malo	Maloway	Norlock	O'Connor
Marston	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse	Oda	Oliphant
Mathysen	Ménard (Hochelaga)	Pacetti	Paradis
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mulcair	Patry	Payne
Nadeau	Ouellet	Pearson	Petit
Paillé	Paquette	Poilievre	Prentice
Plamondon	Pomerleau	Preston	Proulx
Roy	Savoie	Rae	Raitt
Siksay	St-Cyr	Rajotte	Ratansi
Thi Lac	Thibeault	Rathgeber	Regan
Vincent	Wasylycia-Leis — 76	Richards	Richardson
		Rickford	Ritz
		Rodriguez	Rota
		Russell	Savage
		Saxton	Scarpaleggia
		Scheer	Schellenberger
		Shea	Shipley
		Silva	Simms
		Smith	Sorenson
		Stanton	Storseth
		Strahl	Sweet
		Szabo	Tilson
		Toews	Tonks
		Trost	Trudeau
		Tweed	Uppal
		Valeriote	Van Kesteren
		Van Loan	Vellacott
		Volpe	Wallace
		Warawa	Warkentin
		Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
		Sky Country)	Wilfert
		Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth
		Wong	Young
		Yelich	
		Zarac — 203	

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Arthur
Ashfield	Bagnell
Bains	Baird
Bélangier	Bennett
Benoit	Bernier
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brison
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinoooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Coderre	Cotler
Crombie	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davidson	Day
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dhaliwal
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Easter
Eyking	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Folco
Foote	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Glover	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guamieri	Guergis
Hall Findlay	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Ignatieff	Jean
Jennings	Kania
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani — 6

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

The hon. chief government whip is rising on a point of order.

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it you would find unanimous consent to apply the vote from the previous motion to this motion in reverse.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Government Orders

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

(Division No. 76)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Arthur
Ashfield	Bagnell
Bains	Baird
Bélanger	Bennett
Benoit	Bernier
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brison
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Coderre	Cotler
Crombie	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davidson	Day
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dhaliwal
Dhalla	Dion
Dosanjh	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Easter
Eyking	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Folco
Footé	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Glover	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guarnieri	Guergis
Hall Findlay	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Ignatieff	Jean
Jennings	Kania
Karygiannis	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy	Kenny (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	LeBlanc
Lee	Lemieux
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Malhi
Mark	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayes	McCallum
McColeman	McGuinty
McLeod	McTeague
Mendes	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Oda	Olipphant
Pacetti	Paradis
Patry	Payne
Pearson	Petit
Poilievre	Prentice

Preston	Proulx
Rae	Raït
Rajotte	Ratans
Rathgeber	Regan
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Rodriguez	Rota
Russell	Savage
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shipley
Silva	Simms
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Tilson
Toews	Tonks
Trost	Trudeau
Tweed	Uppal
Valeriote	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Volpe	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilfert
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young
Zarac — 203	

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Beaudin	Bellavance
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Comartin	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dorion
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Faille
Gagnon	Gaudet
Godin	Guay
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Julian
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Mathysen	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mulcair
Nadeau	Ouellet
Paillé	Paquette
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Roy	Savoie
Siksay	St-Cyr
Thi Lac	Thibeault
Vincent	Wasylcia-Leis — 76

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani — 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS*[Translation]***YOUTH VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

The House resumed from May 27 consideration of the motion, as amended

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made June 2, 2009, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 299 under private members' business.

• (1555)

(The House divided on the motion which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 77)***YEAS**

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Bagnell
Bains	Bélangier
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Bevington	Bezan
Brison	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Charlton
Chong	Chow
Christopherson	Coady
Coderre	Comartin
Cotler	Crombie
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dosanjh
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter	Eyking
Folco	Foote
Galipeau	Garneau
Godin	Goodale
Guarnieri	Hall Findlay
Harris (St. John's East)	Holland
Hughes	Hyer
Jennings	Julian
Kania	Karygiannis
Kennedy	LeBlanc
Lee	Leslie
MacAulay	Malhi
Maloway	Mark
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mathysen
McGuinty	McTeague
Mendes	Minna
Mulcair	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Neville	Oliphant
Pacetti	Patry
Pearson	Proulx
Rae	Ratansi
Regan	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Savage	Savoie
Scarpaleggia	Siksay
Silva	Simms
Szabo	Thibeault
Tonks	Trudeau
Valerioté	Volpe
Wasylcia-Leis	Wilfert
Zarac— 103	

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
--------	----------

Private Members' Business

Aglukkaq	Allison
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Arthur
Ashfield	Asselin
Bachand	Baird
Beaudin	Bellavance
Benoit	Bernier
Bigras	Blackburn
Blais	Blaney
Block	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boucher
Boughen	Bourgeois
Braid	Breitreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Brunelle	Cadman
Calandra	Calkins
Cannon (Pontiac)	Cardin
Carrie	Carrier
Casson	Clarke
Clement	Cummins
Davidson	Day
DeBellefeuille	Dechert
Del Mastro	Demers
Deschamps	Desnoyers
Devolin	Dorion
Dreeshen	Duceppe
Dufour	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Faille
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Gagnon	Gallant
Gaudet	Glover
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guay	Guergis
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hill	Hoepfner
Holder	Jean
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Laforest
Laframboise	Lake
Lalonde	Lauzon
Lavallée	Lemay
Lemieux	Lessard
Lévesque	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Malo
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nadeau	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Oda	Ouellet
Paillé	Paquette
Paradis	Payne
Petit	Plamondon
Poilievre	Pomerleau
Prentice	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Roy	Saxton
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shipley
Smith	Sorenson
St-Cyr	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Thi Lac
Tilson	Toews
Trost	Tweed
Uppal	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Vincent	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin

Private Members' Business

Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Woodworth
Young— 173

Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Wong
Yelich

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht
Freeman
Lebel

André
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Mourani— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion, as amended, lost.

* * *

[*English*]

ITALIAN-CANADIAN RECOGNITION AND RESTITUTION ACT

The House resumed from May 28 consideration of the motion that Bill C-302, An Act to recognize the injustice that was done to persons of Italian origin through their “enemy alien” designation and internment during the Second World War, and to provide for restitution and promote education on Italian-Canadian history, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-302 under private members' business.

● (1605)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 78*)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Ashton
Atamanenko
Bagnell
Beaudin
Bellavance
Bevilacqua
Bigras
Bonsant
Bourgeois
Brunelle
Cardin
Charlton
Christopherson
Coderre
Cotler
Crowder
Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
DeBellefeuille
Deschamps
Dhaliwal
Dion
Dosanjh
Dufour
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Eyking
Folco
Gagnon
Gaudet
Goldring
Guarnieri

Andrews
Arthur
Asselin
Bachand
Bains
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevington
Blais
Bouchard
Brisson
Cannis
Carrier
Chow
Coady
Comartin
Crombie
Cullen
D'Amours
Davies (Vancouver East)
Demers
Desnoyers
Dhalla
Dorion
Duceppe
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
Faille
Foote
Gameau
Godin
Goodale
Guay

Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)
Hall Findlay
Holland
Hyer
Julian
Karygiannis
Laforest
Lalonde
LeBlanc
Lemay
Lessard
MacAulay
Malo
Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Mathysen
McTeague
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Minna
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murray
Neville
Ouellet
Paillé
Patry
Plamondon
Proulx
Ratansi
Rodriguez
Roy
Savage
Scarpaleggia
Silva
St-Cyr
Thi Lac
Tonks
Valeriote
Volpe
Wilfert

Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes
Jennings
Kania
Kennedy
Laframboise
Lavallée
Lee
Leslie
Lévesque
Malhi
Maloway
Marston
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Masse
McGuinity
Ménard (Hochelaga)
Mendes
Mulcair
Murphy (Charlottetown)
Nadeau
Oliphant
Pacetti
Paquette
Pearson
Pomerleau
Rae
Regan
Rota
Russell
Savoie
Siksay
Simms
Szabo
Thibeault
Trudeau
Vincent
Wasylcia-Leis
Zarac— 146

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Aglukkaq
Allison
Anders
Ashfield
Benoit
Blackburn
Block
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge
Calandra
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Davidson
Dechert
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Fast
Flaherty
Galipeau
Glover
Gourde
Guergis
Hawn
Hoback
Holder
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Lobb
Lunn
MacKay (Central Nova)
Mayes

Ablonczy
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambrose
Anderson
Baird
Bezan
Blaney
Boucher
Braid
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)
Cadman
Calkins
Cannon (Pontiac)
Casson
Clarke
Cummins
Day
Del Mastro
Dreeshen
Dykstra
Finley
Fletcher
Gallant
Goodyear
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hill
Hoepfner
Jean
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Komarnicki
Lake
Lemieux
Lukiwski
Lunney
MacKenzie
McColeman

Private Members' Business

McLeod	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Obhrai	Oda
Paradis	Payne
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Scheer
Schellenberger	Shea
Shipley	Smith
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Uppal
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young— 131	

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

[English]

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TRADING SYSTEM FOR NORTH AMERICA

The House resumed from May 29 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 287 under private members' business.

● (1615)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 79)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Bagnell
Bains	Beaudin
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brisson	Brunelle
Cannis	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton

Chow	Christopherson
Coady	Comartin
Cotler	Crombie
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
DeBellefeuille	Demers
Deschamps	Desnoyers
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dosanjh	Duceppe
Dufour	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Easter
Eyking	Faille
Folco	Foote
Gagnon	Garneau
Gaudet	Godin
Goodale	Guamieri
Guay	Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)
Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	
Harris (St. John's East)	Holland
Hughes	Hyer
Jennings	Julian
Kania	Karygiannis
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
MacAulay	Malhi
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mathysen
McGuinty	McTeague
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Mendes	Minna
Mulcair	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Nadeau	Neville
Oliphant	Ouellet
Pacetti	Paillé
Paquette	Patry
Pearson	Plamondon
Pomerleau	Proulx
Rae	Ratansi
Regan	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy
Russell	Savage
Savoie	Scarpaleggia
Siksay	Silva
Simms	St-Cyr
Szabo	Thi Lac
Thibeault	Tonks
Trudeau	Valeriote
Vincent	Volpe
Wasylycia-Leis	Wilfert
Zarac— 141	

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Arthur	Ashfield
Baird	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Cadman
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Cummins
Davidson	Day

Private Members' Business

Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Glover	Goldring
Goodyear	Gourde
Grewal	Guergis
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hill	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
Jean	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lemieux	Lobb
Lukivski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mark
Mayer	McColeman
McLeod	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Obhrai	Oda
Paradis	Payne
Petit	Poillievre
Prentice	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Scheer
Schellenberger	Shea
Shiple	Smith
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Uppal
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young — 135	

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani — 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

The House resumed from June 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-307, An Act to amend the Official Languages Act (Charter of the French Language) and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-307, under private members' business.

● (1625)

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

(Division No. 80)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Beaudin	Bellavance
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Comartin	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dorion
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Faille
Gagnon	Gaudet
Godin	Guay
Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Julian
Laforest	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lavallée
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
Mathysen	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mulcair
Nadeau	Ouellet
Pailé	Paquette
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Roy	Savoie
Siksay	St-Cyr
Thi Lac	Thibault
Vincent	Wasylcyia-Leis — 76

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Arthur
Ashfield	Bagnell
Bains	Baird
Bélanger	Bennett
Benoit	Bernier
Bevilacqua	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitreuz	Brison
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannis	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Coady
Cotler	Crombie
Cummins	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dhaliwal	Dhalla

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: The hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord wishes to rise on a point of order before tabling of documents. He now has the floor.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in response to a question from the Bloc Québécois, the Minister of Canadian Heritage showed the second part of the stimulus plan presented by the Bloc Québécois, the April 2009 version. The minister mentioned that, in the stimulus plan, there was nothing for culture. Therefore, I wish to ask for the unanimous consent of the House to table the first part of the stimulus plan that was presented on November 24, 2008 and in which the Bloc Québécois specifically asked for cultural programs to be restored.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord have the unanimous consent of the House to table this document?

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: We do not have unanimous consent.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

AFGHANISTAN

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a report entitled “Canada's Engagement in Afghanistan”.

* * *

TRADE

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a report entitled “Canada's State of Trade: Trade and Investment Update—2009”.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 72 petitions.

Dion	Dosanjh
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dykstra
Easter	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Folco
Footé	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Glover	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guarnieri	Guergis
Hall Findlay	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Holland
Jean	Jennings
Kania	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kennedy
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemieux	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Malhi	Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayes
McColeman	McGuinty
McLeod	McTeague
Mendes	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Oda	Oliphant
Paradis	Patry
Payne	Pearson
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Proulx	Rae
Raitt	Rajotte
Ratansi	Rathgeber
Regan	Reid
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Rodriguez	Rota
Russell	Savage
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Shea	Shiple
Silva	Simms
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Tilson
Toews	Tonks
Trost	Trudeau
Tweed	Uppal
Valerioté	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Volpe	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilfert
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young
Zarac— 199	

PAIRED

Members

Albrecht	André
Freeman	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Lebel	Mourani— 6

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie respecting its participation in the meeting of the APF's Commission de la coopération et du développement, held in Cotonou from April 28 to 30, 2009.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I too have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its bilateral visits to Algeria and Tunisia from February 15 to 20 of this year.

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(a)(viii) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding matters related to the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in this report later this day.

Also, if the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which was presented in the House on May 15, regarding the review of Standing Orders 153, on list of reports, and 156, editorial corrections, later this day.

* * *

●(1630)

NATIONAL LITERACY POLICY ACT

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-401, An Act to establish a national literacy policy.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have this opportunity to reintroduce my private member's bill, calling for a national literacy policy.

A national literacy program would help to ensure that educational initiatives would be undertaken to assist Canada's young people with literacy issues. The bedrock of any education is the ability to read and write effectively, and a lifetime of learning requires a solid foundation. This would be assisted by the creation of a national literacy program.

Illiteracy in our country costs the economy an estimated \$10 billion annually, not to mention the ongoing daily struggles of those who must contend with limited skills in reading and writing. Ultimately, there is no short or long-term benefit to shortchanging the future of Canada by failing to adequately invest in the education of young Canadians.

I urge the government to consider the important national initiative and recognize that by ensuring our young people receive the best possible education, we are also ensuring that our society thrives, grows and prospers.

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

* * *

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS ACT

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-402, An Act to provide for the harmonization of environmental standards throughout Canada.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to reintroduce my private member's bill, calling for the harmonization of environmental standards through Canada.

Current environmental practices are well-intentioned, but in many cases they simply work in an ineffective and uncoordinated way. If there is one thing we must know about an effective response to serious environmental degradation, it is that a coordination of efforts and resources are needed to make a lasting and serious difference.

I therefore urge the government and all present to untie the hands of existing environmental protection efforts and to co-operate toward a greener future and a cleaner future.

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

* * *

ALTERNATIVE FUELS ACT

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-403, An Act to amend the Alternative Fuels Act and the Excise Tax Act (motor vehicles operating on alternative fuels).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill that addresses the urgent need to promote vehicles that operate on alternative fuels. The bill would amend the Alternative Fuels Act by creating an obligation for the federal government to ensure that no less than 10% of motor vehicles acquired by all federal agencies and crown corporations use alternative fuels.

The bill would also amend the Excise Tax Act to encourage the purchase of or conversion to a vehicle that operates on alternative fuels. This would be accomplished by providing a rebate on goods and services tax paid by the purchaser.

It is vital that we encourage Canadians to think environmentally and to take action by moving to alternative fuels. It is also vital that the government lead the way by providing an appropriate example.

I encourage the support of all members in this place on this important initiative.

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-404, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (failure to prevent access to child pornography).

*Routine Proceedings***NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY ACT**

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.) moved that Bill S-217, An Act respecting a National Philanthropy Day, be read the first time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring the bill, which passed in the other place, into this place. I want to thank my colleague from Nipissing—Timiskaming, a wonderful philanthropist.

It is important that we recognize the work of philanthropy. As somebody who has spent a lot of time working for not-for-profit organizations, like a lot of members in the House, I recognize the importance of those who give of their money as well as other resources to make Canada a better place.

I want to thank Senator Grafstein, who is a great philanthropist and who has raised a lot of money for worthy causes, and my good friend Senator Mercer, who has been a long-time champion of philanthropy.

We look forward to making November 15 national philanthropy day.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

Mr. Joe Preston: Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House earlier this day be concurred in. The report concerns gifts under the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Marcel Proulx: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We refuse consent for the simple reason that there has been no consultation on our side of the House. If we could have consultation, we could probably do this very quickly afterwards.

Mr. Derek Lee: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I appreciate the remarks of the previous speaker, but these rules will govern all members of the House. I have personally not had a chance to read them. I think all members should have a chance to read the rules that govern them.

I know the member is doing what he has been told to do, but this member is saying that all members should have an opportunity to read the rules that we govern ourselves by. A quick concurrence does not do the job for me. Therefore, I am going to withhold consent for that reason. I respect the hon. member's attempt to get the rules passed quickly.

● (1640)

Mr. Joe Preston: Mr. Speaker, I also move that the House give its consent that the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House on May 15 be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am introducing a bill today that would amend the Criminal Code to ensure that anyone who would permit another person to access child pornography or who would fail to take reasonable steps to prevent access to such material be penalized under the law.

The bill is dedicated to Holly Jones, a young girl who was murdered on May 12, 2003, in my riding of Davenport. We need to protect all children from exploitation, and the key to this is cutting off access.

