



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 145 • NUMBER 051 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, May 28, 2010

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 28, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1005)
[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP) moved:

That this House notes the horror with which Canadians observe the ecological disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico and their call for action to prevent such an event in Canada, and therefore calls on the government immediately to conduct a thorough review and revision of all relevant federal laws, regulations and policies regarding the development of unconventional sources of oil and gas, including oil sands, deepwater oil and gas recovery, and shale gas, through a transparent process and the broadest possible consultation with all interested stakeholders to ensure Canada has the strongest environmental and safety rules in the world, and to report to the House for appropriate action.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with my colleague, the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

The New Democratic Party is seeking the support of the House for an open public review and, where deemed necessary, the revision of relevant federal laws, regulations and policies regarding the development of unconventional sources of oil and gas.

Why is it necessary for this review to be done by the government and why is it critical to the immediate and long-term interests of Canadians?

Canada's economy continues to be majorly dependent on fossil fuel expectation, while much of the developed world is moving away from this narrow focus on energy and economic dependence, both for environmental and sustainable prosperity reasons. It is therefore the duty of the Government of Canada to ensure that our natural resources are exploited in a sustainable, efficient and environmentally sound manner in the interests of Canadians, both current and future generations.

It is also the duty of the government to ensure that the interests of other sectors are consulted, considered, respected and protected under exploitation policies and decisions. Canadians are demanding and deserve a secure clean energy future. They also expect that jobs will not be put at risk, as has happened in the Gulf of Mexico, where

lax environmental controls did not provide employment but rather delivered an economic tsunami.

Canada's oil and gas resources belong to the people of Canada, whether vested in the provincial or federal crowns, first nations governments or peoples. While they may be leased to private corporations for exploitation, they remain public property. Therefore, it is the duty of the government to ensure they are managed and exploited in a manner reflecting the long-term interests of Canadians.

Canadians have watched in horror the monumental ecological disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico. We are all disturbed by the damage to threatened species, the fishery and local economies and the pending spread of this pollution by hurricanes. However, people are equally outraged to learn of the abject failure of the U.S. government to assert its regulatory powers and authority to control the offshore industry and avert this disaster, including deregulation, streamlined approvals, waived environmental requirements, transfer of powers to unelected agencies and an all too cozy and, in the words of President Obama, at times corrupt relationship between oil corporations and regulatory agencies.

It all sounds too familiar. What has happened to the duty to govern? Who is minding the public trust? It is not just this ecological disaster south of the border that has awakened Canadians to the need for greater action by the Canadian government to guard their interests. As the government spends \$1 billion securing a two-day G8 and G20 photo op, the Auditor General is reporting that the government has failed to deliver on its legal duties to safeguard our northern environment, including assessing cumulative impacts and monitoring and enforcing environmental offences.

This fall, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development will issue a timely audit on federal actions to protect our fragile Arctic. Meanwhile, the government is expending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to map the Canadian Arctic offshore territory in anticipation of Arctic offshore drilling. What the public is likely unaware of is that leases have long ago been issued in the absence of broad public consultation, environmental assessment or designation of protected areas.

In a letter to President Obama, the Inupiat community of the Arctic Slope said:

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As the country scrambles to clean up the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, Shell Oil is getting ready to drill exploratory wells in the Arctic Ocean, one of the most remote and extreme environments on Earth... The Arctic coast does not have the infrastructure in place, nor is there technology available, to respond effectively to a blowout or oil spill offshore.

The world has been given this wake-up call at the very moment the National Energy Board was considering a request by the selfsame companies to weaken environmental safety rules for wells in the Beaufort Sea and through a hearing process that effectively excluded the public. We would do well to heed the concerns raised by Arctic communities about the lack of capacity in the remote Arctic, given the complete failure of federal authorities to respond to the unprecedented spill of over 700,000 cubic litres of bunker C oil into Lake Wabamun.

If the government was not capable of responding to an inland disaster of this scale, close to major centres and in an oil-based province, how can we have faith that it is prepared for an offshore disaster of an even greater scale?

However, it is not just offshore deep wells that pose serious threats to the environment. The parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development just reviewed the impacts of unconventional oil sands on the Peace-Athabasca River basin and the natural resources committee has only touched the surface of issues surrounding unconventional drilling.

● (1010)

Yesterday, President Obama announced strong measures to redress what he described as the far too cozy relationship between the oil industry and regulators in that country. He cancelled exploratory drilling permits in the Arctic, Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. He cancelled proposed leases for Virginia's coast and the Gulf of Mexico. He suspended 33 projects in the Gulf of Mexico. He established a presidential commission to investigate causes of the spill. He reversed the policy of fast-tracking and streamlining approvals, and, in his words, "all too frequent skirting of required environmental reviews". He also separated permitting and enforcement roles.

We want to know if the government will expedite similar measures to address the failures identified by numerous past and ongoing reviews? Always keen to tout its desire to follow in the footsteps of the United States, will it also reverse its policy of fast-tracking and streamlining approvals for Arctic drilling?

The National Energy Board has advisedly cancelled the hearing requested by the oil companies to relax safety and environmental requirements for Arctic drilling. It has now set a broader hearing on Arctic drilling. It is our recommendation that this process instead be led by an independent review body under the direction of the government and the terms be expanded to include all unconventional oil sectors on all three coasts and the oil sands.

The current estimate of volume of oil spilled by BP's blowout in the Gulf of Mexico now eclipses the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* disaster, making it the worst in U.S. history. Can we imagine a spill of this magnitude in the Canadian Arctic, on the west coast, the east coast or the Peace-Athabasca Delta?

The Canadian Senate has called for emergency hearings on offshore drilling. National Inuit leader, Mary Simon, has supported the call to postpone offshore oil and gas exploration in the Arctic.

We call upon all members of this House to support this call for an urgent review of: federal laws, regulations and policies regarding unconventional exploitation of fossil fuels; to consider, at a minimum, rules and policies for offshore drilling, in particular deep wells, Arctic drilling, exploitation of shale gas, and the need for government regulation and oversight; precautionary measures, environmental assessment and regulatory requirements; emergency and spill response rules and capabilities; the approval processes for leases, exploration, and drilling; transparency and intervenor rights; consistency among Canadian regulatory regimes and agencies; comparable law and policy in other jurisdictions; and budgeting and resources for delivery of permitting, monitoring, inspection and enforcement and emergency response duties.

We can learn from the mistakes of others. We can exercise precaution. We can choose to govern in the interests of future generations of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her speech.

I must point out that this general weakening of environmental standards, environmental assessments and safety standards had already begun long before the current government decided to amend legislation, for example, so that projects would no longer be assessed by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency but, instead, would be submitted to the National Energy Board. Since 2005, we have known that the federal government, with the help of the Liberals, intended to make changes to environmental assessments so that exploratory drilling projects would no longer be subject to assessments or studies—

The Deputy Speaker: I apologize for interrupting the member, but we do not have translation. Perhaps we could give the interpreters a few minutes to resolve the issue. Is it working now? Yes.

The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie has 30 seconds to ask his question again.

● (1015)

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, if I have only 30 seconds, that means that I cannot do any kind of preamble.

I would like to ask the member whether she finds it acceptable that in 2005, the government decided that exploratory drilling projects would no longer be subject to comprehensive studies, but to screenings instead? We have not only the current government to thank for these weakened regulations, but also the Liberal government, which began this in 2005.

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[English]

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, for quite some time, the federal government has moved in the direction of deregulating this critical and risky venture of offshore and unconventional oil. Unlike the United States, which actually requires an environmental assessment and public review of the issuing of leases to simply explore and do seismic work, in Canada we have deregulated so that none of that is required.

We need to have an overall review of the direction in which Canada is going to ensure our fragile areas are protected from unconventional deep water drilling and all other unconventional pursuits and exploits of resources that put our communities at risk.

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona for her motion today because it is timely and extremely important, especially with what we have seen in the Gulf of Mexico.

Why does the member think it is so important that the Government of Canada actually do environmental assessments, rather than allowing bodies, like the National Energy Board, do them? Why are we allowing folks outside of the regulatory process to do this when we really have the authority? Why would we not be doing it as a government to ensure that all Canadians, all of Canada and indeed the world are safe from any of these massive spills?

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, in Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs makes the decision on whether it will lease those rights. However, when it does that, it requires no environmental impact assessment and there is no public scrutiny.

In the case of the National Energy Board's review of applications to actually drill, there is little opportunity for the public to intervene because, unlike provincial review bodies, such as the one in Alberta to which I give credit, the National Energy Board provides no costs to the public to intervene, whether or not they are first nation communities, Inuvialuit, Inuit or people from Nunavut. There is no support in intervening so they can hire experts and legal counsel, and many of these hearings are held at a far distance. In fact, the NEB hearing that was about to commence to weaken the rules for drilling off the Arctic coast was to be held in the high Arctic, so there was no way that communities outside of that area could intervene.

We need a review because the government is going in the direction of turning over more and more decisions to appointed agencies instead of binding rules by the elected government. That is why President Obama has stepped in and called for a review and is ratcheting the broad discretion that has been granted over far too many decades to regulatory agencies that are unaccountable to the people.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the member for Edmonton—Strathcona, both for sharing her speaking time with me and also for bringing forward this very important motion. The member for Edmonton—Strathcona has a strong and passionate voice for the protection of the environment and has certainly turned a very critical lens on the current government's approaches to so-called environmental protection.

I am pleased to speak to this important motion today. The residents of Nanaimo—Cowichan often raise issues around the

health of the oceans in British Columbia, the fate of the wild salmon stocks and our continued reliance on fossil fuels. This is particularly why I wanted to speak to the motion.

Three things happening in British Columbia right now are important to take note of. The first is there is continuing pressure to remove the oil tanker moratorium that has been in place since approximately 1972. The second pressure point in British Columbia is the proposed Enbridge pipeline that will run from the Alberta oil sands to Kitimat. The third is the continuing pressure to have offshore oil and gas drilling take place in some of the most fragile and volatile ocean waters in Canada.

Although I would like to speak to all three of those matters, I will focus primarily today on the offshore oil and gas. However, I want to quickly mention the tanker traffic because this is a particularly sensitive issue right now.

In the Living Oceans press release, as a result of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, it indicated:

The Enbridge Gateway mega-project would involve an approximately 1,100 kilometre pipeline that would carry oil from the tar sands to Kitimat, where 525,000 barrels of oil per day will be loaded onto oil tankers that will thread their way down Douglas Channel to the inside Passage, bound for Asia. That works out to about 225 loaded, massive oil tankers per year, passing each other in the channel and other narrow, confined areas along the coast.

In March 2010, the first nations from the north and central coasts in Haida Gwaii banned oil tankers from their traditional territories. They stated:

The First Nations governments have taken action to protect the ocean that supports our communities, said Sterritt.

He is the executor director of the Coastal First Nations. They go on to say:

Now we would like to see the same leadership from the federal government.

The groups are pointing to the challenges of cleaning up the spill in the Gulf of Mexico as a grim reminder that failed technology and bad weather can make the impossible even harder.

Many Canadians may not be aware of that particular area of the coastline, but it gets extremely strong storms, huge waves and is a very sensitive ecosystem. To take the risk of having the kind of oil spill that we see in Mexico happen in those pristine waters would be catastrophic.

I will spend a lot of my speaking time referring to a report called "A Review of Offshore Oil and Gas Development in British Columbia" published in May 2004. This study was prepared for the Coastal First Nations by the Offshore Oil and Gas Research Group, the School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University. It is a lengthy report, so I will only be able to touch on a couple of aspects of it.

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The report reviewed the whole B.C. moratorium process and that included a variety of reports that had been issued in the past on offshore oil and gas. It included the B.C. Offshore Oil and Gas Task Force, the Provincial Scientific Review Panel, a B.C. Offshore Oil and Gas Task Force put forward by the provincial review process and the Provincial Scientific Review Panel and then, finally, this report.

In the B.C. Scientific Review Panel's conclusions, it said:

—there are significant gaps in knowledge, that environmental impacts could be catastrophic, that existing regulatory structures are deficient, and that a number of preconditions need to be made before ...[offshore oil and gas] can proceed all suggest that the lifting of the existing moratorium would be premature.

I am speaking to this in the context of the fact that we are concerned the federal regulations are simply inadequate. When we raise some of the environmental issues that we are looking at in British Columbia, it becomes even more evident that the moratoriums both for tanker traffic and oil and gas drilling need to remain in place.

● (1020)

The report identified the fact that there were 26 areas where there were knowledge gaps. I do not have time to go through all 26, but I want to touch on a couple of the environmental areas.

Knowledge gaps include identification of valuable species, identification of stable areas, earthquake monitoring. Again, for Canadians who are not aware, we are in the highest earthquake zone in Canada. The other gaps are impact assessment of acoustic propagation, oil spill trajectories, impact of oil spills on landfalls, areas of critical habitat, behaviour and toxicity of natural gas in marine environment, long-term impacts of spill and recovery rates and cumulative environmental impacts. This is only a few out of the 26 serious concerns that the report raises around gaps in environmental knowledge.

The report goes on to say that offshore oil and gas:

—would have negative environmental affects. These affects would occur at phases including exploration, development, production, and decommissioning. While some impacts are local and short duration, others affect larger areas and last longer.

Although there is consensus that negative environmental impacts would occur, considerable uncertainty regarding the exact nature and magnitude of these impacts exist. The uncertainty is due to several factors. First, research on environmental impacts of OOGD is incomplete; there are substantial gaps in knowledge. Second, impacts are unique to each ecological system. Results based on the experience of other regions would not accurately predict the impacts for B.C. Third, impacts are based on unknown probabilities of events, such as accidental oil spills. Fourth, impacts would vary depending on the type of regulations, management practices, and technology governing OOGD.

The report notes:

Oil spill clean-up measures are largely ineffective in mitigating impacts of oil spills. Clean-up efforts on average recover 5-15% of the hydrocarbons and the clean-up process can itself cause additional environmental damage.

Recent research shows that the impact of oil spills last at least several decades. Recovery time from spills is therefore lengthy.

I want to turn briefly to the arguments around economics. We consistently hear that, particularly in some of these areas in British Columbia where there is high unemployment rates. The argument always is that they need to do offshore oil and gas development because it will bring jobs to our communities.

Sadly the evidence flies in the fact of that. In the report the panel did an extensive socio-economic analysis. The report points out:

OOGD is a very capital-intensive that generates few jobs, and would rely on highly skilled services and equipment produced outside of B.C. Consequently, economic impacts are less per dollar of output than experienced by almost every other sector of the B.C. economy. For example, the oil and gas sector generates about 1.5 jobs (direct person years) per million dollars of output compared to forestry (3.5 jobs), fishing, hunting and trapping (3.5 jobs), and tourism (22.23 jobs).

The panel did a comparison with Sable offshore energy project in Nova Scotia. It says:

The investment in SOEP of \$2.3 billion generated only 310 direct jobs, for a ratio of \$7.4 million per job created. Also, 90% of the revenue generated by gas production accrued to recipients outside of Nova Scotia, most in the form of profits to the companies exploiting the resource. Nova Scotia received just 6% of the revenue in the form of royalties and taxes and employees located in Nova Scotia received 4%

Therefore, there is a very strong counter argument for why we would talk about job creation.

I think it is very clear that there is insufficient information to even consider lifting the moratorium in British Columbia. The community impacts, the socio-economic impacts, the impacts on the environment all need to be taken into account and all the key stakeholders must be at the table for any discussions around lifting this moratorium. This would include first nations, communities, certainly business and other government representatives.

It must be an inclusive process that I would argue needs to respect the precautionary principle. Unless it can be demonstrated unequivocally that it is safe, that moratorium for the tanker traffic and for the oil and gas must remain in place.

● (1025)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan really flags and raises the concerns that all of us in B.C. have about not only the Enbridge pipeline and the devastation that it could cause, as she said with over 200 tankers travelling through very fragile waters, but also the moratorium that we have had on oil and gas development as well as tanker traffic.

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I would like to ask the member a question about the Enbridge pipeline. There has been incredible and significant opposition in British Columbia from first nations, environmental groups, local community organizations, provincial and national organizations. I have not yet seen anyone who thinks this is a good development that should go ahead, other than the proponents of the pipeline itself.

Could the member bring forward to the House the breadth and the scope of the opposition in B.C. to this pipeline and how damaging it will be?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, I have a headline here that says, "First Nations declare opposition to Northern Gateway, heightening risks for Enbridge investors".

First nations and other coastal communities are very aware of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill and the devastation it had in the north. Watching what is happening in the Gulf of Mexico, many people in British Columbia simply cannot believe that we would even contemplate bringing over 200 oil tankers into some of the most pristine coastal areas in British Columbia.

Just a year ago we had the collapse the wild salmon stocks in the Fraser River. One of the major concerns around any kind of oil and gas development or tanker traffic is the impact it could potentially have on already threatened wild salmon stocks.

We are very concerned about the overall health of the ecosystem. British Columbians are signalling, very clearly, that they want the moratorium to stay in place. They do not want to see this kind of development in British Columbia.

• (1030)

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could move the member to the other coast, to Newfoundland and Labrador, where there is a bay called Placentia Bay. It is a very large bay that is subject to fog and other environmental weather hazards. There is also a refinery at the head of the bay, as well as a transshipment port.

A recent study by Transport Canada has indicated there are about 8,200 vessel movements per year there, including tankers bringing oil to the refinery and refined products out, as well as all of the transshipment for oil from the Grand Banks.

One of the criticisms in this study is that there is not really an effective method of dealing with any potential oil spill which could occur and that there is a lack of coordination by Transport Canada, the official responder, as well as the fact that oil response equipment is centrally located outside of Placentia Bay, in St. John's, and not in the bay where it is mostly likely to be an opportunity for a response.

If this review were to take place, is that also the kind of examination that would be done, which could potentially change these regulations to make them tighter so we could have an effectively oil spill response?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the report I was citing was from Simon Fraser University. One of the challenges raised in the report was the fact that there was often no intergovernmental coordination, never mind between the federal and provincial governments but within the federal government itself, around sharing information and oversight and regulations. When we are talking about impact on

oceans, we are not only talking about Environment Canada but we are talking about DFO and the ministry of transport as well.

We would envision seeing some coordinated effort in regulations so we do not have this silo approach when we deal with some of these serious environmental issues. Again, when we deal with oil spills, first the potential for the impact of the oil spill and then the challenges for the clean up, it is absolutely essential that we have that kind of coordinated approach.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, at the conclusion of today's debate on the NDP opposition motion in the name of the Member for Edmonton—Strathcona, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, June 1, 2010, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this debate provides an opportunity to reassure Canadians that when it comes to the development of our natural resources, the health and safety of Canadians over environment remains the top priority of this Conservative government.

We all continue to be shocked by the enormity of the incident in the Gulf of Mexico, the scope of the ecological challenge facing our American neighbours.

