



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 146 • NUMBER 132 • 1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, June 1, 2012

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 1, 2012

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

•(1005)

[English]

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill to which the concurrence of the House is desired: S-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PROTECTING CANADA'S IMMIGRATION SYSTEM ACT

The House resumed from May 17 consideration of Bill C-31, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, the Marine Transportation Security Act and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, and we are speaking at report stage.

Unfortunately, we are debating what I would call irresponsible opposition amendments that try to gut this important piece of legislation. I would like to take a few minutes to explain what the negative consequences would be if the NDP and the Liberals succeeded in delaying and stopping this bill from going forward.

Bill C-31, once passed, will make Canada's asylum system much faster and fairer. The most negative and important consequence of the opposition amendments would be that legitimate refugees would have to wait longer to receive Canada's much needed protection. Under the current system, it takes almost two years for a decision. Our Conservative government believes that is unfair and unacceptable. That is one of the main reasons we have introduced Bill C-31.

By introducing and supporting the opposition amendments, the NDP and Liberals are telling true refugees fleeing war and persecution around this world, many who literally have scars on their backs, that they should wait longer than is necessary to receive Canada's protection and for the certainty and piece of mind that comes with that protection. This is truly shameful.

The measures in Bill C-31 unquestionably complement Canada's proud humanitarian tradition of providing protection for those who are most in need of it. That tradition manifests itself in many internationally recognized ways. For example, Canada is one of only about 20 countries in the world that resettle refugees. In fact, we annually resettle about one out of every ten refugees who are resettled globally, more than almost any country in this world. That is something that we can be proud of. The government has pledged to continue this tradition. By 2013, Canada will resettle up to 14,500 refugees. That is an increase of 2,500 refugees since 2010.

On top of this, every year Canada grants protection inside the country to thousands of asylum seekers. Bill C-31 will continue to move forward Canada's strong humanitarian tradition. With that being said, no one should doubt that there are many concerns with the way that our current refugee system operates. We know there is significant abuse of the system and of Canadians' generosity. Bill C-31 would help address those problems.

Let us take a look at the facts. In 2011, 62% of all asylum claims were either abandoned or withdrawn by the claimant or rejected by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. Far too many taxpayer dollars are being spent on such claims. Indeed, the average failed refugee claim costs taxpayers around \$55,000.

Another concern is the recent spike in refugee claims from countries that are generally considered to be safe. These are countries with traditions similar to our own with respect to human rights and commitments to the rule of law. For instance, Canadians would be interested to know that last year nationals from European Union countries accounted for about a quarter of all refugee claims made in Canada. That is over 5,800 claims from the European Union in 2011, more than the claims that are received from Asia or Africa.

What is more, virtually all of the asylum claims made from EU countries were abandoned or withdrawn by claimants, which is their own admission that they were bogus, or they were rejected by the independent IRB. The cost to hard-working Canadian taxpayers for those unfounded claims is at least \$170 million per year.

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These facts speak for themselves. A large number of asylum seekers in Canada are simply not in need of our protection. Instead of waiting patiently to come to Canada through the proper immigration process, too many of these people are trying to use our asylum system as a back door to gain entry into Canada. The very unfortunate result is a clogged refugee system where those who legitimately need protection must wait far too long before we can process their claims.

Canadians are generous. They want to provide protection to those who are genuinely in need. However, I can tell the House that Canadians have no tolerance for those who blatantly seek to abuse that generosity. We need to send a clear message on behalf of Canadians on this, that being that if they are not in need of our protection they will be sent home quickly.

I would like to try offering an explanation about why the current system results in so many unfounded claims.

● (1010)

To begin, too much of our time is spent on processing applications from people whose applications for asylum are ultimately rejected. This has contributed to a significant backlog of cases at the Immigration and Refugee Board. Currently, about 42,000 claims are pending. In a nutshell, the current system is too slow, not only for our refugees who are genuinely in need of our protection, but also for dealing with bogus claimants who seek to abuse our system and our generosity.

Long wait times make Canada a much more attractive target for those whose only motivation for seeking asylum is to take advantage of our many generous social benefits while they wait for a decision. Ultimately, again, it is hard-working Canadian taxpayers who end up footing that very expensive bill.

Under the current system, claimants can access taxpayer-funded health care and claim social assistance for several years while their claim is still pending. On average, it can take up to four and a half years from the time an initial claim is made until a failed claimant is removed from Canada. In some cases, this process has taken more than 10 years. Every Canadian I know would say that this is clearly unacceptable.

The situation is also far too cumbersome which makes it more vulnerable to abuse. Bogus claimants who seek to abuse our system know they have many avenues and many different layers of recourse. They know they can further prolong their time here by seeking these different avenues of recourse. That is precisely what many of them do to further delay their removal from Canada.

The NDP members have praised the goals of this bill. They have said that the system needs to be faster and that more needs to be done to crack down on those who abuse the system. I will quote the NDP immigration critic and MP for Vancouver Kingsway who had this to say:

I think what we need to do is build a system that has a fast and fair determination process. And that's something that I'll give [the minister] credit for. I do think that's what his intention has been all along. And we all want to work towards that. We don't want endless dragging on of this stuff because refugees, when they come here, you know, they do qualify for basic sustenance...it is at the cost of the Canadian taxpayer.... We want a fast, fair system where we can give a sanctuary to people who need it quickly and we can weed out the people who don't have valid claims, get

them through a fair process. And if they're not valid at the end of the day, deport them out of Canada swiftly.

The Liberal immigration critic and MP for Winnipeg North also has supported these goals. He said, "I support the need to make quick decisions in regards to refugees."

Countless others support Bill C-31 as well. Immigration experts, lawyers, settlement organizations and average Canadians all overwhelmingly support Bill C-31. They have all said that something needs to be done. Our Conservative government has now taken action.

I am not surprised, but I am disappointed, to see that while the opposition members say one thing, they have done quite another. Instead of working in good faith with our government to pass legislation that is in the best interest of Canadians and genuine refugees, they have chosen to play politics with this issue.

The measures in Bill C-31 would help protect the integrity of our immigration system. At the same time, they would not change the fact that Canada's refugee determination system remains one of the most generous in the world. If the measures contained in Bill C-31 are implemented, Canada will be able to develop a faster, fairer refugee system that better protects those who genuinely need our protection. We will also be able to remove bogus asylum claimants from the country faster. Too many taxpayer dollars continue to be spent on bogus applications from people who are not in need of protection.

It is for these reasons that I implore all members in this House to vote against the NDP and Liberal amendments. I ask them to support Bill C-31 and help to ensure its speedy passage.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech with some interest. I disagree with his analysis of our position. I think that he is being disingenuous when he talks about the NDP supporting a bill that turns around a bill that we worked on in the last Parliament where we made compromises and came to conclusions. The former Bill C-11 was supported by all parties. However, this bill turns around many of the things that were included in that bill.

Why does the hon. member think that in the short period of a year and a half we should turn around our thinking on an important issue such as refugees and the changes that are required to ensure that their part in Canada is well protected?

● (1015)

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the only turnaround that is taking place here is the NDP members' support for the bill and their position on it. It is my understanding that in committee they supported Conservative amendments. They supported at least two of the amendments that Conservatives made at committee. That would lead us to believe that they were fairly happy with the bill and the way that it was going and that they supported the direction we are taking, as I quoted members who supported its concepts. Now they are making 85 amendments in the House, trying to completely destroy the bill.

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The member across the way talks about a turnaround. There is no turnaround on this side of the House. We stand for the protection of those who are genuine refugees. We also stand for the protection of taxpayers. Taxpayers are ultimately going to pay the extra costs that are being borne by the system when bogus refugee claims are in that system.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the executive committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has warned that “in view of the hardship which it involves, detention should normally be avoided”. Canada is a signatory to the convention through which the High Commissioner for Refugees functions. Yet the bill, as a matter of normal course, will involve the detention of anyone who arrives by what the minister deems to be irregular entry. This appears punitive. Yet the minister says there is no attempt here to put forward punitive detention. It seems to me we are flying in the face of our international commitments.

I would ask my friend the hon. parliamentary secretary how he would square this circle? How is this not in direct violation of our international commitments to protect the rights of refugees?

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, Canada has a great and long tradition of protecting refugees. Many of the people who have settled in this country are refugees. They were escaping from different types of totalitarian regimes, different types of persecution around the world.

To answer the member's question directly, it is my understanding that less than one half of 1% of refugees will be impacted by any of the detention clauses that are presented in the bill. It is aimed specifically at those who come here with what are called irregular arrivals. We had examples of folks showing up on a boat and we did not have any idea of who they were, or if their identification was accurate or not. There is a need to protect the Canadian public and to find out who people are and what they are here for before they are allowed to settle in our country.