I strongly encourage all my colleagues to support the bill.

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

* * *

● (1635)

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-405, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (firefighters).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce a bill today that would hold fully accountable those who would deliberately contribute to the dangers firefighters have to contend with each day by virtue of criminal behaviour. The vital service provided by firefighters is something for which we should always be grateful. In times of emergency, these men and women demonstrate incredible courage and unwavering bravery in service to their communities.

It is for this reason that we are called upon to act to protect them under the Criminal Code from those who would willingly and purposely add to the dangers faced by firefighters when they act in the course of their duty.

I implore all colleagues to support the bill and, in so doing, to continue to honour the hard work and dedication demonstrated each day by firefighters across Canada.

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

* * *

PEDRO DA SILVA RECOGNITION ACT

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-406, An Act to recognize Pedro da Silva as Canada's first officially commissioned letter carrier.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today in the House to introduce a bill to recognize Pedro da Silva as Canada's first officially commissioned letter carrier.

Keeping in mind the enormous contributions by the Portuguese Canadian community to Canada, it is important that we recognize the enduring legacy of Pedro da Silva, a trapper and carter living in New France. He was first commissioned to transport a packet of letters from Quebec to Montreal in 1693, and he was Canada's first official commissioned letter carrier by virtue of his appointment as first courier in 1705.

I urge all of my colleagues in the House to assist in recognizing this important cultural milestone in Canada's history.

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

Routine Proceedings

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It may well be that what the hon. gentleman is asking for in terms of unanimous consent can be given and the matter can be proceeded with. However, in the absence of the normal type of consultation, it cannot be sprung on the House without notice. We are happy to look at it. We are happy to give consent. Maybe that can be done later today. However, the normal consultation needs to take place.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, I do not really understand what the member means by “normal consultation”. The four whips met. We are members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, and we have been asking the Chair to submit this report for two weeks now.

I do not see what the problem is. We even talked about this yesterday. The Liberal Party's deputy whip was there. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs is at his wit's end, and for good reason. I feel the same way right now.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London sought unanimous consent and did not receive it.

* * *

WAR VETERANS ALLOWANCE ACT

(Bill C-33. On the Order: Government Orders:)

June 1, 2009—Bill C-33, An Act to amend the War Veterans Allowance Act—the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among all the parties and I think and hope you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practices of the House, Bill C-33, An Act to amend the War Veterans Allowance Act, be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at the report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

I draw attention of the House to the words “without amendment” because there was some issue about whether it was going to be amended or not. It is not amended.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Does the hon. government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to move this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, considered in committee of the whole, reported without amendment, concurred in, read the third time and passed)

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been the usual consultations among the parties and I believe you will find consent for the following revised travel motion. I move:

That notwithstanding the motion adopted on Friday, May 29, 2009, in relation to its study of correctional services, mental health and addictions, 12 members of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security be authorized to travel to Saskatoon and Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, Kingston, Ontario, Montreal, Quebec and Dorchester, New Brunswick, in June 2009 and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

● (1645)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Does the hon. chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am here today to present a petition on behalf of many people in Newfoundland and Labrador and from the riding of Random—Burin—St. George's that I represent.

It is a petition that calls on the government to acknowledge that we are in fact in a crisis in this country. The petitioners are looking for some measures that will see EI become much more accessible for those people who are losing their jobs.

The problem we have is that the country is in a recession. We are in a crisis. It is time that the government acknowledged that we really need to do something, especially when we have companies that are laying people off, sometimes through no fault of their own. We are finding a lot of people without employment. They need to be able to turn to EI.

This is a program that they have paid into. It is their money. They are asking to make that program much more available to them and for the government to recognize that this is a serious situation.

We all know that it should take 28 days to be able to access EI, once one has been laid off and had a two week waiting period. That is not happening.

In fact, in my riding we have people waiting as long as 70 days to access EI. In some cases, they then get a letter telling them that it is going to take even longer.

Then the government is telling us that it is putting in measures to try to make sure that this speeds up. That is not happening.

What we are asking for is the 360 hours to qualify and for eligibility to be standard in all regions of the country. We want to increase the benefit duration to at least 50 weeks in all regions. We want to eliminate the two week waiting period. We want to provide benefits that are at least 60% of normal earnings, use the worker's 12 best weeks, and suspend the allocation of severance pay.

The other thing that the signatories to this petition are asking is that there be more flexible, innovative use of EI work-sharing to keep people at work.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present five petitions from Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick in support of my private member's bill, Bill C-322, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (library materials).

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to present a petition that is signed by students at St. Thomas More High School in my riding of Hamilton Mountain. Twenty-seven of the students came to Ottawa to participate in the March for Life and used the opportunity to give my office their petition calling for a legislative reversal of the current law on abortion.

I want to commend these students for their engagement in the political process. They clearly understand that in a democratic country like Canada, it is their right to express their views directly to the House of Commons by petitioning Parliament.

While the rules of the House do not allow me to endorse or oppose the call for action in any petition, I think it is important for all constituents in my riding to know that as their member of Parliament I fully support the right of all citizens to have their voices heard in this chamber through the petition process, even in cases where I do not support the content of the petition itself.

For that reason, I am pleased to table this petition on behalf of the students of St. Thomas More, and look forward to working with them on the full spectrum of issues that confront us as elected members in the House.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions that have been submitted to me by concerned constituents.

The first petition was largely organized by Pastor Gill and it urges the Government of Canada to take action against the persecution of religious minorities around the world, especially in Christian communities in the Kandhamal district of India. This is an issue of great concern to a large number of my constituents, and I would hope that it is given due and careful consideration.

Routine Proceedings

VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls for the government to respectfully recognize volunteer servicemen and women by means of the issuance of a new Canadian volunteer service medal. My constituents would like to see a solid recognition of volunteer servicemen and women who have done so much to build on the proud tradition of the Canadian Forces.

FALUN GONG PRACTITIONERS

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by folks in my constituency and other communities throughout British Columbia and indeed Alberta.

The undersigned acknowledge that the Falun Gong is a peaceful and beneficial spiritual practice. They bring to the attention of the House that the Chinese communist party has launched an eradication program against them, and that the government of China and its agencies have put to death a large number of these practitioners

They call upon the Government of Canada to help stop these atrocities by the Chinese government and to condemn the communist Chinese regime for committing these crimes against humanity.

* * *

● (1650)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 122 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 122—**Hon. Dan McTeague:**

With regard to departmental programming: (a) what was the total funding allocated to each program in each department in the 2008-2009 fiscal year; (b) what was the total funding spent in each program in each department during the 2008-2009 fiscal year; and (c) where were the funds spent under each program in each department, allocated by (i) town or city, (ii) project name, if applicable, (iii) dollar value?

Hon. Vic Toews (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question above, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat cannot provide detailed information in support of this inquiry as it is not available at this time.

A detailed reconciliation of final departmental expenditures by vote and program activity is provided in volume II of the Public Accounts. This reconciliation of actual expenditures by vote and program activity can be found in volume II of the Public Accounts for fiscal year 2007-08, but the data for the recently concluded fiscal year 2008-09 will not be available until the fall of 2009. The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat does not have information in support of departmental expenditures by town or city, project name and dollar value.

S. O. 52

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 123, 126, 127, 128, 131 and 135 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 123—**Hon. Dan McTeague:**

With regard to two government contracts or retainers awarded to Mike McCurry and Ari Fleischer: (a) what criteria did the government use in awarding these contracts or retainers; (b) what are the terms of each contract or retainer; (c) what is the value of each contract or retainer; (d) where will Mr. McCurry and Mr. Fleischer be travelling to; (e) what are the travel expenses and per diem rates for Mr. McCurry and Mr. Fleischer; and (f) was any document or record provided to a minister or MP regarding these two contracts and, if so, what are the details?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 126—**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:**

With regards to requests for financial assistance made to the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec for the 2005-2006 and 2008-2009 fiscal years, and by regional office: (a) for requests submitted for the authorization of the Regional Director, how many did he approve, and how many did he reject; (b) for requests submitted for the authorization of the General Director for Regional Coordination, how many did he approve, and how many did he reject; (c) for requests submitted for the authorization of the Vice-President for Operations, how many did he approve, and how many did he reject; (d) for requests submitted for the authorization of the President, how many did he approve, and how many did he reject; and (e) for requests submitted for the authorization of the Minister, how many did he approve, and how many did he reject?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 127—**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:**

With regards to projects for which a contribution was authorized by the Economic Development Agency of Canada for Quebec Regions in the Capital Fund for Business Succession and Venture: (a) what is the name of the beneficiary; (b) in what region is located the beneficiary; (c) what is the description of the project; (d) what is the maximum authorized contribution; (e) how much of the authorized maximum contribution has been paid out; (f) how many jobs were maintained by the project; (g) how many jobs were created by the project; (h) what is the value of total investments in the project; and (i) what Agency partner forwarded the request for funding to the Agency?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 128—**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes:**

With respect to projects for which a contribution was authorized by the Economic Development Agency of Canada for Quebec Regions in the Capital Fund for Business Startups in the Regions: (a) what is the name of the beneficiary; (b) in what region is located the beneficiary; (c) what is the description of the project; (d) what is the maximum authorized contribution; (e) how much of the authorized maximum contribution has been paid out; (f) how many jobs were maintained by the project; (g) how many jobs were created by the project; (h) what is the value of total investments in the project; and (i) what Agency partner forwarded the request for funding to the Agency?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 131—**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:**

With regard to the Home Renovation Tax Credit: (a) what kind of analysis of this credit has been provided to the Ministers of Environment, Finance and Revenue;

and (b) how many income tax audits does the government anticipate conducting to verify the use of this tax credit?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 135—**Hon. John McKay:**

With respect to access and compensation for medically necessary drugs and treatments that are not covered by provincial drug programs due to the fact that they are not approved by Health Canada: (a) what action has Health Canada taken to ensure that any drugs or medication that have been approved for treatment of a specific illness in one province are then approved for treatment in the rest of the provinces; (b) what steps has Health Canada taken to ensure that those who had to independently pay for their own medically necessary medication as a result of the drug being used off label, or the result of the drug not having been approved by Health Canada for use in general or in a particular illness, or are used in an unconventional manner and are therefore not qualifying for conventional insurance regulations are then compensated for these costs, or have the treatment subsidized in some manner; (c) for Canadians suffering from rare medical conditions, what steps is Health Canada taking to ensure that (i) research in treatment for these conditions is being pursued, (ii) orphan drugs that have been developed and proven to be effective are being actively manufactured, (iii) drugs that have been developed are being actively approved by Health Canada, (iv) legislation is being introduced to guarantee the continuation of these practices; and (d) has Health Canada or the government investigated the creation of a National Drug Program or plan which would allow equal access to medications for all Canadians, regardless of the province that they reside in?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, lastly, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for St. Paul's, Narcotic Drug Control; the hon. member Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, Transport; the hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona, the Environment.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

SRI LANKA

The Speaker: The chair has notices of application for emergency debate from at least six hon. members, all on the same subject.

The first came from the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt. I therefore call upon him to make a submission in respect of emergency debates.

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the House is aware, Tamil Canadians are on Parliament Hill today calling upon the Government of Canada to act in order to help innocent civilians in the recent conflict in Sri Lanka.

In Sri Lanka today, we have people who are residing in refugee camps with little or no medical assistance, little or no clean drinking water, and little or no food. We hear reports of mass graves and over 20,000 people missing. We hear reports of women being raped in these camps, children being separated from their parents, and men being segregated from their wives.

While the government has allocated a pittance for the humanitarian assistance, it has done nothing to further pursue the intervention of the international community to ensure an end to this human suffering. The Government of Canada has done nothing to ensure that the United Nations has access to the refugee camps by humanitarian organizations and independent international journalists. This government also has not worked with the international community to ensure that a permanent solution is found and instituted in order to prevent further bloodshed in Sri Lanka.

Canada is home to one of the largest Sri Lankan diasporas and they are looking to their government and members of Parliament to help provide a solution to their violence-plagued homeland.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am asking you to permit an emergency debate on this very important issue. If we allow this destruction to continue, it has the possibility of becoming one of the greatest tragedies of our century.

The Speaker: The chair has a similar request from the hon. members for Don Valley West, Beaches—East York, Etobicoke North, Scarborough Centre and York South—Weston.

If any of the other hon. members wish to make submissions on this point dealing with other aspects for the argument that were advanced by the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt, I would be pleased to hear them now.

The hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I want to request through this debate, if it is so accorded to us, to press, through the United Nations, to ensure that an individual is appointed, to get him or her in there with the authority to look at the situation, and bring back some findings, and also to press upon the UN to take the leadership role for which it was designed.

The Speaker: The Chair has considered the submissions of the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt and the hon. member for Scarborough Centre, and the letters received from the other hon. members that I listed.

I note that I have ordered a debate on this subject previously. I believe it was in February. I granted the debate on the basis of the humanitarian crisis that was existing at that time, and the House did have a debate on the subject.

The conflict has ended, but there is continuing difficulty in the country, I agree. However, whether it is something that constitutes an emergency for the purposes of debate in this chamber, I have doubts.

Government Orders

I am sure that having heard the submissions of the hon. members, I agree that further submissions by the Government of Canada may be helpful in this matter, and the government is free to make those submissions, and indeed questions are asked during question period and statements made in the House dealing with this subject, which I am sure are influencing the opinions of members of the government who make the decisions in respect of these matters.

I am not convinced at the moment that a debate in the House, on an emergency basis, is something that is required and, accordingly, I am going to deny the request at this time, bearing in mind the possibility of the matter being brought back to the chamber at another time, as it has been a couple of times since the debate in February.

Accordingly, I do not feel the submissions meet the exigencies of the Standing Order at this moment.

Before I call orders of the day, I wish to inform the House that pursuant to order made on Tuesday, June 2, because of the ministerial statement and the deferred recorded divisions, government orders will be extended by 78 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

●(1655)

[*Translation*]

TOBACCO ACT

The House resumed from June 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-32, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are resuming debate on Bill C-32, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act. It is important to point out the alternative title. The bill contains the following note: “This Act may be cited as the *Cracking Down on Tobacco Marketing Aimed at Youth Act*.”

I wanted to point that out because it is clear that, in the mind of the legislator, this bill definitely fits in with the objectives set out in the Tobacco Act of 1997. In section 4(c), it states that the purpose of the act is to protect the health of young persons by restricting access to tobacco products.

Clearly, generally speaking, tobacco is very harmful to human health, as we know. It is clear that, as a society, we want the best for our young people and our children. We want to ensure that whatever they consume things is in no way harmful to their health, their development or their growth.

Clearly, and again generally speaking, no one wants to see someone who is still growing consume products that are harmful to health. It is only natural that a society like ours creates legislation to try to ensure only the best for our young people. That is why it is important to limit the use of tobacco products by our young people.

Government Orders

That is precisely what we are doing by prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors. That is the message we are sending to all our citizens, not only to the young people themselves, of course, but also to their parents and their peers. As we know, at a certain age, young people often use tobacco products to imitate others. We see people smoking and might then be inclined to smoke as well, since one of the rituals of some groups.

However, as I was saying, we have a collective responsibility to ensure that our young people do not consume tobacco products. That is what the law tells us, by prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.

Furthermore, according to a 2007 Health Canada survey, close to 85% of merchants abide by this law. Of course, we would prefer that all merchants abided by the law. That would reinforce the message we want to get across to young people, their parents and their friends of legal age, which is to discourage them from using these products.

However, it is rather clear that merchants are generally aware of their roles as responsible citizens in promoting healthy lifestyles among our young people.

An important part of Bill C-32 is to restrict the use of little cigars, or cigarillos. It is true that young people who smoke them from time to time, may not be happy to learn that flavoured cigarillos will no longer be found on the shelves. However, it is clear that in this case, we are making this change to the Tobacco Act for their own good.

● (1700)

It is important to note that in 2000, Health Canada determined that cigarillos contain between 67% and 200% more tar than standard cigarettes, and that unfiltered cigarillos contain twice as much nicotine. We know that these harmful substances are addictive, and it is important to restrict the use of the products by young people as much as possible. It makes me smile to think of an interview I heard at the end of last week. Louis Lemieux, a morning host on the RDI news network was having a rather candid interview with Sylvie Fréchette, spokesperson for No Tobacco Day. He spoke about his own desire to quit smoking. He was even wearing a patch during the show. During the interview, Mr. Lemieux admitted that he did not think many people enjoyed smoking, but that it was difficult for them to quit because they were addicted.

We do not want our young people to develop an addiction to tobacco products during their development in adolescence. So it is important, in accordance with paragraph 4(c) of the 1997 Tobacco Act, to try to restrict access to tobacco products for young people as much as possible.

We have some interesting statistics from the Institut de la statistique du Québec. Our young people, both boys and girls, begin smoking cigars between secondary 2 and 3, that is, grades eight and nine. About 21% to 22% smoke cigars. We tend to believe that things are the same as in an earlier time and that only boys smoke; however, girls smoke now as well and that is not what we want for them.

Exactly what is Bill C-32 trying to do? It introduces three things.

It prohibits certain types of flavouring agents used in little cigars or cigarillos. Surely everyone has seen them. The little cigars now

come in cute packaging resembling a package of candy or treats in all kinds of flavours that are unusual, interesting and colourful. This bill will eliminate these flavoured tobacco products from our stores.