As the Prime Minister said earlier this month:

There are strong rules in Canada. There are rules for relief wells. The National Energy Board does not allow drilling unless it is convinced that the safety of the environment and the safety of workers can be assured. Let me assure all members of the House that we will continue to enforce stronger environmental standards in this country.

That is the fact of the matter.

• (1035)

[*Translation*]

In terms of the search for energy resources, environmental protection and worker safety, Canada's regulatory system for drilling offshore and everywhere else is one of the best in the world.

[*English*]

We are all hoping that efforts to cap the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico will soon be successful. Media around the world are following the story closely and, no doubt, countries around the world will be taking a long, hard look at their offshore activities as a result of this disaster.

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Here in Canada, our regulators have already moved swiftly by launching a review, placing additional requirements to ensure that all equipment, systems and procedures are in place to ensure safe operations, and to protect the environment.

On May 11 the National Energy Board announced a review of Arctic safety and environmental offshore drilling requirements.

On May 20 the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board announced special oversight measures for current drilling by Chevron in the Orphan Basin.

In addition, the Government of Canada has a team in place, monitoring the efforts in the Gulf of Mexico.

I am happy to tell members that current regulatory requirements for offshore drilling are substantial and meet high standards. I am confident that after a thorough review, one that takes the unfortunate incident in the Gulf of Mexico into close consideration, Canada's safeguards will stand the test of scrutiny. If they fall short, make no mistake about it, they will be strengthened.

[*Translation*]

Canadians will be happy to learn that our current environmental laws and standards are very strict and we already have a well-developed safety regime for offshore drilling.

The oil and gas platforms used in the Canadian offshore drilling industry as well as the equipment and training required for their operation must meet regulatory standards that are among the highest in the world.

There is currently no offshore drilling in the north. Allow me to repeat that, because there seems to be a lot of confusion. There are currently no oil wells being drilled in northern waters. There is not a single one, and it is as simple as that.

If applications for drilling were to be accepted in the future, the National Energy Board, an independent agency in charge of evaluating these types of applications, would evaluate each one to ensure that it meets strict federal standards.

As for the east coast, the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board have similar responsibilities and are equally rigorous in applying them.

No drilling will happen unless the board responsible is fully convinced that the drilling plans are safe for workers and the environment.

These same boards require that oil and gas companies have up-to-date environmental protection and response plans in the event of a spill.

It should also be noted that the National Energy Board and the offshore petroleum boards do not take a silo approach to their work. They work together. They work together very closely. They are often in touch with other regulatory organizations around the world to learn from what is happening elsewhere, which is what they are doing now.

[*English*]

It is important for Canadians to understand that when it comes to offshore activities, decisions are made with the greatest care and only after a very thorough examination of all factors.

Currently, there is no offshore drilling or oil production occurring in Canada's north. Also, there is a moratorium on oil and gas exploration and production in northern Hudson Bay. And just recently, the moratorium on Nova Scotia's Georges Bank offshore exploration was extended to the end of 2015.

As can be expected in a matter of such great importance, the NEB review process will be open, transparent and extremely thorough. It will include opportunities for any Canadian citizen, especially aboriginal people, to get involved.

● (1040)

[*Translation*]

In light of the spill in the Gulf of Mexico, we will take a close look at the measures that we may have to take in order to reduce the risk of such an incident happening here.

In the meantime, we have a very sound regulatory system. But like all Canadians, I am appalled by and very concerned about the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. I am shocked to see the scope of the environmental damage and the economic cost of such a spill. And like all Canadians and, I am sure, all members of this House, our Conservative government wants to ensure that such a disaster never happens here in Canada.

[*English*]

The hon. member's motion also requests a review of the regulations as they apply to the oil sands.

A recent article in the *Calgary Herald* pointed out:

In the case of the oilsands, the size of the resource has been defined, the exploration risk is non-existent and the environmental challenges fall into the remediable category.

That is just the first point. The same level of risk does not exist; it is just not there.

Second, let us also remember that the environmental regulations that apply to the oil sands, like those that apply to Canada's offshore, are among the toughest anywhere. However, there are some concerns and they are being addressed.

One of the concerns is the use of water. On that point, less than 1% of the average annual flow of the Athabasca River is used in the oil sands. A water management framework is in place. Within that framework, waterflow from the Athabasca is monitored on a weekly basis and limits are adjusted accordingly every week.

Land use is also a concern. Any application for a new development in the oil sands must include a thorough and detailed plan for reclaiming and remediating any land that may be disturbed by the operation. That is a condition of licence. Tailings are managed and monitored according to the strictest environmental requirements, and it must be noted that environmental performance in the oil sands is improving steadily.

Between 1990 and 2007, GHG emissions per barrel of oil production dropped by close to one-third, one of the best records of achievement by any sector in Canadian industry.

[*Translation*]

Carbon capture and storage will allow us to significantly reduce carbon emissions from the oil sands.

This technology will also allow us to reduce the emissions generated from coal-fired electricity production, thus achieving two goals at once.

The Canada-Alberta carbon capture and storage task force estimated that generalized use of this technology could allow Canada to cut its greenhouse gas emissions considerably, by as much as 600 million tonnes a year, which corresponds to three-quarters of our current annual emissions.

Since we cannot ignore such significant potential, the government continues to invest in research and in demonstration projects to perfect this technology.

Regarding the water issue, I must point out that 90% of the water used in oil sands production is completely recycled, and producers are turning more and more to underground sources that yield brackish or saline water that cannot be used for human consumption or agricultural purposes.

Extensive research is helping us find new and better ways to clean up the land and dispose of tailings and other waste.

Research conducted by scientists in my department is very promising. Scientists have developed a treatment process for the dry tailings whereby those tailings would be shaped into a sort of brick that is both dry and stackable, eliminating the need for tailing ponds entirely and further reducing the risk to the environment.

Although things keep improving from an environmental standpoint, we must also take into account the economic and strategic importance of the resource.

The oil sands are the second largest proven reserves in the world with 170 billion barrels of oil. That is enough to provide every drop of oil the United States will need for the next 23 years.

With advances in technology, it is possible that this yield could almost double and reach more than 300 billion barrels. The contribution of the oil sands to North America's energy security is immense and growing almost every day.

As the International Energy Agency and other experts have said, oil will be the main source of fuel in the world for many decades to come. That is a matter of fact whether we like it or not. We do not have to like it. We can be upset about it, but we can continue to develop alternative sources. That is what we are doing.

However, when we govern, we must also act responsibly, and we must accept the facts and the reality. I repeat that oil will continue to be the main source of fuel for many decades to come. It is time to develop this resource in a cleaner, greener way and that is what the government is doing.

In fact, the IEA has forecast that global demand for oil will increase by almost 35% over the next 20 years. We should realize

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how lucky we are to have such a formidable resource to fuel our economy and that of our neighbour.

Let us be clear about this: the energy security of the United States and the health and well-being of the American economy are very important considerations for Canada.

The oil sands provided direct and indirect jobs for 250,000 Canadians in 2008 alone. Our entire country benefits. According to a major study conducted by the Canadian Energy Research Institute, 44% of jobs generated by investments in the Alberta oil sands are located outside that province.

In the next 25 years, the oil sands alone could contribute \$1.7 trillion—that is \$1,700 billion—to Canada's GDP. That translates into 326,000 good jobs, and I repeat, good jobs, for all Canadians.

●(1045)

[*English*]

These are very impressive numbers and very important to our future prosperity and quality of life in Canada, and to the energy and economic security of our most important trading partner and number one customer, the United States.

Of equal importance is the fact that these tremendous resources, not just oil sands, but our offshore oil and gas and any other new energy resource from shale gas to methane, will be developed according to what is the most thorough and demanding safety and environmental regulatory regime in the world. No development will proceed until it is proven that it can be done in safety with full respect for our environment.

The policies and regulations that govern energy and other resource development in Canada are under almost constant scrutiny to ensure that they continue to be effective in all respects; that is, protecting safety, protecting our environment and protecting our economy. This is done not only by the Government of Canada, but by the provinces and territories as well.

Indeed, as Minister of Natural Resources, I am already working with my provincial and territorial colleagues to undertake a fundamental review of Canada's regulatory regime to ensure it is as effective as it can be.

[*Translation*]

Therefore, I would like to thank the member for Edmonton—Strathcona for her motion, which draws our attention to some very important issues today.

This motion provides us with a golden opportunity to reassure Canadians about the protection provided by Canadian regulatory standards. As I said, these standards are modern, robust and constantly being improved.

Business of Supply

[English]

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to zone in directly on an element of this question of review which is inherent in the motion. It speaks to a commitment the Prime Minister made on behalf of this country at the G20 in Pittsburgh. It deals with the whole question of fossil fuel subsidies.

The Prime Minister repeated three times this week in the House of Commons that Canada has no fossil fuel subsidies to eliminate, citing the accelerated capital cost allowance measure from the 2007 budget, which only kicks in in 2011. The commitment was specific, that we would be looking at, for example, accelerated deductions for exploration and development expenses and flow-through shares.

At the G20 meeting in Toronto, Canada is supposed to present an implementation strategy and a timeframe for the elimination of those subsidies. The Minister of Natural Resources is specifically responsible for those subsidies. Perhaps the minister could help Canadians understand, because there is significant confusion. Will Canada have an implementation strategy for the removal of fossil fuel subsidies in their entirety at the G20 meeting in Toronto?

• (1050)

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Accelerated capital cost allowance is an incentive brought in by the previous Liberal government. Nevertheless, it is important to note that our Prime Minister has made it very clear both here in the House and around the world that subsidies must be eliminated. Canada is a leader in that respect.

We will continue to provide leadership. Commitments were made in Pittsburgh, and we will stay on track for the G8 and G20 summits. Canada's record in this area speaks volumes: we have one of the lowest levels of subsidies in the world. We have a green economy, and it is important to continue in that direction. I am very happy with our Prime Minister's leadership on this issue. We are already leaders when it comes to eliminating subsidies, but we will continue to work on this issue and show leadership.

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the minister's words. He says that he can reassure people about current and future drilling in Canada, but that is just not true. Down south, President Obama says that his government has imposed a moratorium and is waiting for the results of an inquiry, but here, the minister is still authorizing oil drilling just 400 km from St. John's, Newfoundland.

Government officials say that if a drilling accident happens, they would have to bring in a drilling platform from the Gulf of Mexico to drill a relief well. It could take 11 days for the drilling platform to get here and four or five months to drill a relief well.

How can the minister provide any reassurance about current drilling projects when people from the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board are saying that it could take months to drill a relief well? Is that what the government calls reassuring?

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board is overseeing drilling east of Newfoundland and Labrador. On May 20, this board announced that it was tightening up its oversight measures. That is what is happening now.

As I was saying, we are not working in silos. At the federal level, the National Energy Board is reviewing all of the regulations. We are happy that the Americans have suspended drilling in the north. In the end, they are exactly where we are now. There are currently no drilling permits in Canada, in the Beaufort Sea, in the Arctic waters. No drilling will be permitted before 2014. That gives us ample time to examine this issue and to fine-tune our regulations. The United States has also suspended its activities to take a closer look. Otherwise, there would have been drilling in six months.

This shows that we have a robust system. Our National Energy Board is an independent entity that has been in operation for years. We need to be careful. I think it is very dangerous that the opposition is trying to politicize this situation and to discredit responsible scientific agencies that are independent of the government, and whose job it is to enforce the strictest standards that best protect the environment.

[English]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, again I sat here listening to the rhetoric. What is important to the government is the continued subsidy of the oil and gas sector and ensuring the continuance of the contracts to supply our resources to the United States.

Time after time in the House, I have heard the government say that it wants to mirror U.S. law and policy on energy and the environment, but let us consider the disaster in the gulf and the potential for far greater disaster in our Arctic. As the disaster in the gulf was occurring, our National Energy Board was about to hear an application to relax the requirement for a relief well. In this case, it would take three years to do a relief well and not two or three months, as was the case in the gulf.

Will the minister commit to open up his review? Will he ensure public participation and ensure costs to the public so that others can bring in their own independent experts and legal counsel if necessary regarding a review of improving the regulatory regime and governance in this critical area?

• (1055)

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear: what is happening in the Gulf of Mexico is a catastrophe, and we are all appalled by it. Now, there are a lot of ifs. And it would not be right to say that this will definitely happen here in Canada. We have rules in place.

First, no project will be allowed unless the government and the National Energy Board, Canada's regulator, are certain that workers' health and the environment are protected. That is the first thing. It is the basic premise.

Statements by Members

As my colleague knows, the National Energy Board announced on May 12 that it was reviewing all offshore drilling requirements and that it would hold hearings open to the public. The review will be open and transparent.

They are going to look at all the incidents that have taken place in the Gulf of Mexico to get a better understanding of what happened and improve our regulations. It will be an open and transparent process. In the meantime, no licences have been granted for the north or the Beaufort Sea. Nothing is happening at this point in time. To all intents and purposes, nothing will be happening there until 2014. There are not even any boats there to drill. There is absolutely no drilling activity.

That gives us at least five years to get a better understanding of what has happened and learn from it. That is why I said it is reassuring to see that the Obama administration in the United States has decided to move toward an independent agency, like the one we have had for years, and to suspend operations while it finds out more about what is happening and looks at what can be done in future to protect the environment better.

[*English*]

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, due to some of the statements by the opposition, many Canadians have been led to believe that there is a full-blown drilling process going on offshore in the far north. That is simply not the truth. In view of the misleading statements made by the opposition in the past few weeks, I think it would be appropriate for the minister to stand and specifically deal with that question and assure Canadians that there is absolutely no drilling going on offshore in the far north.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

No licence or authorization has been granted for drilling in arctic waters or the Beaufort Sea. That is the current situation. If ever projects were to be undertaken, nothing would happen for at least the next five years. That gives us the time to conduct, in partnership with the National Energy Board, an extensive study as well as consultations in order to advance our understanding and improve the situation. Our aim is to protect the environment. That is what everyone here wants and that is what we are focused on.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

PARLIAMENTARY FITNESS INITIATIVE

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians must harness the momentum we achieved in our spectacular year of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Representing the riding where many of the games took place, I am honoured to work with MPs and senators from all parties to promote the 2010 parliamentary fitness initiative which encourages fitness and health for all Canadians.

On a personal basis, I will be raising money for our athletes by running the five kilometre race with my family this Saturday on national race weekend in Ottawa. Team Weston, which includes my wife, Donna, and my three children, Shane, Jake, and Mei Mei, who are here on the Hill today, will all participate in this event.

Canadian Athletes Now is one registered charity that facilitate the fundraising. This charity has, since 1997, raised over \$11 million to support hundreds of Canadian athletes achieve the dream to compete on the international stage. Together, Team Weston, people of the riding I represent and all Canadians support our heroic Olympic and Paralympic athletes as wonderful role models.

* * *

● (1100)

UKRAINE

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's 1.2 million strong Ukrainian Canadian diaspora community is in angst due to recent attempts to muzzle Ukraine's media, and trumped up criminal charges against opposition leaders.

Incredibly, secret service agents have even attempted to intimidate university rectors. On May 18, Father Borys Gudziak, the rector of the renowned Ukrainian Catholic University, received a call on his cell phone from a secret security agent. Twenty minutes later the agent was in the rector's office. What followed was an hour of attempts to co-opt and intimidate the rector into spying on student activists and to rat out the names of student protest organizers.

Not since the days of the Soviet Union has the Ukrainian Catholic Church, its institutions, priests and students been menaced in this way.

Canada has a special relationship with Ukraine and has stood shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine's people on their journey toward statehood and democracy.

Today we do so again with Ukraine's students, journalists and all those who have dedicated themselves to a free and independent Ukraine.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LA FRANCOPHONIE

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the first time this June, the Université du Québec en Outaouais, the UQO, will offer an innovative program called Université d'été sur la francophonie des Amériques. Working with the Université Laval, the UQO will offer the second part of this summer university course. This event is the fruit of collaboration with the UQO's Senghor chair and the Centre de la francophonie des Amériques.

Statements by Members

The first edition of the summer program will bring together some 15 experts, including Graham Fraser, the Commissioner of Official Languages, Benoît Pelletier, former Quebec MP, Barry Ancelet of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Virgil Benoît of the University of North Dakota, and representatives from Mexico, Maine, New Brunswick, Ontario and Quebec. They will share their knowledge and discuss la Francophonie in the Americas. This will be the first time these researchers will come together in one place to talk about the French fact.

I am sure that this event will be a great success and I salute this excellent initiative.

* * *

[English]

INTERGENERATIONAL MEMOIR PROJECT

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring this House's attention to a unique school project created by Ms. Camille Dupuis and her colleague at Lasalle Secondary School.

Created in 2008, the intergenerational memoir project pairs a senior with two students who help record the senior's life story over a period of several months. At the conclusion, the students present the senior with a scrapbook of the senior's life.

I can attest personally to the fantastic work of these students, because two of them, Alexandra Burgess and Alyssa Sabourin, worked closely with my father, Conrad Gravelle, to produce his scrapbook.

What a brilliant project. Students gain empathy toward their elders while learning about their contributions to their community. Seniors get the company they need and the valuable opportunity to record their story.

I commend Ms. Dupuis and the students who have participated over the past three years, as well as the school and the school board for their support of this project.

I hope that other schools introduce the intergenerational memoir project to their students.

* * *

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the accomplishments of an extraordinary constituent. Betty Thompson recently won a Partners in Excellence Award for her volunteer efforts at the Dryden Regional Health Centre.

This award recognizes individuals who are committed to the hospital's values and perform outstanding actions that enhance the patients' experience. Betty started volunteering in 2004. She first spent four hours a week as a front desk greeter and happily took on increasing responsibilities to the point that she now contributes more than 60 hours per month.

Last year Betty completed the Ontario superhost certification by participating in a workshop that aims to build the skills and techniques needed to achieve service excellence.

Volunteers make the difference for many organizations. I know patients appreciate her commitment and dedication.

According to her nominator, Betty treats everyone with a smile, a helpful hand and an extra special touch. Betty is yet another constituent who puts the great in the great Kenora riding.

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PENSIONS

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was on this day in 1927 that Liberal Prime Minister Sir William Lyon Mackenzie King approved the old age pension plan. In that historic step, Liberals enacted Canada's first major public welfare legislation, extending income benefits to needy seniors.

Sadly, the Conservatives opposed the move even then. Then in 1963, when Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson began working on the Canada pension plan, the Conservatives again stood firmly in opposition to the idea of retirement income security for working Canadians.

The Conservative Party clearly has a long history of opposing improvements to Canada's pension structures. The Conservatives opposed the Liberal old age pension. They opposed the Liberal idea of the Canada pension plan and today they continue to stand in the way of real pension security.