I have had the opportunity to deal with some of the religious persecution issues. We need to be a country that is open to bringing in folks who are being persecuted, whose lives are in danger. There are many places in this world that imprison individuals on issues of religious faith. People are being threatened with death. Canada needs to be a place that is open to having them come to this country. We need to welcome them as we always have.

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has done an excellent job of outlining his position and in responding specifically to the issues.

He mentioned those he has assisted with respect to religious persecution. I would like to give him an opportunity to speak a little further about those who are genuine refugees and actually need our assistance here in Canada.

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the great work that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has done on this legislation and on so many of these issues. He is far more knowledgeable than I am on these issues.

In many areas around the world people are persecuted just for making a choice to believe. They should have the freedom to be able

to make their own choices. They should be able to believe as they choose. They should be able to act that out as they choose as long as it does not invade their neighbours' space or violate other people's rights. We realize that is not the case in big parts of this world. There are regimes that have specifically targeted religious minorities. They are threatening them with persecution and death. We need to be open to bringing those people in.

I just need to quickly point out that Canada's top source of refugee claims last year was Hungary. When most of our refugee claimants are coming from the European Union, we need to do something to correct that situation and allow genuine refugees to be able to come here and settle.

• (1020)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-31, but before I get into my speaking points, I did not have an opportunity to reply to the parliamentary secretary for natural resources and I want to put on record the very clear NDP position on this.

First, I want to acknowledge the good work done by the member for Newton—North Delta and the member for Vancouver Kingsway. The member for Newton—North Delta indicated that witness after witness at the committee meetings studying Bill C-31 told us that the legislation was fundamentally flawed, unconstitutional and that it concentrated too much power in the hands of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Bill C-31 would effectively punish legitimate refugees and do nothing to stop human smuggling because none of the NDP substantive amendments were adopted by the government members at committee and because MPs from all parties just passed the balanced refugee reform package in the last Parliament. The member for Newton—North Delta recommended that all clauses be deleted from this legislation. I think that is a fairly clear position from the NDP.

I also must correct the record around the member for Vancouver Kingsway. I know all members of the House at various times selectively quote from speeches and press releases, but I want to indicate that the member for Vancouver Kingsway actually said that Bill C-31 was a bill that was “...unconstitutional, violates international conventions, punishes refugees and harms Canada's long reputation as a responsible recipient of those needing protection”. That is from the website of the Canadian Council for Refugees. I think that is fairly unequivocal about the NDP position on Bill C-31.

As responsible parliamentarians, the New Democrats studied the bill very carefully. I would remind people that it is another omnibus bill, which seems to be a pattern that we are seeing from the Conservatives. They are not allowing parliamentarians to divide bills up and have thorough and considered study of each section of the bill to ensure we are not having unintended consequences and that the impact is exactly what the bill was intended to do. We have seen other examples in the House where we have had to go back and correct after the fact when we have made errors in bills that have been passed.

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Bill C-31 would repeal most of the compromises from the former Bill C-11, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, which was from the 40th Parliament. It received all party support. Again, members from the New Democrats worked very hard with other parties to ensure that it was a more balanced approach. Bill C-31 re-introduces Bill C-4, human smuggling, which targets refugees instead of the smugglers, and it introduces the collection of biometrics for temporary residents.

I do not have enough time in 10 minutes to go through all aspects of the bill, but I will touch on a couple of points. The bill would concentrate more powers in the hands of the minister by allowing him or her to name safe countries and to restrict refugees from these countries. Under the former Bill C-11, this was to be done by a panel of experts, including human rights experts. It would restrict access to humanitarian and compassionate consideration. It includes a clause that would prohibit refugee claimants who have been incarcerated in their home country for over 10 years and would not allow for tribunal discretion in the case of political prisoners. One that has been pointed out in this context is Nelson Mandela who was convicted and sentenced for sabotage in the apartheid era of South Africa. Although the New Democrats agree that Canada should not accept those with a criminal background, many refugees are actually fleeing political persecution and some consideration must be given to those refugees.

The bill would allow arbitrary designation of irregular arrivals and their mandatory incarceration.

Bill C-31 re-introduces most of the provisions of Bill C-4, which were widely condemned by refugee advocates and are likely unconstitutional. It would change the Balanced Refugee Reform Act 2010 without even implementing the law as it is. That act was passed by the minority Parliament after a series of compromises led by the NDP and was set to come into effect in June 2012.

I want to emphasize a couple of key points. The bill would punish refugees and would not address the problem of human smuggling. We just passed the Balanced Refugee Reform Act last year and the Conservatives are going back on that compromise that they spoke in favour of mere months ago. The minister wants to concentrate more arbitrary power in the minister's hands to treat refugees differently depending on how they come to Canada.

There were some amendments that were considered. This was not only through the NDP but also by refugees and stakeholder groups. A couple of these amendments were to allow for initial detention review at 14 days initially and subsequently at six months, and to clarify that the government would not have the power to revoke the permanent residency of successful refugee claimants if conditions should change in their countries of origin unless it was found that they obtained their status through fraudulent means.

• (1025)

However, it is important to note that these amendments did not deal with a number of very serious situations: provisions that would give the minister the power to hand-pick which countries he or she thinks are safe without the advice from any independent experts; measures to deny some refugees access to the new Refugee Appeal Division based on how they arrived; and a five-year mandatory wait

for bona fide refugees to become permanent residents and reunite with their families, again based on how they arrive in the country.

A number of other serious concerns were highlighted as potentially unconstitutional or potentially in violation of our international obligations.

We are specifically talking about refugees, but many of our constituency offices end up dealing with significant amounts of casework as a result of immigration, whether it be visitors visas, refugee claims or a number of other factors like that. I am dealing with two cases in my riding. One case concerns a family member who is now in Canada. The person is professional, hard-working and has been in the country for a number of years. Her sister has been applying to come to Canada as a resident. She has been on the list for seven years and she is a skilled, professional worker. We have no idea what is going to happen to her application. Despite the number of years she has been on the list, the amount of money she has paid and that she has done everything that she needed to do, she will not be able to come to Canada even though she is one of those skilled workers we are looking for. This family, which has been waiting patiently for seven years, has been thrown into turmoil.

The second case I am dealing with concerns a visitors visa. The person was born and raised in Canada and he married somebody from another country. This woman has adult children in the other country who are professionals and who have extended families and property. They just want to come here to visit mom and dad. These family members have been repeatedly denied visitors visas because they are deemed to be a threat or risk to not return, despite their very clear ties to their home country. What will happen in this case is that this Canadian family, with significant assets in this country, will sell its assets and move to the country where the woman's family lives. What we will have here is the loss of a professional and his wife who live in the country and the loss of their significant assets because the other country will welcome them with open arms. We need to look seriously at some of this processing.

In its comments on the amendments, the Canadian Council for Refugees stated:

While the CCR welcomes changes that improve protection for refugees in Canada, the majority of the CCR's key concerns with the bill remain, including:

Provisions to designate 'irregular arrivals' and 'safe countries' (also referred to as 'designated countries of origin') that discriminate simply because of a person's origin or method of arrival

Speedy and inflexible timelines that prevent people from telling their stories and preparing their cases properly

A five-year ban on permanent residence applications and family reunification for "irregular arrivals" once they are recognized as refugees

Mandatory detention for some claimants

The Canadian Council for Refugees concludes:

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Unfortunately, other amendments represent a step backwards with respect to restrictions for claimants from 'safe countries' applying for a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA). In its original form, Bill C-31 put in place a 12-month bar; the amended version of the bill will increase this to 36 months. This change renders the PRRA ineffective.

We have an organization that works hard on behalf of refugees and it cannot support this bill. Surely the opinion of somebody who has the face-to-face knowledge from working for years with refugees should be considered.

I will close with a comment by Dr. Meb Rashid who said that as a physician who has had the privilege of working with refugee populations for over 10 years, he was deeply concerned about the impact of mandatory detention on the health status of an often overly traumatized population.

I urge all members of this House to oppose the bill.

•(1030)

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for participating in the debate on this important bill. I would, however, remind her that this is not an omnibus bill. These are all amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the vast majority of which deal with essentially the same scope of issues. They all deal with the integrity of our system.

The member is the first person I have heard suggest that this is an omnibus bill. Moreover, I would suggest that this bill has received very fulsome consideration. In fact, we have had more than 13 days of debate, almost 50 hours of debate and now over 130 speeches. At committee, we had 15 committee meetings with over 43 hours listening to 109 witnesses. Much of this bill was already considered in an earlier Parliament, with respect to the human smuggling provisions and the refugee reform provisions. Therefore, I would challenge that assertion.

I would, however, ask the member what I have asked every opposition MP. What does she propose as an effective legal disincentive for human smugglers who would target Canada and further would-be clients? Does the member have any constructive ideas about how we could dissuade such people from coming to Canada in such a dangerous and illegal fashion?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the minister is correct in that it is not an omnibus and that is not changing a number of different acts. I was referring to it more in terms of the very broad scope and the impact that it would have on immigrants to this country, refugees and their families. The minister is correct in that respect.