It also prohibits the sale of single products. Young people do not necessarily have a lot of money. They often manage on odd jobs or perhaps gifts or allowances from their parents or grandparents. They do not necessarily have the money to buy a package of 20 or 25 cigars or cigarettes. At present, these flavoured little cigars are sold individually or in packages of three, five or eight. Subclause 10(1) of the bill reads as follows:

No person shall import for sale in Canada, package, distribute or sell cigarettes, little cigars or blunt wraps except in a package that contains at least 20 cigarettes, little cigars or blunt wraps or, if a higher number is prescribed, at least the prescribed number.

● (1705)

From now on, it will be much harder for minors to purchase these products because the larger packages will be more expensive.

With respect to advertising, current legislation allows tobacco product manufacturers and distributors to advertise in publications that have an adult readership of 85%. It is also interesting to note that there will be some advertising restrictions because we noticed that some of these publications were being distributed free of charge and were available to everyone, including minors. These publications may have been community, culturally or socially oriented, and their content may have been of interest to young people.

It is interesting to note that, to prevent these ads from reaching minors, legislators decided to take that option away from advertisers who wanted to put tobacco advertising in such publications.

I also want to point out that the Government of Quebec did not wait. I always like to remind people that the Government of Quebec and Quebecers generally do the responsible thing when they realize that it is in the collective best interest and in young people's best interest.

The Government of Quebec has already implemented a number of rules to limit minors' access to tobacco products. According to Quebec law, a package had to include at least 10 units of a tobacco product and had to be priced above \$5. As of June 1, that went up to \$10. In Quebec, tobacco products are now out of sight of consumers, so when minors go into convenience stores, they will not see tobacco products that they might be tempted to buy.

However, I want to emphasize that, if we want to win the war on tobacco use among young people, we have to be much more open in our interpretation and enforcement of the measures we want to implement. If the per-unit cost is a factor for young people, then which currently available products will they buy? They will buy contraband cigarettes.

• (1710)

Everyone knows these cigarettes are easy to get and inexpensive. They are not, however, monitored in any way as far as ingredients or contents are concerned. What is more, they are not monitored for their ignition potential, either. If there is no clear, effective, vigilant and concerted attack on contraband tobacco, thanks to Bill C-32, young people will no longer be able to get cigarillos or flavoured tobacco products but they will be able nonetheless to turn to other products, such as contraband cigarettes.

Any one of us can look around near a high school to look at the ground where the kids hang out and find a number of butts. We will of course find some cigarillo butts, but we will also find a lot of butts from contraband cigarettes. If the legislator's clearly stated desire is to restrict the marketing of tobacco products to young people, and their access to those products, it is vital to attack contraband tobacco products in a vigorous and clear manner.

To date we have had no clear sense that the government is firmly committed to attacking this problem. I am certain that all the stakeholders will very definitely be in favour of much stronger and more effective measures against contraband. The survival of many businesses depends on it, of course, but it is also important to remember that all governments are increasingly concerned about tax leakage due to contraband. In addition, as I said earlier, it is impossible to analyze the content of the contraband products in circulation.

Another slight contradiction in the bill concerns the flavours covered by the bill. Why are menthol products still allowed? The bill puts them in a separate category, and manufacturers will still be able to make and sell menthol products, even though products flavoured with raspberry, vanilla, cherry, wild blueberry, peach, strawberry, cinnamon, honey, black cherry and rum are prohibited. Menthol is being kept because it is apparently not a flavour young people appreciate. But how do we know which of the flavours I listed young people like better than others? In my opinion, menthol should not be excluded.

Moreover, many new products will come on the market, and the government does not even make provision for them in the current version of the bill.

• (1715)

This is a flaw I noticed. It will be important to know why. When cigarillos came on the market, they were not very popular at all, just like other new products, but look how popular they are now.

In conclusion, I call on my colleagues to refer this bill to committee.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think the bill is certainly a good step forward.

Government Orders

Over the years we have found that scaring people with warnings on cigarette packages and so on has had an effect, but people are still managing to smoke. We tried raising the prices, and we raised them so high we saw increased smuggling efforts with contraband cigarettes showing up on the market. Some people did stop smoking, but still we have a problem here.

I would like to know whether the member agrees that at some point the government will perhaps have to look at providing financial incentives to existing smokers to stop smoking. Perhaps we could look at administering that through the medical profession. I am not sure what mechanism could be used, but there has to be a way to work out a program with doctors so that if people stop smoking the government would provide an incentive. To the extent that this would work, I think we should take a look at exploring that avenue as well.

I would like to know what the member thinks of that idea.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Malo: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very pertinent question. As I mentioned earlier, people try to find ways to quit smoking because they do realize that cigarettes are harmful to their health. Without naming him, I would like to congratulate one of my colleagues in this House, who has decided to stop smoking because it is important for his health.

It is important that, collectively, we try to find effective means of allowing our fellow citizens to make choices about their health even though we know it is difficult to stop smoking.

• (1720)

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-32, which is a very important piece of legislation, particularly as it affects public health.

What is Bill C-32? This enactment amends the Tobacco Act to provide additional protection for youth from tobacco marketing. It repeals the exemption that permits tobacco advertising in publications with an adult readership of not less than 85%. It prohibits the packaging, importation for sale, distribution and sale of little cigars and blunt wraps unless they are in a package that contains at least 20. It also prohibits the manufacture and sale of cigarettes, little cigars and blunt wraps that contain the additives set out in a new schedule to that act as well as the packaging of those products in a manner that suggests they contain a prohibited additive.

This is a really important piece of legislation, and I have a personal bias on this.

Government Orders

When we look at legislation affecting tobacco, the first thing we have to accept is that tobacco has no redeeming qualities. One could argue that for people who smoke the taste is a redeeming quality, but there are no redeeming qualities. It is dangerous, it is addictive and it shortens life.

Tobacco abuse is sometimes compared to alcohol abuse, but there are some significant differences. One difference is that alcohol can be used responsibly in moderation. Some research even indicates that there are health benefits to certain types of alcohol. We often hear about red wine. Even the beer distributors have evidence indicating that beer used in moderation can be helpful. It has not helped me very much, but I accept the argument. Whether one believes it or not, it can be argued that alcohol does not automatically shorten life. Of course the abuse of alcohol can have dramatic impacts: early death, drinking under the influence, et cetera. But we have laws that pertain in those circumstances.

Tobacco has no health benefits. It is very important that we ensure young Canadians do not fall into this trap and become addicted to tobacco. The bill is important for that reason, and for me it has a historical importance as well. From 1991 to 2004, I was very involved as a volunteer with the Heart and Stroke Foundation in Nova Scotia and in Canada. I was the president of the Heart and Stroke Foundation in Nova Scotia for three or four years, and I served on the national board for a number of years.

I had the opportunity to work with some great health advocates who worked very hard in the anti-tobacco strategies. Joan Fraser was a mentor to me in Nova Scotia, and Jane Farquharson was a pioneer in healthy living. Mary Elizabeth Harriman, who works with the Heart and Stroke Foundation nationally, and is now the executive vice-president, was involved in health promotion when I worked with her on a number of these issues. Sally Brown is now the executive director of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and she has been for a number of years. People in Nova Scotia, like Tanya Willis, Rollie Jameson, Grant Morash, George Buckell, are business leaders who became presidents of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and advocated for many issues, including but not specifically restricted to the battle against tobacco.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation has done a great deal of work on the anti-tobacco strategy. The key was when the organizations with a common interest in promoting healthy living, particularly as it pertained to tobacco but also on other things like obesity and other issues, started working together. The health charities round table in Canada had great success. They have done a lot of great work. We know the work that the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Lung Association, Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, the CMA and other organizations do. Those organizations have been active on this for a long time.

We have come a long way in the battle against tobacco, but it was not always easy. I can recall 30 years ago that my now mother-in-law told people that if they were going to smoke in her house they should leave. That was radical in those days. People thought she was crazy. They thought she was hypersensitive to tobacco smoke to actually ask someone to leave her house to smoke. That was only three decades ago. They thought it was just an inconvenience. They did not understand the health detriment of second-hand smoke. That is not that many years ago.

We have come a long way, but it has not always been easy. At times success came incrementally, in small steps, and the tobacco advocates, who were well financed and well resourced, fought back every step of the way. But success has come to some degree. It has not come all the way, but it has come, and we have reduced the incidence of smoking. It has taken a lot of hard work.

● (1725)

I can recall a time, probably about 10 years or so ago, when the Liberal government of the day was cracking down on tobacco companies being able to sponsor events. The tobacco companies, to their credit, were very involved in things like the artistic community.

I remember arriving at my office one day and receiving calls from two organizations with which I was involved. One was from the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia asking if I would write a letter encouraging the government, in the piece of legislation that it was pursuing, so that tobacco companies could not sponsor events and take advantage of that sponsorship to leverage people to become addicted to smoking. That was fine.

I was also on the board of Neptune Theatre, probably the finest theatre company in Canada, with the possible exception of Eastern Front Theatre in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and perhaps the St. Peters Playhouse. The one in Charlottetown is not half bad, I must say, thanks to *Anne of Green Gables* and a number of other fine productions.

When I was on the board of Neptune Theatre I was asked to write a letter opposing the legislation because Neptune Theatre was the beneficiary, largely of du Maurier but other companies that provided sponsorship. It was a difficult position. Tobacco companies knew that governments had been reducing their role in the artistic and cultural communities and that they had an opportunity. To their credit, they stepped in.

I wrote the letter for the Heart & Stroke Foundation, which was the right thing to do. The Heart & Stroke Foundation has been a great advocate on a number of things.

We have had discussions in the House on things like trans fats. The Heart & Stroke Foundation has led on Health Check, where it identifies products that are healthy for people and puts a check mark on them so that when people go to grocery stores they will know what is healthy and what is not because consumers still have an awful lot of trouble identifying what is actually good for them and do not understand all the ramifications and differences in products, such as polyunsaturates, trans fats and everything else.

My bias on this bill is the work that I did with the Heart & Stroke Foundation and the people I met, including the many people who had become addicted to tobacco. Quite honestly, in my parents' generation it was a pretty easy thing to do. It seemed everybody smoked and, before they knew it, they were hooked on tobacco. Thank heaven, today my own children face probably more pressure if they do smoke than if they do not, although there are some areas where that is not always the case.

Government Orders

We have had great champions in Nova Scotia. I recall Ron Stewart, who was the minister of health in Nova Scotia in my father's government in the 1990s. He postulated at one point in time that we should not have things like the candy licorice pipes. I am sure members have had those before and probably in recent years. I have been known to enjoy them myself. However, the idea was that maybe we should not have them because it makes it easy for kids to become accustomed to pretending that they smoke and eventually they do. He was pilloried. People thought he was crazy. I think he was ahead of his time, as Ron Stewart always is.

Dave MacLean is with Heart Health Nova Scotia. I am very proud of the fact that in Nova Scotia, when I was involved in the Heart & Stroke Foundation, we had an organization that pulled together a number of advocates in public health, largely on smoking, headed by Dr. Dave MacLean, who was a champion on this issue. He is now at Simon Fraser University. Both he and his wife have teaching positions there. He was a pioneer.

Anne Cogdon in the city of Dartmouth was very involved in the healthy communities project.

Those are people who understand that people should not smoke. There was a day when people said that we were taking away their freedom. It was like seat belts and a number of other things but there is a role for the state in ensuring we provide opportunities, and not dangerous ones, for all citizens, but particularly for children.

I was always proud of the fact that Nova Scotia, under the Progressive Conservative government of Dr. John Hamm, back maybe five, six or seven years ago, was the first province in Canada to have a health promotion department. I give Dr. Hamm and people like Scott Logan, who worked there, a lot of credit. They were very active in ensuring people knew the facts about smoking, gambling, alcohol abuse and a whole bunch of other issues. I am proud of the fact that Nova Scotia, under Dr. Hamm's leadership, was the first province to bring in a health promotion department.

I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of my not-for-profit friends about this bill, organizations like Heart & Stroke, the Cancer Society, the Canadian Medical Association, Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and the Lung Association. They want this bill passed. It may not be perfect and, in fact, I would argue that it is not. A number of things need to be looked at and adapted in the health committee but we need to get this through the House, which is what people are calling for.

I would like to quote Rob Cunningham, senior policy analyst at the Canadian Cancer Society. He stated:

The Canadian Cancer Society strongly supports this bill as it will lead to fewer Canadians starting to smoke and encourage more to quit.... By working together to quickly pass this bill, federal MPs will send a clear message that the health of their constituents and all Canadians comes first. Cancer is a non-partisan issue.

• (1730)

Speaking of cigarillos, which I will speak to in a second, which come in fruit flavours and things like that, he says:

There is the risk that these flavoured products would be a starter product for kids who would never otherwise start smoking.

There is a concerning rate of cigarillo smoking among young Canadians. The Heart & Stroke Foundation, the aforementioned

Sally Brown is doing a wonderful job with the Heart & Stroke Foundation. I am proud to say that I was part of the search committee that recommended her. She said:

Protecting children from harmful tobacco industry products such as candy-flavoured cigarillos and their associated marketing is critical to ensure that children do not get hooked on tobacco. This is crucial because long-term tobacco users, half of whom die from their tobacco use, more often than not begin their addiction in their youth. This initiative is critical to reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

I would also mention Paul Thomey, the chair of tobacco policy for the Canadian Lung Association, who was quoted as saying:

These are positive steps forward in the fight against tobacco. Strong measures such as these not only will protect Canada's children from the harmful effects of smoking, but will also serve to curtail industry tactics aimed at marketing their products to the youth of this country.

The president of the CMA said, "Closing loopholes is a huge step forward in protecting our children from a deadly addiction to tobacco". This is a very serious issue for many people.

I have spoken to my friends at the Heart & Stroke who have suggested that we should pass the bill and get it to committee and perhaps the health committee would amend the bill to address smokeless tobacco products: oral, chew, spit tobacco, et cetera. Some of these products contain flavourings that are meant to appeal to youth. We think that should be dealt with at the committee level.

Other speakers have probably referred to this, but how could we believe anything other than the fact that producers of tobacco products are trying to get children addicted to their products when chewing tobacco comes in flavours that appeal to kids? We should think about that. These are flavoured products that are meant to appeal to children and that needs to be changed.

We should think about how deliberate these strategies are, and this is for both smoking and for smokeless products. Little cigars, the cigarillos, whose sales have exploded in recent years, come in these flavours: grape, peach, tropical punch, chocolate and bubble gum. These are not the boys in the fishing camps sitting around having some bubble gum flavoured chewing tobacco that they are appealing to. These are my kids, other members' kids and grandkids and other children across the country. It is really abhorrent. They are not breaking the law right now. We need to change the law so that if they do it, they do break the law because our grandchildren are too important to the future of this country. Who are these intended for? It is pretty clear.

Bill C-32 would deal with what I think is a rotten marketing practice. We are told that more than 400 million little cigars were sold in Canada in 2007 and that must stop. The bill would deal with that. It also would deal with the practice of selling cigarillos in small quantities. That is the other thing. Flavoured products are sold in ones or twos. It is a lot easier for kids at recess or kids at lunchtime to get one or two than if they are mandated to come in a pack of 20 or more. We dealt with this with cigarettes. We cannot buy one or two cigarettes but we can buy one or two root beer flavoured cigarillos or tropical punch. This needs to be changed.

It should never be easy for children to buy tobacco. As a father, the thought of my children becoming addicted to these products is frightening. Any one of us would hope that would never be the case.

Government Orders

Another issue that my colleague from St. Paul's has spoken to quite passionately and very effectively to is the issue of contraband tobacco. In 2008, three billion more contraband cigars were sold than in 2007. That is \$2 billion in lost government revenue. Officials estimate that 200 small cigars cost \$8 to \$15 and not what it should be, which is in the range of \$55 to \$80. That is a huge problem that needs to be dealt with. It is a huge percentage of the issue that we have to deal with here.

• (1735)

I now want to talk about advertising. We thought we had dealt with this issue because the law was that companies could not advertise tobacco except in publications where at least 85% of the readership were adults. However, there has been a strong resurgence of advertising recently. Who knows where a lot of these publications that carry these ads go. There is no way of knowing if children are getting them and reading them, finding them on the street or if the publications are being distributed for free. Therefore, that exemption for publications where at least 85% of the readership are adults, needs to be dealt with. We really cannot regulate the distribution of advertising in today's society.

We have made some good strides. I will read an article which states:

A recent resurgence of tobacco advertising—over 400 ads nationwide—between November 2007 and December 2008—has exposed young audiences to tobacco sales pitches.

Full colour tobacco ads have been appearing....

Between November 2007 and December 2008, tobacco companies spent approximately \$4.47 million dollars to place nationwide ads....

That also would be dealt with by this bill.

We have made some great strides on the issue of dealing with tobacco and the dangers that it can cause. A lot of credit goes to organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society, the Heart & Stroke Foundation, Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, public health agencies across the country, municipal public health organizations, doctors, nurses, teachers, and many others who have brought this message forward for us. I think young people are much more aware of the dangers of smoking than they used to be, certainly more than when I was a child when it was kind of cool to smoke. I do not think that is the case any more. When I talk to my children, they do not think smoking is cool at all, and I want to keep it that way. It is good that we are headed in the right direction but it is nowhere good enough.

Good public education is in fact the key, as it always is, but so is good public policy. The government has a role in ensuring that we provide safe and healthy communities for all of us, but particularly for our children.