When will the Prime Minister set aside his party's shameful history on pensions and admit that the Conservatives' approach of more talk and less action is a barrier to real pension reform?

* * *

●(1105)

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every so often members from all parties come together with little fanfare and do the right thing for the people they serve. This week's human resources committee is one such example.

The committee is studying the fairness for military families act, inspired by Major Duquette, who brought the idea to my attention some months ago. He was trying to correct an injustice in the EI system, which denies military families benefits for which they paid and gives criminals better treatment than soldiers.

Major Duquette testified before the committee by teleconference, and his wife testified here in Ottawa in person. It was great to see them connect for the first time in months. Their faces lit up when that screen came on.

After the testimony was done, the committee unanimously passed the bill, which shows that when we come together to serve soldiers, their families and all constituents, we can do the right thing and get things done.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International is concerned. It describes the deterioration in the federal government's support for basic rights and democracy as flagrant.

In addition, in a report released yesterday, Amnesty condemns the government's lack of protection of human rights in Canada, including aboriginal rights, when issuing licences for mining, logging and petroleum and other resource extraction. Amnesty also considers that Canada's failure to ratify the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is indefensible and criticizes the government's inaction on violence against aboriginal women.

But Amnesty's criticisms do not stop there: recalling the testimony of Richard Colvin, the organization expresses concern about the fate of Afghan detainees. It also points out that child soldier Omar Khadr is the only westerner still being held in Guantanamo.

If it wants to stop being an international laughingstock, the federal government must regain its credibility on the issue of human rights.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Hon. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader's announcement that his MPs will be whipped on the long gun registry vote did not just affect the eight MPs who previously voted to abolish the costly gun registry. In my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, it also drove away a prospective Liberal candidate, Brent Bush. He said the Liberal leader has:

reversed his position and stated that third reading of the Bill will now be a whipped (or forced) Party vote.

He continued:

Forcing a sitting MP or prospective candidate to vote the Party position on an issue, knowing in advance that it runs contrary to the interests of the constituents in the Riding clearly runs contrary to the principles of representative democracy.

The Liberals' definition of getting tough on crime is to punish farmers and duck hunters. These eight Liberal MPs need to do the right thing and vote to scrap the long gun registry, or vote to keep it—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Hull—Aylmer.

* * *

[Translation]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Quebec's public safety minister came to Ottawa to ask the Conservatives and the New Democrats to save the registry.

In seven years, the registry has saved 2,100 lives. Do the NDP and the Conservatives think \$4 million is too steep a price to save 300 lives every year? We are talking about \$400 million compared to \$1 billion they are going to spend on three days of security at the G8 and the G20.

This billion dollar Conservative waste of money would fund the registry until 2260.

A billion dollars is being spent because of the Prime Minister's incompetence, but they cannot save 300 Canadian lives a year for the next 250 years. That would be 75,000 lives saved in all.

[English]

Yes, the \$1 billion spent on three days' security at the summits would pay for the registry for the next 250 years. That \$1 billion would save 75,000 Canadian lives.

● (1110)

[Translation]

Quebec's public safety minister said it: the Conservatives' message on law and order is completely inconsistent with their policies.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a University of Calgary study has confirmed what we have known all along: the Liberal plan to raise taxes will kill jobs. The study points out that the Liberal plan is ill advised and will undermine Canada's fiscal competitiveness compared to other OECD countries.

Our government knows that lower taxes create jobs and stimulate economic growth. That is why tax breaks are a key component of Canada's economic action plan, which has resulted in the net job creation of 285,000 new jobs since July 2009.

With our economic recovery still fragile, the Liberals want to raise taxes and kill thousands and thousands of jobs.

The fact that the Liberal leader wants to increase corporate taxes, hike the GST and create a carbon tax is just further proof that he does not care about Canadians. He is thinking only about himself.

* * *

[English]

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I joined with steelworkers from Port Colborne and many others in a rally on Parliament Hill, calling on the government to end foreign takeovers that destroy Canadian jobs in the name of foreign profits.

The painful consequences of such deals are all too real for my constituents. Vale Inco workers have been off the job for 11 months. They and their families have suffered serious hardships as they fight for a fair deal they need and the respect they deserve.

Statements by Members

Yesterday, Vale Inco finally agreed to resume negotiations in June, using a provincial mediator. While this is good news, Vale Inco is still trying to leave some workers out in the cold. Employees discharged while on strike have been told they will never work for the company again. This shameful behaviour is possible because the current government failed to protect workers and our economy when it allowed this foreign takeover. And the Conservatives still refuse to step in and push Vale Inco to negotiate in good faith. Canadians deserve better.

I call on Vale Inco to negotiate a fair deal for all workers, including discharged employees, and I call on the Conservatives to finally stand up for Canadian workers and their families.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, good news bears repeating. I am pleased to inform this House that on Wednesday, Bill C-13, the fairness for military families act, passed through committee with unanimous support.

This bill would ensure that Canadian Forces members who so proudly serve our country would no longer be prevented from spending quality time with their new children when they return from duty.

Major Duquette, who originally brought this issue to the attention of the member for Nepean—Carleton, appeared via teleconference from Kabul, Afghanistan, and his wife, Anne, appeared in person. Major Duquette stated that having this bill pass would be the greatest accomplishment of his proud military career, because it would have a lasting impact on the lives of military families.

I urge all parties to help ensure the swift passage of this bill so that military families can get access to these benefits they so richly deserve.

* * *

[Translation]

MATERNAL HEALTH

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Status of Women and the Minister of International Cooperation have repeated all week that it is important to save the lives of women and children who are dying because of a lack of health care in developing countries. Yes, of course it is.

However, on this International Day of Action for Women's Health, are these ministers aware that by failing to fund access to abortion for women in developing countries, they are allowing more than 70,000 women to die every year for lack of access to this service? Does this government not have any compassion for these women who are dying because of an excess of dogmatism.

The Conservatives claim that they do not wish to reopen the abortion debate. However, backbenchers are at complete liberty to introduce bills limiting access to abortion, with the obvious approval of a Prime Minister who is obsessed with controlling everything.

The Conservatives must listen to what Quebeckers and Canadians are telling them and fund access to abortion in developing countries, while maintaining this service—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa South.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the public safety committee on Wednesday, the member for Saint Boniface launched a disgraceful, baseless attack against Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair.

She said: “There were officers who did suffer consequence at the hands of chiefs, like Mr. Blair, who did transfer them out when they spoke out against [the gun registry]. That is why they are silenced today and are afraid to come forward”.

It is a shameful smear of Chief Blair, who has worked for 33 years in nearly every policing function in some of this country's toughest neighbourhoods.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police says the gun registry keeps our communities safe. The Canadian Police Association says the same, joined by the RCMP, pediatricians, physicians, victims and labour and women's groups. Ontario's attorney general says that support for the gun registry is unprecedented.

The government should be standing with police instead of smearing them. They should stand with victims, stand with doctors and save lives by saving the gun registry.

The member should apologize for her appalling and unjustifiable attack. It is conduct unbecoming of a member of Parliament.

* * *

● (1115)

TAXATION

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday experts confirmed what we have known all along. The Liberal leader's plan to raise taxes will kill jobs. In fact, a University of Calgary study says that the Liberal tax hikes would lead directly to 233,000 lost jobs. It calls the Liberal leader's plan “seriously misguided” and one that would put Canada at a “disadvantage among OECD countries”.

Earlier this year another independent study said that the Liberal leader's GST hike would cost Canada 162,000 jobs.

Our government knows that lower taxes create jobs and fuel economic growth. That is why lower taxes have been part of Canada's economic action plan, a plan that has created some 285,000 net new jobs since last July. At a time when our economic recovery is fragile, the Liberal leader's tax hikes would kill almost 400,000 jobs.

Calling for tax hikes that would result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs shows yet again that the Liberal leader is not in it for Canadians. He is just in it for himself.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government invoked 9/11 to try to justify spending 300% more than any summit ever held in history.

Since 9/11 there have been 11 summits, including one in London, England which just last year was able to hold its summit for 5,000% less. It did it for \$1 billion cheaper. Using the word “security” is not a get out of jail free card. One cannot use it to avoid accountability.

How did the government allow this summit to become far and away the most expensive meeting ever held anywhere in history?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since the tragic events of 9/11, increased security has unfortunately become a fact of life. Security costs money. We are hosting two international events back to back, which is unprecedented.

All the costs have been budgeted for and are on target. As we have seen with the Ottawa fire bombing and the damages in Toronto last night, events like the G8 and G20 meetings attract thugs and other fringe elements that are desperate for attention. Canada, as host to the G8 and G20 meetings, has to be prepared to respond to any possible situation or threat to our guests, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only thing unprecedented is the cost. I said that there were 11 summits, all of them incredibly cheaper. In fact, London was 5,000% cheaper, just last year.

Clearly, the government does not get it. We are in a recession. Thousands of Canadians do not have jobs. The Conservatives have run up the biggest deficit in Canadian history. We cannot afford a \$1 billion binge for 72 hours of meetings.

Now the public safety minister says that the costs are “very expensive” and asks whether “these types of meetings necessary”.

Why on earth did he not ask any questions before he signed off on \$1 billion?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians were shocked last week by the fire bombing of a Royal Bank in Ottawa and by the damages last night in Toronto, prime examples of why we need to be prepared to face thugs who would threaten our safety.

We are on track to host safe and secure G8 and G20 summits. Our security plan has been developed and costed by Canada's best experts in the field. It is budgeted money. We are honoured to host the world's most influential leaders at the summits this June.

Unlike the Liberal leader, who has said that he is ashamed of Canada, we are proud and ready to showcase Canada on the world stage.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue is not security; it is incompetence and mismanagement.

Oral Questions

The government says that it cannot afford improved EI benefits for breast cancer survivors. It tells police and firefighters that there is no money for the families of those who have died in the line of duty. It tells those who have lost their jobs in this recession that it does not have the budget to help, but it has \$1 billion to spend on the most expensive 72 hours of meetings ever held.

Will the government just admit that its mismanagement, its poor planning, and its attempt to stick these meetings in a cabinet minister's riding have stolen \$1 billion away from priorities that Canadians care about?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just because the member says it does not mean it is true.

Canada is honoured to host the world's most influential leaders at the G8 and G20 summits this June. The G8 and G20 summits are major events, and hosting these summits requires complex security planning to ensure that we are prepared. The priority with all events of this importance must always be the safety and security of Canadians, participants, and our visitors.

We were successful in hosting a safe and secure Olympic Games that Canadians can be proud of, and we will ensure that the summits' security is as effective and well managed.

* * *

● (1120)

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Citizenship and Immigration Canada has denied visas to 60 representatives from African organizations for the blind, because it suspects that they will try to remain in Canada after their conference in Laval.

These visually impaired delegates from the Union Francophone des Aveugles are coming to Canada in the spirit of international co-operation, but the Conservative government is treating them like criminals.

First it was African rape victims. What does this government have against the least fortunate in Africa?

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the question, although this is not an issue of criminality. The member needs to be extremely clear in how she uses that type of language.

Oral Questions

I cannot comment on the specifics of any visa refusal without the consent of an applicant. That said, visa decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by independent, highly trained public servants, not politicians, who are applying the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Among the factors they consider is the likelihood that an applicant will violate the conditions of a temporary visa by, for example, not choosing to ever leave Canada.

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is treating the blind of Africa like criminals. I assume that it is because they are from Africa and not because they are blind, since representatives from other countries got their visas. Surely there is a way these people can come into Canada for this conference.

Will the government please take care of this now and let the conference take place with its delegates from Africa?

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not mind questions of clarification. That is what the opposition's responsibility is. I have responded to the question. Now the hon. member is making allegations that are completely unfounded and have nothing to do with the issue. The government will not stand to be treated in a way that is unfair and that has nothing to do with government policy.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SECURITIES

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the cat is out of the bag. The Minister of Finance is counting on pressure from publicly traded companies to convince Quebec to join the Canada-wide securities commission. Voluntary approach, my foot. It is all a sham.

Why does the federal government not admit that its real plan is to strip Quebec of its financial autonomy for Toronto's benefit?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a voluntary approach. We have asked the Supreme Court for an opinion to ensure that we are acting within our jurisdiction. Some other provinces want to get together to have a single commission under federal leadership. So we are asking the Supreme Court of Canada for an opinion, and if it agrees, we will go ahead. If Quebec does not want to take part, it does not have to. It is as simple as that.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the federal proposal would eliminate the passport system. By cutting this system, the Conservative government is tying the hands of Quebec companies listed on the AMF and forcing them to make the jump to the Canada-wide commission, which would sideline the AMF and local authorities. It is not hard to understand.

How can the federal government claim that Quebec can keep its commission when the government is doing everything it can to strip Quebec of its financial autonomy?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, it is a voluntary approach. We are asking the Supreme Court for an opinion so that we can act within our jurisdiction. The proposed single commission would be decentra-

lized, with offices in the major regions. That said, if Quebec does not want to be part of the single commission, the federal government will not force it to join. That is open federalism.

Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ): The Lortie report is clear. Balkanizing the system and having voluntary membership, as proposed, is the worst scenario. That is what it says. By eliminating the passport system, which is recognized and works, the federal government will complicate things in the short term and will take away Quebec's control over its financial sector and hand it over to Toronto in the medium term.

Why do you, in the federal government, wish to take away Quebec's financial autonomy? Why do you want to do that?

● (1125)

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is the only G20 country without a national regulator. I see that my colleague quotes OECD studies extensively when it comes to taxing banks. However, when it comes to quoting the OECD on a good approach, when it comes to quoting the IMF about the fact that it would be a good approach to have a single regulator, he ignores the studies.

What is important is that we are using a voluntary approach. If Quebec does not wish to join, then it need not. Furthermore, we are referring the bill to the Supreme Court of Canada to ensure that we are acting within our jurisdiction. That is being responsible.

Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the National Assembly denounces your power grab.

Molson, Canam, Cascades, Couche-Tard, Jean Coutu, Power, Quebecor, Transat, Transcontinental, Industrielle Alliance, La Capitale, the SSQ, the Conseil du patronat du Québec, Fondation, the Fonds de solidarité—to name but a few—are opposed to your bill.

Rather than being of service to Quebec, why are you token Quebecers being so servile? Why are you doing this?

The Deputy Speaker: It is important to remember that members should use the third person and not the second person when asking their questions.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the OECD is clear. In times of crisis, having a single regulator makes things easier.

A Columbia University study shows a loss of about \$10 billion and 65,000 jobs.

Rather than hurling insults, let us rise above politics. Let him talk to the people who lost money, to real people like Joey Davis, who clearly said yesterday—because he lived it, he was defrauded by financiers—that having a single regulator would be the best approach for eliminating white-collar crime. Let him talk to ordinary people.

Oral Questions

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have yet to come up with a sensible defence for their G20 billion dollar boondoggle. The original plan, tabled in the main estimates, established the cost of security at \$179 million. It will now cost taxpayers over \$1 billion. That is about \$75 million in security for every actual hour of meeting.

How can the government justify this boondoggle compared to the \$18 million it cost in Pittsburgh and the \$30 million it cost in London? What is with the Tories' math? What is going on? Why do they not come clean? What is the real cost of this?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, surely a member from Ottawa would understand that the firebombing of the Royal Bank in Ottawa last week is part of this as are the damages in Toronto last night. These are prime examples of why we need to be prepared to face thugs who would threaten our safety.

We are on track to host safe and secure G8 and G20 summits. Our security plan has been developed and costed by Canada's best experts in the field. It is budgeted money. We are honoured to host the world's most influential leaders at the summits this June. Unlike the Liberal leader, who has said that he is ashamed of Canada, we are proud and ready to showcase Canada on the world stage.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we need more than talking points. We need answers. Five months ago, the Prime Minister promised that Canada would champion maternal and child health in the developing world, yet with less than a month to go until the G8 meetings, there is no government plan for any funds announced to back it up.

The government is spending \$1 billion on sound cannons and tear gas. Why can we not see that kind of money go to children and women for maternal health? Where is the money for that? Why can it spend \$1 billion on sound cannons and tear gas, but not commit at least \$1 billion—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is honoured to host the world's most influential leaders at the G8 and G20 summits this June. The G8 and G20 summits are major events, and hosting these summits requires complex security planning to ensure that we are prepared.

The priority for all events of this importance must always be the safety and security of Canadians, participants, and our visitors. We were successful in hosting a safe and secure Olympic Games that Canadians can be proud of. We will ensure that the summit security is as effective and well managed.

My friend from the NDP would vote against anything.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if the government had managed this correctly, 160,000 additional people could have received employment insurance, 190,000 students could have gotten money to pay their tuition and 1,270 hybrid buses could have been purchased. We could have also paid one-third of the

global annual costs of the millennium development goals and saved the lives of 10 million women and children by 2015.

Are these people not supposed to be the priority at the summit?

● (1130)

[English]

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the G8 summit provides a unique opportunity for Canada to show leadership on the world stage. The G8 will focus on broader issues of development, democracy, and peace and security. We are honoured to have the world's most influential leaders at the summits this June.

The scope and magnitude of the security operations associated with hosting two major summits back to back is unprecedented. It represents the largest deployment of security personnel for a major event in Canada. We are on track to host secure G8 and G20 summits. The integrated security unit and its partners have a comprehensive approach to security planning. The security plan has —

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Malpeque.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the incompetence of the Conservative government knows no bounds. First, the Conservatives created a billion dollar boondoggle trying to shoehorn the G20 into Huntsville as a political plum for the industry minister. Now there is an infomercial by the same minister shrilling for his friend to sell supplies to the Chinese army.

The Prime Minister knew about this boneheaded stunt two years ago. Why have they kept it a secret for two years and allowed the minister to consistently violate the rules?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member invented a verb: shrilling. I think he meant the adjective “shrill” to describe his own question.

I notice that he did not mention in his question the issue of jobs and the economy. The industry minister is working hard to advance both of those causes.

Oral Questions

Yesterday, experts confirmed what we have known all along. The Liberal leader's plan to raise taxes will kill jobs. The University of Calgary says that Liberal tax hikes would cost 233,000 lost jobs. Earlier studies have shown that a Liberal GST hike would cost 162,000 jobs. That is the real issue.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, spin and diversion will not change the facts. What is worse is that the minister still does not understand that he violated the rules. He said that he was ready to act as a TV huckster again.

It is unbelievable to have a Conservative cabinet minister as an ad man for Conservative friends with privileged access. That is wrong and it is a blatant violation of Treasury Board policy, section 23.

If the Prime Minister will not act, will the Treasury Board minister act against this violation?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that member's question was like ShamWow without the wow.

The member should stand and wow all of us with an explanation as to why it is that he is voting to keep the billion dollar wasteful long gun registry which he promised in election after election to eliminate.