I think there are a number of organizations that we can work with in this country in terms of targeting smugglers and working with the international community. We do take our responsibility seriously. I also agree that Canadians do not want to see human trafficking and human smuggling take place. However, we would also argue that we do not target the refugee but actually target the smugglers.

We need to respect our international conventions and work with international organizations because the problem is that it is often not made in Canada, it comes from another country.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I do think we recognize, as the hon. minister pointed out, that this is

specific legislation dealing with a specific area of immigration policy, and that there have been changes accepted.

Those changes are improvements, but I am still not able to support the bill as it now stands because I believe we cannot treat a class of refugees, simply because they arrive by boat, differently from how we would treat anyone else. We could legitimately have an entire boatload of people escaping religious persecution. It would not matter the reason they had arrived on our shores, they would go to detention.

That is my understanding of the bill. I would ask my hon. friend if she thinks I have misunderstood the government's intent?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, actually, Amnesty International has raised this as an issue about looking at how a group of refugees comes. It cites article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which reads:

Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.

The same article stipulates that anyone who is deprived of his or her liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before a court and so on.

Other organizations are also raising concerns about how we are targeting refugees, on how they arrive in Canada and on how we are treating them differently.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP has been very clear since we started debate on this motion that we are absolutely in support of targeting the smugglers and that we should be working with the international community to ensure that they get the punishment they deserve and all the disincentives.

However, we are not in favour of punishing the victims, which is what this bill would do.

Could my colleague tell us exactly what will happen to children who are under 16 when they arrive on one of these boats?

•(1035)

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, my understanding of this bill is that children under the age of 16 would often be treated the same way as adults. The physician whose comment I was reading was targeting how many of these young people are traumatized in their countries of origin and here we will add to that trauma. We would argue that it violates the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We would urge the government to review that section of the bill.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour, obviously, to speak to this bill.

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I come from a community which, as I have said many times in the House, is the largest riding in the country. Some 250,000 people call my riding home. It is a community that has been built on immigration. Specifically, over the last 30 years, my community has grown dramatically in leaps and bounds. The entire York region has grown by leaps and bounds because of immigration to our community. Markham is one of the most diverse municipalities, if not the most diverse city, in all of Canada. We are proud of that because in Markham, Stouffville, King City and Richmond Hill, the communities that I represent, we understand that immigration is important to our communities. Immigration is what helps build and boost our economy. We understand that diversity is a strength, not a weakness.

I have to take a moment to congratulate the minister and the parliamentary secretary. What has been most impressive with this legislation, and in the last Parliament as well, is the ability of the minister and the parliamentary secretary to sit down with individuals to bring bills forward and to come to a consensus that is not only good for Canadians, but is good for those who would seek to come to Canada.

I had the pleasure of being on the immigration committee in the last Parliament when we studied a previous bill. We heard continually that the bill we brought forward then, which received the unanimous support of Parliament, was the first step in addressing what were many problems within the immigration system. It is absolutely no secret that when we took office, we were left with a system which had a backlog of a million people waiting to come to Canada. In the past, the first experience for people who wanted to come to this country was applying through the immigration system and being told that they would have to wait some seven to ten years before they would actually gain entrance into Canada. Many of them had moved on to other places. Some had fallen off the list for other reasons. We were not keeping track of things.

The minister, the parliamentary secretary and this government decided that we had to do something about that. If Canada was to continue to remain a prosperous country, we had to do better to encourage the right type of people to come to Canada so that we could continue the strong economic growth that we have had. The minister set out to make some changes. We worked with our provincial partners to make sure the people we were attracting to Canada were the type of people our economy required. We sat down with our provincial partners to find out the job categories they were looking to fill. They helped us create categories where we could encourage people with the needed skills to come to Canada.

We also told people that when they come to Canada, we want to get them employed faster. This government has moved very quickly to recognize foreign credentials so that when people come to Canada, they can actually be productive members of our society as soon as possible.

These are the types of changes we have started to make. Under the Balanced Refugee Reform Act we went even further.

We always said that we needed to do more to make sure that our immigration system reflected Canada's values and to put Canada first. What we are doing now is making some additional changes to our refugee system to ensure that Canada remains the best

destination in the world for people to come to, but to also remove the disincentive for those people who would seek to take advantage of our generosity.

Recently, there were two ships that came to Canada. My community was the final destination for many of the people who were aboard those two ships. I recall the diverse opinions from people across my community. There was an immediate sense of wondering who the individuals coming to Canada were and what it was that they were fleeing. People wanted to know more about them.

This government had to put in place mechanisms. Through this legislation we are putting in place mechanisms that will make sure that people who seek to come to Canada actually require the assistance and protection of the Government of Canada, and our continued generosity. Unfortunately, in the past we have seen that there are individuals who would seek to take advantage of Canada's immigration policies. That is not how this country was built.

● (1040)

My parents came to this country in the late 1950s, early 1960s from Italy. They came in at Pier 21, as many immigrants did. Like millions of other hard-working immigrants, they came to this country, worked hard, loved this country, and were very proud to be Canadians. They contributed not only to the community but also to the province and to the country until the day they died. That is the type of immigrant this country is seeking.

This country also does its part in making sure that those who are in need of protection get Canada's protection, but we will not stand for people seeking to take advantage of this generosity. Canadians do not expect us to stand for that.

We made it clear in the last election and in the throne speech that we intended to seek further changes to our immigration policies to make sure we put Canadians first, to make sure we put the protection of vulnerable individuals first. That is what we are doing.

When there are more refugee claimants from Europe than there are from other places in the world where there is an absolute need, then we have a problem that needs to be addressed. That is what we are doing.

My community is one of the most diverse communities in the entire country. I am proud to say that my riding of Oak Ridges—Markham is home to Canada's newest national park, the Rouge National Park. My riding is the largest in the entire country. It is also the breadbasket of southern Ontario. Some of the most fertile lands in all of southern Ontario are located in my riding, through Whitchurch, Stouffville, northern Markham, King City. This is the time of year when our farmers seek the assistance of people from all over the world to help them plant and bring in their crops, and to make sure that their fields remain some of the most productive.

We are making changes to the immigration system that will allow us to continue that and will also allow us to seek the people this country needs to continue what has been the best global economic recovery of any nation in the world.

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We are doing very well in this country not only because of policies that have been brought in by the Minister of Finance, but because of policies that the Minister of Immigration has brought in, the policies which have encouraged people to come to Canada.

I have the honour of representing the Department of Canadian Heritage. During the global economic downturn, we increased funding in culture and heritage because we understood that was important to the Canadian economy. No other G8 country did that. During the global economic downturn, while other G8 countries were reducing immigration, we were doing just the opposite. We were increasing immigration, because we understand how important immigration is to Canada and to our communities. We understand how important immigrants have been in helping to make this the best country in the world in which to live.

Canadians and people who seek to come to this country expect our immigration system to reflect what they need. We want to protect people faster. We want to make sure that those who need the support of this country get it. We want to make sure that those who seek to take advantage of our system, the human smugglers, are punished and that they are not given any incentives. We work with our international partners to make sure that we do our best to stop people before they actually get on the ships and pay the ransom they are asked to pay.

The member for Kildonan—St. Paul has been a tireless worker on human smuggling and protecting vulnerable women.

We on this side of the House understand a number of things. We understand that immigrants and the immigration system help to make this country a great place to live. We also understand that if we are going to continue to be the best country in the world, we have to do better to make sure that Canadians have confidence in the systems that support their government. That includes the immigration system.

We have tackled workers' credentials. We are tackling the backlog. Now we are reforming the refugee system to make sure that those who seek our protection actually get the protection that they deserve.

• (1045)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to sit across the aisle here and listen to some of the things that are being said about how much the government supports immigration and how much it supports refugees, when in fact, in this particular bill, two tiers of refugees are being created.

People are going to be recognized as refugees, but even after our recognition of them with all the criteria we use, we are still going to treat the refugees who arrive as so-called irregulars very differently. We will not be giving them any travel documents or permanent residency for five years after they have been recognized as refugees. They will not have any travel documents and they will not be able to bring their family members here to join them.

For a government that speaks so much about the family being central in Canadian society, why is the government attacking the families of the most vulnerable refugees who will land on our shores?

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. This government has done everything in its power to encourage people to come to this country, as my family did. This government will continue to support legitimate refugees and those immigrants who want to come to this country and help build a better Canadian society.

The member is specifically referencing people who come in as irregular arrivals. We need to find out who they are. Canadians expect their immigration system to make sure that we know exactly who they are.