There have been a number of champions in this House. I think of former health ministers, like Dave Dingwall and Allan Rock, who did a lot of work on this issue. I think of my NDP colleague from Winnipeg North. I know this is an issue that she takes very seriously and it is an issue that she has championed in private member's bills. She deserves credit. I am sure she is very happy that this bill has come to pass and that she would want to get it into committee.

I also think of my colleague from St. Paul's, the former and first minister of public health in Canada, the originator of the Public

Health Agency of Canada. We recognize that the Public Health Agency of Canada, when it was set up, was set up largely in reaction to the issues like SARS and was to deal with things like West Nile virus, but also that there are chronic health disease issues in Canada that are taking a huge toll on our health system and on our citizens.

The biggest issue we face in managing our health care costs today is chronic disease. Tobacco has no positive health benefits. It is designed and produced to be detrimental to health. It is highly addictive. For years, led by public health champions, Canadians have resisted the tobacco lobby and made progress against smoking. We have moved forward. Smoking is now severely restricted in public places, for example; advertising and promotion is curtailed; packaging has been legislated.

My colleague from Scarborough—Guildwood passed a private member's bill a few years ago that affected the burn rate of cigarettes. Again, he faced opposition.

Progress has come but this is now the new battle for our children. We must not allow our children to be easily led down a very dangerous path: a path of addiction to tobacco.

This bill is a very good start and I encourage all members to support the bill and get it into committee where we can make it even better.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased that in his excellent speech the member recognized all the work that my colleague, the member for Winnipeg North, has done on this file. She introduced a bill in the spring of 2008 on this very subject in an effort to pressure the government to act. It has taken a while, but the government has finally brought in a bill. We support the bill.

I asked the member for St. Paul's yesterday when she made her speech about the possibility of going beyond where we are in this area. We have scared people with warnings. We have raised the price of cigarettes to reduce smoking. Does the member think that at some time in the future, and maybe not so far in the future, we will have to look at providing some sort of financial incentive to people to get them to stop smoking? A program like that could probably be administered through the medical system. For example, a patient who was addicted to cigarettes would get involved in a program run by a doctor, and upon completion of the program and upon stopping smoking, would get some sort of financial reward from the federal government.

Doctors could be much more aggressive than they have been in encouraging people to improve their health. We should be mandating the medical system in our country to be more aggressive in trying to get people to live more healthy lifestyles.

I would like the member's comments.

• (1740)

Mr. Michael Savage: Madam Speaker, the member's comment makes sense on many levels.

Physicians and nurses in Canada have played a big role in reducing smoking. Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and the CMA have been active on this file.

Government Orders

There is no question that if we look at the health costs of tobacco use, the money could be much better used at the front end in terms of health promotion so that we could actually do more to prevent people from smoking. The money could also be used for a smoking cessation program.

I am pleased the government has brought the bill forward, but on the other hand, I am disappointed that the government cancelled the smoking cessation program for aboriginals.

There are a number of things we should be putting money into now that would encourage people to stop smoking, but even before that we need education policies to encourage young Canadians not to start in the first place.

The economic case for what my colleague is talking about is pretty clear.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to compliment my colleague on his intervention with respect to the health issues associated with smoking and the abandonment of smoking.

There are two issues I wish to raise, and I hope there will be enough time for him to address them. He alluded to one of them and that is the issue of contraband cigarettes and all that they impose on the system. The other issue is enforcement.

My colleague has already acknowledged that the bill has a considerable amount in it that needs to be addressed and reviewed. Imposing fines such as \$50,000 for infractions is a very important issue, but most people who are involved in anti-smoking strategies admit that enforcement of these measures is more important.

Other governments in the past have discovered that the most common measure for promoting anti-smoking has been to increase the price of legitimate cigarettes. What has happened is that those cigarettes have been replaced by ones from less legitimate manufacturers and retailers, in the process criminalizing a lot of people who engage in the manufacture, sale and distribution of illegitimate cigarettes. There is nothing in the bill that addresses a mechanism to ensure that contraband distributors and sellers of the product are put in the target area. Today there are a lot of people who will actually deliver contraband cigarettes to the home. They will arrange meetings. They have phone numbers. They hand out business cards.

I know my colleague is going to look at this in committee, but I wonder if he would comment on this a bit further because the bill deserves to be supported if it includes all the dimensions of an anti-smoking strategy.

● (1745)

Mr. Michael Savage: Madam Speaker, my colleague is entirely right that this issue demands more attention in committee on the regulation and enforcement of what is happening in the contraband market. I can recall when my father was premier of Nova Scotia and the price of cigarettes went up back in the 1990s. There was a huge problem with contraband product.

We have to get very serious about this. We are looking at a price difference of between \$8 and \$15 versus \$55 and \$80. Unless we do something about that contraband market, we cannot make the impact

we need to make across the board. I absolutely agree with his comments.

His comments are much more learned than anything I could add to that particular topic. I think it has to be looked at in committee, but it is really important that we get this bill through and get something done about this. This is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Andrew Kania (Brampton West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to compliment my friend on being an advocate on behalf of his constituents and Canadians on issues that matter, such as this one, and of course on employment insurance reforms which are desperately needed in Canada right now.

In terms of this particular topic, my friend mentioned in his speech that historically, tobacco advocates have always fought back, and they are doing it again with respect to this legislation. Many arguments have been used. One of them is that if this legislation passes, there will be an increase in smuggling and related contraband.

I would like the member's views on that topic and the advocates, and whether this bill should be passed in that light.

Mr. Michael Savage: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Brampton West is a very knowledgeable and well-informed person.

Let me read a comment that came from a representative of one of the tobacco companies in speaking about this bill. He said that his company "does not target minors in any of its marketing and advertisement efforts, the focus is really towards adults".

Bubble gum, tropical punch, chocolate, grape, peach and whatever else, these are not flavours typically geared toward the adult market. I understand people are in business. They are legitimate business people. I do not want to suggest that anybody is criminal in what they are doing. That is not what I am saying.

What I am saying is that the government has a role to stand up for the rights, the safety and the future of our children. When it comes to tobacco, this bill is a step in that direction. We have to do more on this. We have always had fights with the tobacco lobby when it has come to making changes and improving public health safety in this country, and we are going to have to do it again. The good news is that we have been steadily winning, but we cannot slip back with things like smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco and these cigarillos that are marketed to children.

This bill is a step in the right direction.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence has time for a very short question. We have one minute left.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Madam Speaker, I will cede the floor to my colleague who made an intervention on health prevention that I think merits expansion.

He talked about the ways we would be proactive in terms of delivering the message of a smoke-free society. I am wondering if he would comment on that, given that he also has some experience with many of the enterprises that initially objected to those kinds of measures and strategies in the retail industry, whether they were in the entertainment business or the food business.

Government Orders

Mr. Michael Savage: Madam Speaker, the future of our health care system is in advocating for population health, public health, promoting healthy living among all citizens but particularly among kids, making sure that they do not smoke tobacco, making sure they lead a healthy lifestyle, making sure there is physical education in the schools, and making sure they have safe foods.

I hope that the Public Health Agency of Canada models itself on the vision of the former public health agency minister, the member for St. Paul's. It was a very strong model which I think we may have gotten away from just a little bit.

We should and can have a public health care system that is publicly delivered and publicly funded, but we have to do everything we can to get out in front of sickness instead of waiting for it to happen.

• (1750)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ): Madam Speaker, before anything else, I would like to congratulate my colleague from the Liberal Party on his fine speech.

I will pick up on his final comment, that indeed any campaign against smoking encompasses not just a battle against cigarettes but also an overall approach to the causes of tobacco addiction. A large part of this will involve education. Major advances have already been made on the educational level to raise public awareness, among young people in particular, in order to make sure they do not start smoking at that age, and then be stuck with it for the rest of their lives. There is therefore far more to be done than just to take concrete actions on today's smokers or the tobacco companies. There is also the whole educational approach to the diet and physical fitness of our young people, long before any direct attack on cigarettes.

The Bloc Québécois is in principle in favour of Bill C-32, although it is not of great use to Quebec, where the Government of Quebec has already enacted stricter control over cigarillos. I would like to take just a minute to show you that, once again, Quebec has been proactive rather than reactive like the federal government. Quebec has had an anti-smoking strategy for ages. For about three years now, there has been legislation in place banning smoking in bars and restaurants. Before that, there were segregated areas. But now smoking in public places is completely banned.

I must admit that this measure has made considerable strides toward reducing smoking, because smokers really have nowhere left to smoke except at home and outside. Even outside, it has to be nine metres away from a building. So it can be seen that Quebec has already taken great steps toward reducing smoking. Now too, corner stores have to store cigarettes in a closed cabinet so that young people who come into the store are not attracted by the packages of cigarettes.

I would like to come back to cigarillos. There is a problem: young people are smoking more and more, and start with cigarillos before gradually making the move to cigarettes. As my colleague said earlier, although tobacco companies are legitimate—we have nothing against the companies themselves—I have a problem with their ethics when they launch a vigorous marketing campaign targeted at young people and the most vulnerable people in society.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Health, I have heard from a huge number of representatives from anti-tobacco lobbies, including Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, which the Liberal member is very familiar with. This group showed us the new packaging and tobacco products. I must admit that it is very scary. I am not afraid of the box itself, but of the way things are being done. There are advertisements with bright colours targeted directly at young people. Tobacco companies are trying to make it attractive and get young people interested in smoking. Everyone knows that the products in cigarettes and cigarillos are extremely toxic and addictive. They will make young people want to smoke. That is what is so great about their strategy. I am being sarcastic, of course.

Young people start with a little cigarette or cigarillo. The companies try to encourage them to buy just one or two. They make small packages of five cigarillos so that young people buy only a package, and thus do not consider themselves real smokers. Unfortunately, they start with a small package of five cigarillos, which gradually leads them to cigarettes, and maybe even worse. We can see that these companies have a marketing strategy to find young people on high school grounds or in CEGEPs, so that they gradually develop a dependence on cigarettes or cigarillos, and eventually become smokers—heavy smokers at that.

• (1755)

In spite of everything, the number of smokers has gone down over the years. My colleague to my left stopped smoking three months ago, and I want to congratulate him, because it is a very brave thing to do. He deserves a round of applause. He has tried to stop smoking for three months, and I encourage him to keep at it.

The number of smokers is going down from one year to the next. We have come a long way since the 1950s, when physicians said that cigarettes were good for your health and had studies to back their claims. I do not know whether hon. members remember this. Unfortunately, I had not yet been born in 1950, but the cigarette companies, with the help of the medical profession, sold their products without too much difficulty. People still did not know about all the problems cigarettes caused. Education has played a prominent role in the decrease in the smoking rate.

It is therefore important to raise awareness, especially among children. Public awareness of the harmful effects of cigarette smoking has caused this huge decrease from one year to the next. Certainly, there is still a lot of work to be done, but the bill is a step in the right direction and a way to continue bringing down the number of smokers.

Needless to say, there are some things missing from the bill. First, it should have more teeth, particularly to combat contraband cigarettes. I will come back to this. Bill C-32 lacks teeth, but it is a step in the right direction, and we will be able to study it in the Standing Committee on Health, which is what I am going to do, and do thoroughly, have no fear.

Reworking this bill in committee will give us the chance to make certain amendments so that the bill has more teeth. Of course, we will have to consult groups such as Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada to find out what sort of amendments they would like to see made to this bill.

Government Orders

The Bloc Québécois believes that cigarillos and all other tobacco products should be subject to the same prohibitions as cigarettes. Efforts to reduce the visibility and consumption of cigarettes must not be thwarted by the emergence of other equally harmful products.

The Bloc Québécois is asking that, as for cigarettes, it be prohibited to advertise tobacco products to children under 18, that all products display warnings about the dangers of smoking and that these products be hidden from public view.

As I was rereading my notes to prepare for the debate on Bill C-32, I got to thinking about the little labels on cigarette packages that show pictures of gingivitis and say that smoking too many cigarettes can cause impotence. Those messages turn young people off of smoking. Of course, we still have a lot to do.

It would be unfortunate if some young people began to ignore these messages because they have seen them over and over. We will have to work hard to educate them. We also have to make sure that cigarillo packages carry the same messages as cigarette packages. That is extremely important. We have to show young people that cigarillos are just as dangerous as cigarettes.

Unfortunately, young people tend to replace one with the other, and it would be really unfortunate if cigarillo packaging did not have to follow the same rules as cigarette packaging. That is covered in part in Bill C-32.

• (1800)

Nevertheless, it is clear that Bill C-32 will not put an end to tobacco use among minors, as I said earlier, and that tougher measures, particularly with respect to contraband cigarettes, will have to be enforced to minimize minors' access to illegal tobacco products.

Not so very long ago, I was in high school and at CEGEP. At the time, I was not a smoker. I was stunned to see 15 and 16 year olds smoking on high school property without a care in the world. On the one hand, we prohibit the sale of tobacco products to minors, but on the other, we let them smoke on public property in full view of everyone else. That was a major contradiction. But it is not the only contradiction we will ever see. As I was saying earlier to my colleagues, democracy is all about managing contradictions.

The Bloc Québécois is calling on the federal government to use every legal means possible to put an end to the explosion of smuggling, including for example, seizing smugglers' vehicles. Quebec has had many problems with cigarette smuggling. Many of the cigarettes sold to our young people, and some not so young, do not come from legal sources, but rather are smuggled. If we raise taxes on cigarettes, the sale of legal cigarettes will go down and smuggling activities will increase. Since smuggled cigarettes will be cheaper, there will be much greater demand for them. That is the law of supply and demand. So if we raise the taxes on packs of cigarettes too much and do nothing else, this will have a completely negative effect, since smuggling will increase.

The government must take decisive action and ensure that cigarette smuggling is eradicated in very specific regions of Quebec and Canada. That is the problem, since we know where the smugglers are. We know who they are, but unfortunately, it seems as though there is some sort of political fear around taking steps to limit

cigarette smuggling. Until something is done, there will always be problems with tobacco. We can do all the publicity campaigns and educating we like, but if one day we reach the critical point at which we cannot get the rate of smokers below 20%, then we will have to implement other strategies, such as eradicating smuggling rings, as I was saying earlier.

At the same time, we believe that although police action is crucial, certain regulations must also be amended in order to discourage smugglers. That is key. Eliminating the source, the supplier, is still the best way to prevent smuggling.

My very honourable colleague from Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, a former minister of public safety, did extraordinary work with respect to both cigarette and drug smuggling. At the time, the Parti Québécois government—which was not afraid to assume its responsibilities—took concrete action to eliminate these smugglers. He sent the police and enacted extraordinary measures in an attempt to eliminate networks of cigarette smugglers that were often criminal organizations. To tell the truth, they are all criminal organizations.

The following are some of the measures that should be implemented: prohibit unlicensed manufacturers from purchasing raw materials and equipment used to manufacture cigarettes; revoke tobacco licences from manufacturers who break the law; establish an effective marking system for cigarette packages—a marking and tracing system—that would allow for close monitoring of tobacco deliveries; and lobby the U.S. government to shut down illegal manufacturers located on the American side of the border. This is not just a Canadian problem.

• (1805)

We can pass the best laws in Canada to prevent the sale of cigarettes and cigarillos to youth and to attempt to prevent cigarette smuggling but it will still be futile if the American government does not help us out with our tobacco control strategy. It is extremely difficult to wage this war against these criminals all by oneself. I am not afraid to call them that because they are poisoning our youth.

We would like to see the fee for a federal licence to manufacture tobacco products raised to a minimum of \$5 million, rather than the paltry \$5,000 required today.

Madam Speaker, do you not think it is ridiculous that licences are only \$5,000? Some colleagues are telling me that they are convinced that you believe it is ridiculous that these licences cost only \$5,000.

Any one of us here and perhaps even most of those watching on television could afford it. Between you and me, this amount is a pittance for tobacco companies, which make billions of dollars in profit every year. It is a paltry \$5 million.

An hon. member: \$5,000.

Government Orders

Mr. Nicolas Dufour: Rather, a paltry \$5,000. We want to increase it to \$5 million. I believe \$5 million should be the minimum. Perhaps we could make it more than that.

This is impossible if all the stakeholders work independently. The federal government absolutely must coordinate the effort of the various organizations and departments because only one concerted effort will be able to address all the different aspects of tobacco addiction: prevention, education or even repressive measures against suppliers of contraband.

As I have said, there must be an overall approach to smoking. We cannot just go after the tobacco smugglers or raise the price of cigarettes. We really must have a concerted overall approach to all stakeholders to ensure that there are prevention activities in the schools, to go after the smugglers, and to use even more vigorous advertising to discourage young people from starting to smoke.

Mainly, we must try to discourage these manufacturers of harmful, dangerous products from advertising them with attractive campaigns to woo young smokers. They encourage young people to “try it, just a little”. They smoke a cigarillo or two, and the next thing they know they are smokers for life.

Finally, the Bloc Québécois believes that all measures focused on contraband cigarettes and cigarette smuggling on the reserves must be taken in conjunction with the aboriginal authorities. Cooperation in this area is vital, in order to identify and target the criminal organizations.

The purpose of Bill C-32 is a praiseworthy one: to discourage young people from smoking by limiting the availability of tobacco products and reducing the types of products available. The bill is also intended to correct some of the present shortcomings of the Tobacco Act, particularly the exception that permits tobacco advertising in publications with an adult readership of not less than 85%. This has led to the situation of such ads being placed in free newspapers or magazines that are readily accessible to young people.