The Minister of Industry has followed all of the rules. He is working to create jobs across the land. His work on the economic action plan is succeeding. It is helping Canadians get ahead. He is bringing hope to all of us.

I ask all members to congratulate this great minister for his excellent work.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every time we dare ask questions in the House about the government's plan to clean up potential oil slicks, we get meaningless answers. We have yet to hear about any such plan, not a single page or detail.

Can the minister clearly outline what the government would do if an oil slick were to spread along our coastline? Can the government provide even a single document that would reassure Canadians and prove that the government is ready to deal with a potential catastrophe?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have answered this question over and over again. They are always talking about potential slicks or potential risks. Is the member just looking to politicize this even more?

It is the National Energy Board that examines these projects. Companies must submit contingency as well as strategic plans. The National Energy Board is responsible for enforcing the toughest environmental regulations in the world, and it must be convinced that there will be no harm to workers' health or the environment. Otherwise, there will be no go-ahead.

● (1135)

[English]

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again no real details, just more posturing with zero credibility.

President Obama has called for a full review of the government's plan to ensure that oil drilling is safer. Meanwhile, the Conservatives do nothing but talk.

With three separate coasts vulnerable to possible oil spills, why is the government persisting in its refusal to re-examine the issue? Why this denial of the obvious, such as the need for a real contingency plan?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the National Energy Board announced on May 12 that it would begin a review of all rules and regulations. No drilling authorization has been granted so far. No drilling has taken place at present in the Arctic in the Beaufort Sea. We are pleased that American authorities have decided to suspend all drilling that was planned for the spring because they have reached the same conclusions as we have here in Canada.

President Obama wants to examine what happened in the Gulf of Mexico to better understand and improve the regulations to ensure future safety of workers and to protect the environment. The president has reached the same conclusions that we have here in Canada.

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[Translation]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, despite studies showing that the firearms registry saves lives, the government is determined to eliminate it. Quebec's public safety minister appeared before the committee to argue that this valuable tool should be maintained. He was accompanied by a large delegation of family members of the victims of the Dawson College and École Polytechnique tragedies, as well as municipal police officers, police chiefs, representatives of the Fraternité des policiers et policières de Montréal and the Chief Firearms Officer of Quebec.

Why does this government, which claims to care about victims of crime, want to eliminate such an effective tool that is universally supported in Quebec?

[English]

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the Liberal Party has once again turned his back on rural Canadians by stating his continued support for the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry, he will force all Liberal MPs to maintain the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry, including those Liberal MPs who have continually promised their constituents that they would vote to end the registry.

The Liberal leader's definition of tough on crime is to crack down on farmers and duck hunters. We all know that criminals do not register guns and we are committed to taking meaningful action that cracks down on crime.

[Translation]

Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think he confused me with the Liberals. Let me start over.

The government's ideological and stubborn desire to eliminate the firearms registry is exasperating. The Conservatives stubbornly refuse to listen to public safety experts and police officers, who are saying that the registry saves lives.

How can the Conservative members from Quebec remain silent, thereby condoning the government as it scorns the consensus of the Quebec nation, unanimously expressed by the National Assembly?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the registration of goods and property is a provincial jurisdiction. It is as simple as that. We do not want to make criminals out of hunters when they fail to register their long guns. These people do not commit crimes. Once again, our constituents, including those in the riding of the hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, are probably not very happy about that. If Quebec wants a registry, it can have one. At the federal level, we are decriminalizing long guns. So the federal government no longer has jurisdiction.

* * *

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Immigration Canada is refusing to grant visas to 60 representatives of organizations for the blind from African countries who were supposed to attend the Union francophone des aveugles conference in Laval. Immigration Canada is concerned that the delegates will refuse to return to their country. These people are leaders in their countries. They have ties to their countries. Some of them are even being sponsored by their government.

Does this not prove once again that the Conservative government's policy on granting visas is still far too often based on unacceptable prejudice?

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have answered this question from the Liberal Party previously. The one thing that is consistent between the Bloc and the Liberals is that they want to use words like prejudice and bigotry as if they work and are effective. This has nothing to do with that issue whatsoever.

These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by independent, highly trained public servants without politicians being involved in it, and they apply it using the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

• (1140)

[Translation]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister had the authority to do something about this and he did not, yet again.

This government's lack of flexibility has major repercussions on Quebec's convention industry. In this case, the Union francophone des aveugles, which is meeting in Laval for a conference on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, will not have

Oral Questions

enough attendees to hold its annual meeting, which is rather discouraging to many other groups.

When will the Conservative government stop undermining Quebec's efforts to develop the convention industry?

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the last thing this government has ever done is to try to stop Quebec businesses and the industry itself from moving forward. If we look at the economic action plan, that is exactly what it does for Quebec and the rest of this country.

In terms of the decision, if we have parties on the other side of the House that want to bash and trash our public servants, we will not have that on this side of the House. They help us in terms of directing policy. They help this country move forward. We will continue to work with them and support them, even if the opposition will not.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, President Calderón called on the Prime Minister to do more on climate change. The president said that we cannot wait, that quality of life and the future is at risk.

Time is of the essence and there is no better opportunity for Canada to show leadership than at the G8 and G20 next month.

Why will the government not make climate change a focus at the conference?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, President Calderón said that in Mexico's view Canada has been one of the planet's leaders in environmental protection. He also said:

...Asia and the European Union have succeeded in combining their potential... regions that can maximize their comparative advantages will be assured of success.... Therein lies the importance of Canada and Mexico working together.

We agree. Canada is committed to the harmonized continental approach, working together with our North American partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We will continue to demonstrate that good leadership.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, not only did the government mismanage the security costs for the conference next month, but the agenda will not speak to the most pressing concerns of our global partners.

The Conservatives are on the wrong side of bank reform. They are ignoring climate change. Their approach to maternal health will cost lives.

When will the Conservatives realize that the world is passing them by?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only party in this House that has been an absolute failure on the environment is the Liberal Party, with the support of the NDP and the Bloc.

Oral Questions

This government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We have made great progress. In the budget there is \$8 million for cleaning up the Great Lakes, \$18 million for the government's annual reporting on environmental indicators and \$9.2 million for Arctic meteorological research and navigation.

Why are all those members voting against these good environmental programs?

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Francis Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's agri-retail sector has pleaded for help to secure its sites where massive amounts of explosive fertilizers and drug-producing chemicals sit without proper security from the nefarious plans of terrorists and drug dealers.

President Obama has instituted security tax breaks for the industry to secure American sites, while in Canada, Conservative ministers refuse to even meet with agri-retailers to keep Canadians safe.

How can the Conservatives spend \$1 billion for 72 hours of security for the G8 and the G20 and yet spend years with their heads in the sand, ignoring Canada's own security threats?

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite makes the point for us. We are committed to security and we are proving that with the G8 and the G20 summits.

We continue to work with agri-retailers. There seems to be some miscommunication coming out of the Liberal years when they were left hanging high and dry. We will work with them and ensure that Canadians are well served on all fronts.

Mr. Francis Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, most recently a terrorist attempted to explode a car bomb packed with fertilizer in Times Square. If that car bomb had been filled with the Canadian fertilizer that the government leaves completely unprotected, the bomb would have killed hundreds of innocent people, terrorized the nation and cost billions in economic losses.

The government's own members from Edmonton—St. Albert, Yorkton—Melville and Saint Boniface have joined with the official opposition and the industry asking for action to keep Canadians safe.

With all that is at stake, what excuse does the government offer for its continued neglect of our public safety?

• (1145)

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am left in a bit of a quandary here. If that member was so concerned about this issue, why did he not raise it on all the cross-Canada tours that his committee just did? Why did he not bring it up at that point? A report will be coming out—

Mr. Francis Valeriote: I've raised it three times in the House.

Hon. Gerry Ritz: The member is screaming about raising it in the House. That is not real Canadian. I am not sure why he did not bring it forward at those committee meetings when we actually had agri-retailers before us.

We continue to work with the sector. He continues to fearmonger about things that happen in other parts of the world. We will continue to work with the sector in the best interests of everyone.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's economic action plan is at work in communities across Canada with historic infrastructure and lower taxes for Canadian families.

With the OECD and the IMF predicting Canada's economic growth will grow and lead G7 nations, and with 285,000 new jobs created since last July, it is clear that our plan is working. In fact, an OECD official said that Canada's economic performance "shines".

Could the parliamentary secretary tell this House what the experts are saying about the Liberal leader's tax hike plan?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday an important study was released. It confirmed that the Liberal business tax hike would lead directly to 233,000 lost jobs. Earlier this year another study revealed a Liberal GST hike would cost Canada 162,000 jobs. We now have independent evidence that these two Liberal tax hikes alone would kill nearly 400,000 jobs.

Our Conservative government knows that lower taxes create jobs and fuel economic growth, which is why we have cut the GST and over 100 other taxes since forming government.

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HOUSING

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the big city mayors met this week and are calling for a national housing strategy, saying that homelessness needs immediate attention, and yet the Conservatives refuse to take a leadership role.

Two single moms, a cancer survivor and a father of four have been forced to take the government to court for a decent place to live.

The mayors want the minister to sit down with the stakeholders and implement a national strategy to deal with this crisis.

Will the government finally wake up to the growing housing problem in this country and support a national housing strategy?

Oral Questions

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while that member talks about a national housing strategy, we have been out there doing things nationally to ensure that those who are most vulnerable have a roof over their head. In fact, there are over 3,500 projects across the country from province to province. We are taking action while they are talking about the possibility of taking action.

The paradox is that those members voted against all of the measures that we have taken to help those who are homeless.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the same old announcements of the same old dollars will not solve Canada's housing crisis.

The minister knows full well that the Conservative government is ready to cut \$500 million a year in federal support for existing affordable housing units. The FCM and over 50 major organizations across the country have endorsed Bill C-304 for safe and affordable housing.

Will the government support the bill and sit down with all levels of government to implement a national housing strategy?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate the dollars we have been spending for homelessness: \$1.9 billion over five years. That is a significant investment.

For others, like seniors, we have invested \$400 million. That is an amount that has been opposed by NDP members. They voted against the budget. They voted against these provisions.

There is another \$75 million for those who are disabled, \$400 million for first nations reserves, and \$200 million for the north. That party voted against each and every one of those provisions, and it is talking about a national policy.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREST FIRES

Mr. Jean-Yves Laforest (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Attikamek from Wemotaci, Obedjiwan and Manawan are going through some harrowing hours right now because unusually intense forest fires are threatening their communities and have even made it necessary for many of them to be evacuated. We already know that the losses will be heavy.

Can the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development tell us what measures he intends to take to provide help quickly to these thousands of people in distress?

[English]

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the situation. Our officials have been working with the first nation and with the province that is primarily responsible for the evacuations that are necessary and for the work that will be done. We will do everything we can to help in this circumstance.

• (1150)

[Translation]

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, Kruger announced that it was laying off 440 workers in Trois-Rivières. Even though the forestry industry has to deal with interest rates that can reach 25%, the Conservative government refuses to offer loan guarantees.

How can the government claim that its programs are working, when job losses are piling up in the forestry industry?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is supporting and will continue to support the key sectors of our economy. The Minister of State for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec joined Nathalie Normandeau, Deputy Premier of Quebec, Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife and Minister responsible for the Northern Plan, and Serge Simard, Minister for Natural Resources and Wildlife, in announcing \$110 million in support measures for 2010-11 to solidify the recovery and to support the transformation of the sector.

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[English]

SYDNEY HARBOUR

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister.

Last Thursday in Cape Breton, Sydney celebrated Ports Day. The main topic was the dredging of Sydney harbour, which will be key to Cape Breton's future. What was missing that day was the announcement for federal funding for the dredging.

The extended deadline is today. Will the Prime Minister commit his government to funding the dredging of Sydney harbour so the community has an opportunity to grow and prosper?

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is not missing are millions of dollars that have been committed to Cape Breton by the government over the last four years, most of which the member voted against; for example, the infrastructure stimulus fund, \$175 million to support marine Atlantic revitalization; money through the gas tax; and projects through CAF and RInC.

These are incredible projects for Cape Breton, all of which the member voted against. He is shaking his head. I can hear it rattling from here, but it is a fact.

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how come this minister, who is responsible for Nova Scotia, does not come across the Causeway enough? He should get down there. He should be there today announcing this much needed money instead of spending his time in the House.

Oral Questions

I will continue to fight for the people of Cape Breton. He should be responsible for the people of Nova Scotia. He should get down there and make that announcement so Cape Breton can move ahead.

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's canned rage, but he has been missing in action. When he was a member of the government for 13 years, we heard nothing but stunning silence from this member on the Sydney dredge. It was like crickets when it came to the member raising this issue around the Sydney dredge.

In the meantime, we as a government on the Conservative side have invested millions and millions of dollars.

I get to Cape Breton regularly. I love Cape Breton. I even love Rita's Tea Room.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, next week in Alberta a provincial hearing will begin into an oil sands upgrader in Upgrader Alley. The project will destroy fish habitat and cause acid deposition in the national park, yet despite public requests, no federal environmental assessment has been required and no federal officials are attending the hearing.

How does the minister defend his failure to ensure a review before an irrevocable decision is made to ensure timely and meaningful public participation, and to provide a coordinated environmental assessment, all required by law?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member knows this government is committed to first-class environmental assessment regulations. Her party has been voting against improving environmental assessments. The existing system duplicates assessments. It is expensive and frustrates major projects in the country without enhancing environmental outcomes.

Why would she be opposed to improving environmental assessments?

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is why there is a coordinated review, except one of the partners is missing in action.

The government constantly touts its policy of following in the footsteps of the United States on energy and environmental policies and standards. Given this, will the government today commit to upgrade Canadian laws governing oil and gas leases to at least provide the same public rights to scrutinize the process and require environmental assessment as provided in U.S. law, and not in Canadian law? Will it follow the path forged by President Obama to seize that control and responsibility to regulate these risky oil and gas—

• (1155)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member does know that this government is committed to an environmental assessment that is improved. We have a harmonized continental approach with the Obama administration, but she is opposed to that.

Why would she be opposed to what President Calderón said is good Canadian leadership on the environment? Why would she oppose that?

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the public safety committee heard yesterday from a front line policeman who stated that the long gun registry “represents the largest and most contentious single waste of taxpayers' dollars and that it can do nothing to prevent criminals from obtaining firearms”. Our Conservative government continues to stand with rural Canadians and against the unfair targeting of law-abiding gun owners.

Would the parliamentary secretary please tell the House why NDP and Liberal MPs should listen to their constituents rather than their party whips before voting on Bill C-391?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do not agree with the Liberal leader's smoke and mirror unconstitutional proposals or that law-abiding gun owners should be criminalized. On this side we stand with rural Canadians, front line police officers like Murray Grismer, and the justice ministers from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Yukon, all of whom remain firmly opposed to the long gun registry.

I urge all NDP and Liberal members who voted for Bill C-391 at second reading to listen to their constituents and not allow their vote to be determined by the Liberal leader.

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[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we speak, the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences is hosting a symposium here in Ottawa on water security in Canada.

The government has not renewed the foundation's funding, with the result that the foundation's research into the impact of climate change on water will come to an abrupt stop at the end of the year.

Why does the government seem unable to realize that the foundation's research is vital to the future of water management in Canada and will help the western provinces in particular to better understand the increasingly serious droughts they will be experiencing?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I always find it interesting when a member of the Liberal Party, that for 13 years did nothing on the environment, is now asking questions on the environment, particularly water and particularly that member, who voted against what we are doing with the good funding in our budget to help clean up the mess that the previous Liberal government created.

Our government has a strong comprehensive plan to ensure clean water for all Canadians. We have a good plan and the Liberals need to get on board.

* * *

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to Marjorie Villefranche of the Maison d'Haïti community centre, some 2,000 family class applications were being processed before the earthquake. Since then, 2,000 to 3,000 new applications have been submitted. According to the department, as of May 15, only 525 visas have been granted since the January 12 earthquake.

Will the minister stop dragging his feet and instruct his department to speed up processing for family class applications?

[English]

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the last thing this government and this minister have done is foot-dragged on this issue.

We have now taken action on nearly half of pre-earthquake family applicants, which is 1,837 within the family class. We have now completed more than half of the applications, 62% of spousal and 63% of dependent children.

We are working. It is not easy. It is tough. It is hard sliding. But we are doing the job on behalf of the people of this country in Haiti.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the forestry sector has seen more than 70,000 job losses under the current government's watch, the latest at AbitibiBowater in Gatineau.

In this year's budget, the government has offered just \$25 million in new money to the \$70-billion forestry sector. Coming from northwestern Ontario, how can the government spend \$75 million an hour for security at G8 but just \$25 million a year to help Canada's forestry sector?

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since coming to power, we have made extraordinary progress in the forestry sector. Our first step was to resolve the softwood lumber crisis by signing an agreement that gave our forestry producers nearly \$1 billion. We also made strategic, targeted investments because we know that the main issue is finding markets.

Routine Proceedings

The Forest Products Association of Canada submitted its BioPathways program, and we will be investing \$100 million in that program over the next four years to strengthen conventional sawmills and maximize use of bioproducts. That is what I call action and leadership.

* * *

● (1200)

[English]

FISHERIES

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians care deeply about the future of the Atlantic bluefin tuna and our government shares the concerns of experts around the world about the conservation of this important species.

Could the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans please inform this House about the most recent development on this important file, on which Canada continues to show international leadership?

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian bluefin tuna fishery is a model of sustainability for the world. At meetings in Doha, in March, the world was put on notice that the time for talk was over and urgent action was needed now to protect this species.

At international meetings next week, our government will continue to show leadership on this file and press our international tuna fishing partners to follow the example of Canadian fishers, who strictly adhere to sustainable fishing practices and protect the future of this fishery.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

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 15 petitions.

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PETITIONS

CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

Business of Supply

The first petition is signed by dozens of Canadians. It is a call for Health Canada to reverse its authorization to allow caffeine in all soft drinks. Health Canada announced on March 19, 2010 that beverage companies will now be allowed to add up to 75% of the caffeine allowed in the most highly caffeinated colas to all soft drinks.

Soft drinks have been designed and marketed toward children for generations. Canadians already have concerns about children drinking coffee and colas because they acknowledge that caffeine is an addictive stimulant. It is difficult enough for parents to control the amount of sugar, artificial sweeteners and other additives that their children consume, including caffeine from colas.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to reverse Health Canada's new rule allowing caffeine in all soft drinks and not to follow the deregulation policies of the United States and other countries at the sacrifice of the health of Canadian children and pregnant women.

AIR PASSENGERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is also signed by dozens of Canadians. It is a call for Parliament to adopt Canada's first air passengers' bill of rights.

In only six months Barack Obama and his transportation secretary, Ray LaHood, have rocketed ahead of Canada by penalizing airlines \$27,500 per passenger for tarmac delays of over three hours. LaHood recently charged Southwest Airlines \$120,000 for overbooked flights.