In many cases, people have paid a ransom to human smugglers, whom the opposition seems to want to support. We do not want people coming here and bringing their families, also as slaves, to try and pay off a ransom they have been forced to pay to criminal elements who have put them on ships. Criminal elements are forcing people to pay \$25,000 to \$50,000 a year to come to Canada, when they could have come legitimately.

This government has made changes to the immigration system that actually encourage some of the highest levels of immigration in this country's history. We will not create new slaves, people who are beholden to criminal elements at home and abroad. This government will always put the rights of hard-working Canadians, hard-working immigrants and real refugees ahead of the criminal elements.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Brooks, Alberta, is a city in my riding that has a huge population of immigrants and refugees. On average, per capita, it is probably far greater than most other communities across this country. I have talked to those individuals, those immigrants and those refugees. They tell me that they are extremely upset with people who are jumping the queue.

How would this bill help us to protect the opportunity for people to come to this country as immigrants and refugees?

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, the member for Medicine Hat comes from a region of the country that is in an economic boom. His community requires hard-working skilled immigrants to help our Canadian economy continue to prosper.

The member is quite right. Canadians expect that those legitimate people who want to come to this country and be a productive part of our society should get priority. They should be able to get here as soon as they possibly can so that we can meet some of the labour shortages across the country to help the extraordinary economic recovery that we have had in this country.

Canadians also expect us to deal with those who would seek to take advantage of this Canadian generosity, those who would seek to circumvent the rules, and those criminal elements who would seek to take advantage of people in need, criminal elements who seek ransoms of \$25,000 to \$50,000 per person. We are going to put them out of business. That is what Canadians expect this government to do and we will do it.

Government Orders

• (1050)

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak today on Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, and to voice my strong opposition to the irresponsible NDP and Liberal amendments that will gut this necessary and important piece of legislation, which will improve the country's immigration system in a number of important ways.

Immigration is central to our country's history, to our prosperity, to our international reputation for generosity and humanitarianism and our great success as a nation. That is why I am pleased to speak today in support of a bill that is designed to ensure that our country has a strong, effective and efficient immigration system.

Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, aims to strengthen Canada's immigration system in three very specific ways.

First, it would further build on the long-needed reforms to the asylum system that were passed in Parliament in June 2010 as part of the Balanced Refugee Reform Act.

Second, it would allow Canadian authorities to better crack down on the lucrative business of human smuggling by integrating measures that the government previously introduced in the Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act.

Third, it would enable the introduction of biometric technology for screening visa applicants which would strengthen our immigration program in a number of important ways.

All these measures are important for many reasons and I would like to spell out how and why.

On refugee reform, Canada has the fairest and most generous asylum system in the world. In fact, we resettle more refugees than almost any country on the planet, and we are increasing that number by 20%, a record of which all Canadians can be proud. However, it is not a secret that our system is open to abuse. The facts paint a clear picture.

Last year asylum claims for democratic and rights respecting European Union countries made up a quarter of all claims in Canada. Shockingly, that is more than the claims we received from Africa and Asia. What is more, virtually all these asylum claims from the EU were either abandoned or withdrawn by the claimants or rejected by the independent IRB.

In other words, these people were not in need of Canada's protection when they applied to come to Canada as refugees, but they came anyway. They came to soak up our generous benefits and to try to jump the queue because they did not want to wait in line and follow the rules like everyone else. While here, these bogus claimants have access to our generous taxpayer-funded health care system and our welfare benefits. Indeed, the average bogus asylum seeker costs the taxpayers \$55,000 each.

The opposition can argue against this bill, but they cannot argue with those facts.

The measures in Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, would accelerate the processing of refugee claims,

especially for nationals from designated countries that generally would not produce refugees. They would also reduce the options available to failed claimants to delay their removal from Canada.

In short, these measures will help to prevent abuse of the system and will ensure that all our refugees determination processes are streamlined as much as possible. This will be accomplished without affecting the fairness of the system and without compromising any of Canada's international or domestic obligations with respect to refugees. Most important, by growing the refugee system in these ways, the legislation would also ensure that the refugee claimants who really needed our protection would get it even faster. For those who deserve to come to Canada, for those who are truly refugees, the system will become fairer and it will become faster.

As well with this new legislation, taxpayers are expected to save \$1.65 billion over the next five years. This is money that can go to health care, to education, to roads, to all the other things that we hold dear in our country.

As I mentioned at the top of my remarks, the second piece of the protecting Canada's immigration system act incorporates measures that address human smuggling.

Several months ago in the House the Minister of Public Safety introduced Bill C-4, preventing human smugglers from abusing Canada's immigration system act.

• (1055)

As my hon. colleagues are well aware, we debated that bill extensively throughout the fall sitting of Parliament. The anti-human smuggling measures contained the bill would help maintain the integrity of our generous immigration system, while curtailing the abuse of that system by human smugglers whose activities would undermine the security and safety of Canadians.

Cracking down on human smugglers is an important element of protecting the integrity of our immigration system. After listening to expert witnesses, Canadians and parliamentarians, the government has proposed amendments to the detention portion of that bill.

The amendments would allow for a first detention review within 14 days and subsequent reviews every 180 days. As before, a person would be released before this time upon being found to be a genuine refugee. As an additional safeguard, the government will also propose an amendment which allow the Minister of Public Safety, on his own initiative and at any time, to release a detained individual when grounds for that detention no longer exist. We are putting great protections in the system for true refugees.

Detaining individuals until their identity has been established is what any responsible government would and should do. The human smuggling groups include architects of these criminal operations, war criminals and serious criminals. These are not just perceived threats; these are real threats, threats to Canadians, threats to our seniors, threats to our children.

For example, on the *Sun Sea*, to date, four people have been found inadmissible to Canada for security reasons. One has been found inadmissible because of being guilty of war crimes.

In the *Ocean Lady*, to date, 19 people have been found inadmissible to Canada for security reasons, while 17 have been found inadmissible due to war crimes.

These are significant numbers. Unlike the NDP and the Liberals, our government wants to keep these people off the streets and out of our country. By opposing these provisions, the NDP and the Liberals are saying to their constituents that they want these inadmissible people, war criminals, these security threats, to be let into our communities where they will go underground immediately and be difficult to track and left to threatened the safety and security of all Canadians, our seniors, our children, our single moms. These people are true threats and it is our responsibility as parliamentarians to ensure they do not have access to Canada.

The first component of Bill C-31, protecting Canada's immigration system act, would create a legislative framework for the long-planned implementation of biometric technology as an identity management tool in our immigration and border control systems.

This component of the legislation and its corresponding regulations that would follow would allow the government to make it mandatory for certain visa applicants to Canada to have their photographs and fingerprints taken as part of their temporary resident visa applications. Because biometric data is more reliable and less prone to forgery or theft than other documents, these measures would strengthen immigration screening and enhance our security and help reduce fraud.

Biometrics form an effective tool to manage high volumes of applications and growing sophistication in identity fraud measures. Using biometrics will help prevent known criminals, failed refugee claimants and previous deportees from using false identities to obtain a Canadian visa. It will help prevent innocent Canadians from being victimized by foreign criminals who should not be in the country in the first place.

Implementing biometrics will bring Canada in line with a growing list of countries that already use biometrics in their immigration and border control programs.

I stand in strong support of Bill C-31, and congratulate the minister and the parliamentary secretary for bringing in needed amendments. I will support the bill and I ask the opposition parties to do the same.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The non. member for Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley will have five minutes remaining for questions and comments when the House next returns to the motion.

Statements by members, the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1100)

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last Sunday marked the amazing return of two children, Abby and

Statements by Members

Dominic Maryk, to their mother, Emily Cablek, after being abducted by their father to Mexico four years ago. The happy ending to this heart-wrenching case was the result of a joint effort of a number of partners.

I want to thank the incredible and relentless work of Winnipeg Police Inspector Gord Perrier, Detective Sergeant Shaunna Neufeld and the Winnipeg Police missing persons unit in finding and rescuing these children. That is amazing police work.

I also want to thank and highlight the invaluable assistance of Mexican congresswoman Rosi Orozco and the Mexican ambassador to Canada, Ambassador Francisco Barrio-Terrazas, as well as consular officials and our very own Minister of State for Consular Affairs, as well as the RCMP and the CBSA.

It is a wonderful day when we can wish Emily all the best in growing and helping her children to adjust in Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSING

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last Sunday in Montreal, thousands of Quebecers marched along with FRAPRU to call on the federal government to maintain social housing subsidies. An end to the agreements between the federal government and housing co-operatives is fast approaching.

Yesterday we met with the director of a group of non-profit housing organizations, who confirmed that within just a few months, a number of organizations will no longer have financial support and will be on their own to maintain their already aging building inventory. Dozens of social housing units will soon be in dangerous condition, when there is already a huge lack of available affordable housing. In the region of Roussillon alone, more than 1,500 families spend from 50% to 80% of their income on housing.