To draw a parallel with what I was just saying a few minutes ago—and I will be brief because I am getting the one minute sign—I want to address the fact that young people are allowed to smoke in the school yard. So there are really some major shortcomings in the Tobacco Act and a concerted effort is needed to try and reduce smoking among young people. That is why the Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-32, despite the presence of certain points that perhaps need looking at in committee. We—my colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes, who has done an excellent job on the Standing Committee on Health, and I—will make it our duty to try to wipe out tobacco addiction among young people.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member who just spoke not only about smoking, but also about the problems the federal and provincial governments have preventing tobacco use and the criminal activities linked to tobacco. He spoke briefly about strategies, which he thinks are not yet comprehensive enough, and I agree, and about how to make them much more effective.

I would like him to take a few more minutes to explain and give more details on the strategy needed to target organized crime groups and organizations that, as he mentioned, are often found in

predominantly aboriginal areas, as well as tobacco imported from the United States.

Does he have detailed strategies? The government is not at all interested in this subject. In fact, I see that no government members want to speak on this topic.

● (1810)

Mr. Nicolas Dufour: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my Liberal Party colleague's knowledge of the issue. So far, his questions have been very precise. I can see that he wants to crack down on contraband. Unfortunately, I do not know his riding very well; perhaps he will have a chance to show me around someday. I do not know if he has problems with cigarette smugglers. I would also like to thank him for differentiating between provincial and municipal levels and aboriginal reserves.

With respect to smugglers, key public safety players absolutely have to work together. In Quebec, a number of operations have been undertaken involving collaboration between Peacekeepers on reserves and the SQ or the RCMP, and sometimes even the Carcajou squad, which used to focus on drugs and sometimes infiltrated smuggling networks. In many cases, cigarette smugglers are not just smuggling cigarettes. We have to face the fact that they sometimes traffic in other drugs, and that is much more dangerous.

We need our police forces to work together to improve communication, which does not happen often enough. We have to respect jurisdiction, but sometimes on reserves, where there are lot of cigarette smugglers, Peacekeepers have a role to play because they know the community. All the same, they have to have good communication with the SQ and the RCMP to carry out coordinated raids to break up these networks.

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank my colleague from Repentigny for his kind words about me. I could also say that I am extremely pleased with all of his efforts and his work in this House, particularly his work on the Standing Committee on Health, where I am pleased to serve with him.

The bill seems to completely disregard a number of new tobacco products that can be used by young people. Clearly, if we eliminate the market for flavoured cigarillos, manufacturers will try to find other ways to target young people to turn them into smokers.

Should the bill not contain more significant measures regarding the elimination of smokeless tobacco products? I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that. Does he not believe, as I do, that all the members of this House should do everything in their power to make the government yield on this?

● (1815)

Mr. Nicolas Dufour: Madam Speaker, what else can I say, after my colleague asks me such a great question. As we can see, smoking-related problems are very important to him, and so is defending our young people.

The hon. member for Verchères—Les Patriotes has in fact been our health critic for years now. He is therefore very knowledgeable about the issues and concerns of this debate. As always, he will do an excellent job. I just used an English word, “issues”. The proper word in French is “dossiers”. I thank my colleague from Sherbrooke.

Government Orders

Flavoured products are a serious problem. They are what encourage young people to smoke. So in committee, my hon. colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes and I must challenge the government and propose amendments that will give this bill more teeth.

[*English*]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to see this legislation advance in the House. I am particularly pleased that this follows the hard work of my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

I come from British Columbia, where we have one of the lowest rates of smoking in the country, one of the most health conscious populations in the country.

When I came to Parliament Hill and was met by people from the Canadian Medical Association, who showed me these products in tubes, flavoured cigarettes and flavoured rolling papers with flavours like peanut butter and jelly and cookie dough, I was absolutely appalled, shocked and disgusted.

Our country should not allow these products for sale because they are clearly geared at addicting our young people to one of the most carcinogenic and unhealthy products in the country.

Will my friend and his party be supporting the bill and doing everything they can to help make the bill law as soon as possible so we can protect the children of our country immediately?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nicolas Dufour: Madam Speaker, I will answer his question directly, which does not happen often in the House of Commons. Yes, we will be doing that. It is extremely important.

My colleague spoke of an interesting problem, which I only had the chance to touch on even though I spoke for about twenty minutes. As a parliamentarian, I like to talk. I would like to talk about new tobacco products. Let us look at new tobacco products, how they are advertised and the casings used. Take cigarillos, for example. I challenge all MPs to do an eyeball survey. I did it. Cigarillo smokers are mostly youths; they are not people in their forties or fifties. These products truly target young people by using attractive packaging, design and flavours in order to get them to start smoking.

When young people see a peach-flavoured cigar, they may not realize the health hazards of this cigarillo, which looks quite harmless. A small peach-flavoured cigar is really cute. Unfortunately, it is extremely harmful and is just as bad, if not more so, than a conventional cigarette.

Mr. Gérard Asselin (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is all well and good to want to pass laws here in Ottawa, just as laws have been passed in Quebec, but there cannot be one law for whites and one law for aboriginal people. There cannot be a double standard either.

We can tighten laws, make it harder to get cigarettes, raise taxes and try to discourage young people from smoking, but if the only way young people can smoke is to get cheap cigarettes, they are going to go to aboriginal communities.

It is too bad when a small corner store owner, who has a hard time making ends meet and depends on his clients and his environment, is charged because a young person with a false ID bought a pack of cigarettes. The store owner is fined \$5,000, yet people can buy cigarettes near certain aboriginal reserves.

The aboriginal police, the Sûreté du Québec and the RCMP go by these businesses every day, but no one controls contraband cigarettes. They are all afraid to shoulder their responsibilities. That is what gives rise to contraband. I was a smoker, and I was asked whether I smoked Indian cigarettes. I did not smoke Indian cigarettes, I smoked real cigarettes.

• (1820)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The member for Repentigny has 15 seconds.

Mr. Nicolas Dufour: Madam Speaker, I just want to congratulate my colleague. Members will see that the Bloc Québécois has a talent for summing up. I wanted to say that I agree with him completely.

[*English*]

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to Bill C-32, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act. Even though we on this side of the House support the legislation in principle, I am disturbed by its implications. Despite the government's assertions, the bill does nothing to protect the rights of the child, especially those children under 18 years of age.

I will like to quote from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that:

States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

The government is not upholding its obligations under that convention when, as my colleague from St. Paul's, Ontario point out yesterday in responding to a question, that rolling back the taxes increases the buying power of cigarettes for children, which is what the government has done. If we do not want children and youth to be a target of the tobacco industry, we must not decrease the taxes on cigarettes. What we have done with the decrease of taxes on tobacco has taken \$12 billion out of the treasury.

[*Translation*]

I would like to say a few words about a phenomenon which has not, to my knowledge, been addressed sufficiently by my colleagues, although two or three of them have just spoken of it. I want to speak of the extent of the role of smuggling in the trade and sale of tobacco products.

The Canadian government's decision on smuggling is not the best one. The 1999 report by the World Bank makes the point that even when there is a considerable amount of contraband, higher taxes increase government revenues and reduce smoking. Price hikes encourage smokers to quit, stop others from starting, and reduce the number of former smokers who start up again.

Government Orders

It is also difficult to understand the statement by the Minister of National Revenue reported in the *Gazette* on April 2, 2009. According to him, the federal government has issued 14 permits to Quebec companies out of a total of 38 across Canada, or 37%. This is in marked contradiction with the stated objective of the government to protect children and youth from the tobacco industry's marketing tactics.

Moreover, 11 of these cigarette manufacturers are located on the Mohawk reserve, where organized crime seems to have infiltrated the tobacco industry. Clearly, contraband is a growth industry. I am not the only one who says so. Other members from other parties have talked about this. It seems to me that it is more prevalent in Quebec than in the other provinces, because the members from the other provinces have not talked about it.

It is estimated that 30% to 40% of the cigarettes sold in Quebec are contraband. The shortfall for the province is in the order of \$300 million. Although the government clearly does not have the means at present to effectively monitor the industry and make sure that manufacturers comply with their licences, which would require them to collect taxes on what is sold, this bill will not prevent children and young people from being able to buy tobacco from the lucrative illegal industry. The bill is weak and ineffective, even though it prohibits the packaging, importation for sale, distribution and sale of little cigars and blunt wraps unless they are in a package that contains at least 20 little cigars or blunt wraps.

● (1825)

[*English*]

According to a letter I received from Casa Cubana/Spike Marks Inc. of Montreal dated May 26, 2009, it said: "The government's proposed ban will not in the least address minors' access to tobacco issues. As importantly, the government's proposal will come to further fuel the contraband trade in tobacco by providing exclusive market rights to these products to Native manufacturers and criminal groups".

The illegal industry will find a way to circumvent the laws if the kind of public education demanded under article 42 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is to make the convention widely known to adults and children, is not carried out. Article 44.6 of the convention also requires Canada to make the reports on child rights widely available to the public and to have the public actively engage in children's rights.

For example, 71% of Canadians who participated in an Ipsos Reid study undertaken for Save the Children Canada in 2004, only five short years ago, gave Canada a C or lower in fulfilling its obligations to improve the lives of Canadian children. At the same time, only 33% of adults who were interviewed answered questions accurately when it came to Canadian children living with HIV, in poverty, with abuse or other social conditions as a result of the increasing marginalization of their parents.

The government has not only failed in its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to educate the public but it is also derelict in those obligations by failing to put in place the necessary legislative policies with effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to curb the lucrative contraband trade.

Here is what is fascinating about this entire approach. According to Luc Martial of Casa Cubana, he was surprised to learn during his meeting with Health Canada officials that the government had little or no actual relevant research on flavoured tobacco products, their market or the industry.

More precisely, Health Canada had no comprehensive understanding as to who exactly is consuming these products; what products are actually being consumed: little cigars or cigarillos, plain or flavoured and in what quantities and frequencies; where and how these products are actually being accessed, whether through friends, family, peers, legal channels or contraband; why consumers were beginning to access these products as opposed to other traditional cigars or cigarettes; and how the use of flavours actually impacts a consumer's decision to start or continue smoking. That seems to be an extremely important point, considering what other colleagues have said earlier.

I find all of that strange to understand because, according to the Canadian Cancer Society's website, findings from a 2006-07 youth smoking survey released on June 23, 2008, and funded by Health Canada, say:

—teenagers in Grades 10-12 use cigars and cigarillos the most. Thirty-five per cent said they had tried cigars, cigarillos and little cigars (39.5% were boys and 30% were girls), while 48% had tried cigarettes.

The Cancer Society's press release says:

Teenagers are very vulnerable to trying tobacco products. There is a risk that cigarillos, which can be just as addictive as cigarettes, could be a starter product for kids who would never start smoking.

The press release also says:

Cigarillos can be cheaper to buy than cigarettes because they come in smaller quantities and are easier to obtain because they are not regulated in the same way.

It would appear that the Conservative Minister of Health, even though she might fund surveys or, and I am giving her a lot of credit here, know what her own department's reports indicate, sales have grown in cigarillos over the last five years. There is obviously no plan in place to protect the most vulnerable. In 2001 about 50,000 cigarillos were sold and 80 million were sold in 2006. What an increase.

● (1830)

[*Translation*]

What a disaster for our youth. The Canadian Cancer Society also says that the steady decline in smoking observed in recent years among young Canadians aged 10 to 14, in grades 5 to 9, could very well have stopped.

The blame lies squarely on the shoulders of this government. The Conservatives' actions have led to an increase in the risk of mouth, throat, larynx, lung and esophagus cancer.

When will the government shoulder its responsibilities by putting policies and practices where they are really needed?

Government Orders

I support this bill even though it is weak and ineffective. I support it because I recommend referring this bill to committee so that the members can make the necessary amendments to it and turn it into a bill that really addresses the situation facing our young people.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Laval—Les Îles for her rather enlightening speech.

I would also like to ask her a question about the government's responsibility. She noted that ironically, the government had not yet targeted the real problem.

[*English*]

That real problem is associated not only with price point but with the consequences of that price point. She has noted that as taxes go up in order to increase the price of cigarettes, there is a consequent diminution of smoking, but there is as well there is an equally significant and troubling consequence, and that is the emergence of the contraband trade and those who are best equipped to address contraband, not only manufacturing but distribution. They are, by and large, associated with criminal elements who manufacture and distribute other equally noxious products.

[*Translation*]

French uses “noxious” to talk about harmful products, but it is not the same in English.

[*English*]

My colleague used the language that is employed in the drug trade in reference to them.

The reason I say that this is ironic is because this is a government that has come forward on getting tough on crime, doing the right thing on criminal issues. As the member has indicated and other colleagues from the Bloc as well have noted, the contraband trade is worth at least \$3 billion per annum in cigarette distribution.

There is a loss of \$2 billion to the federal and provincial treasuries but not a penny has gone, at least through this bill, toward putting together a strategy for enforcement, for going to the root of the manufacturing and distribution systems, for putting in place a methodology and system to arrest, charge, and then incarcerate or otherwise punish those who would go against the intent of the legislation and the convention, which is, as my colleague has said, the health of young people initially and obviously their continued health as they get on in life.

I wonder if she would comment on this absolute abdication of responsibility, when it comes to doing the right thing from criminal activities and the imposition of the right laws to prevent criminal activity.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Madam Speaker, my colleague raised an important, yet sensitive question.

It is true that the Conservative government, the Government of Canada, has huge responsibilities with respect to this issue, since some of these criminal elements come from reserves. There is no denying it. That does not mean that the reserves are criminal, and I

want to make that clear, but we all know that there are criminal elements here and there.

Thus, the Conservative government has the responsibility to eliminate these criminal elements that work on both sides of the border, on the American side and the Canadian side.

Now, if the Conservative government were more understanding and fair towards aboriginal communities across Canada, these communities would perhaps be in a better position themselves to fight these criminal elements in their own communities. These aboriginal communities see the problem, but they often have no way of tackling it.

• (1835)

Mr. Gérard Asselin (Manicouagan, BQ): Madam Speaker, we are supposed to find ways to eliminate smuggling. I have a question for the member for Laval—Les Îles. Instead of having retailers charge the sales tax on tobacco products, could the government not pass legislation to tax the manufacturers of tobacco products? This way, if aboriginal communities or organized crime groups that smuggle cigarettes want to get supplies from companies that produce cigarettes or cigars, they would be taxed directly at the source, and the tax would be charged to the company producing the tobacco products, instead of to the retailers, who then pass that along to consumers.

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Madam Speaker, we have to consider every step in the process that gets tobacco from the seed to a minor's lips. This is a big problem because the entire industry is going to have to disappear. Our country's political and psychological atmosphere discourages tobacco use. We have seen it, and members on both sides of the House have talked about it.

The tobacco industry is going out of style, much like how horses began to disappear as bicycles and cars became commonplace. People who raised horses found themselves in an industry, a trade that was no longer working for them. In my humble opinion, the tobacco industry is about to experience difficulties that will have an increasingly negative effect on both growers and cigarette manufacturers. We must not only consider the whole process; we must eliminate it.

[*English*]

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Madam Speaker, I find that my colleague is a lot more learned on this debate than any member of the government side has been prepared to demonstrate and so, I am going to ask her, because she took great pains to make distinctions between correct activity and that which contravenes the law. Now, one of the problems that we have had in fighting smoking and tobacco usage, of course, is getting the appropriate partners.

Some would argue, as I know she would, that some of the legitimate retailers, mom and pop shops, in some of the major cities, have been our greatest allies in deterring young people from purchasing because they refuse to sell. In fact, those proprietors of those stores are already under great surveillance and they do the very best they can to discourage the use of cigarettes, cigarillos and other tobacco products.

Government Orders

What has happened with the emergence of the great contraband trade is that we no longer have a distribution system that is willing to be compliant with the law and, in fact, is in a position where it can be surveyed by law enforcement officers. I am talking about that illegal distribution system. I know she would want to take a moment to point out that legitimate retail operations have been our allies and we are losing them because this act does not address that distinction.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Madam Speaker, my colleague put it so well that I am hesitant to repeat what he said, but he is absolutely right. Legitimate retailers are disappearing and the illegal trade is gaining strength. That is why I said at the end of my speech that when this bill goes to the Standing Committee on Health, we will have to make amendments that crack down on all contraband, particularly tobacco.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Resuming debate.

[*English*]

Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Hearing no opposition, I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

PROTECTING VICTIMS FROM SEX OFFENDERS ACT

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC) moved that Bill C-34, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am speaking to Bill C-34, an act to amend the Sex Offender Information Registration Act, the Criminal Code and the National Defence Act and the International Transfer of Offenders Act.

[*Translation*]

The amendments we are proposing here today will make the National Sex Offender Registry and the National DNA Data Bank more effective tools to help the government fight crime, a objective that, I am sure, will be supported by all Canadians and all parliamentarians.

[*English*]

Bill C-34 will implement fundamental reforms to the national sex offender information registry. First and foremost, the government will ensure that in future every individual who is convicted of a serious sexual offence is automatically registered with the national sex offender registry.

Offenders convicted of a serious designated offence under the Sex Offender Information Registration Act will also be required to provide a DNA sample to the national DNA data bank.

• (1845)

[*Translation*]

As hon. members all know, at this time, not all sex offenders are registered, since crown prosecutors must make a special request for an order to have an offender included on the registry when he or she is convicted of a sex offence, and the presiding judge has the discretion to deny such an order.

The amendments that the government is proposing here today would eliminate that flaw, which allows Canadian sex offenders who have been convicted to avoid being added to the registry, which hampers future police investigations and exposes Canadians to greater risk.