A Canadian air passengers' bill of rights would compensate air passengers with all Canadian carriers anywhere they fly. The bill would provide compensation for overbooked flights, cancelled flights and long tarmac delays. It is about time that Parliament adopted Canada's first air passengers' bill of rights.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 180 and 201.

[Text]

Question No. 180—**Hon. Hedy Fry:**

With regard to the Community Access Program: (a) what were the expenditures of the program for fiscal year 2009-2010; and (b) what is the projected budget for fiscal year 2010-2011?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the community access program:

Total expenditures for 2009–10	
Grants and Contributions	\$14,120,636.00
Operating	\$ 1,912,352.00
Total	\$16,032,988.00

Total projected budget for 2010–11

Grants and Contributions	\$14,120,636.00
Operating	\$ 1,721,432.00
Total	\$15,842,068.00

Question No. 201—**Hon. Geoff Regan:**

With respect to changes to the Public Service Employment Regulations announced by the President of the Public Service Commission, Maria Barrados, in December 2008 that would give spouses of Canada's military, reservists, RCMP and public servants who are killed in the line of duty appointment priority in the federal public service, when does the government intend to implement these measures?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the proposed priority provision would grant an appointment priority into the federal public service to the spouse or common-law partner of employees of the public service and members of the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police whose death is attributable to the performance of duties. This priority would be retroactive to October 7, 2001, the date on which Canada and a coalition of other countries initiated military actions in Afghanistan.

The amendments to the Public Service Employment Regulations, which include the priority provision, were pre-published in part I of the *Canada Gazette* on December 5, 2009. Revisions were made to the regulations as a result of pre-publication.

The Public Service Commission received the finalized version of the amendments to the regulations from the Department of Justice on April 15, 2010. The commission approved the regulations on April 22, 2010, and they were registered and published in part II of the *Canada Gazette* on May 12, 2010. The provision regarding the spousal priority came into force on that date, retroactive to October 12, 2001.

[English]

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1205)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to address this very important motion tabled by the NDP. This opposition day motion focuses on Canada's overall energy future. It is unfortunate that the NDP did not situate the motion in that context, but I want to make some opening remarks for Canadians to understand why what this motion is calling for is so fundamentally important to our future.

Business of Supply

This motion would have the House of Commons approve that the government conduct a review and revision of all relevant federal laws, regulations and policies regarding the development of different forms of oil and gas. This would include the oil sands, deepwater oil and gas recovery, which is the type of exploration we are seeing in the Gulf of Mexico, and shale gas so that we can ensure that Canada has the strongest set of environmental and safety rules in the world.

By conducting such an analysis, the government would report back to the House on how we could take appropriate action to improve a situation. After all, good government is always a constant improvement struggle. It is constantly moving to improve a situation as it evolves over time, through knowledge, technology and investments.

For me and many Canadians, this motion shows that there is absolutely no national strategy in Canada for our energy future. We really do not know where we are going with respect to energy.

That is why just a few short weeks ago in an opposition day motion which I was privileged to table on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada, I asked the House to endorse the notion that the Prime Minister would, within 90 days of the passing of that motion, convene a first ministers meeting to deal with energy and climate change for this country. The motion did pass and the Prime Minister has yet to respond to Parliament's desire to see that meeting convened.

I asked specifically because there is a lot of good effort and good work going on in the country, led by the provinces, our cities, our municipalities, our universities, our schools and our hospitals. We have good practices in industry. We have all kinds of improvement being made. However, we do not have federal leadership to tie it all together and identify those best practices to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and become more efficient with our energy use.

As I said a moment ago, this motion shows that we have no national approach, let us call it a strategy, for Canada's energy future. We are seeing increasing and inordinate pressure being placed on Canadian citizens, Canadian companies and Canadian provinces who are desirous of seeing more and more offshore oil and gas exploration and exploitation.

All of a sudden, with massive publicity and in dramatic fashion, the Canadian people see what can potentially go wrong and the risks inherent in the kind of exploitation that is taking place in the Gulf of Mexico with the BP oil rig, which is leaking more oil than the *Exxon Valdez* in a much shorter period of time. It is a huge challenge not just for a particular oil company, but for hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Americans living near the Gulf of Mexico. It is wreaking havoc not just on the environment, but is now showing how it can also wreak havoc on the economy there.

We have no national approach to energy because the Conservative regime in place does not want to talk about it. For example, the Prime Minister has completely stopped talking about putting a price on carbon emissions. He promised in a foundational speech that he delivered in London, England several years ago that in the next several years, Canada would see a price placed on the privilege of emitting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

● (1210)

Since that speech, which he described as a clean energy superpower speech in his first foreign trip to the United Kingdom, all talk by the Prime Minister about an energy future for Canada has evaporated. He has not talked about this issue since. I can only ascribe it to his handlers and his pollsters who are telling him that he cannot win on this issue, which is very unfortunate and very irresponsible from my perspective.

Canadians need to know where we are going on our energy front. We need to know how hydro power will connect with nuclear power will connect with, yes, fossil fuel power and fossil fuel usage. They need to know how we are moving to become, hopefully, the most energy efficient economy in the world and the cleanest economy in the world. That is the race, after all, that we are embroiled in here. I would ask the Prime Minister to buy himself a pair of sneakers and get in the race, because we are being left behind, as I hope to illustrate through these remarks.

Industrial sectors right across the country, the oil and gas sector, the transport sector, the manufacturing and exporting sector, every single group I meet with is clamouring for a vision and an approach nationally on our energy future. They understand the climate change crisis is connected directly to our energy usage patterns and our energy efficiency patterns.

Citizens get it. Senior citizens in their homes get it. That is why they were stunned to learn last month that the government, by sleight of hand and in the dark of night, had announced that the eco-energy grant program which had commenced five, six, or seven years ago, with a threefold increase in take-up in the last three years, was being eliminated without any rhyme or reason when Canadians are most prepared to make those investments and do the right thing to help reduce their energy consumption and to save money, change their furnace and windows, and become more energy efficient.

It is just a small example of the government's abdication of federal leadership on our energy future. The government says it has a target. Okay, let us take that at face value. The Conservative regime says it has a target to reduce our greenhouse gases by 17% from 2006 levels in the next nine years. Okay. How are we going to get there? In the Liberal motion that we passed some two weeks ago, we asked for an independent group of experts to report to the House of Commons to help design the pathway.

How are we going to reduce our greenhouse gases by that amount? Where is the plan? Where are the regulations that were promised? What are the regulations to deal with greenhouse gas emissions that were promised not once but seven times by the Prime Minister in the last fifty-three months? He is on to his third minister of the environment. There is no regulation and there is no plan.

Business of Supply

The second issue I want to deal with is the continuing claim, repeated again here today during question period and in remarks made by the Minister of Natural Resources earlier, that Canada is somehow harmonized with the United States when it comes to energy and environmental policy, or that we are harmonized on a continental basis. Let us just examine that claim for a second.

Yesterday President Calderón from Mexico spoke in this chamber. Afterwards he was very open and direct with the Prime Minister and told him face to face that he was making a serious error by waiting for the United States to act and that he was compromising Canada's future and Canada's leadership on the climate change and energy front.

It took a Mexican president to get the Prime Minister's attention to understand that it is not responsible to allow for a climate change and energy plan to be designed for Canada in Washington. Would Canada design a plan to benefit the specific nature of the American economy? Never. Would we do so to benefit the specific nature of the Mexican economy? No, we would not.

• (1215)

Why would we expect the United States Congress to go forward and design a climate change and energy plan, which would be a benefit to the Canadian economy and the Canadian people? It would not be. I think that is why President Calderón disciplined the Prime Minister yesterday and reminded him that Canada was a sovereign state with sovereign responsibilities.

Let us look how the Prime Minister reacted to this unfortunate spill in the Gulf of Mexico. His first knee-jerk reaction, as he has wanted to do, a function I think of his character and his anger, was to attack the United States. He stood in the House of Commons and finger wagged the American administration and the American regulatory system and said that it was all their fault. This was the day after he stood and said that Canada had the most stringent standards and regulations in place to deal with the environment and oil and gas exploration both onshore and offshore. That is really quite a claim.

We then learned that the environmental assessment regime in the United States was a much more demanding regime than the one in place in Canada when it came to, for example, offshore oil exploration and exploitation. The Prime Minister does not address that issue.

Then two days after his claim that Canada was perfectly all right, in a very career limiting move, the head of the National Energy Board undercut the Prime Minister by specifically announcing that the National Energy Board would be conducting a complete analysis, a serious and detailed review, of what was happening in Canada's Arctic, not on the west coast, not on the east coast, but in the Arctic when it came to oil and gas exploration and exploitation.

The head of the NEB should be very careful. I commend him for his courage because many heads of independent boards, agencies and commissions have spoken out with the Prime Minister in power and have seen their heads cut off. Five or six senior regulators have been fired by the Prime Minister, none the least of which was the head of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission for speaking truth to power. Doing her job got her fired.

There is another angle on this that has come up more recently. I raised it earlier today with the Minister of Natural Resources.

The Prime Minister flew to Pittsburgh and participated in a G20 meeting on behalf of Canada. He signed on to a specific commitment to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. He stood, in response to that, and said that we had already done it, that in budget 2007, the government announced one measure, which begins in 2011, called the accelerated capital cost allowance measure, which will be phased out over four years.

Then we find out, through a leaked memo produced by the deputy minister at Finance Canada, that the Prime Minister was not exactly forthcoming in his remarks. We find out that the deputy minister, Mr. Horgan, advised the Prime Minister, through his Minister of Finance and through the Clerk of the Privy Council, the top official in Canada, that the Prime Minister should move responsibly to eliminate a series of fossil fuel subsidies.

We heard the Minister of Finance say, no, that would not happen, despite the efforts of the Minister of the Environment to bring him to understand the connection between the environment and the economy.

It is interesting that the deputy minister of Finance Canada confirmed in a leak memo that the Prime Minister was briefed on a whole series of new measures that could be eliminated to make Canada more efficient and to stop subsidizing fossil fuel production. In other words, he got caught and he got caught again.

It is particularly striking that he got caught because he has said that we are harmonized with the United States. However, in a 2011 budget, being proposed by President Obama, 12 measures are singled out to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies on the production side of fossil fuels, not necessarily fossil fuel subsidies to deal with the question to help, for example, Canadians in the Northwest Territories to comply with very high costs for diesel fuel so they can have power like every other Canadian in an affordable way.

When the government also relies on the National Energy Board's commitment to conduct a review, it does not tell us that the review, as I mentioned earlier, is specifically curtailed, that it is actually just about the Arctic. It only covers a review of safety and environmental requirements in the Arctic but not in other areas. It does not include a review of existing or future projects, for example, in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. It does not talk about potential future projects off the coast of British Columbia.

• (1220)

While drilling in the Arctic environment would require a different set of safety and environmental rules, Canadians are watching television and they are questioning the safety of existing and soon to be developed projects.

Business of Supply

It is interesting to note that there are a whole series of projects being contemplated off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador and the coast of Nova Scotia: the Terra Nova floating production, storage and offloading vessel, which is currently operating; the Hibernia production platform; the Searose floating production, storage and offloading vessel; and the Deep Panuke offshore gas development project. All these projects are being contemplated or are under way. There is so much inherent risk in terms of what is at play here if we are to continue in our country to pursue offshore exploration and exploitation.

I want to turn to those risks for a second.

Almost two years ago to the day, I stood in the House and I asked the government about the fast-tracking of exploration licences, which was then under way in the Beaufort. The ocean is very shallow and fragile at the very northern part of the country. At the time, I raised the fact that one of the project proponents had already had a spill in 2000 on the American side of the Beaufort Sea. During that spill, the particular oil company discovered that its existing technologies, its boom system to contain a spill, and there was a small spill, failed. The Arctic Ocean seawater is particularly rough and particularly aggressive. As a result, the system put in place by this company collapsed and oil was shed in that part of the ocean.

At the same time, I raised concerns about wildlife habitat. I asked the government about beluga whales, about the polar bear habitat, about the pristine and sensitive nature of the shoreline in that area of the Arctic. My question was met with a denial. It was met with, quite frankly, a deceiving answer, that nothing was happening, until we confirmed, with the good help of WWF and other actors, that the government was in fact fast-tracking those very licences.

There are currently in place oil and gas development moratoria, or basically temporary bans. They go back in B.C., for example, on oil and gas drilling, to the 1980s. The province of B.C. and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers have come out in favour of lifting the moratorium to allow for oil and gas exploration and extraction. It is a very interesting possibility.

I was in British Columbia some 10 days ago. I spent a considerable amount of time meeting with people in British Columbia and western Canada from the Vancouver Port Authority to the Vancouver Aquarium, which is one of Canada's leading west coast research and analysis locations. I met with folks involved with existing pipelines and proponents for a future pipeline between Fort McMurray and northern British Columbia for a new deep sea port so we could sell more oil and gas into emerging markets in India and China. It was interesting to note that every actor I met was unable to defend the call for, or the need for, an additional pipeline.

What that really tells us is this motion is timely. Canada needs to stop, take some time out and examine not just the existing state of technology for offshore oil and gas exploration, but also the question of moratoria, temporary bans, and the question of fiscal measures, as I alluded to earlier, promises the government made to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies. That would constitute the beginning, the architecture, for a national approach to our energy future. That is why the official opposition is pleased to support this motion.

●(1225)

We would call on the government to do the right and reasonable thing. Stop the bobbing, the weaving and jumping from ice floe to ice floe, stop trying to contain environmental issues as just another crisis to contain from a public perception approach and, instead, do the right thing. Sit down with other parliamentarians in the House and come forward with a new, improved national approach to our energy future, its linkage to climate change and greenhouse gases and, hopefully, place Canada not just at the forefront for leadership in the world, but to become the most energy efficient, cleanest economy in the world.

We can do it. We have the knowhow, the people, the risk takers and the practices. It takes political leadership and some courage. I call upon the government to get with it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to the Liberal environment and energy critic, but I am a bit surprised by his rhetoric today. He is saying that we need to strengthen laws and ensure that an event like the one that recently happened in the Gulf of Mexico does not happen in Canada. However, I remember quite well that on March 26, 2005, his own government wrote a regulatory amendment in the *Canada Gazette* that would not require exploratory drilling projects to undergo a comprehensive study, but just a simple screening. I took the time to write to the then environment minister on April 25, 2005, to ask him to withdraw the regulatory plan.

How can the member say that there needs to be tougher regulation when, in 2005, his own government proposed to relax, and even weaken, Canada's environmental assessment rules for oil projects?

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague. It is true that those proposals were made five years ago, but it is now 2010. We have learned a lot. We have a lot to learn and we have a lot of progress to make. That is why I am again calling on the government to work with the opposition to finally create an energy plan for Canada's future.

And I do not mean a plan like the National Energy Program in the 1970s and 1980s. No, now we want a credible plan. The government says it has set the targets at 17%. Let us work together. We need to make progress now. That is exactly why I think this is a good motion: it is asking the House of Commons to work together to develop a plan.

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Ottawa South for expressing the support of his party for the NDP motion and for this broader review to proceed. He is quite correct. The review that was about to proceed was extremely narrow. It is still unclear whether the government is talking about a review that it will undertake or whether it is talking about the National Energy Board broader review that is about to be undertaken, which, frankly, is not the government but an appointed agency.

Business of Supply

I also appreciated the reference the hon. member made to what President Calderón said in his speech to the House, which we all witnessed. He had a hard time finding anything complimentary to say about what has been done by government. He very politely did not talk about the deregulation of the environment going on, but called on us to move on climate change.

One thing the government seems to be saying is the International Energy Agency is endorsing its path. In fact, more than a year ago, the International Energy Agency called on all developed nations of the world to endorse a new greener path to energy security.

Is the member supportive of the call by the New Democratic Party for a national energy, security and sustainability strategy so we get on that path?

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, a call for a comprehensive and coherent approach to Canada's national energy future transcends the New Democratic Party. It has been called for by industrial sectors, by NGOs and by consumer groups. It has been called for, I think, a consensus in Canadian society. For five years now, it has been called for by the official opposition.

There is a desperate need in this country for the ball to sit down on the green, as I say for those golfers out there who may be watching or listening. We need a plan for how Canada is going to move forward efficiently on its energy future. We have to make choices. We need coherence between how we spend money and how we provide incentives for investment, using fiscal measures, as I alluded to earlier.

It is not just parliamentarians who are seized with this, but this is becoming a very important question of economic competitiveness for Canada. Our investors out there, our risk takers, our entrepreneurs are saying, "Where are we going? How can we make hard choices about allocating scarce dollars into our companies to employ our people if we have no idea what the future looks like?"

That is why I again call on the government and the Prime Minister to actually call together the first ministers within 70 days and hold an energy and climate change meeting so that Canada can win this energy efficiency race.

• (1230)

Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the natural resources committee has been holding hearings as a result of the very dramatic and traumatic effects of the gulf oil spill. This motion, while it is not immediately predicated on the events down there, has vision and is looking at the whole regime that exists.

The worry that some members of the committee have had is that the industry appears to be taking a wait and see approach, maybe thinking that a little bit of a tightening up of the regulations would help in this respect, and waiting to see what happens with respect to the technological approach being taken to the spill in the gulf.

More and more it seems that parallel drilling of a relief well is superior in every sense and that the act should be amended so that the regulations stipulate before drilling permits are allowed that such a well must be drilled at the same time. It appears that the experience in the gulf is coming to the same conclusion.

Would the member like to comment on the National Energy Board's hearings and whether the seriousness of the more dramatic impacts is actually going to be taken into consideration, or whether there is just going to be an imbalance toward the needs and concerns of the industry, as opposed to the higher interests of Canadians with respect to what we are learning as we go forward from that oil spill in the gulf?

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be a grave mistake for the National Energy Board and the parties engaged in that process to underestimate the importance of making the vast improvements in the regulatory system and regime that have to be in place if we are going to continue to pursue exploration and exploitation of offshore oil and gas. That would be a very big mistake.

Oil companies and, for that matter, any large companies, really do not get their licence granted by regulators. They now have learned through this BP exercise, and many more before, that their licence to operate is granted by the public. Ask BP shareholders if they are pleased about the fact that it has now cost their company probably well over \$1 billion to deal with this crisis. Ask them if they think that is a productive use of the scarce capital they are investing in this company. I doubt it.

I think it is a moment in time right now, and beyond, that we should seize as a country. I do not know why we are not, for example, leading this question in the Arctic Council context, where other nation states around the Arctic are also brought up to speed on best practices. This may actually come after the review, but sometimes there may be a point in time where we simply have to say no, that the economic and environmental risks inherent in pursuing offshore drilling are simply too large and that we need to move forward.