Three city councils in my riding, Delson, Saint-Constant and Sainte-Catherine, are aware of this problem and have supported a resolution calling on the Government of Canada to reinvest continuously and to maintain affordable housing subsidies.

The government stubbornly refuses to assume its responsibilities with respect to this issue, so I am taking this opportunity to strongly denounce this government that has, once again, turned its back on the poorest Canadians.

Statements by Members

[English]

CANADA-INDONESIA RELATIONS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Canada-Indonesia Parliamentary Friendship Group, I was delighted to welcome to Ottawa this week a delegation from the Indonesian house of representatives. Seven parliamentarians representing the Indonesia-Canada friendship group are in Canada this week meeting with Canadian lawmakers and administrators, seeking ways to better understand each other and to strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

Our members of Parliament and senators had a fruitful dialogue with the visiting MPs and had the opportunity to exchange ideas on furthering our relationship. Topics raised included human rights, co-operation on fighting terrorism and Indonesia's role as a key player within ASEAN.

As they conclude their visit, I wish them a safe journey back to Indonesia.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, according to a recent countrywide vote conducted by canadianimmigrant.ca, it is my pleasure to announce that a good friend and former parliamentarian has just been chosen as one of Canada's top 25 immigrants.

This individual is a retired lung specialist for children and a pediatric professor. He is an author of several papers and chapters for medical journals and books and is the first ever Filipino Canadian elected to Canada's Parliament and appointed senior cabinet minister in the Government of Canada.

His achievements and contributions to our nation since he arrived in Canada over 40 years ago are what I believe makes him truly a deserving recipient of this award. He has indeed inspired and motivated many other Canadian immigrants by serving as a role model, showing that hard work and determination are the key to success.

Today, it is my honour to congratulate Dr. Rey Pagtakhan.

* * *

TOWN OF COBOURG

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize and celebrate the 175th anniversary of the town of Cobourg.

Founded in 1837, Cobourg has served as an economic hub for the surrounding region and will continue to be a leading community in eastern Ontario. Cobourg has a rich historical heritage. In fact, the town was home to the first post-Confederation life-saving marine rescue centre, established by the Government of Canada in 1882.

This year also marks the 200th anniversary of a battle fought near the town during the War of 1812. Furthermore, Cobourg is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the appointment of Canada's first judge advocate general, Major-General Henry Smith, whose burial site was recently discovered in Cobourg.

I ask all members of the House join me in saluting and paying tribute to the hard-working people of Cobourg as they celebrate this historical and significant year.

Happy anniversary Cobourg.

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● (1105)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to bring an issue of great urgency to the attention of the House and Canadians.

Over the past two days, an estimated 600 Tibetans have been detained in Lhasa after two more young Tibetans joined those who have self-immolated in protest of religious and cultural oppression by the Chinese authorities. This Wednesday, a mother of three self-immolated in protest.

After years of repression, Tibetans have reached a breaking point. Young monks and nuns are acting out of sheer frustration. Canada must act to end the suffering and work to improve the lives of the Tibetan people.

During his visit to China, the Prime Minister promised a good and frank dialogue on fundamental principles. The Government of Canada must now reach out to the Chinese government and urge a peaceful and quick resolution to the current situation. We can and must save innocent lives.

* * *

VIOLET NELSON

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on May 23, I was in Winnipeg for the grand opening of the Kihiw Iskewock Lodge, a new housing facility for women exiting correctional facilities, championed by the Native Women's Transition Centre. When the well-known chairwoman of the board did not arrive, it was very unusual. We later learned that Violet Nelson, the chairwoman, was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident en route to the grand opening.

Violet was passionate about services for aboriginal women and children. That is why this new lodge was so important to her. It would give women who had made some mistakes hope and opportunity to be self-sufficient and to secure stable housing as they transitioned away from a life of crime.

She also donated countless hours to the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre and aboriginal Girl Guides, among others. Violet's family and her children are devastated, and her death is a big blow to our community.

Canada has lost a strong, proud and extremely caring aboriginal woman who at age 35 leaves us far too soon.

For all that Violet gave and all that she did, meegwetch. She will be deeply missed.

*Statements by Members***ARMENIA**

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, May 28 is a significant date for Armenians in Canada, Armenia and around the world. On that date in 1918, the first Republic of Armenia declared its independence following the horrors of the Armenian genocide. Although the new republic was forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union in 1920, even 94 years later May 28, 1918, remains an important date for all Armenians.

The Republic of Armenia is again an independent country after declaring its independence on September 21, 1991. I had the honour to visit Armenia in 2010 and saw first-hand Armenia's functioning democracy and vibrant culture.

This past Monday here on Parliament Hill, members of Parliament and Senators commemorated this 94th anniversary with members of Canada's Armenian community. His Excellency Armen Yeganian, Armenia's ambassador to Canada, addressed the group.

I am honoured to serve as chair of the Canada-Armenia Parliamentary Friendship Group and to have shared in this historic commemoration.

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[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. François Pilon (Laval—Les Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, in the course of my duties, I had the opportunity to visit two western Canadian provinces. Even there, people were appalled by the Conservatives' mammoth Bill C-38.

Last week in my riding, people were even angrier. This bill amends or repeals laws that directly impact my Laval—Les Îles constituents: old age security, cuts to environmental agencies and changes to the Employment Insurance Act, to name but a few.

My constituents are furious. Day after day, they tell me that, when the next general election comes around in 2015, they will elect a government that listens to workers, Canadian families and all Canadians. In October 2015, they will elect an NDP government because we are fit to govern.

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[English]

NATIONAL BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last Friday I had the privilege of attending a gala to honour brain injury survivors in my riding of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to them by reminding everyone that today marks the first day of National Brain Injury Awareness Month, as designated by the Brain Injury Association of Canada. The goal this month is to highlight the effects and causes of acquired brain injury and its prevention.

Brain injury is the number one killer and disabler of people under the age of 44. Statistics further indicate that incidences are two times greater within the male population. Recognizing the challenges associated with brain injuries, our government recently announced \$100 million for the Canada brain research fund.

I would like to encourage all members of this House to become involved with grassroots brain injury associations in their ridings. They should take the time to listen to survivors and family members speak out about the support and guidance they have received. Their courage and determination are truly inspiring.

* * *

● (1110)

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 17 pages of the Conservatives' Trojan Horse budget bill were devoted to speaking about innovation. However, when it came to funding made-in-Canada satellite technology, the budget was silent. I will not be.

The RADARSAT Constellation mission is the leading edge of Canada's innovation in space. Once launched, it will be able to detect oil spills both at sea and from pipelines and it will monitor the Northwest Passage as well as ice floes and icebergs in the Atlantic. It can track forest fires and flooding to protect Canadians from natural and even man-made threats.

The government's refusal to extend funding is precipitating a brain drain of highly skilled engineers and scientists who are packing their bags and leaving Canada to go and work for the competition.

In Brampton, 100 jobs have already been lost, and 150 more are at risk in Richmond, Montreal and Brampton. These are the people who built the Canadarms.

The project is due to run out of funds by the end of August, and it is time for Conservatives to stop playing games and fund RADARSAT.

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CANADIAN FORCES DAY

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, Canadians will celebrate Canadian Forces Day. Our brave men and women in uniform serve their country with pride at home and abroad. Their dedication to protecting our freedom and sovereignty is treasured by every Canadian. Canadians show their pride and appreciation by wearing red on Fridays.

Later today, the streets of our nation's capital will be awash in red as thousands take part in a walk/run in red event. It is through events like this and the personal gestures of millions of Canadians who wear red every Friday that we can continue to thank them.

On behalf of my constituents, this House and all Canadians, I want to thank the members of our Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force for their extraordinary and brave service.

*Oral Questions***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak of the alarming suicide rate in first nations communities and, in particular, the plight of Pikangikum First Nation, home to not only the highest suicide rate in Canada but, shockingly, the highest suicide rate in the world. Equally shocking is that 90% of residents are unemployed, which combined with inadequate housing, lack of access to education and pervasive poverty lead inevitably to problems of violence and addiction.

While it was welcome news this week that Ontario's Chief Coroner will hold a joint inquest into the deaths of seven first nations teenagers, including one from Pikangikum, more must be done to address and prevent deaths in first nations communities, including suicides, particularly among the young.

Parliament must make this an issue of the highest priority, alongside the shocking incidents of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls as well as the redressing of past wrongs, as raised in my meeting this week with the chiefs of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They report that of the hundreds, if not thousands, of indigenous children who died in residential schools, many of their parents were never notified, their graves are unmarked and their identities may be lost forever.

We can and must do better, lest we learn nothing from the tragedy of Pikangikum or the sad legacy of residential schools or murdered aboriginal women and continue to allow first nations communities to suffer such unspeakable horrors.