[*English*]

We are taking action to ensure that every individual who is convicted of a serious sexual offence is automatically registered with the national sex offender registry and is required to provide a DNA sample to the national DNA database.

Under the reforms the government is proposing today, the police will also be able to use the national sex offender registry, not only to investigate crimes after the fact but also to prevent them from occurring in the first place.

Under the present system, police can only make use of information in the sex offender registry after a crime has happened. They are unable to use that information as a preventive measure to ensure the protection of Canadian communities.

If police see suspicious activity near a school ground, for example, if this law is passed they will be able to request access to the registry to find out if the person involved is a registered sex offender and obtain more information to assist them in their prevention work.

Police and victims' groups have requested these changes for some time. Our government is delivering on them.

[*Translation*]

The proposed amendments will also allow police services in one region of Canada to advise other foreign or Canadian police jurisdictions that registered sex offenders are traveling to their area.

Furthermore, federal and provincial correctional agencies would have authority to advise registry officials of registered sex offenders' releases from and any re-admissions to custody.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS***[English]*

Currently, travelling sex offenders escape the national sex offender registry. We are changing that. Canadians being transferred to complete a sentence in Canada for a sexual offence conviction committed in another country will automatically be registered. Any Canadian who returns to Canada after having completed a sentence for a sex offence committed outside of Canada will be required to provide written notice of that fact to the police in the province or territory where they are returning and will be required to register if served with a notice to do so.

Many Canadians are shocked to find out that travellers who commit sexual offences can escape the registry upon returning to Canada under the present system. Under Bill C-34, Canada will no longer be a safe haven that protects travelling sex offenders.

[Translation]

Our proposals will help police officers investigate serious sex offences and will protect the Canadian public. Our proposals will increase the amount of information to be included in the registry and will force sex offenders to notify authorities of any absences from their home address of seven days or more.

[English]

The bill before us today responds to the concerns expressed by thousands of Canadians about the inadequacies of the present national sex offender registry. It responds to the concerns and recommendations expressed by provincial and territorial governments that have been widely consulted about the present system and how it can be improved. It responds to the concerns and recommendations of law enforcement officials as well as to various victims' groups, all of whom see almost every day the pain and suffering that heinous sexual crimes can cause to victims and their families.

All of this is why I am confident that the hon. members in this House will give speedy passage to the bill under debate. All of us have an interest in preventing crime.

[Translation]

We care deeply about crime prevention, and we all want our streets and our communities to be safe. That is precisely the goal of this bill. That is the opportunity we are being given here today.

[English]

This is our opportunity, as Canadians, as members of this House, to take a step to correct the deficiencies in the national sex offender registry. While well intentioned, in practice it has simply not worked to protect Canadians.

We are making the changes today. We are asking this House to make the changes today to make that registry work to protect Canadians. We owe it to all Canadians, to children, to those who have been victims of sexual crimes and to their families. We need to do this, and we need to do it now.

The Deputy Speaker: We will have questions and comments at a later date. It being 6:48 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

*[English]***EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT**

The House resumed from May 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-280, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (qualification for and entitlement to benefits), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Before resuming debate on this bill, I would like to issue a ruling.

[Translation]

On May 7, prior to the second reading debate on Bill C-280, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (qualification for and entitlement to benefits) standing in the name of the hon. member for Algoma—Manitowlin—Kapusking, a point of order was raised by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons to the effect that this bill requires a royal recommendation.

● (1850)

[English]

The parliamentary secretary argued that Bill C-280 would result in significant new expenditures by lowering the threshold for eligibility for some claimants and changing the formula for the calculation of benefits.

He further noted that Bill C-280 was virtually identical to another private member's bill introduced in the last Parliament, Bill C-265, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (qualification for and entitlement to benefits), which had been found to require a royal recommendation.

In replying to the parliamentary secretary's point of order, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh expressed the opinion that a royal recommendation was not required since any new expenditure would be covered by contributions from workers and employers and not by the government.

I have examined the bills carefully and found that as the parliamentary secretary noted, Bill C-280 and Bill C-265 are indeed virtually identical. They both contain proposed changes to the employment insurance program that include lowering the threshold for becoming a major attachment claimant to 360 hours, setting benefits payable to 55% of the average weekly insurable earnings during the highest paid 12 weeks in the 12 month period preceding the interruption of earnings, and reducing the qualifying period before receiving benefits and removing the distinctions made in the qualifying period on the basis of the regional unemployment rate.

[Translation]

On March 23, 2007, in a ruling on Bill C-265, on page 7845 of the *Debates*, the Chair had concluded that:

It is abundantly clear to the Chair that such changes to the employment insurance program, notwithstanding the fact that workers and employers contribute to it, would have the effect of authorizing increased expenditures from the Consolidated Revenue Fund in a manner and for purposes not currently authorized.

Therefore, it appears to the Chair that those provisions of the bill which relate to increasing Employment Insurance benefits and easing the qualifications required to obtain them would require a royal recommendation.

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[English]

Having heard no new compelling argument to reach a conclusion that is different than the one concerning Bill C-265, I will decline to put the question on third reading of Bill C-280 in its present form unless a royal recommendation is received.

However, today the debate is on the motion for second reading, and this motion shall be put to a vote at the close of the second reading debate.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Niagara West—Glanbrook has seven minutes remaining in his time slot.

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the first hour of debate on the bill, I spoke briefly about some of the substantive measures this government is taking to help Canadians get back to work and to train for the jobs of the future. I also mentioned some of the actions we have taken to protect Canadian jobs.

One of the highlights of our job protection efforts is our improvement of the work sharing program. We have extended the duration of work sharing agreements by 14 weeks to a maximum of 52 weeks. As the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development shared with the House late last month, over 110,000 Canadians are benefiting right now from our expansion of the work sharing program. Those are jobs that are being protected.

The bill of course deals with the employment insurance program. As discussed numerous times before in this place, this is an area where our government has taken significant action to help Canadians through our economic action plan.

To help Canadians through the challenges posed by the current economic situation, we have extended EI benefits by five additional weeks through a national expansion of an existing pilot program that was focused in areas of high unemployment. These five weeks will help unemployed Canadians who need it most.

We have also increased the maximum duration of benefits available under the EI program from 45 weeks to 50 weeks. Further to this, we are introducing a new initiative for long tenured workers who are taking training, allowing those workers to receive EI benefits up to a maximum of 104 weeks while they pursue their training.

As the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development said during the first hour of debate on Bill C-280, the proposed NDP legislation before us has not been costed and it does not take into account the future potential unintended consequences on the labour market that these proposed changes may have.

Any proposals for reform to the EI program need to be considered comprehensively within the context of who is going to pay for these changes while also taking into account what impact these proposals would have on helping Canadians get back to work so they can get jobs to put food on the table and provide for their families.

I want to reiterate that our government recognizes the challenges faced by those who have lost their jobs in these difficult times. That

is why we want to ensure that any action we take is effective in both the short and the longer term.

That is also why we are monitoring the effectiveness of our measures, to make sure that the EI system is working and responding effectively to the evolving economic circumstances.

What we will not do is implement this Liberal-NDP 360 hour, 45 day work year idea.

The opposition can say what it wants about this scheme, and we know that it will. The fact is that this irresponsible proposal would result in a massive increase in job killing payroll taxes that would hurt workers and businesses alike, at a time when they can least afford it. This irresponsible proposal certainly would not help Canadians find new jobs or get new skills. It would simply add billions and billions more to the tax burden on Canadians.

Members do not have to take it from me. Let us see what others are saying about this Liberal-NDP plan.

The sponsor of the bill herself, the member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, said on Monday, in the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix*, that “a payroll tax increase may be necessary”.

The Liberals realized this when they stated in a press release back in October that the NDP proposal would result in an “employment insurance premium hike”. They seem to have forgotten that now. It is striking that the Liberal Party would be honest with Canadians when it is looking for their votes during an election but would change its tune now.

It should also be noted that on April 11, 2008, the Liberal EI critic, the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, a colleague of mine on the HR committee, said in committee:

It's my view that if you get rid of the regional rates and there are changes forced on the EI system because of the economic circumstances, those in the [high unemployment] regions will be hurt disproportionately.

He also said that the “cost is pretty significant” to do this 360 hour, 45 day work year plan. He said we should “keep the regional rates to protect those people in high unemployment areas”.

He said that just a year ago.

Let us see what others are saying about the Liberal-NDP 45 day work year proposal.

Harvey Enchin said in the *Vancouver Sun* on May 26:

The Liberal option not only seems illogical but it would raise the federal deficit—and probably taxes—while doing nothing to address the fact that many of the jobs that have been lost are not coming back. The Conservative government is right to reject it.

The federal government is on the right track with investment in skills training. The federal government is on the right track with investment in skills training and transition programs.

● (1855)

Here is what Don Martin, of the *Calgary Herald*, said on the same day:

But just 360 hours to qualify? For a benefit payment period that's just shy of a year? That's a bit rich, even for Liberals.

Yet there are many better ways to reform the system, starting with the Conservative's reannounced \$500-million to stretch benefits for long-term workers...

I agree with that and I think a good many Canadians do as well. Unlike the opposition's rhetoric and irresponsible plans, our government's economic action plan is helping Canadians get new skills for new jobs and is helping Canadians through these tough economic times. Unlike the opposition, on this side of the House we will not force all working Canadians and businesses to pay more taxes for this proposal.

Our government is helping and will continue to help Canadians get the training they need for the jobs of tomorrow. We will continue to help preserve jobs so that hard-working Canadians can continue to pay their mortgages and provide for the needs of their families. Our economic action plan is providing additional support to Canadians in a responsible, coordinated way, and we will continue to do so.

The proposal before us is not responsible and that is why we on this side of the House cannot support it.

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-280. The issue of employment insurance is critical and impacts every community in our country. I am glad to have the opportunity to discuss the need for changes to this critical component of our social infrastructure.

Since the economic crisis began, more than 300,000 Canadians have lost their jobs. Our system of employment insurance, designed more than 60 years ago, was simply not structured to effectively manage a national crisis of this scope.

More than 40% of unemployed Canadians who have paid into employment insurance do not qualify for benefits because of where they live. This is a serious concern and one the bill takes steps to address.

Employment insurance rules have not kept pace with the changing work environment. Current restrictions on claiming employment insurance benefits are preventing workers who have paid into the program from claiming money to support their families now when they need it most.

Across the country, 58 regional standards govern which Canadians are eligible for temporary assistance when laid off from their jobs and which Canadians are left to fend for themselves. This means that while most of us pay into the employment insurance program for most of our lives, we may never be eligible to receive employment insurance if we happen to lose our jobs through no fault of our own.

This assortment of regional standards is clearly not meeting the needs of the unemployed. We are seeing cases, for example, where two workers are laid off in the same factory and have paid the same amount into employment insurance but are now receiving different levels of assistance because their town just happens to straddle the border of two employment insurance regions.

In my riding of St. John's South—Mount Pearl, I recently heard from a young professional woman who in my riding found herself applying for employment insurance for the very first time because she was laid off from her job as an occupational therapist. Her hours had already been scaled back and she was working mostly part time in the months leading up to the permanent layoff. As a first time filer in my region, she needed 840 hours to qualify for benefits. The

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reduction in the hours over the previous months left her with only 581 insurable hours, not nearly enough to qualify.

I also think of fish plant workers, for example, from Petty Harbour who work side by side doing the same work for the same number of hours with someone from the community right next door. The person from Petty Harbour needs 630 hours to qualify and his fellow worker living nearby in the next community needs 420 hours.

In this economic situation, the employment insurance system is not right for the times and needs to be adjusted.

I believe that a temporary national 360-hour standard of employment insurance eligibility should be introduced for as long as this economic crisis in Canada persists. This would set a temporary consistent standard across the country and make it easier for workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own to qualify for benefits during this crucial time.

This proposal would not only mean 150,000 additional unemployed Canadians would have access to benefits, but it would also inject much needed spending in some of the hardest hit communities. Families spending money on food, rent and transportation translates into one of the most immediate, effective and direct ways to get desperately needed stimulus money flowing into our communities.

During this time of record job losses, we need to help unemployed Canadians. Implementing a national 360-hour standard to qualify for employment insurance would provide benefits for thousands of Canadians who have paid into the system and who now need help to support their families.

As we pull through this difficult economic time, it will be crucial to ensure that areas facing chronically high levels of unemployment are helped by the development of consistent standards for employment insurance and are not made to meet unreachable targets that would be impossible in other areas.

● (1900)

Most stakeholders strongly support the creation of a 360-hour standard for employment insurance. Social policy organizations across the country, including the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the Canadian Labour Congress and many unions, have all advocated for a national standard.

Provincial political leaders are also calling for changes to the employment insurance system. Several premiers, including Premier McGuinty, Premier Stelmach and Premier Campbell, have all called for a national standard for employment insurance. Unfortunately, the government would rather leave Canadian families to fend for themselves than fix this crucial program.

Rather than opting to inject stimulus funding into local economies through increased employment insurance eligibility, which vulnerable families spend on groceries, transportation and housing, the government has characterized employment insurance as being too lucrative. This characterization by the minister is insulting to the thousands of Canadians struggling to make ends meet while they search for new meaningful jobs, and it is simply not true.

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Families are burdened with enough concerns during these troubled economic times without adding additional confusion and apprehension about whether or not they will be able to qualify for employment insurance should they lose their jobs. I am hearing calls for clarity from workers in my riding in advance of this summer's closure of a telecommunications company in Mount Pearl, Teletech.

My constituents are concerned about whether they will qualify for benefits and would like to know if they will actually have access to some of the training programs. Clarity on qualification standards would go a long way to answering some of the many questions workers face when they know an eventual layoff, plant closure or restructuring at their place of employment is on the horizon.

Last week, in an attempt to convince Canadians her government would be taking badly needed action on this issue, the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development simply repeated a part of the budget in place of announcing some kind of plan. The minister's reannouncement of funding for employment insurance training programs does nothing to help the thousands of Canadians who have not been lucky enough to qualify for employment insurance benefits in the first place. Not one new worker will qualify for employment insurance or benefit from this training program. These programs apply only to those who qualify for employment insurance already, leaving thousands of Canadians out in the cold.

Funding for training, while a crucial component of a strategy to address retraining and chronic unemployment, is not the full answer to this problem. If Canadians cannot qualify for this assistance in the first place, these training benefits are of no use.

In response to a question I recently asked in the House, the minister responsible for employment insurance indicated that it was becoming easier for people to access employment insurance, backing up this claim by pointing to regions of the country where so many workers have lost their jobs that the eligibility standards have changed. In her response, the minister stated, "The worse the situation gets, the easier it is for people to collect benefits". Is that not unbelievable?

It would seem that the government's solution to the employment insurance crisis is to wait for more businesses to close, more companies to fail and more Canadians to lose their jobs so that the threshold for that region would change. This is a staggeringly inadequate strategy.

There is a clear need to undertake an intensive review of employment insurance and to carefully consider the changes that will make employment insurance more accessible during this economic crisis. Employment insurance rules have not kept pace with the changing work environment and it is time to address these shortfalls. Restrictions are preventing workers who have paid into the program from claiming benefits now to support their families when they need it most.

The government has a responsibility to help, especially during this economic crisis. It is time for the government to actually do something to help the unemployed.

● (1905)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak on this bill, a very important bill, even though we see some flaws in it. I will follow up on the comments of my hon. colleague and address the accessibility of EI.

Seeing that my hon. colleagues from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour and Saint-Lambert, with whom I work on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities are both here, I will take this opportunity to remind the House that the committee is currently carrying out a study on poverty in the country. One point that everyone appearing as witnesses on behalf of their various groups is making is that the restrictions to the EI program put a terrible burden on individuals, make them poorer and make things worse for them. They are unable to have access to benefits despite the fact that, in many cases, they have contributed to the program for weeks and months.

We know that many steps were taken over the years to exclude as many people as possible from the program and that, as a result, a minority of those contributing to EI actually receive benefits. Previous speakers, except for those from the Conservative Party of course, recognized that this is a major problem that has to be addressed.

We are delighted that the Liberal Party now agrees with us and recognizes the need to implement measures as soon as possible. Such measures will help those who are losing their jobs, of course, but they will also contribute to the economic recovery.

Bill C-280, which was put forward by my hon. colleague from the NDP, calls for a minimum of 360 hours of work to qualify for benefits. Adding five weeks of benefits is another measure. Some might say that those five weeks have already been granted in the last budget, but I should point out that this is a temporary measure designed to get out of the current crisis.

Missing are a number of measures we would have liked to see come about. We would have liked benefits to rise from rise from 55% of insurable earnings to 60%. The same for the two week waiting period. I will come back to that later, when the bill put forward by the Bloc Québécois, a more comprehensive bill in my opinion, comes up for consideration.

We will also have some questions for our NDP friends about how the rules will be relaxed during the economic crisis, including new criteria for people who received employment insurance over-payments previously or who have received a penalty. The rules are not quite clear. I think that when we study this bill in committee, we will have an opportunity to go into detail in this area, which is still a bit vague.

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All the same, we have to be realistic about the work that needs to be done. Earlier, I mentioned that our Liberal friends had expressed their intent to vote for this bill. However, we need to know their precise intentions. The only measure the Liberal Party has proposed so far—a proposal it has made over and over—is the 360-hour rule. The Liberals think that it is a way to help us get out of the crisis. But this bill includes a permanent rule that will last as long as the House believes it to be appropriate given the state of the economy.