Again, all of this decision-making is going to occur in the absence of a coherent national approach to our energy future. Where are we going on nuclear power? Where are we going on hydro? Where are we going on coal and where are we going on other fossil fuels? Where are we going on solar?

Canadians often talk about wanting to invest in renewable power. The Liberal Party of Canada has been clear. It is not that we are looking for a levelling of the playing field between renewable power and non-renewable power; we want the playing field tilted in favour of renewable power.

I think at this stage it would be really important for the government to work with the opposition parties to come up with a coherent approach to Canada's energy future.

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to take part in this opposition day debate on a topic I feel is important. It is important to discuss this issue, because it is a terrible ecological disaster. The motion is very timely, and calls on parliamentarians to make a commitment about projects that could be carried out here, in the Beaufort Sea or in the waters off the coast of Greenland.

I will read the motion:

Business of Supply

That this House notes the horror with which Canadians observe the ecological disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico and their call for action to prevent such an event in Canada, and therefore calls on the government immediately to conduct a thorough review and revision of all relevant federal laws, regulations and policies regarding the development of unconventional sources of oil and gas, including oil sands, deepwater oil and gas recovery, and shale gas, through a transparent process and the broadest possible consultation with all interested stakeholders to ensure Canada has the strongest environmental and safety rules in the world, and to report to the House for appropriate action.

This lengthy motion is important because it is to some extent the result of the incident that happened on April 20, 2010, in the Gulf of Mexico. The *Deepwater Horizon* oil platform exploded, causing an environmental disaster. According to the company, some 800,000 litres of oil are spilling into the gulf every day. That is a lot of oil. That is the company's estimate, although according to certain American government teams that have been assessing the situation, it could be nearly twice that amount. This ecological disaster is even worse than the infamous *Exxon Valdez* spill in the north.

This disaster, which is already affecting many ecosystems in the United States, will have very serious environmental impacts on wetlands. That is one appalling aspect of this incident, along with the economic repercussions. That is what people are now realizing. Despite everything, this ecological disaster does serve to raise awareness.

There are moratoriums on fishing, market losses and considerable revenue losses affecting fishers, along with all the ensuing human tragedies. We realize that an ecological disaster not only leads to the loss of ecosystems, the pollution of certain wetlands and the loss or endangerment of certain species, but it also causes economic losses. Today we need to demonstrate that an ecological disaster can also deal a serious economic blow. Fishers in Louisiana are beginning to realize the scope of the disaster.

On this side of the border, no one predicted this disaster. The government has been weakening environmental standards for the past five years. It is easy for the official opposition to accuse the Conservative government of being too lenient and authorizing exploratory drilling.

● (1240)

The truth is that the previous government, the Liberal government, was the first to weaken environmental standards. On March 26, 2005, without having held a public debate on the issue, the environment minister at the time, the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier, published a regulatory amendment in the *Canada Gazette* that some considered to be cosmetic and unimportant. His amendment sought to change the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act so that exploratory offshore drilling projects could get away with a screening type assessment and would no longer be required to undergo a comprehensive study. The purpose of the amendment was to remove exploratory drilling projects from the consultation process, thereby denying all stakeholders the opportunity to comment.

The Bloc Québécois reacted because we are in touch with the people. We toured all regions of Quebec in 2005, especially those along the St. Lawrence. We eventually got to the Îles de la Madeleine, where groups told us about the federal government's proposed regulatory amendment to make environmental assessment regulations more lenient.

The people of Îles de la Madeleine told us to take a close look at the regulatory amendment because it would have posed a danger to them. They asked us to intervene. We met with groups such as Attention Fragiles and the Îles de la Madeleine preservation society. They asked us to intervene.

On April 25, 2005, we wrote to the Minister of the Environment to say that “the purpose of this proposed regulatory amendment is to change the type of environmental assessment of the first exploratory drilling project in an offshore area”.

We told the then-minister that he “knew that exploratory drilling projects were being planned for the Gulf. If the regulatory amendment passes, sites like Old Harry, Cape Ray and others off the coast of Nova Scotia identified for exploratory drilling would be subject to a screening type assessment instead of a comprehensive study”.

We reminded him that “the renewable resources in that area were critical to the tourism and fishing economy in the Gaspé and Îles de la Madeleine region”. We intervened.

What did the environment department say in a statement attached to the proposed regulation change? Here is what it said: “—the environmental effects of offshore exploratory drilling are, in general, minor, localized, short in duration and reversible”.

That was the department's reasoning for its regulatory changes. It said that the environmental effects of offshore exploratory drilling were, in general, minor, localized, short in duration and reversible.

But that is not what we have been seeing lately, and it is not true of the April 20 catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Liberal Party made the first wave of changes that weakened the environmental assessment regulatory regime. The Conservatives picked up where the Liberals left off and, in a more wide-ranging bill, also changed the environmental assessment rules, so that future oil projects would not come under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, but the National Energy Board. That is another big mistake by the federal government: shifting responsibility for environmental assessments from government institutions whose mission is to protect the environment to organizations with an economic focus that serve the oil industry.

● (1245)

We criticized this decision by the government long before the April 20 catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico. We still believe that the environmental impact of drilling projects should be assessed by the people whose job it is to protect the environment, not the people who are responsible for increasing oil production. That is how the federal government thinks.

Business of Supply

There are three threats on the horizon. I will identify three types of projects. The first is a drilling project in Newfoundland that got under way a few weeks ago, 430 kilometres from St. John's. The goal is to drill 2,600 kilometres below sea level, which is a kilometre further than the project in the Gulf of Mexico where the catastrophe occurred on April 20.

In other words, because of the Liberal government's changes, this exploratory drilling in Newfoundland was not subject to a thorough assessment, but a simple screening. If the regulatory amendment had not been made in 2005, this project in Newfoundland would have been subject to a thorough assessment and public consultations where stakeholders, scientists and people concerned about the environment could have proposed a number of risk scenarios with regard to the exploratory drilling. Because of the Liberal changes, this project in Newfoundland was not subject to a thorough assessment. That is the first risk.

Last week, when officials appeared before the parliamentary committee we asked them a number of questions. Oil drilling occurs in Canada, including in Orphan Basin. We asked the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board what the timeframe would be in the event of an accident like the one on April 20 in the Gulf of Mexico. What would be the monitoring plan? What would they do? What could we expect? The board's spokesperson, Sean Kelly, told us that a platform would have to be sent from the Gulf of Mexico to be able to drill a relief well at such depths and that it would take at least 11 days for the platform to arrive. According to another analyst, it would take four to five months to drill a relief well. We know what that means. Someone decides to drill at 2,600 km below sea level, which is deeper than the oil well in the Gulf of Mexico and if there were a similar accident, a platform would have to come from the Gulf of Mexico. It would take 11 days for the machine to arrive and five months before the drilling was complete.

Then, the government told us not to worry, that everything was fine, and that it was all in our heads. They said that there was no risk, and that people on the Îles de la Madeleine and Canadians do not need to worry. That is what the government calls an emergency plan. That is completely unacceptable. The government has been making decisions with its eyes closed since 2005. First, it was the Liberals, and those who went along with them without changing the regulations, and then it was the Conservatives, who slipped amendments into Bill C-9.

If an accident were to happen, someone would have to assume the ministerial responsibility. Ministers in this House would have to take responsibility if ever there were an accident off Newfoundland or elsewhere offshore.

• (1250)

We are calling on the government to come to its senses and amend the regulations to ensure that this type of drilling is subject to comprehensive studies and that consultations are held. The public and experts have a right to be heard. On this side of the House, we believe that we must learn from the environmental disaster of April 20, although the government does not seem to agree.

The government has always said that it is important to harmonize with the United States. But President Obama declared a moratorium

and wants to create an independent commission to assess the situation. He does not want to move forward until they have examined the issue. Here, our government is agreeing to continue oil drilling off Newfoundland. Plus, it continues to be in favour of calls for tender from oil companies for the Beaufort Sea. In 2007, the government sold the rights to explore three parcels in the Beaufort Sea for about \$50 million to oil companies, including Exxon. And in 2008, it sold BP the rights to drill oil wells 700 metres below sea level.

The government is telling us that no drilling will take place before 2014, and that is true. However, we need to understand the signals that we have been getting in parliamentary committee lately. Representatives from BP came to see parliamentarians and were unable to say if it would be possible to clean up the mess if an accident were to occur in Canada's north. They did not know if they would be able to clean up after a disaster. The representative from BP did not have enough information to respond to the questions.

What is more, since it is costly to operate during the off season, from the start of December until spring, oil companies have asked to drill the northern Canadian relief wells later, after drilling activity has begun. They have asked an economically driven, non-environmental organization to give them an exemption from drilling relief wells because it costs too much. What costs too much? Will it cost BP too much to clean up the mess from April 20?

The oil industry is pressuring us to weaken—some would say relax—environmental standards once again and give breaks to and create loopholes for an industry, which is completely unacceptable.

I will take advantage of the fact that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is here to remind him that next week, from June 9 to 11, there will be an important Arctic Council meeting. Canada is expected to take a leadership role there. Drilling will begin this summer in Greenland, which is very close to Canada. They hope to drill in Baffin Bay, near the mouth of Lancaster Sound, near where the government wants to establish a marine conservation area, at the boundary of Canada's territory.

There will be risks for Canada and Quebec. Greenland is far away, but it does not seem so far when you look at the devastation in the Gulf of Mexico.

• (1255)

We are hoping to see some Canadian leadership to ensure that we have the means necessary to prevent a disaster like the one on April 20 from ever happening in Canada.

[English]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a few of us were down at the Gulf of Mexico a few weeks ago and received a briefing on that whole issue. The member was talking about drilling at very extreme depths. We see now that there was really no plan by the authorities in the event that something went wrong.

Business of Supply

When we are dealing with drilling in the Arctic, it is even more of a complicated situation. A polar bear expert is arguing that an oil well blowout in Canada's northern Beaufort Sea just before freeze-up could be disastrous to northern animals; that the Arctic conditions pose special risks for oil extraction and transportation because of the lack of natural light, extreme cold, ice floes, high winds, low visibility and remoteness; and that the same conditions make oil spill response particularly challenging.

The northern environment provides an even more serious challenge for the oil industry if something were to go wrong. We can see that it is not if something is going to go wrong but when something is going to go wrong. I do not know why countries allow companies like this to drill without proper oversight or proper regulation. That has to stop and I think the member and I agree with that.

Does the member have any more observations as to the complexities of drilling in the Arctic versus in the Gulf of Mexico?

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed very complex, because of ice and snow. No guarantees can be given with regard to a cleanup plan.

For example, two weeks ago, Fisheries and Oceans Canada was considering spilling 1,200 litres of oil in Lancaster Sound, in the Northeast Passage, just to assess how, in the future, we might have to clean up an oil spill in northern Canada following an environmental disaster.

We have a government that grants rights to companies through tender offer. Four years away from a potential drilling project, all the Government of Canada finds to do is to spill 1,200 litres of oil in northern Canada to see how, over the next few years, we will manage to clean up that environmental disaster. That is a case in point. Rights are being granted, yet we do not know how a disaster would be cleaned up. That is totally unacceptable.

In fact, Inuit communities in the North have opposed such a move by the government. It takes some gall to put forward that kind of plan just one, two or three weeks after the April 20 oil spill.

I think that goes to show that the government is in the process of approving such a project without having a monitoring plan or a cleanup plan in place.

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while my colleague was giving his speech, the member for Pontiac and foreign affairs minister talked about Quebec's interests and the fact that the Bloc Québécois was still defending them. I would like to hear my colleague on how Quebec's interests are being jeopardized by the Conservatives' policy.

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, they are in danger very simply because it is unacceptable that we are under a government with such lenient legislation. We are calling for a Quebec-Canada agreement on energy resources to ensure that Quebec's environmental assessment process is applied to this kind of drilling project.

If we rely on the federal legislation, exploratory drilling projects will be subject to basic screenings only, rather than thorough studies. Quebec's legislation, on the other hand, stipulates that these kinds of

projects must be submitted to the BAPE, a real public inquiry organization whereby communities on the Îles de la Madeleine would be allowed to express their opinions and scientists could also weigh in.

We need a Quebec-Canada agreement as soon as possible but unfortunately, once again, the federal government refuses to recognize that the gulf belongs to Quebec. We simply do not accept the government's attitude towards Quebec, because what people want are stricter environmental regulations. If we compare Quebec's regulations to Canada's, it is clear that Quebec's regulations are much stricter than those passed and amended by any federal government.

• (1300)

Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie for giving such a great speech on the importance of protecting the environment.

I wonder if he could tell us more about the budget implementation bill before us, which has not yet passed third reading. Hidden in that bill is a part that deals with environmental assessments. Of course the bill was drafted before the incident in the Gulf of Mexico. In light of what we have seen so far, this is due to some complicity within the government, a failure to obey the law, or perhaps some political influences.

The budget implementation bill would allow the environment minister to decide whether environmental assessments should be conducted or not, and I wonder if this is not somewhat dangerous. Could the member comment on this?

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely right. With the changes in Bill C-9, Canada is trying to achieve some harmony with the United States. The decision was made that an energy board would assess drilling projects of this kind. However, the U.S. experience has shown that this was a mistake.

Transferring the environmental assessment process for oil projects from the environmental field to the energy field might open the door to favouritism. The thing to do, therefore, is to backtrack and ensure that oil projects are not assessed by the National Energy Board, but instead by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, which will be able to carry out studies and assessments in cooperation with the provinces.

As we suggested even before disaster struck on April 20, the proposed changes to transfer that responsibility to the National Energy Board are a serious mistake. That board should be off limits to oil companies, especially where applications for drilling permits are concerned.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member from the Bloc Québécois agree that Canada should review its legislation with a view to bringing it more in line with that of the United States, which provides that drilling permits are granted subject to an environmental study? Also, would the public be welcome to take part in such a study?

Business of Supply

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. That is exactly what I was saying earlier. We had asked for this in April 2005, when the Liberal Party amended the Environmental Assessment Act, so that a preliminary screening rather than a thorough assessment was required for oil projects. The result was that these projects were no longer subject to public consultation because the department believed that the environmental impact of exploratory drilling was, in general, minor, local, of short duration and reversible.

In light of the U.S. disaster, it is time to return to more rigorous environmental assessments, complete with public consultations, in order to prevent preferential treatment. It is not true that the environmental impact of oil drilling is minor, local, of short duration and reversible. There is nothing about the U.S. disaster in the Gulf of Mexico that is minor, local, of short duration and reversible. Quite the opposite. For that reason, we should be conducting complete assessments of these types of projects.

• (1305)

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to join the debate today on the motion put forward by my colleague from Edmonton—Strathcona. I will repeat it for the benefit of the House and the people watching who have perhaps just tuned in. The motion states:

That this House notes the horror with which Canadians observe the ecological disaster unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico and their call for action to prevent such an event in Canada, and therefore calls on the government immediately to conduct a thorough review and revision of all relevant federal laws, regulations and policies regarding the development of unconventional sources of oil and gas, including oil sands, deepwater oil and gas recovery, and shale gas, through a transparent process and the broadest possible consultation with all interested stakeholders to ensure Canada has the strongest environmental and safety rules in the world, and to report to the House for appropriate action.

When we consider the wording of the motion itself calling for a thorough review and for revision of the laws to make them the strongest environmental and safety rules in the world, you would think that this would be an absolute no-brainer. In light of what we have seen in the BP disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, it seems pretty clear that a review is called for.

A spokesperson for the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board, a federal-provincial body that looks after the offshore oil and gas regime in Newfoundland and Labrador, said within a matter of days after the events in the Gulf of Mexico that it would have to review its regulations in light of that incident. It is pretty clear that the people of Canada want to see a review.

I will quote a Newfoundland environmentalist of long standing, a gentleman by the name of Stan Tobin. He has been active in environmental matters over the last 20 or 30 years, particularly in Placentia Bay, where there is a lot of tanker traffic, an oil refinery, a transshipment port, and a lot of concern about the environmental consequences of oil and gas. Mr. Tobin said that it is time that the federal government did a complete review.

He is talking about the tanker traffic here. He said:

It's been 20 years since the last one was done. A lot has changed. If government and the oil industry believe that we are in a position to adequately respond to something like what happened down in the [Gulf of Mexico], they are the only ones who believe it. No way are we prepared.

That is a sentiment expressed by a lot of people across the country, both lay people and people who know what they are talking about, having studied the issue for many years, and even by those who have a lot of respect for the technological expertise of people in the oil and gas industry.

There was, in fact, an admission by Chevron, which is doing the Orphan Basin project, the deepwater well that was started just a couple of weeks ago, when it put forth its proposal for drilling five years ago. It candidly acknowledged that it would not be able to clean up an oil spill of any significance if one were to occur. It did not have the capability to do it because of the weather and wave conditions in that particular area, because of the fact that the oil would disperse very quickly, and because the containment measures were likely to be inadequate. However, it said that the chance of it happening was so rare that it did not think the risk was too great.

It candidly admitted that on the technological side, it did not have the capability of doing an oil-spill cleanup. I think that is sobering news for a lot of people to come to realize.

After hearing the government talk and after listening carefully to the Minister of Natural Resources today, one would think that it would not be difficult for the government to actually support this motion and engage in this review. The Minister of Natural Resources said this morning that he and his department are constantly reviewing their rules and regulations and that they want to be assured that they are the best in the world. How is that different from the motion before the House today? It is not enough to have assurances from the government. There has to be an open and transparent process.

• (1310)

If the minister truly believes that we are in the forefront of the world in terms of environmental protection and environmental safety and operations in this kind of oil and gas activity, then what does he have to fear from a transparent process that would allow stakeholders or others, other than the government officials, to examine the issues and pronounce on them?

This is intended to provide a level of confidence Canadians would require for the type of oil and gas development contemplated here, those that are of higher risk to the environment.

We know that the oil sands have an extremely severe negative environmental footprint as they operate today. We know that there are dangers, as we have seen in the Gulf of Mexico, from deepwater drilling. There are dangers from offshore drilling in general.

I think the sensitivity to that is so great in British Columbia, for example, that a moratorium has been in place for some 30 years. It is likely to and should continue, because that is what the people of British Columbia want. They do not want to take the risk of a potential oil spill occurring.

We have had pretty good success on the east coast, I have to say. The oil and gas developments in the Hibernia, White Rose, and Terra Nova projects have had some oil spills. An estimate was given the other day by the CNLOPB chair to the parliamentary committee for natural resources. I think the number was approximately one barrel of oil spilled for every million barrels produced over the years. I suppose that is a good ratio. Maybe it is and maybe it is not. Someone else might have a different opinion on that.

We have seen some spills. On the other hand, we have seen what I would call inadequate environmental monitoring. We have a self-reporting system in the east coast oil and gas industry. The industry is the one that monitors the environmental effects and reports on them to the CNLOPB, which then makes them public.