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NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP's energy and natural resources critic is at it again. We all know he has led the NDP charge on nearly every trade treaty deal that has come before the House during his time here. He opposes trade deals with countries on several continents and even supported the U.S. in its buy American policy, which unfairly discriminates against Canadian exports. He should be ashamed of himself.

This weekend, he is taking it a step further. Attacking the natural resources sector, he is attending a Council of Canadians conference that actually opposes the mining industry and Canadian companies around the world. The member for Burnaby—New Westminster is spending his weekend attacking trade and our resource sector.

We know the NDP members think that natural resources are a disease, but such positions will cost Canadian families jobs and prosperity at a time when they are needed most. He and his anti-oil-sands party and leader should be absolutely ashamed of themselves.

* * *

[Translation]

CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives were propelled into power by surfing the wave of the sponsorship scandal, promising major democratic reforms and a more transparent and accountable government.

Six years later, what is left of those promises? Nothing more than a sour taste in our mouths.

They have already begun sabotaging their own law on ethics by eliminating the Public Appointments Commission. They are disregarding the most basic parliamentary principles by hiding all kinds of irresponsible measures in their Trojan Horse budget bill. They support an unelected Senate and have stacked it with their cronies. They do not hesitate to violate fundamental rights with their back-to-work legislation and they muzzle their backbench MPs. The Conservatives have become everything they once scorned, everything they condemned in the election campaign.

Soon, however, in 2015, Canadian voters will remind them that, in a democracy, when a party does not keep its promises, it does not remain in power.

* * *

• (1115)

[English]

RESTORING RAIL SERVICE LEGISLATION

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week our government took swift action to protect the Canadian economy by passing back-to-work legislation for CP Rail. CP Rail, a company whose trains carry over \$540 million in goods per week for the Canadian economy, went on strike for a week. Our government pulled out all the stops to protect thousands of Canadian jobs and the economy, like those at Honda in my riding of Simcoe—Grey. We were pleased to see the bill receive royal assent last night to get the trains running again.

Unfortunately, the NDP members continue to ignore the best interests of Canadians and stand up only for their big union bosses, and the Liberals tried to delay the legislation because they would rather put thousands of Canadian jobs at risk and damage the Canadian economy than act in the interests of the public.

Our government will continue to stand up for the best interests of Canadians and create jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity. Why does the opposition not ever support any of these actions?

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

HEALTH

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Medical Association is worried about the impact of air pollution on our seniors.

People aged 65 and older face a greater risk of suffering from cardiac problems than youth or adults. With our aging population, this proportion will only continue to increase.

Oral Questions

Cuts to environmental programs go against the interests of seniors. The Conservatives also want to cut old age security. Can they at least spare the health of our seniors?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously the health of Canada's seniors remains a top priority for the Government of Canada.

Despite a \$50 billion deficit just a few short years ago, the government has honoured our commitment to the health care system in this country like no other government in Canadian history. Despite difficult economic times, we have increased the transfers to the provinces and territories by 6% a year, every single year since the government came to power.

The first thing we did in looking for savings and reductions was to exempt the transfer for health care to the provinces. That is an unparalleled commitment to our seniors and to Canada's publicly funded health care system.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will try another one. In an open letter to the Prime Minister, four former federal fisheries ministers, two of them Conservatives, raise serious concerns about the Fisheries Act changes that the Conservatives are trying to sneak through in their budget bill. They are "...especially alarmed about any possible diminution of the statutory protection on fish habitat...".

This is not about misguided attacks that take 25-year-old comments out of context. It is about today's changes. It is about communities, experts and even former fisheries ministers who are raising the alarm.

Why will the Conservatives not stand down the attacks and listen?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at what the government is doing. We are introducing changes that will focus our fish and fish habitat protection rules on fisheries, not on farmers. The current rules do not distinguish between vital waterways, lakes and rivers that support local fisheries, and drainage ditches, man-made reservoirs and irrigation channels that are not even home to fish.

What we are doing is trying to focus fisheries protection on fish habitat, not on farmers' fields.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I understand I was missed Wednesday at the Trojan Horse subcommittee hearings.

However, while I was working on my file, do members know who was missing in action at the hearings? The Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. Conservative ministers are not too keen to come back to committee and explain why they are killing environmental assessments, gutting the Fisheries Act and muzzling scientists.

I will be back at committee next week. The question is, will they?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I, like all members of the House, did miss the participation of the deputy leader of the New Democratic Party. I am so thrilled to see her back in her place today.

The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment appeared before the committee, as ministers always do when budgets are presented. They have appeared in this House each and every day, they or their parliamentary secretaries, to be accountable, to be responsive to members of this House.

What we want to focus on, though, is not process. We want to focus on building long-term prosperity for this great country. We are pleased with the economic growth of 1.9% we saw in the first quarter. More work remains to be done. Let us focus, like a laser, on job creation and on economic growth.

● (1120)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, being a Conservative minister means not having to be accountable.

The quiet elimination of the position of Inspector General of CSIS shows just how ridiculous the budget bill is. Normally, this type of change would be found in a bill on public safety. That bill would then be debated and examined in committee. Instead, the Conservatives have put this measure in a Trojan Horse bill.

Why are the Conservatives afraid of open debate?

[*English*]

Ms. Candice Hooppner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have answered this question, but maybe the member opposite did not hear it. The responsibilities of the office of the Inspector General will be merged into the Security Intelligence Review Committee. This decision will preserve all of the oversight and accountability of CSIS while reducing administrative costs, saving taxpayers \$1 million a year.

Maybe \$1 million a year is not very much to the opposition, but it is a lot to taxpayers in Canada.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is just one of the very dangerous changes the government is making.

Oral Questions

Bill C-38 has 753 clauses, given just 3 minutes of study each. These include changes that would gut environmental legislation, changes that would force Canadians to work longer, cuts to health transfers, cuts to EI, cuts to food inspectors, sweeping immigration changes and an attack on charities. The government is even giving away the powers of the Auditor General.

Why is the government hiding all of this from public hearings? Is it afraid to take on the official opposition, or is it just trying to pull a fast one on Canadians? Which is it?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as all Canadians know, this government is focused on jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity.

We heard on March 29, that after only a few minutes, the NDP and the Liberals voted against budget 2012. They voted against things like extending the hiring credit for small businesses, things like investing in the youth employment strategy, economic opportunities for our aboriginal youth, the opportunities fund to help Canadians with disabilities get into the jobs market, improving job market information for Canadians and on and on.

It is disgraceful that the NDP stands up and talks like we are not doing enough. We have created 750,000 jobs—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our cities and towns do not have the resources they need to fulfill their growing responsibilities, and the Conservative government is only making matters worse with its pathetic lack of leadership in areas like support for aboriginal people, transportation, site decontamination, protection of the environment and fish, immigrant integration, crime prevention and regional development.

Will the government do the right thing and support the Liberal leader's proposal that municipalities be given more of the gas tax?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no government has provided more support to Canadian municipalities than this government led by this Prime Minister.

The Liberals came forward with a one-time, five-year infrastructure program for the gas tax. This government not only kept our commitment to support that initiative, we doubled it and we made it permanent. In addition to that, at the height of the economic downturn, this government gave unprecedented support to Canadian municipalities for infrastructure. More infrastructure has been accomplished in the last six years under this Prime Minister than at any other period in the post-world war era.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Not at all, Mr. Speaker, it was the Liberals who established the GST rebates and the gas tax transfer in order to start to correct this cap-in-hand relationship between the federal government and municipalities. Canada's municipalities may be the most underfunded among developed countries, receiving only 8¢ of every tax dollar collected.

Will the government follow today's Liberal call and commit to remitting more of the gas tax to municipalities so they will be able to fulfill their increasingly large mandates?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the Liberal Party did was bring in a one-time, five-year program to support infrastructure in our municipalities. It was this Conservative government that made that program permanent. It was this Conservative government that doubled the support to Canadian municipalities. When the economic downturn happened, it was this government that made unprecedented partnerships with municipal governments from coast to coast to coast to ensure that municipalities could build the infrastructure that they need, to help to create jobs and opportunities.

It was an unqualified success, and the minister is now consulting on a post-2014 plan.

* * *

● (1125)

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has taken EI from the fishermen. It is taking quota from the fishermen in order to pay for scientific research that is the responsibility of the Government of Canada. It is gutting the Fisheries Act and habitat protection.

Four former ministers have indicated that the government is bowing to special interest groups. Why is the government kowtowing to the large corporate sector and taking everything it possibly can from the fishermen who work so hard for their living?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can assure him that we are fully committed to protecting the habitat of fisheries that provide such important benefits to Canadians, but it is our conclusion that without greater focus we are not able to do that as well as we should.

As the habitat protection policy of Mr. Tom Siddon contemplated in 1986, we are going to be focusing on protecting aboriginal, recreational and commercial fisheries and the habitat they depend on. We will be doing that with excellence so that future generations can enjoy these fisheries.