● (1910)

That is the only measure the Liberals have discussed and debated up to now. For Bill C-280 specifically, we have to urge the Speaker of the House and the Prime Minister to have a vote on this bill at third reading. Will they vote at third reading? Voting at second reading is a much smaller commitment when the Speaker announces that he does not intend to authorize third reading unless the bill receives a royal recommendation.

There is another important issue with respect to the credibility of the proposal. We have to remember that the system is what it is right now because of the previous government. The current government is making a mistake by keeping these bad measures in place. But it was the previous government that passed Bill C-17 in 1994, Bill C-12 in 1996, Bills C-32 and C-2 in 2000, Bill C-49 in 2002 and Bill C-23 in 2005.

That does not mean much, because they are just numbers. But each of those bills, which were passed and became laws, represent measures to limit access to EI as much as possible. According to the Department of Human Resources and Social Development, about 44.6% of all people who claim EI can expect to receive benefits. That is quite serious, because it affects not only those losing their jobs, but also their families, the local economy, the regional economy and the economy of the provinces concerned.

We know that someone who does not receive EI benefits will eventually find themselves on welfare, which is administered exclusively by the provinces, even though this person made contributions to the EI system and the EI fund. But the Canadian government does not contribute one cent to this fund. I would call that a serious economic crime, because access to EI is being compromised. We know now that there was a surplus of about \$57 billion that the government spent on other things over the past 12 years. That means that there are hundreds of thousands of families who have suffered because of these measures, some of whom have been plunged into poverty.

The Bloc Québécois has consistently brought forward bills that, every time, have been fought by the two big federal majority parties.

In conclusion, if the Liberal Party wants to be credible—because the Conservatives are hopeless, and this is clear from their right-wing measures that take away all the means to support the economy and especially the poor—it must first vote in favour of Bill C-280. It must in particular, as of June 19, join us in studying and debating in favour of Bill C-308, which I introduced on behalf of my party. This bill of course brings back the 360 hours and the 60% of income earned, eliminates the distinctions, eliminates the presumption that persons related to each other do not deal with each other at arm's length, and bases the calculation of benefits on the 12 best weeks.

● (1915)

This is my invitation to my colleagues here in the House. The time has come to fix the employment insurance system.

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-280, which was introduced by the NDP member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking. I want to thank her for putting this bill forward. There is some controversy around it, as we have heard from the Speaker, about the cost factor.

In the midst of this recession, where so many workers who have, through no fault of their own, found themselves unemployed and today quite desperate, Bill C-280 would begin the process of setting right those aspects of Canada's employment insurance system that have been shut down for so many Canadians since the 1990s, as we heard from the previous speaker.

On first examination, Bill C-280 appears to be relatively simple legislation, but I will remind members present that it has two significant objectives. The bill would create a uniform level entry for every person who made a claim for EI benefits by lowering the threshold hours for qualification to 360 hours for people in every region of Canada.

We hear from various media outlets that the Liberal leader is proposing the same 360 hours for qualification for EI benefits, but I would point out that the Liberal leader is in fact proposing only a temporary fix to the qualifying hours for just one year.

I want to be clear. This NDP member's bill, Bill C-280, proposes a permanent change to 360 hours for qualifying for benefits. In addition, Bill C-280 would ensure benefits to people based on their best 12 weeks of earnings in the year prior to their claim. You will know, Madam Speaker, that this would be a marked improvement over the current 14 weeks that are considered to set benefit levels today.

It appears from the comments of the Leader of the Opposition that current Liberals are actually interested in reforming employment insurance. We in the NDP have called for this for years. In fact, I would say the Liberals have a particular understanding of the current EI rules because much of what we need to repair today comes from the damage that they themselves inflicted on the system in the 1990s.

We will also recall it was during that period that the Liberal finance minister, later prime minister, the former member for LaSalle—Émard, not only changed the eligibility rules for employment insurance but the very name of unemployment insurance was changed to employment insurance. Those changes included a change of philosophical view regarding the contributions of workers and employers, that they now be viewed not as premiums for insurance but as being payroll taxes. The contribution/premiums acquired then could be directed to general revenues and debt reduction.

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Turning EI into a tax on working people, fed Liberal surplus budgets and helped the Liberals justify implementing corporate tax breaks. Of course this was a passion shared by their friends of the day, the Progressive Conservatives. However, in fairness, I am pleased that the Liberals have done a 180° turn and now, apparently, at least as a temporary measure, share the our goal to see the threshold for benefits lowered to 360 hours.

Bill C-280 would put an end to the regional disparity in the qualifying period. This NDP bill would ensure the flow of EI dollars to more Canadians, who so desperately need them right now.

The existing EI rules set nine different sets of criteria in terms of hours worked for nine different ranges of regional unemployment rates. Workers in Canada may be required to have anywhere from 420 to 700 hours of eligible work to become a claimant for this benefit. This inequity is not suited for the kinds of job losses we see in Canada today. Regional unemployment rates are in flux and shift from day to day and week to week. EI must be better able to respond to this challenge. Common sense should dictate this, but I find common sense just is not common in the halls of the current government, or the preceding one, for that matter.

● (1920)

We are hearing support for changes to EI from some non-traditional places, such as the TD Bank and the Caledon Institute, both of which are saying that lowering the number of hours needed to qualify for employment insurance is the right thing to do to further combat the global recession.

These two particular groups clearly understand that EI not only serves the individual, but serves the communities' well-being and that of our nation as a whole. They understand very well that if we hang our workers and communities out to dry, it is not only bad for business but bad for the future of our country as a whole.

Across this country, Canadians will tell us very quickly there is much more to an economy than balance sheets and mathematical equations. For instance, Canadians know that the economy is only as secure as the lives of the people who make up our country.

The TD Bank and the Caledon Institute have taken a view of our economy that is both one for the long term, as well as for the short term. They recognize that one important economic measure that will help support a hurting economy in an almost immediate way is an employment insurance system that catches more people in a safety net, not fewer.

There will be those, and even some in this place, who will contend that we cannot afford to make employment insurance more accessible.

After years of building up a \$54 billion EI surplus, the Conservative government wrote it off the books last year. The government owes Canadians the EI protection that they have paid into for years. Canadians have played by the rules, and now the federal government must set EI rules that protect them.

I can hear it now, like an echo in this place, how the government has already expanded the number of weeks a person can remain as a claimant. Yes, this is certainly true. However, those five weeks mean nothing to a person, to a family, when the person does not even

qualify for benefits in the first place. And those extra weeks are only a temporary stopgap added to the end of a benefit period, where statistically people are even less likely to claim them.

The NDP has told the Conservative government repeatedly how it is critically important to remove the two-week waiting period for new claimants at the front end if we want to help a majority of claimants right now.

What is clear is that we have the opportunity to not only do the right thing at a time of national need, but we clearly cannot afford to miss this opportunity to fix a discriminatory and close to dysfunctional system.

The current Conservative government often looks to the U.S. to see its experience in any given matter. I offer the chief economist for Moody's credit rating service as an example. He testified before the U.S. House Committee on Small Business last July that apart from U.S. food stamps, the best bang for the government buck was to ensure that unemployed workers had access to employment insurance benefits.

To determine the effectiveness of differing stimulus measures, he compared their multipliers, an equation that gives a dollar amount to the economic activity created by a government dollar spent to stimulate the economy. His conclusions, for some, will be shocking.

A typical right-wing solution, such as a permanent tax cut, came in as a loss, a negative equation, that saw the dollar spent fizzle to half of its value. His opinion was that they were drains on the economy.

Infrastructure spending was quite good, with a multiplier of \$1.59 for every dollar spent. In his view, again, the problem with infrastructure spending is in the amount of time it takes to have the money flow to the economy, which is exactly what we are living in Canada today.

His suggestion was that the better way to get money into the community immediately was through increases in spending on unemployment insurance. With a multiplier of \$1.64, that would get the job done.

I will close by saying that our first best chance to help Canadians directly and in a tangible way is through Bill C-280. I ask members to join the NDP and support this bill.

● (1925)

Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill C-280.

In the current economic situation, our government is taking unprecedented action to help Canadians adjust to the changing economy and acquire the skills required for the jobs of tomorrow, as seen by our government's economic action plan.

One of the things we are doing to help and protect Canadians during the economic downturn is investing \$8.3 billion to the Canadian skills and transition strategy. We are providing unprecedented support for workers to train and acquire new skills. Our plan will invest an additional \$1 billion in funding over the next two years for training delivered under the EI program through existing labour market development agreements. This funding will help the provinces and the territories train an additional 100,000 EI eligible claimants.

To help Canadian workers who are not EI eligible, we are also providing \$500 million to establish the strategic training and transition fund to support their training needs. To help workers while they are looking for work and who have been unemployed for longer periods, our plan provides nationally an extra five weeks of EI benefits. That was offered as part of a pilot project that had previously only been provided in regions with high unemployment. We have also increased the maximum duration of benefits available under the EI program by five weeks, raising it from 45 to 50 weeks.

This government is pursuing a broad-based labour market approach aimed at helping Canadians through this economic downturn. We are doing this by helping them upgrade their skills to get new jobs, while injecting significant economic stimulus into the economy.

With respect to the bill that we have before us today, there are, however, many problems. First, this legislation fails to consider how changes being proposed would impact the EI program as a whole. It fails to consider what the impact would be upon labour markets, and it fails to consider how much it would cost, a particularly important consideration during tough economic times.

Any responsible proposal that seeks to make permanent changes to the EI program needs to consider how the proposed changes would be paid for, who would pay for them and how these changes would help Canadians get back to work so they can provide for their families.

As mentioned earlier in remarks, our government is doing many things to help those in need, but what it will not do is implement the Liberal-NDP 360 hour, 45 work days a year idea. This is what this bill seeks to implement.

We are not the only ones who believe this bill is an ill-conceived idea. On April 3 of this year the *Scarborough Mirror* reported that the Liberal member for Scarborough—Guildwood said he was “hesitant” on the 360 hour threshold, saying that nine weeks of work seemed “low” Commenting on the impact that this legislation would have on the labour market, here is what Jack Mintz said in the *National Post*:

—shortening drastically the qualification period would encourage greater turnover of workers, result in a permanent rise in the unemployment rate and impose a high economic cost.

Mr. Mintz also addressed the opposition's position on EI, saying:

But, one should be careful not to come to quick conclusions about access to EI.

He then referred to a study by the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development that said:

...shows that eligibility is not a problem for many hardworking Canadians who have recently lost a long-term job.

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The fact of the matter is hard-working people who have just lost a long-term job and who have paid EI for years are some of the people who are hurting most right now. This proposed legislation does absolutely nothing to help them.

Commenting on the Liberal-NDP 45 day work year proposal, this is what a Vancouver *Sun* columnist said:

The Liberal option not only seems illogical but it would raise the federal deficit—and probably taxes—while doing nothing to address the fact that many of the jobs that have been lost are not coming back. The Conservative government is right to reject it...

The federal government is on the right track with investment in skills training and transition programs...

The fact of the matter is that this proposal would result in a massive job-killing payroll tax that would hurt workers and businesses at a time when they can least afford it. It would do nothing to help workers get new skills and new jobs.

● (1930)

The hon. members of this place should understand that the people who will be most directly impacted by this payroll tax hike will be the working poor, people earning between \$15,000 and \$40,000 a year, people who work for minimum wage. Many members of this House have not worked for minimum wage month after month. I have. It is those people most of all, along with small businesses, who need to be protected from this cash-grab payroll tax hike the opposition is proposing.

It should also be noted that this bill will make the proposed changes permanent. There are no temporary measures here. Let us not be fooled in this regard. On one hand, they say that temporary changes are favoured, and on the other hand they say they support this bill that would make a 45-day work year permanent. The Liberals cannot keep their stories straight. Let us take a trip through some of their flip-flops.

The NDP sponsor of this bill, herself, said in the *StarPhoenix* on June 1, “A payroll tax increase may be necessary”. The Liberals, however, realized this back in October, and they said so. They said the NDP plan would result in an employment insurance premium hike. I guess this is one of the ways the Liberals will have to raise taxes. Now the Liberals will deny that they will need to raise EI taxes on lower income workers. Well, which is it?

I know the Liberal member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour and the official opposition EI critic had much to say on this issue. He continues to ask why we are sticking with the regional rates and are not implementing this Liberal-NDP job-killing 45-day work year idea.

Private Members' Business

Well, I can tell members by using the words of the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour from April 1, 2008 in committee,

It's my view that if you get rid of the regional rates and there are changes forced on our EI system because of the economic circumstances, those in the regions will be hurt disproportionately.

He also said that the “cost is pretty significant” to do this 360-hour, 45-day work year idea. He said that we should, “keep the regional rates. This is to protect those people in high unemployment areas”. He said that barely a year ago.

On May 13, 2005, the former Liberal government also said in its response to the human resources committee:

—significantly reducing entrance requirements...is not likely to equate to substantially increased EI coverage, particularly for the long-term unemployed.

Now they do not seem to agree with themselves.

I am loath to quote Liberal members opposite who now seem bent on implementing irresponsible and ill-conceived policies, but I must say that on past occasions they did occasionally talk some common sense. But where has that sense gone?

If we are trying to help others, I think the Liberals, especially the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, should try to help themselves. They should listen to what they themselves had to say in the past. They might learn a few things.

While the opposition continues to propose irresponsible and ill-conceived ideas that will only increase taxes by billions of dollars, Canadians can rest assured that our government has taken unprecedented and effective action to support workers to get through these difficult economic times.

This government will not raise payroll taxes on working Canadians, on low income Canadians. We will not target small business and the workers of this country.

The proposals in Bill C-280 would result in a massive increase in a job-killing payroll tax that would hurt workers and businesses at a time when they can least afford it. These proposals would also do nothing to help hard-working Canadians who have paid into EI for years and years, and have just lost their job.

It is for these reasons and the reasons I mentioned earlier that I cannot, and I will not, support Bill C-280.

• (1935)

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and respond at the completion of the second reading stage of my private member's bill.

I am grateful for all the MPs who spoke to the bill and look forward to continuing this discussion in committee should the House vote to move in that direction which I expect it will.

New Democrats have been focusing on problems within the employment insurance system for many years now. We criticized the change that took EI from being a self-sufficient fund capable of responding to immediate problems without jeopardizing year to year fiscal budgets to becoming part of Canada's general revenues and expenditures.

We all know that over \$55 billion was stolen by the Liberals and used to pay down the deficit. Now, it would seem that the Liberals

have finally come to their senses and may very well realize that NDP members were right all along.

The Conservatives have continued to use EI premiums paid by employers and employees as a cashflow for general revenue instead of ensuring that it be a stand-alone fund which would specifically be used by those who find themselves out of work.

We expressed grave concerns about how it was becoming more difficult to claim employment insurance and the inequities that were coming to define the program.

New Democrats criticized how EI became a tax on workers, a tax that led to a decade of surpluses, a tax that fueled corporate tax cuts by both the Conservatives and the Liberals, and a tax that placed an unfair burden on hard-working Canadians and employers who have the right at this point to demand more for all they have paid for over the years.

Had EI remained relatively accessible for Canadians who lost their jobs throughout these changes, it may have been more difficult to criticize some of these changes, but it has not. Employment insurance is only accessible to about 40% of those who pay into it. Where is the justice in that? There is none.

With 347,400 jobs lost since the last election and another 320,700 laid off in that same period of time, there is no question that this is a timely bill.

Just as the motion by my colleague, the member for Hamilton Mountain, which was passed by the House in March was timely, we have witnessed this week that the government is capable of moving dramatically to support communities in dire need as it bailed out GM, highlighting the number of spin-off jobs and the damage that would be done to communities as one of the biggest reasons to do so.

That is the same argument we can make for improving EI and I wish the government would have done the same with regard to our forestry industry.

Employment insurance is widely seen as a viable form of economic stimulus that protects communities from events such as we are seeing today. It allows the local stores to stay in business by ensuring that they still have a customer base.

The bottom line is that for every \$1 that is paid out to a person who is unemployed, it is an economic stimulus of \$1.64 into the economy. It prevents diaspora scenarios in many smaller centres like some of those from my constituency: Nairn Centre, Hornepayne, Wawa, White River, Manitowadge, Kapuskasing and Hearst, while they wait for mills and plants to reopen or logging trucks to roll again.

It is not just employment insurance. It is a community insurance.

The bill would help these communities by removing regional distinctions and level the playing field of eligibility for EI benefits to 360 hours. New Democrats recognize that it is just as important to protect neighbourhood communities in large centres as it is to protect smaller towns and communities.

The bill would also reduce the sampling period for a claim from the best 14 weeks to the best 12 weeks of the previous year.

As I said previously, I would like to thank all the members who have joined in the debate on this bill. I believe that by engaging in these debates we will keep the issue of the inequity that has been built into the employment insurance program front and foremost in our national dialogue.

New Democrats are committed to the fight for an equitable employment insurance program that serves our country well. The bill would go a long way in that direction and I look forward to shepherding it through the committee process.

• (1940)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): Pursuant to Standing Order 93 the recorded division is deferred until Wednesday, June 10, just before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (1945)

[English]

NARCOTIC DRUG CONTROL

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on March 12, during the meeting of the 52nd session of the committee on narcotics and drugs, I rose in the House and asked the government to deal with the recent *World Drug Report*, which stated:

Urgent steps must be taken to prevent the unravelling of progress that has been made in the past few decades of drug control.