There has been constant criticism in my province from the environmental scientists, researchers, and academics who work in this area. They say that self-reporting is not the best form of reporting at all. One speaker at a recent event said that if someone asks me how I am doing or how good I am, I will probably give a pretty favourable report about myself. If somebody else is asked how I am doing, it might be a little bit more objective.

This is something that has been recommended in the past. In fact, the environmental assessment for the Terra Nova project recommended strongly that there be independent environmental monitoring of the project. This did not turn out to be one of the conditions of the development of the Terra Nova production platform.

Since then, we have seen some incidents with significant spills, particularly of processed water, that went undetected and carried on for a long period of time. This is something that we find abhorrent. It obviously shows that the rules we have in Canada are not the best they can be and certainly are not the best in the world. We have also seen incidents like this that require attention.

I want to talk about the deepwater drilling being done by Chevron. It needs to be put into perspective a little bit. It is not the first well done. It is the deepest. Chevron did drill a deepwater well in the Orphan Basin in 2007. It is not intended to be a production well. In fact, they are not even going to do a test flow. They are just drilling the well for the sake of obtaining core samples. They will cement it in at the end of the process. This is purely an exploration well, so there is some difference there in terms of what the ultimate risk might be.

It has taken three months to drill the well. The CNLOPB has moved on this very quickly and has said that they want additional oversight requirements there. Interestingly enough, at a certain point, when they actually get into the high-carbon zone, which is considered the pressure zone, they will be taking what the CNLOPB calls a pause. We hope at that time that there will be an opportunity for an assessment of the dangers of continuing based on what happened in the Gulf.

• (1315)

The Deputy Speaker: Unfortunately, there will not be time for questions and comments.

It being 1:15 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the opposition motion are deemed put and the recorded division deemed requested and deferred until

Private Members' Business

Tuesday, June 1, 2010 at the expiry of the time provided for government orders.

I believe that the hon. member for Crowfoot has a suggestion for the House.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I hope that the House would be open to the suggestion that we see the clock as 1:30 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Shall I see the clock as 1:30 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC) moved that Bill C-509, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (library materials), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to stand and present Bill C-509, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (library materials) at second reading. It is something that libraries and communities have been asking for for years and it is an honour and gives me great pleasure to present this bill.

What is the library book rate and how did I come to learn about it? Since 1939, libraries in Canada have been able to exchange books at a reduced rate, historically known as the library book rate. This allows all libraries in Canada to access each other's inventory of reading materials allowing libraries in smaller, rural and remote areas to offer the same kinds of reading materials we would find mostly in urban centres.

In the 2004 campaign I met with several communities which expressed concern that due to economic pressures Canada Post was considering withdrawing support for this program and returning to charging the standard rate for shipping books.

This I contend would cause a great hardship on Canadian libraries and by extension on the very people who are using the library book rate program. These people tend to be rural Canadians, Canadians who live in remote areas, including the north, who have limited access to libraries and the books within.

Having the ability to access the inventory of major libraries and having these books shipped to communities at a favourable rate allows many small communities to offer a larger selection of reading material without the huge cost of shipping to the local libraries. It also allows Canadians living in these rural and remote areas the same reading material without the huge personal expense of travel.

Private Members' Business

Why is the library book rate important to all Canadians? It ensures equitable access for all Canadians to documents located in libraries across the country. It supports the intellectual needs of remote northern and rural communities. It is the principle underpinning the concept that collections of all libraries are a national asset accessible to all Canadians, and as such, supports education and lifelong learning as well as helps to maintain Canada's global competitiveness and productivity.

As I have gone across the country many people have asked what would happen if the library book rate were to disappear.

Many people, myself included, believe that one, it would create a two-tiered library service for those who can afford to pay to access information and those who cannot. This would jeopardize the access of Canadians to the resources of Canadian libraries necessary to learn, innovate and prosper in the information economy of the 21st century.

Two, Canadian students, persons with disabilities and residents of rural communities would be particularly disadvantaged as they rely heavily on their local library's ability to share resources with larger centres.

Three, it would severely reduce access to books for people living in rural and remote parts of Canada.

Four, it would reduce the level of service libraries provide, possibly forcing the program into a cost recovery basis with patrons and distance learners having to bear the costs. Such user fees would discourage many patrons from making mail-based borrowing requests.

Five, smaller libraries would stop providing lending services and in turn would only borrow materials.

Six, it would deprive the rest of the country from being able to access the unique information resources often preserved in our local libraries.

Seven and finally, it would very, very easily deny access to library materials for people who are homebound.

● (1320)

My bill proposes that before Canada Post can increase the library book rate, it must receive the approval of the Government of Canada. This, in my mind, ensures that Canadians' voices will be heard on this very sensitive issue before any rate changes occur.

My bill also asks that the library book rate now include the shipping of CDs, CD-ROMs, DVDs and other audiovisual materials. As technology changes, so do our needs for more specific types of reading materials. I believe that by including these materials, over time we would actually reduce the cost to Canada Post in delivering this very valuable community program. Imagine shipping 16 CDs to a rural or remote community as opposed to shipping 16 books. Based on the weight alone, the numbers speak for themselves at the savings that could be accomplished. The cost savings over time would be dramatic and very well may help to resolve some of the financial pressures that Canada Post is facing. I am convinced that as technology continues to evolve, Canadians will, and should, have more access to all types of reading material.

Due to circumstances, I have introduced my bill three times in this chamber over the last four years. I have been fortunate and very pleased to receive support from all across Canada. I have received responses from every province and every territory. I would like to put on the record some of those comments.

An individual from Ontario, in talking about the book rate said:

It is the principle which underpins the concept that the collections of all libraries are a national asset accessible to all Canadians and as such supports education and life-long learning and helps to maintain Canada's global competitiveness and productivity.

As a side note to that, the city librarian at the Ottawa Public Library suggested that if the library book rate were to be changed and increased to what would be requested, it would add a \$70,000 burden to that library itself. I would ask people to think about how that would translate across the country, particularly with respect to rural and remote libraries which rely on the city's ability to send those books to them at a reduced rate.

The following comment came from New Brunswick:

The Library Book Rate supports and encourages the sharing of taxpayer-funded library books in Canada. At relatively little cost, it acts as a bridge between all Canadians, including the disabled, shut-ins, and residents in remote locations. It is also a way of creating a more literate and knowledgeable population, by helping, for example, students enrolled in distance education programs or Canadians pursuing lifelong learning goals.

This comment came from Alberta, and speaks about the library book rate and the addition of the audiovisual materials:

The addition of audio-visual materials recognizes that people are not all text-based learners and need access to information through a whole host of audio-visual and digital media.

This comment came from British Columbia and again talks about the library book rate:

At relatively little cost, it acts as a bridge between all Canadians, including the disabled, the shut-ins, and residents in remote locations. It is also a way of creating a more literate and knowing population....

Approximately 2,000 libraries in Canada use the library book rate. These libraries provide services to over one million users every year. I have received petitions, as I stated earlier, from all across Canada. I have received letters and phone calls encouraging me to press forward in supporting the library book rate.

● (1325)

I believe that the library book rate is a valuable asset for all Canadians. I believe that people in Canada have a right to have access to the library book rate. I believe as a government and as members of Parliament, we have a responsibility to the Canadian public that cannot access the public services of a library to provide an alternative way to move information and reading materials to those communities that so desperately need the opportunity to increase their reading and their learning.

Private Members' Business

I have learned a lot of things. I cannot say that before I got involved in federal politics in 2004 I knew much about the library book rate. Today, I would say differently, and today I would say that I understand what people are trying to do. Their goals have merit and they deserve the respect of members of Parliament. Today I am presenting a bill on their behalf to support this wonderful service, the library book rate. It is with those few words that I ask my fellow members to do the same.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am trying to get a handle on the amount of the current subsidy that Canada Post provides to the libraries. The member indicated that we are talking about 2,000 libraries across the country affecting about a million people. What is the total amount of money the libraries are currently paying to Canada Post and what would be the suggested increase? How many millions of dollars would the libraries be paying under the new regime if the bill was not successful?

Mr. Merv Tweed: Mr. Speaker, that has been a challenge as I have worked through this entire book rate issue. Determining the cost has been very, very challenging. Even today, that figure is not identified specifically by Canada Post.

I am suggesting that with the movement from books to the new technology of DVDs and CD-ROMS, those costs will automatically go down as more and more people use it. That is the reason I introduced that part of the bill in this presentation, because I think the mood of the public is moving away from books. The Kindle has been mentioned. I want to make sure that when libraries make that transition into the 21st century with the technology in which they are now engaging that we do not lose the ability to transfer the information to rural and northern communities in particular.

I apologize that I do not have the exact amount of money, but it has never been made available to me. I have heard several figures mentioned. I have challenged all those figures and I have never had an actual figure presented to me.

• (1330)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first, I wish to congratulate the Conservative member for Brandon—Souris for this initiative. Naturally, I hope he will take into consideration the recommendations or the advice that I may give him. I know he is the chair of a committee, because I belong to that committee. He is very knowledgeable about procedure and I would suggest that he move that the motion be unanimously adopted by all parties at all stages. As he mentioned in his presentation, he introduced his bill a number of years ago and I believe that it is time for Parliament to adopt it quickly so that it can become law as soon as possible.

[*English*]

Mr. Merv Tweed: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his comments and suggestions. We share work on the transportation committee and I believe we have an excellent relationship.

I am prepared to follow the process of the House and the rules of the House. I know that there are two parts to the presenting of a bill. I am very aware of the time it takes to do that. I know there are some concerns from others and there may be some suggested changes to

the bill that might even improve it. I am certainly prepared to listen to what all MPs have to say and move forward on that advice.

Mr. Brian Storseth (Westlock—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for his tenacity. He has now introduced this bill three times in four and a half years. I would suggest that he is as stubborn as this bill.

I note that the 2008 strategic review done by Canada Post mentioned that the library book rate was not a part of the universal service obligation. This created a lot of concerns in my rural constituency as my rural libraries rely heavily on this rate.

I wonder if the member could answer briefly about his reasoning for making this part of the bill a responsibility of parliamentarians and how important he feels that is in his bill.

Mr. Merv Tweed: Mr. Speaker, it is true that there is some discussion about what Canada Post is responsible for and what it is not. The reason I wrote it into my bill that any discussion or any attempt to increase that rate, rather than putting it in the hands of Canada Post, because it is such a valuable service to all Canadians, is that I felt it was appropriate that the discussion should come back to this House and be the decision of the members of Parliament as opposed to the crown corporation.

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will speak today to the library book rate, the specific proposal to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act to reduce the rate of postage for library materials.

I congratulate my colleague from Brandon—Souris for bringing this motion forward and, as another colleague mentioned, for his tenacity in continuing to pursue this. I am also pleased to congratulate my colleague on this side of the House, the member for Mississauga—Streetsville, our opposition critic who has also recommended that we in the House support these amendments and therefore support my colleague from Brandon—Souris in his efforts.

I have a personal story that has led me to support this. When I was very young, my family moved to a very small town in rural Ontario. It had a small library but it had been left unattended for quite a few years and had few books and very few materials. My mother, seeing the need, volunteered as the town librarian to provide an opportunity for some adults, although in our case it was mostly children in this small town. The biggest challenge she had was finding books.

As an aside, I congratulate my colleague for adding a variety of other materials to this list because now, in 2010, CDs, tapes and a variety of other materials complete the picture of all of the materials available.

However, when I was a little girl many years ago before CDs and videos, my mother had a great deal of difficulty finding books for the community. There is no question that small town and rural libraries will find that books and all these other materials will be significantly less available and they will be much more reluctant to obtain them if the cost is the way it currently stands. On the positive side, there is no question that so many of these small town and rural libraries will bring in far more materials, books, CDs and videos for so many people in their communities if they are capable of doing so at a reduced cost.

Private Members' Business

In a country where we all agree that education is important and that opening up horizons, particularly for our children, is critical to the success and the future of this country, particularly in these areas where they would not otherwise have those opportunities, that doing so is tremendously important.

One of our primary jobs as parliamentarians is to ensure that taxpayer money is spent wisely, effectively and transparently. There are concerns about what this might mean in terms of reduced revenue to Canada Post. I am, therefore, pleased to support this on the basis that it will go to committee and that my colleagues at committee will be in a position to review what this may mean in terms of reduced revenue to Canada Post, but it is in that forum that we will have the opportunity to analyze those details and deal with them appropriately at that time.

●(1335)

[*Translation*]

I would like to congratulate my colleague from Brandon—Souris on his ongoing support for this bill. I know that he has been behind this issue for a long time.

I would also like to congratulate my colleague from Mississauga—Streetsville, who is our opposition critic. She is the one who recommended that members on this side of the House support the member for Brandon—Souris.

I am very familiar with the situation facing rural libraries. When I was little, we lived in a very small town, and my mother became the volunteer librarian. The hardest part of her job was finding books and other materials for the library. She worked with adults as well as lots of kids.

I know that it was a real challenge for her, but she really appreciated getting books and other materials for people in the community. That was really important.

I know that reduced fees for inter-library loans are really important, not only for rural libraries and small towns across Canada, but also for the people who will have a chance to read and look at these books. That is the most important thing.

I want to reiterate that those of us on this side of the House are proud to support the member for Brandon—Souris on this bill. We hope that the committee will discuss it because we have questions about costs and outcomes in terms of reducing Canada Post's revenue. This bill is a very good idea. We will support this bill, and we hope that it will pass.

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-509, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (library materials), introduced by my colleague from Brandon—Souris, particularly since this is an emergency.

There is a persistent rumour going around inter-library loan networks, including the network in Quebec, that Canada Post is planning to increase its rates. Canada Post operates as a business and has problems of its own. Bill C-9 would take away its exclusive international remailing privilege, so Canada Post will likely face revenue losses. The Conservative government chose to adopt this strategy. It chose to take away Canada Post's exclusive remailing

privilege. It was a political choice, but public libraries should not have to pay the price.

I believe my Conservative colleague from Brandon—Souris has a good grasp of the situation. He is very keen on this bill. Earlier, I suggested that he try to have it passed at report stage. I know he wants the committee to look at the bill, discuss it and have Canada Post come and explain where it will get the money. That is why I suggested we pass the bill quickly.

If Canada Post has revenue problems, it should discuss them directly with the government. It is not this service that is depriving Canada Post of revenue, because the corporation already offers reduced rates for inter-library loans and for individuals who also want to provide this service. This service is already in place, so it cannot cause a loss of revenue. The reduced rate has been in place for decades. The cause of Canada Post's revenue losses lies elsewhere. I do not want the committee to focus on Canada Post's lost revenue and kill a bill that is urgently needed.

Sometimes, we discuss things that can divide us. Some governments choose to govern that way. But a bill like the one before us is not divisive. I have not heard the NDP critics, but I am sure they will support this measure. It needs to be passed very quickly.

As our Conservative colleague from Brandon—Souris said, he has been working on this for over four years. He is introducing his bill for the third time. I hope the third time is the charm. I can offer him the Bloc Québécois' support to pass the bill at all stages. He can talk about this with his House leader in order to avoid a debate with Canada Post Corporation, which currently has problems with some of the government's other policies. I would not want this measure to be jeopardized.

I know the president of Quebec's library network quite well because she is also president of the Outaouais library network. She is the mayor of Plaisance in my riding. She is the reeve of the RCM of Papineau. I had the opportunity to talk to her about this possibility of increased transportation costs. These organizations are often run by volunteers. This is a highly important issue. They prepare an annual budget and every year she talks to me to find out what is going on with Canada Post. It is hard to give her an answer because Canada Post is a crown corporation that manages its operations independently. This corporation is governed by federal legislation. If we order it, through this bill, to maintain the current rate, it would be required to do so. I believe this is the right approach.

●(1340)

The hon. members will have gathered that we will be supporting wholeheartedly Bill C-509 which is before us, first because it maintains the current reduced-rate service, and second because this rate would apply to all audiovisual materials in the future.

My colleague from Brandon—Souris is a visionary. New technologies have been developed, and the public should have more and more opportunities to use them. Having the reduced rate apply to audiovisual materials would be a good way to encourage communities.

The member for Brandon—Souris talked about the significant savings that could be made by the Ottawa Library. That is right, and that goes to show the magnitude of the problem. I have heard a \$75,000 figure mentioned; that is a lot of money.

Just think of the thousands of dollars that small communities could save. Public libraries in our communities in Quebec and Canada are often run by volunteers who manage funds received from generous donors.

Municipalities contribute to the network as best they can within their means. Money does not grow on trees. I believe that this bill will have an impact on all regions of Quebec and Canada. It does not matter how thick the bill is. A bill can be quite modest in length, but that does not mean that it will have a modest impact on communities.

Bill C-509 provides for a reduced postage rate for all library materials from books to audio-visual material. This is critical to the development—perhaps even to the survival—of all communities.

At the very least, libraries have to be able to offer a borrowing service for people who often do not have the means to buy these materials themselves. This is a good way to encourage parents, children and seniors to read.

This is an excellent social measure, and I would like to congratulate my Conservative colleague once again for having introduced it. I can assure him of the Bloc Québécois' support because all Quebec communities need this kind of justifiable measure.

I give him our support so that this bill will pass at all report stages because we do not want it to disappear should an election, prorogation or something else happen. Once again, we will support Bill C-509.

• (1345)

[English]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to rise to support Bill C-509. I want to congratulate the member for sticking with it, so to speak, having introduced this bill evidently three times over four and a half years. I have known the member for Brandon—Souris now for quite a number of years. He is certainly a very hard worker and is looking out for the interests of his constituents in this case.

I see an interesting opportunity here for us to simply let this bill go to committee at the end of the first hour. I personally see no reason why we would want to use up House time for a second hour of debate on this particular bill when we are all in agreement. We are 100% in agreement on what he is trying to accomplish here.

I also find a slight contradiction, perhaps, in the member's party. On the one hand, the member is presenting a bill supporting a continued reduction in a subsidy for the delivery of library books, but on the other hand, his government is supporting hiving off

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remailers to the private sector and doing it through the budget implementation bill, Bill C-9.

I know there are people in his caucus who have an ideological problem with this because they would see a role here for the private sector. This would be a prime opportunity to have the private sector do private deliveries of library books. I am sure that there is a huge divergence of opinion in his caucus about this. We happen to align ourselves with him against the neanderthals in his caucus who would want to privatize this service, assuming that they are there. I am assuming that the argument has been made or would be made in that caucus.

Having said that, we are 100% behind him in his efforts to make certain that we stop the decline in rural areas, the decline in the north and the decline in the inner cities because of closures of not only bank branches, which have certainly happened over the last number of years, but certainly libraries as well. The member knows that, in the city of Winnipeg, we have had the closure of some branches in the poorer areas of our city, which has caused a huge public backlash.