*Oral Questions***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only is the government going to force people into lower-paying jobs with its changes to EI, it is now planning on taking away assistance young first nations may get if they do not sign up for training programs. The government has it backwards. Any coherent strategy to help first nations youth must start with investing in better education, not cutting off people who already have problems getting by.

Why are Conservatives bent on making the lives of first nations harder?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has the facts quite the reverse. Following the Crown-First Nations Gathering, we entered into a commitment with our first nations to focus on education and create new opportunities for young Canadians. Indeed, in our economic action plan 2012, we set out quite clearly that equipping first nations people with the skills and opportunities they need to fully participate in the economy is a priority for the government and for first nations.

In many areas of the country, first nations communities are ideally placed to contribute to and benefit from large economic projects. We are trying to create more opportunities for first nations to participate in the mainstream of the Canadian economy, to advance their own economic circumstances, to benefit their—

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are not living up to the commitments from January's Crown-First Nations Gathering.

The conservatives simply do not understand the reality facing first nations youth. First nations are looking for an opportunity to improve their lives and have successful careers, not having their support cut off. Many first nations youth face extreme poverty in their communities and a lack of opportunity.

Why are Conservatives singling out first nations youth and taking away this basic support? How can they justify this irresponsible move?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, there is no such policy as the hon. member suggests there is. In fact, quite the contrary.

What we are trying to do with our economic action plan 2012 is take advantage of the fact that Canada is blessed with tremendous natural resources and with tremendous people, tremendous potential in those people. We want to ensure that all of them have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. That includes our first nations and, especially, young aboriginals who are looking for greater opportunities to participate in the economy.

That is why the economic action plan said that Canada's young aboriginal population has that tremendous potential for long-term success and economic prosperity and our government will work to help them achieve that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain (Manicouagan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are making yet another mistake.

Rather than implementing real programs to help aboriginal people enter the labour force and allow them to meet their housing and transportation needs, the Conservative government prefers to threaten that it is going to steal food from aboriginal people's mouths and take away their welfare benefits if they do not take training. This is yet another initiative that proves that the Conservatives are out of touch with reality.

Did the Conservatives not learn their lesson from Attawapiskat? Why are they insisting on making life even more difficult for aboriginal people?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not at all the case. In fact, we intend to help aboriginal people become very successful in the economy. That is why we stated the following in the 2012 economic action plan: "Equipping First Nations people with the skills and opportunities they need to fully participate in the economy is a priority both for this Government and for First Nations people."

That is a good idea for all Canadians.

* * *

• (1130)

[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has been a rough few weeks for Canadians looking for answers about employment insurance changes. They are still waiting for the Conservatives to say what "suitable employment" really means; to explain how communities relying on seasonal industries will be affected; to explain whether they are even taking into account the difficulties facing youth, minorities and the disabled in finding jobs.

When will the Conservatives finally do the right thing: stop their attacks and start listening to Canadians concerned about these changes?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the real question is, when will the NDP stop spreading misinformation and trying to scare Canadians?

What we would be doing is giving those people who have lost jobs through no fault of their own help in finding jobs within their skill sets, within their geographic area. For the first time, we would make available to them job alerts twice a day, not three times every two weeks, to let them know what jobs are out there. We would ensure that if they cannot find a job in their area, within their skill sets, EI will be there for them, as it always has been.

Oral Questions

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, only the Conservatives would see targeting Canadian workers as helping them. How else can we explain changing the fair wages law to make federally contracted construction workers earn less, or why some Canadians would be forced to work for 30% less without even getting a fair chance to look for work in their field?

There have been no consultations, no accountability and no real answers from the minister. These EI changes are a mess. When will the minister finally admit that this is flawed legislation that needs to go back to the drawing board?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these changes are actually common sense. Our priority is job creation and increasing the growth and prosperity of our country. In fact, we have been very successful with that, creating over 750,000 net new jobs since the recession.

At the same time, we recognize there are Canadians who have difficulty finding work, particularly, in areas where it is mainly seasonal work or seasonal industries or one-industry towns. We would help those people get access to the jobs that do exist. However, if they do not exist, we would ensure that they still have access to EI.

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ATLANTIC CANADA

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what we know is the Conservatives' changes to EI are an attack on seasonal workers and they are meant to drive down workers' wages.

The government's attack on coastal communities continues. It is so out of touch that now we see bonuses being handed out to ACOA executives while that agency cancels support for community economic development. ACOA has already cut dozens of staff and programs meant to help Atlantic communities.

How can the minister be so tone deaf to the interests of Atlantic Canadians? Why will he not stand up for coastal communities?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member ought to know that the law provides clearly that ministers do not have discretionary authority over at-risk pay for public service executives.

If the member wants to talk about ACOA, we will talk about ACOA and the work it does in Atlantic Canada.

We remain focused on creating jobs, economic growth and long-term prosperity. For example, the naval action plan helps small- and medium-size enterprises throughout all of Atlantic Canada to benefit from a \$33 billion initiative, the national shipbuilding procurement strategy, which will create jobs—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour.

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FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are simply failing Atlantic Canadians. Now

they are undermining our livelihood with their attack on fisheries protection.

Former fisheries ministers, including two Conservatives, are condemning the government's proposals. How do the Conservatives respond? They accuse former minister Siddon of not reading the bill. Wrong again. He not only read the bill, he renamed some of these reckless clauses. Clause 147 is the “let them off lightly” clause. Clause 150 is the “minister cops out” clause.

Why is the government ramming through changes that will harm our fisheries and hurt our coastal communities?

● (1135)

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we are providing a much-needed greater focus on fisheries, particularly on recreational, commercial and aboriginal fisheries, so that we can ensure that those resources are available for future generations.

Frankly, I am a bit surprised that the member thinks this is a novel concept. In 1998, under a Liberal minister, there was a new policy document that explained how to apply the habitat section of the act. It says:

Section 35 is not about the protection of fish habitat for the benefit of fish, but of fisheries. Therefore, the decision required is a determination of whether or not the potentially affected fish habitat directly or indirectly supports - or has the potential to support - a commercial, recreational or subsistence fishery.

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the only thing the Conservatives want to protect is the bottom line of their industry friends.

This reckless dismantling of fisheries protection will harm our fishing communities and the economies that sustain them. Fishery groups are already warning that the Conservatives' cuts to DFO science would put the fisheries at risk. Scrapping in-house research for a hand-picked talk shop will not serve Canadians who rely on fisheries science to protect their livelihood.

How does the minister expect to respond to crises that could cripple vital fisheries without this science?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we certainly agree that science is very important to the protection of our fisheries. That is why we invest about \$230 million every year in science. We will continue to invest in the priorities so that we can protect these fisheries that Canadians depend on. We are committed to that.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are ready to roll the dice to determine the fate of coastal communities. The minister will not even say whether he has consulted anyone on separating the fleet and he is keeping mum on his plans. Local fishers are worried and rightly so. They see a minister who is abandoning his responsibilities with respect to scientific research, fisheries and fish habitat.

The coastal communities are entitled to answers.

Is separating the fleet part of the minister's plans or not?

[English]

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague is suffering from the heartbreak of premature exaggeration.

We have said a number of times in this House that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans had a conversation with fisheries stakeholders about changes they would propose in order to make the fisheries more prosperous and sustainable for the future. The minister and his officials are continuing to look at that feedback and will make some decisions in the future.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a batch of weak responses and inappropriate jokes when 1,000 people are being cut from the staff of Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

It is unworthy to assault knowledgeable and dedicated former ministers for voicing their real concerns about the plan to weaken habitat protection for fish. The government's strategy is to attack anyone who disagrees with it. The four former fisheries ministers from B.C. are just the latest targets.

West coast salmon are far too important to British Columbians to be lost because of the government's petty ideology and gross mismanagement. Why condemn the Pacific fisheries to the fate of the Atlantic cod?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we did not have much of a conversation with former minister Siddon about Atlantic cod. I suppose we could have.

Let me remind the member that salmon are part of aboriginal, commercial and recreational fisheries. We are going to be protecting those with excellence to ensure that they are available for future generations.

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ETHICS

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of International Cooperation is well known for her lavish spending habits and was recently forced to repay taxpayers again for impulsive hotel changes and limos.

Yesterday we learned that she changed her public travel expense claims with no explanation.

Is the minister ready to admit that there are more \$16 glasses of orange juice that she has charged to taxpayers? When will she be accountable for her bad behaviour?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think I have answered this a number of times.

Our government is committed to keeping expenses of ministers travelling at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. That is why they are much lower than the hon. member's party spent on ministerial travel when that party was in government.

In the case of the minister in question, all inappropriate costs have been repaid.

• (1140)

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives think it is okay to steal from the poor.

The CIDA minister is an embarrassment to Canada. She is abandoning the world's poorest of the poor by cutting over \$400 million from the CIDA budget, just like a laser. At the same time, she is sipping on \$16 glasses of orange juice and picking up the tab for wealthy mining companies.