Adjournment Proceedings

Unfortunately, the government continues to embarrass Canada on the world stage by refusing to back a drug policy that is evidence-based and in step with our international partners who support the four pillars of prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction.

According to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, harm reduction is “any program, policy or intervention that seeks to reduce or minimize the adverse health and social consequences associated with drug use”. Harm reduction focuses on those policies, programs and interventions that seek to reduce or minimize the adverse health and social consequences of drug use without requiring an individual to discontinue drug use.

As we know, this is a government that favours ideology over evidence. At the WHO international AIDS conference in Mexico City last August, the former health minister shocked the medical and international health communities by saying that he had an ethical objection to harm reduction and therefore could not support it as a policy. Not surprisingly, the reaction from the scientific community was swift and unrelenting. Canada was called an embarrassment, out of step with any rational response, and out of step with the rest of the world.

A *Toronto Star* editorial chastised him for the ideology-over-evidence approach, say that his statements were “vociferous and illogical” and that they fly “in the face of World Health Organization support for such sites as part of a comprehensive approach to reducing HIV and other harms associated with injection drug use”.

At the time, I was compelled to criticize the former minister. Then, at the annual general meeting of the Canadian Medical Association, I was appalled to be sitting in the room as the minister spent his whole annual speech to the doctors of this country chastising them and calling into question their ethics if they participated in these programs of harm reduction.

It is insulting that the minister did not understand that 80% of the Canadian Medical Association members support harm reduction and that evidence shows that harm reduction has positive effects on poor health outcomes associated with drug use. The former president of the CMA, Dr. Brian Day, said:

In rejecting harm reduction as one tool of addiction treatment, the minister is abandoning the most vulnerable members of society.

Harm reduction also lowers the risk of disease transmission and provides education about drug addiction. We have yet to hear from the new Minister of Health on this issue, but I am concerned that as of yet the fourth essential pillar in drug policy is not in action. It is impossible to help someone who is dead.

There are already too many barriers to harm reduction. Individual barriers include the fear of prosecution, inaccurate understanding of the risks, and the fear of lack of confidentiality. Social barriers include the stigma attached to addiction and harm reduction services or cultural beliefs. There are also legal barriers, such as the arrests of harm reduction clients and volunteers. However, the one barrier that we as members of Parliament can work to combat is the political one.

Adjournment Proceedings

We must give sufficient funding to harm reduction, stop the government from censoring reports that do not back up their backward ideology, and support the evidence-based policies that put the health and safety of Canadians at the forefront.

● (1950)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Daniel Petit (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada is very pleased to receive the political declaration and action plan adopted by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its meetings in Vienna. One hundred and thirty governments, with the solid backing of Canada, defined the future of anti-drug trafficking strategies which are compatible with Canada's national anti-drug strategy.

The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the policy-setting body of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in drug-control matters, adopted the draft political declaration and action plan on the future of drug control at the conclusion of its high-level segment this past March 11 and 12.

The governments, including Canada's, reviewed the progress in drug control since the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on drugs in 1998 and agreed on further steps to reduce the threat posed by drugs to health and security. The political declaration recognizes that countries have a shared responsibility for solving the world drugs problem, that a balanced and comprehensive approach is called for, and that human rights need to be recognized.

Governments also approved an action plan proposing 30 remedies to problems in the areas of concern, namely: reducing drug abuse and dependence; reducing the illicit supply of drugs; control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants; international cooperation to eradicate the illicit cultivation of crops and to provide alternative development; countering money-laundering; and juridical cooperation.

The action plan places considerable emphasis on scientific evidence to support interventions; mainstreaming drug treatment and rehabilitation into national healthcare systems; and ensuring accessibility to drug demand reduction services.

The action plan addresses, for example, new trafficking trends and calls for greater exchange of intelligence, better monitoring of the impact of cyber-technology and effective data gathering. It also supports drug control and alternative development approaches as part of measures to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development.

The Government of Canada feels that the declaration will be a valuable tool to spur national efforts the world over and to strengthen international cooperation. It will help Canada achieve the objectives of Canada's national anti-drug strategy.

The government recognizes that illegal drugs threaten the health of families and the safety of communities, feed organized crime and lead to the commission of minor offences.

On October 4, 2007, our Prime Minister announced Canada's new national anti-drug strategy, which provides a focused approach based on three action plans to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit

drugs and to fight crime associated with these drugs. It will also improve the safety and health of communities through measures taken in three priority areas: prevention, treatment and law enforcement.

The strategy represents a focused approach that deals harshly with criminals and compassionately with drug users.

Through the national anti-drug strategy, the Government of Canada has implemented concrete measures to reduce supply and demand with respect to illicit drugs in accordance with the United Nations political declaration and action plan.

[*English*]

Hon. Carolyn Bennett: Madam Speaker, the hon. member has tried to change the channel in terms of the enemy being drug trafficking instead of what is a health issue around a comprehensive drug policy. In fact, there is a consensus around the world. There are four pillars in a comprehensive drug policy, prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction, which the hon. member clearly has left out.

On the issue of drug trafficking, I cannot help but remind the hon. member of the government's failure to deal with cigarette smuggling by exactly the same people who are smuggling drugs and guns. Since the government has been elected, cigarette smuggling in the country has doubled, a 100% increase in the amount of cigarette smuggling by exactly the same people that this flawed approach of the government has implemented.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Daniel Petit: Madam Speaker, as I just said, the government has implemented a number of concrete measures to decrease the supply of and demand for illicit drugs. The government has always been determined to increase the health and safety of communities.

Canada's national anti-drug strategy supports, in the three priority areas—prevention, treatment and law enforcement—steps set out in the political declaration and action plan. The strategy is a concrete measure to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs.

The Government of Canada has added \$30 million over five years to funding for the prevention action plan and more than \$100 million over five years to funding for the treatment action plan. This money will solidify current prevention efforts and promote collaboration between governments and support organizations in order to improve access to drug treatment services.

● (1955)

TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, on April 29, 2009, Aérocentre YHU Longueuil announced a \$20 million investment over three years to develop a new airport terminal at the Saint-Hubert airport, which is called the Aéroport Montréal Saint-Hubert-Longueuil, even though it is located in Saint-Hubert.

Adjournment Proceedings

All of Longueuil was in attendance for announcement. There was a big outdoor party to finally celebrate the fact that the work would be going ahead. About 100 people came out on a Wednesday morning. That only goes to show how long awaited this news had been.

Aérocentre YHU Longueuil is a consortium made up of Dev-YHU Longueuil and DASH-L—a not-for-profit organization whose acronym stands for Développement de l'Aéroport Saint-Hubert-Longueuil—and the City of Longueuil.

In 2007, DASH-L applied to the federal government for a grant to renovate and lengthen the Saint-Hubert runway in order to accommodate larger aircraft, which would enhance airport activity, contribute to economic development and help complete the project to develop a new airport terminal.

I would even call the South Shore region the aviation region. In addition to the airport, there is the Canadian Space Agency, the Institute of Aeronautics and Aérovision, a very dynamic organization in Saint-Hubert that promotes aviation and aerospace trades, chaired by Lucien Poirier. Some of the major aerospace companies are also located there, such as Pratt & Whitney and Héroux DevTech, along with a number of subcontractors around the airport. It is the fifth busiest airport in Canada.

Last Saturday, I attended the day-long celebrations organized by Aérovision to mark 100 years of flying. We had a great day, with hundreds of young people and adults taking part. In the evening, the guest speaker was Charles Lindbergh's grandson, Erik Lindbergh. Many of those in attendance, including, to my surprise, Erik Lindbergh himself, have asked me to continue promoting the development of the airport in Saint-Hubert here in this chamber. I would like to pass this message on to the minister through you, Madam Speaker. Even Charles Lindbergh's grandson asked to do everything in my power in this Parliament to help the Saint-Hubert airport.

The project description and the grant application were submitted two years ago and there has been ample time, might I say, to review them.

Just recently, DASH-L submitted an application in the prescribed form to reflect changes in needs and demands. It is imperative that Saint-Hubert get a new airport.

The government, through the Department of Industry and many other responsible departments, is making considerable investments in Canada's aerospace industry in particular. But the fact is, as we know, that the aerospace industry is to Quebec what the automotive industry is to Ontario. Given the astronomical amounts of money this government is investing in the automotive industry these days, there is an expectation that it will provide assistance to the Saint-Hubert airport.

The minister's response in this House was that he was prepared to look into it. Might I remind the minister of the campaign promise made by his party last fall.

All the ingredients are there. What is the minister waiting for to make his decision known?

[English]

Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to address the question of the member opposite, which she raised in April, regarding the Saint-Hubert Longueuil airport.

I understand the member's position on this issue because I represent Fort McMurray—Athabasca, as members know, which is 6% of the gross domestic product of the country. It has one single runway, which is the busiest runway in North America. Indeed, approximately 5,000 Quebeckers work directly, or indirectly, in the oil sands and use that airport from time to time, in fact, on a weekly basis, to bring home money and themselves to their families. Therefore, I do understand what the member opposite is talking about in relation to priorities and the necessity of keeping the economy going and investing in places that are necessary for the economy, especially during a time like this.

I am pleased to say that under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Conservative cabinet our government has made significant investments in Canada's airports through the airports capital assistance program. Under this program, as she knows, eligible airports can receive funding for capital projects related to safety, the protection of assets and the reduction of operating costs.

This program invests nearly \$30 million annually and helps close to 100 airports across the country. In fact, in Quebec, the member opposite's home province, more than 30 airports have benefited from this funding, including the Saint-Hubert airport. This year ACAP will provide \$8 million of financial assistance to airports in the province of Quebec. Other airports are in priority and are in line for this funding.

In the past two years, the Saint-Hubert airport has benefited from the airports capital assistance program. This allowed it to purchase important pieces of equipment, equipment it prioritized, in order to keep travellers safe and sound, which is the priority of this government. We want to keep Canadians safe and secure, and we are doing exactly that.

No other official request, at this time, for the rehabilitation of airport infrastructure has been received under this program. Transport Canada does evaluate all official requests received from any airport according to fairness and to the airports capital assistance program criteria, and Saint-Hubert is no exception, just as all airports across the country that serve Canadians from coast to coast to coast are no exception.

Funding is also available under the local and regional airports category of the building Canada and the infrastructure stimulus funds. In fact, there is more assistance available. This Conservative government continues to work actively with our partners in the provinces, territories and municipalities to identify such projects to be considered under these two funding initiatives.

Adjournment Proceedings

The question is this. Why did that member and her party vote against that assistance? Our Conservative government remains committed to ensuring the safety and the security of all Canadians and treating all Canadians and all Canadian airports fairly. By investing in our airports through the airports capital assistance program and other infrastructure programs, we will be able to enhance and maintain Canada's already very great, enviable safety record and we will treat all Canadians fairly.

• (2000)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée: Madam Speaker, I do not know why members are applauding. I thought that the parliamentary secretary had not understood a thing.

He tells me that the Saint-Hubert airport did not request funding under the airports capital assistance program. I do not know why he took three minutes to talk about that, because it is not what I asked him about. I asked him whether he had money for the Saint-Hubert airport in the infrastructure and building Canada programs. He said absolutely nothing about that. He did not understand a thing.

I am asking whether he received the Saint-Hubert airport's application under the infrastructure and building Canada programs and how he plans to handle it. That is what I am asking. It is not a difficult question.

In addition, I want to know when he will announce this decision, which, according to what I have been told, has been made.

He should stop playing games and beating around the bush and give a real answer.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Jean: Madam Speaker, no matter how aggravated the member gets, it will not change that. This government's position is to treat all airports fairly. In fact, we cannot move forward with this application until Transport Canada receives an official request for funding from the airport authorities. We have to treat all Canadians and all Canadian airport authorities fairly. We have to receive an official request for funding from the airport authority under the airports capital assistance program.

Once an official request has been made and has been received, this government will then be able to ascertain and be in a position to perform an evaluation of the project's eligibility within the context of the program criteria, compared to other places in Canada that are just as eligible, but the application has to be made.

I should also take this opportunity to remind the member opposite of the unprecedented work this government has done to improve our infrastructure in her home province of Quebec. In fact, just yesterday in Quebec City the Minister of Public Works and Government Services announced an agreement with the province of Quebec for \$2.75 billion in infrastructure projects throughout the province over the next two years, which is great news. We do work in co-operation and we can get the job done, unlike the Bloc.

• (2005)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, previously in the House, I raised concerns with the minister

regarding continued delays in government action on climate change and the rising rates of Canadian sources of greenhouse gases. I asked the minister if he would finally move to impose legally-binding, absolute reduction targets for major emitters.

In reply, I was told that I was well aware of the clean energy dialogue purportedly ongoing between the Prime Minister and President Obama and that it was getting done there. In fact, regrettably, neither I nor, so far as I am aware, any other member of Parliament or Canadian citizen can say with any level of certainty what, if anything, is occurring in this apparent dialogue.

Contrary to the provisions of the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation signed almost two decades ago by Canada, the United States and Mexico, critical deliberations on environmental policy are proceeding behind closed doors. This is despite Canada's commitment, pursuant to this agreement, to ensure transparency and participation by concerned Canadians in any environmental policy proposals.

If this is in fact where decisions on Canadian climate change policy are being made, will the government finally open up this dialogue and provide a place at the table for effective and concerned citizens and business leaders; will the government respect the will of the House, expressed clearly by the majority vote today, and impose binding, science-based targets and issue the final federal regulations needed to implement the promised cap and trade regime for major greenhouse gas emitter; and, will the government expedite these actions so that Canada will have something concrete to contribute to the global effort in addressing climate change leading to Copenhagen this December?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Madam Speaker, the hon. member wants to participate in the clean energy dialogue with President Obama and our Prime Minister. I do not think that will happen with the NDP because one would even question if it believes in climate change.

Our government takes seriously the climate change issue. We are very serious about it. We are acting and taking aggressive realistic measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse gas emissions fluctuate from year to year for a number of reasons, but the long-term trend has been that greenhouse gas emissions in Canada have been rising since 1993 because the previous Liberal government failed to take action. Unlike the previous Liberal government, we are committed to change that trend and reduce Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions 20% by 2020 and 60% to 70% by 2050.

Adjournment Proceedings

With regard to domestic actions, I would emphasize that we have already made significant progress in introducing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We have established, as the member has mentioned, the clean air energy dialogue with President Obama and his administration and our Prime Minister. The minister has made numerous trips down there. That dialogue will help us set out on a path to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the mid-term reduction targets.

Our environmental action continues with the introduction of Canada's economic action plan, which includes more than \$2 billion of green investments designed to protect the environment, stimulate our economy and transform our technologies here in Canada, which the member and her party voted against. Why would a party do that unless it does not believe in climate change?

In addition, the measures laid out in the action plan are reinforced with complementary measures, such as our commitment to support the development and use of renewable fuels and our support for clean technology development. Our government is committed to ensuring that 90% of Canada's electricity needs are provided by non-emitting sources by 2020. That is huge. They are tough targets in Canada and one of the toughest in the world.

Moreover, on April 4, the government announced that it would introduce tough new regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions from the automotive sector under CEPA. These regulations will be aligned with the fuel efficiency standards of the United States, beginning with 2011 model year vehicles.

In the North American context, Canada will continue to work with President Obama and his administration to develop a co-ordinated approach that will advance our respective environmental and energy objectives and renew the North American economy at the same time. Canada needs good, green jobs.

On the international front, the Government of Canada is moving forward to support international action on the global fight against climate change. Copenhagen will be an important conference and Canada fully intends to play an active and constructive leadership role, with a view to achieving a comprehensive and ambitious global agreement.

• (2010)

Ms. Linda Duncan: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the reply but, unfortunately, it seems to be more of the same.

Perhaps our Prime Minister could talk to the President of the United States who might be more willing to open up the dialogue consistent with the North American agreement. I would encourage the Government of Canada to do so, which is its obligation under that agreement.

There has been a lot of talk about green incentives and support for a green economy and yet the budget, which I was opposed to for this very reason, cut funding to renewable technology. While the rest of the world moves forward, including our neighbour, the United States, which is investing billions of dollars in building its renewable technology to meet its climate change targets, we have done the opposite. Even the International Energy Agency has said that it is time for the world to move away from reliance on the fossil fuel industry and endorse the green economy.

At what juncture will the government finally change course?

I have had a chance to look briefly at the latest climate change action plan, which, from my brief look, appears to completely repeat the previous climate change action plan that was decried roundly by the Commissioner for Sustainable Development. I am talking about initiatives such as reliance on the public transit tax credits and reliance on a fund that money is simply put into, but none of these measures seem to be delivering real reductions in greenhouse gases. The government tabled a report yesterday indicating that greenhouse gases would continue to rise for some time in Canada.

Where within these measures is the action?

Mr. Mark Warawa: Madam Speaker, I am shocked that the member and the NDP would demean people who use public transit. It is a good environmental practice. This government encouraged that and we provided tax breaks for Canadians to help them use public transit.

I am also shocked at her party's record. It voted against \$1 billion for green infrastructure, against \$300 million for the ecoENERGY retrofit program to make homes more efficient, and it voted against \$1 billion for clean energy projects like carbon capture and storage.

We just came back from the oil sands where we heard how important it is that Canada continues to lead by providing funding for demonstration projects on carbon capture and storage. We are a world leader in that technology. The world is counting on us and we are taking leadership. The response from the NDP was to vote against that too.

With all this evidence, one needs to seriously consider whether the NDP really believes in climate change.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:13 p.m.)

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