People have organized and tried to stop the closure of the libraries. There has been a move toward large recreation centres in urban environments and then perhaps in rural environments as well. When there is a move to these larger centres, then there is a closing of the smaller centres. That disadvantages poorer people because the richer people can afford to get in the car and drive to the recreation centre in the next town or a few blocks down, or they can afford to drive to the library in the next town or suburb.

However, if one is living on a fixed income or social assistance and does not have a car to get around, then basically one is disenfranchised from the recreation centres or library facilities. That is not something we want to do. We want to try to reverse that. This has been an ongoing problem for the last 20, 30 or 40 years. Provincial governments have been trying to deal with it to keep people in the small towns, on the land, in the rural areas, and in the north.

I see this as just another battle that we have to engage in to stop or slow down the closure of small facilities and the driving out of business of these small libraries.

I have a question about the costs and the member knows that.

• (1350)

The member has mentioned that the Ottawa Regional Library would perhaps save \$70,000 per year on its mailing costs. He has also indicated that currently it is paying a factor of say \$3 and the new rate, if Canada Post had its way, would be to jump it to \$12. It would be multiplied by a factor of four, and I think the member would agree with that calculation.

If we take the Ottawa Regional Library, we would be looking at an increase of \$70,000. If we multiply that for the 2,000 libraries across the country, we are talking about a huge increase. Perhaps the Ottawa Regional Library can come up with the difference, but the small libraries in the small towns across the country will be unable to do that.

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What the member has proposed is something with which we can all agree. However, it is a much bigger picture that he is addressing. This goes far beyond the whole issue of subsidizing the transfer of library books back and forth from the libraries to the people who use the books.

The library book rate is a Canada Post service that has been around since 1939, as the member indicated. It has provided a reduced rate for mailing library books between libraries and from libraries to their users. Canada Post recently has announced that the current library book rates will remain unchanged to 2010.

What we are seeing is the libraries are going one year at a time, so the member is left hanging not knowing what is going to happen. This system has worked well since 1939. The issue is if "it ain't broke, why fix it?" What is to fix? I am amazed the member cannot get the financial information that he needs.

Canada Post is not privatized yet. Surely, there is a way to get some freedom of information from it to determine just how big the numbers are. However, after four years, he still has to surmise as to what sort of effect this will have on each and every library, which is why he has said that the cost for the Ottawa Regional Library is plus \$70,000 a year. However, he really does not know what the total effect will be. It may be even worse than what he thinks.

We are talking about over 2,000 libraries actively using the library book rate and over one million Canadians benefiting from it annually. It is an indispensable part of the service delivered by Canada's not-for-profit academic school and special libraries.

The library book rate is not a government program and it is not currently financially supported by the federal government. The members of the library community in all constituencies continue to be concerned about its sustainability.

Given that Canada Post is a crown corporation with a mandate to generate a dividend for its shareholder, which is the government, the rate contributes to the public policy goals of literacy, lifelong learning and inclusion of vibrant rural and remote communities.

This is where we get into the intangibles. We start looking at parallels like the closure of the prison farms. The government is looking at it as a dollars and cents question, but not looking at the total effect of the prisoner getting up at 6 a.m., milking cows and communicating with nature and with the animals and taking care of the animals.

The government takes that out of the equation, as with this. It takes the fact out of the equation, that this is a much bigger issue than just dollars and cents. It is the effect that we have when people cannot get library books, when people have disabilities, visual impairments and cannot get facilities from their library. The member has also expanded this list to include DVDs and other things.

This is a good bill and we support it.

• (1355)

Mr. Brian Storseth (Westlock—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand here in this House to talk about the library book rate bill that my colleague from Brandon—Souris has put forward.

I was actually just on the phone with my son, Easton. He hopes that the member has a bit more luck getting this through than he had in committee the other day. My son also has some concerns about the NDP member's approach during private members' business, bringing up these topics of neanderthals in western Canada.

I really take umbrage with that because, to be honest, this government has always stood on the side of rural Canadians. This bill is something that is very important to rural Canada, to western Canada, and to my communities. To hear a member of the former NDP government in Manitoba complain about bank branches and libraries being shut down in Manitoba, it was that member who did not do anything about it for the last who knows how many years in the provincial government and who is just as ineffective today in this Parliament.

This really is a non-partisan piece of legislation. This really is something that we should all be able to gather around and talk about, and be able to pass this at the utmost speed because this is something that is critically important to rural Canada.

I want to congratulate the member for Brandon—Souris once again for four and a half years of dedication to this legislation. He has introduced the bill three times and at the end of the day, it is as determined, as stubborn and as practical as he is.

I also want to mention and thank the member for Brandon—Souris for all the numerous phone calls and petitions that I have received from my constituents and librarians around my constituency. I have come to know more of my librarians a lot better after they have called me and explained to me the benefits of the library book rate to them and how critical it is that they have some consistency in this form of payment.

It is like when we talk about municipal government. When I was in municipal government, it was great when politicians came in and cut a ribbon with us, but it really was tough to balance the books year after year when we were not sure how many grants we were going to get the following year.

What this bill would do is help stabilize for our libraries the rate going forward and it would, I believe, bring the responsibility back to Parliament for changing that rate. I think we as elected officials should be the ones who have a say in this because it does affect all of our local communities so very much.

This bill is critically important to communities in my riding, such as, Mallaig, Barrhead, Westlock, Neerlandia, Elk Point, and St. Paul, that rely on interlibrary loans and rely on that rate staying at a discount and staying competitive.

The library is something that I utilized first as a young child in rural Alberta. There is not a bookstore around every corner. We go to the local library. I have to confess I was a Hardy Boys fan myself. I know the Speaker was a big fan of Nancy Drew. This library book rate helps us access not only these kinds of book but books by Tolstoy and other books that help expand the minds of rural Canadians and help educate the minds of rural Canadians.

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It is critically important now, not only after we have been through the system but for my children, such as Ayden, who is now starting to go to the library and is reading ferociously, and who does not want to be limited in her local library as to how many books she can get. She should be able to access books from around the world. Thankfully, due to things like the library book rate and interlibrary loans, we have that ability.

I first learned about the importance of this when I was a municipal politician. I was elected at the municipal level and in one of the first committees that I was assigned to, I was to proud to represent our local library as the municipal leader there. I was then off to the regional library system to represent our local libraries there. We find the difficulties that our libraries have in staying competitive and keeping the bottom line at a reasonable rate, while still maintaining an excellent service to our constituents and to their clients, who are the youth of our generation.

• (1400)

I must admit I was somewhat of a fiscal conservative. I know some people call those neanderthals, but I believed that we needed to hold the bottom line. It was there that I realized the library book rate was essential to keep our libraries effective. It was essential to keep them growing and expanding for the customers. They moved into DVDs and CDs, long before this bill was ever put forward.

The local libraries tell me how important it is and what a cost savings it will be to them to have DVDs and CDs included. Now big books of Braille and with block letters that are harder to read can be transcribed onto CDs and DVDs. There will be a much reduced cost to the government and to the taxpayers to move these books around.

I had an interesting discussion this morning with the Minister of Agriculture. We talked about how important this bill was. He talked about the Internet. As a forward-thinking rural Canadian, he is always looking after rural Canadians. He brought up how important it was that libraries had access to the Internet. In my communities, oftentimes this is one of the only places rural Canadians, young boys or girls, can go and access free Internet services outside of their own homes.

This shows that libraries are moving forward, but we have to keep the libraries as an essential piece of our communities. In rural Canada the library is not just a place to go to pick up books or to access the Internet. It is also the place where moms and tots gather and where small groups bring their kids and meet new people who have moved into the community. I know when my family first moved to St. Paul, the library was the place where my wife took our children to meet other kids their age, to learn to read and to do different exercises.

Without things like the interlibrary loans and the library book rate, our libraries would be less effective and have fewer hours. This is very important legislation for us.

Once again, I thank the member for Brandon—Souris for putting forward this bill and for having the ingenuity and the determination to stick with it. It is important that we all gather around and do the right thing on this. As I said in the beginning of my speech, it is important that this is a non-partisan bill. This really does benefit rural

Canadians and rural youth. I wish him the best of luck and thank him.

• (1405)

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in this place and to speak to this bill that has been brought forward by my colleague from Brandon—Souris. Let me also commend him as the colleague from Westlock—St. Paul has done for his perseverance in keeping this before the House. I know he has been at this for four and a half years. It has been introduced three times and he has done a very good job each time.

I was just going through my BlackBerry and I noted that on Saturday, April 24, I was in Chestermere Lake attending the Chestermere Public Library spring gala. I recall waking up early in the morning that day, heading in a snow storm to an early meeting in Hanna and then a board meeting and then heading to Three Hills for a graduation ceremony. I travelled close to Calgary into Chestermere for the gala, where the theme was the 1920s. In the midst of this spring snow storm, the hall was full. It was held at the golf course. People came in the costumes of the 1920s. Music from the 1920s was being played and people were there to support their local library. They understood that if the library were going to succeed, if the library were going to meet the needs of their community, they had a role to play in that. The community came out in force that night to enjoy the evening, first of all, but also to raise some significant dollars through a live auction and also a silent auction.

Make no mistake about it, throughout my rural constituency, these types of meetings are held fairly frequently. People were there because they have a remarkable library in Chestermere. I can recall going into the Hanna and the Bashaw libraries and getting tours through a number of libraries in my riding. This issue of the library book rate, this issue of funding and being able to shuffle or move books around from library to library, was always brought forward to me by librarians and parents.

In my hometown of Killam, the post office sits kitty-corner to the public school and the community library. I am amazed at the number of people who frequent that library. In the summertime, it is not uncommon to see young mothers pulling a wagon or pushing a stroller with one or two children, heading down to the local library. Young—

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay: Only young parents? What about old mothers?

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Well, old mothers, too. Mr. Speaker, the member from Toronto asks, what about old mothers? Well, there were old mothers as well, but it is usually younger mothers pulling infants and children in the wagons.

So it is a facility that is used and not abused.

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The member for Brandon—Souris also talked about those who are homebound and forced to stay in their homes or communities and how they access the libraries.

We need to thank the member for Brandon—Souris for bringing this bill forward to be debated, and to go to committee and to be looked at. It is going to be a positive thing when we get to know a little more about the savings from having this rate. We know the history of it. I think that when we look back to 1939, when we were a young country trying to develop local communities, we recognized the need then to work together to help each other succeed by accessing more resources for our local libraries, and that is where this came up.

●(1410)

I have already talked about what this means to local libraries. I think all members would agree with me in wishing that those who are watching today could see the amount of correspondence that we receive on this issue. Libraries are very good at mobilizing their users, and I applaud them for that. It helps us to represent them when we know the significance of legislation such as the bill we are debating today.

I want to go over some of the points that have been raised already. There are over 2,000 libraries throughout this country that use the book rate. One million Canadians benefit from this service annually. It is an important part of the service that the libraries offer to the public. It is important for the moms and other people who frequent the libraries. Let me also say that academically, this is also a very important bill because this is going to ensure that rural libraries that

may be part of a local school can access resources for the school. Academically this gives a hand up to people in rural ridings.

My riding, as I mentioned earlier, is a rural riding with many small communities, villages, hamlets, and towns. They are already feeling the pinch. I can recall when utility rates took a little bit of a spike in Alberta. I received a letter from one library that said the library was run by volunteers, that it had a limited budget and its utility bills had gone up by \$600. I recall receiving that letter three or four years ago which asked, "How can we keep our library open? What are the things that we can do to keep the library open?"

It is very important that we look at bills like this one and recognize that we are not guaranteed universality all the time, or access to some of these resources, but for our rural ridings, it is an integral part of the community.

I thank the member for Brandon—Souris for persevering, for sticking to it and bringing the bill forward. I wish him all the success as the bill goes to committee, we hope, where we will have the opportunity to study it some more.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Crowfoot will still have two minutes remaining to make remarks on this bill.

However, the time provided for the consideration of private members' business has expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

It being 2:15 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:15 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MR. RODGER CUZNER

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. JACQUES GOURDE

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MR. JOE PRESTON

MR. MARCEL PROULX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Third Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Seniors)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	BQ
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	Ind.
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	British Columbia	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Généreux, Bernard	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario) ..	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville ..	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Simcoe—Grey	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	Ind. Cons.
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques ...	Québec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River ...	British Columbia	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North ..	Ontario	NDP
Ignatieff, Hon. Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca ...	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster ...	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Ontario	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's ...	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) ..	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance ..	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport).....	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound ...	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria.....	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard.....	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre.....	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliphant, Robert.....	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Ouellet, Christian.....	Brome—Missisquoi.....	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Paillé, Daniel	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	Québec	BQ
Paquette, Pierre.....	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Natural Resources	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat.....	Alberta	CPC
Pearson, Glen.....	London North Centre.....	Ontario	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.....	Québec	CPC
Plamondon, Louis.....	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment.....	Calgary Centre-North.....	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ...	Ontario	CPC
Proulx, Marcel.....	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John.....	Thunder Bay—Rainy River ...	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc.....	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East.....	Ontario	Lib.
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff.....	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Thompson, Hon. Greg, New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valeriote, Francis	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of International Trade	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
VACANCY	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Third Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Seniors)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ.	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	CPC
MANITOBA (13)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
VACANCY	Winnipeg North	
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Thompson, Hon. Greg, New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Simcoe—Grey	Simcoe—Grey	Ind. Cons.
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP
Ignatieff, Hon. Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Lib.
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Valeriotte, Francis	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of International Trade	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Généreux, Bernard	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska— Rivière-du-Loup	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute- Côte-Nord	BQ
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paillé, Daniel	Hochelaga	BQ
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Natural Resources	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane— Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thaï	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
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Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River ..	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of May 28, 2010 — 3rd Session, 40th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Bruce Stanton	Vice-Chairs:	Jean Crowder Todd Russell	
Larry Bagnell	John Duncan	Yvon Lévesque	LaVar Payne	(12)
Rob Clarke	Marc Lemay	Anita Neville	Greg Rickford	
Earl Dreeshen				

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Jim Abbott	Rick Casson	Randy Kamp	Brent Rathgeber
Harold Albrecht	Michael Chong	Gerald Keddy	Scott Reid
Mike Allen	Nathan Cullen	Greg Kerr	Blake Richards
Dean Allison	John Cummins	Ed Komarnicki	Lee Richardson
Rob Anders	Patricia Davidson	Daryl Kramp	Andrew Saxton
David Anderson	Bob Dechert	Mike Lake	Gary Schellenberger
Charlie Angus	Dean Del Mastro	Guy Lauzon	Bev Shipley
Scott Armstrong	Jean Dorion	Pierre Lemieux	Devinder Shory
Niki Ashton	Ken Dryden	Megan Leslie	Joy Smith
Gérard Asselin	Kirsty Duncan	Ben Lobb	Kevin Sorenson
Carolyn Bennett	Rick Dykstra	Tom Lukiwski	Brian Storseth
Leon Benoit	Ed Fast	James Lunney	David Sweet
Maxime Bernier	Carole Freeman	Dave MacKenzie	Greg Thompson
Dennis Bevington	Royal Galipeau	Inky Mark	David Tilson
James Bezan	Cheryl Gallant	Pat Martin	Brad Trost
Steven Blaney	Bernard Généreux	Tony Martin	Justin Trudeau
Kelly Block	Shelly Glover	Colin Mayes	Merv Tweed
Sylvie Boucher	Peter Goldring	Phil McColeman	Tim Uppal
Ray Boughen	Jacques Gourde	Cathy McLeod	Dave Van Kesteren
Peter Braid	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Maurice Vellacott
Garry Breitkreuz	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Mike Wallace
Gordon Brown	Laurie Hawn	Rick Norlock	Mark Warawa
Lois Brown	Russ Hiebert	Tilly O'Neill-Gordon	Chris Warkentin
Patrick Brown	Randy Hoback	Deepak Obhrai	Jeff Watson
Rod Bruinooge	Candice Hoepfner	Daniel Petit	John Weston
Dona Cadman	Ed Holder	Pierre Poilievre	Rodney Weston
Paul Calandra	Carol Hughes	Joe Preston	Alice Wong
Blaine Calkins	Bruce Hyer	John Rafferty	Stephen Woodworth
Ron Cannan	Brian Jean	James Rajotte	Terence Young
Colin Carrie			

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Paul Szabo

Vice-Chairs:Patricia Davidson
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Rick CassonWayne Easter
Judy FooteCarole Freeman
Pierre PoilievreGreg Rickford
Ève-Mary Thai Thi Lac

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Mike Allen	Dean Del Mastro	Mike Lake	Lee Richardson
Dean Allison	Earl Dreshen	Guy Lauzon	Andrew Saxton
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Charlie Angus	Ed Fast	Ben Lobb	Devinder Shory
Scott Armstrong	Christiane Gagnon	Tom Lukiwski	Michelle Simson
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Gordon Brown	Michel Guimond	Serge Ménard	Merv Tweed
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Patrick Brown	Jack Harris	Larry Miller	Dave Van Kesteren
Rod Bruinooge	Richard Harris	Anita Neville	Maurice Vellacott
Dona Cadman	Laurie Hawn	Rick Norlock	Mike Wallace
Paul Calandra	Russ Hiebert	Tilly O'Neill-Gordon	Mark Warawa
Blaine Calkins	Randy Hoback	Deepak Obhrai	Chris Warkentin
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Michael Chong	Brian Jean	LaVar Payne	Rodney Weston
David Christopherson	Marlene Jennings	Daniel Petit	Alice Wong
Rob Clarke	Randy Kamp	Joe Preston	Stephen Woodworth
Joe Comartin	Gerald Keddy	James Rajotte	Borys Wrzesnewskyj
John Cummins	Greg Kerr	Brent Rathgeber	Terence Young

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair: Larry Miller

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France Bonsant
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Pierre Lemieux

Blake Richards
Bev Shipley

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Francis Valeriote

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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Vice-Chairs:

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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

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Rodney Weston
Stephen Woodworth
Lise Zarac

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Alan Tonks
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Dave Van Kesteren
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John McCallumJohn McKay
Ted MenziesThomas Mulcair
Mike Wallace

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Mr. Mike Lake	to the Minister of Industry
Mr. Ted Menzies	to the Minister of Finance
Mr. Tom Lukiwski	to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
Mr. Dave MacKenzie	to the Minister of Public Safety
Mr. Pierre Lemieux	to the Minister of Agriculture
Mr. David Anderson	to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board
Mr. Rick Dykstra	to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Mrs. Alice Wong	for Multiculturalism
Mr. Dean Del Mastro	to the Minister of Canadian Heritage
Mrs. Sylvie Boucher	for Status of Women
Mrs. Shelly Glover	for Official Languages
Mr. Colin Carrie	to the Minister of Health
Mr. Randy Kamp	to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

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