The minister cannot even manage her own travel expenses let alone Canada's international aid and development.

When will the Prime Minister fire the incompetent minister?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by that member's standard when his Liberal Party was in government, every single minister in that government would have had to resign. The hospitality expenses of ministers in this government are a small fraction of what the Liberals spent on hospitality. In fact, the spending of all ministers in this government is well below that of the Liberals.

In the case of this one minister, any inappropriate spending has all been repaid.

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FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, climate change is opening the Arctic Ocean to fishing for the first time.

Currently there is no international agreement on Arctic Ocean fisheries. Over 2,000 global scientists have called upon the five Arctic coastal countries to hold back the start of commercial fishing in Arctic waters until research is done and management plans are in place.

Canada knows how much damage is done by unregulated international fishing.

In 2013 Canada will be the chair of the Arctic Council. Will the government show leadership and push for a treaty governing fishing in the Arctic?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has raised an important issue.

Oral Questions

The minister is engaged in this. He will be consulting, obviously, with his officials and will be moving forward with what is in the best interests of Canada.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' hastily announced hunting and angling advisory panel has angered Canada's first nations, Métis and Inuit with their exclusion. They see this action as another attempt by the government to cut them out of environmental decision-making. This is similar to the way the Conservatives want to dismantle environmental review boards in the Northwest Territories.

At the same time, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development will not reappoint the Inuit chair of the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

Why do the Conservatives want to shut out first nations, Métis and Inuit from roles in protecting their lands and their resources?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is about supporting the traditional practices in Canada of hunting and fishing. This includes the ability of people to engage in those traditional practices, practices that were being interfered with by the very policies supported by that member and the NDP in terms of Canada's long gun registry. We have taken steps to ensure that the long gun registry is now out of the way so that those traditional rights can be preserved.

We are going to have an ongoing dialogue. We are certainly happy to look at others who are interested in supporting those same traditional Canadian values of hunting and fishing.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' attacks on science have claimed yet another victim, the world-renowned Experimental Lakes Area research program. This is a devastating blow to environmental science that will be felt for generations, particularly in provinces like Manitoba.

There is no other facility in the world that does this work. In fact, the loss of this program is so serious that scientists around the world are speaking out.

Will the government reinstate this vital research program?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course our government is committed to the Freshwater Institute and clean, fresh water. We have shown that by the funds we have put into the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund, for example.

The member is from Manitoba. She knows the Freshwater Institute will still continue to function. We just think that the work done at the Experimental Lakes facility would be better done by a non-governmental association or university.

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are simply making stuff up as they go along. The minister knows the Experimental Lakes Area is the

research facility that made groundbreaking discoveries about acid rain. He knows it identified and helped reduce mercury contamination in coal-fired plants. He knows phosphorus is banned in detergents now because of the facility's work.

The Conservatives need to wake up. When will they stop their dangerous cuts that put our water, our environment and our health at risk?

● (1145)

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we are committed to research on fresh water. That is why much of what we do at the Freshwater Institute in Winnipeg has generated some very good results in Lake Winnipeg, for example, and in other lakes in central Canada.

On this side of the House, we do not believe that the government has to do everything. We think that the Experimental Lakes facility, which was so useful in the acid rain era, now would be better managed by either a university or a non-governmental organization.

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TAXATION

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every year, millions of Canadian families take vacations abroad and they often bring back goods. They often bring back presents. They often bring back mementos from their trips.

However, some of the rules applied to the goods purchased abroad have not been adjusted in decades. That is why our government is adjusting the value of goods that Canadians can bring home duty free and tax free after trips of 24 hours and 48 hours.

Could the parliamentary secretary please explain to us why these changes are good for all Canadians?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today's change to the travellers' exemption will ease congestion at our borders to help boost trade and allow our border agents to better focus on keeping Canada secure.

This measure will expedite customs clearance for returning Canadian consumers, making business and personal travel more convenient for Canadians. Consumer groups, like the Consumers' Association of Canada, have long asked for this change as well.

Oral Questions

However, it is important to note that this will only impact limits for trips over 24 hours, making the exemption amounts for Canadians exactly the same as what Americans can spend here in Canada.

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[Translation]

HEALTH

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, half of all children get only three hours of exercise a week. Childhood obesity rates are rising and putting undue pressure on our health and education systems.

When we asked the Minister of State for Sport whether he was worried about the situation, the only thing he could think to say was, and I quote, “Keeping our kids active and involved in sports leads to healthier, happier lifestyles”. Honestly.

Is the Minister of State for Sport aware of the extent of the problem and can he tell us exactly what he plans to do to help our children be more active?

[English]

Hon. Bal Gosal (Minister of State (Sport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, keeping our kids active and involved in sports leads to healthier and happier lifestyles. That is why our government is working hard to provide families and children with opportunities to take part in physical activity. We have created the children's fitness tax credit and continue to work with Participaction, Le Grand défi, and the provinces and territories to make sure young Canadians stay active and healthy.

Participaction was revived by our government after being let go by the previous government.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, again we get the same ridiculous and meaningless answer.

Are the Conservatives aware of the extent of the situation? They keep telling us that more and more children are getting physical exercise, but a report released this week shows that that is absolutely not true. Our young people are increasingly sedentary and need more guidance before the situation gets worse.

The minister needs to be honest and admit that he has dropped the ball on this.

Can he do his homework and cut the vapid talking points, which do nothing to help children become more active?

[English]

Hon. Bal Gosal (Minister of State (Sport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have created a children's fitness tax credit and the NDP voted against it.

Also, working together with Canadian Tire Jumpstart, we have helped nearly 400,000 kids get involved in sports. That is what we are doing for our kids. We want all kids healthy, active and happy. That is what we are doing for children.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to forget that the tax credit does absolutely nothing to help poor kids get active.

The minister keeps fouling out on this issue. Children's health is vital to a healthy future and a healthy Canada. The organization Active Healthy Kids Canada gave our kids an F and, just to be clear, that does not stand for fantastic.

In the active play category, something is wrong. The Minister of State for Sport keeps fumbling his portfolio when he cannot even be bothered to read the report. It is not exactly heavy lifting.

Could the minister quote one recommendation from the report?

Hon. Bal Gosal (Minister of State (Sport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said before, keeping our kids active and involved in sports leads to healthier, happier lifestyles, and that is what we are doing.

Working with the provinces, we have created the children's fitness tax credit. Participaction is another program that was revived by the Conservative government and it is helping a lot of kids around the country get involved in physical activity and sports.

Also, with the help of Canadian Tire Jumpstart, we have helped nearly 400,000 kids get involved in sports in which they were not involved before. That is what we are doing for all Canadian kids.

• (1150)

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the minister knows his talking points quite well, and so does everyone else at this point.

The minister is unable to stand and answer the most basic questions about the report. Why is that? It is because the report contradicts his PMO-sponsored talking points. The minister could not even say if he thinks it is acceptable that half of Canadian children get less than three hours of physical activity a week—

An hon. member: Keep reading.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order, please. The hon. member for Scarborough Southwest has the floor.

Mr. Dan Harris: Mr. Speaker, if the minister would actually read the report, maybe he would have something to add to the discussion.

Let us be good sports and give him a mulligan. Does the minister think that three hours a week is enough?

Hon. Bal Gosal (Minister of State (Sport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, keeping our kids active and involved in sports leads to healthier, happier lifestyles. That is what we are doing for our kids.

We have created the children's fitness tax credit. We have invested money in Participaction and Le Grand défi. We are working with the provinces and territories to help Canadians stay healthy and active. That is what we are doing.

An hon. member: What is the NDP doing? Voting against us.

Hon. Bal Gosal: The NDP is voting against everything we try to do for our kids. It should be working with us.

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services has now had her own personal Damascus Road experience. She now thinks that sole sourced military procurement is bad, in spite of the fact that her department signed off on the F-35s with the speed of light and the stealth of a Ninja.

If sole source is bad for other military contracts, why is not bad for the F-35s? Why not do what the Liberal Party has been asking for years now, which is to have an open, fair and transparent competition for the replacement of the F-18s?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services has undertaken to improve and optimize military procurement so that Canada's economy, industry and jobs can benefit. Our government is ensuring that our men and women in uniform have the equipment they need to do their work.

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with Bill C-38, the government is cutting the heart out of our small communities by attacking library services. The government plans to eliminate the only program that has provided reliable high-speed Internet access to small communities. Saint-Adelpe, in my riding, is one such community.

How does the minister plan to provide fair access to the cultural and historic heritage of our communities, no matter where they are located?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not at all the case.

We have invested in these types of programs in the past and we continue to do so today, all the while ensuring more efficiency than ever before. There are new electronic programs that ensure that the collections the member spoke about are available, and not just in one region, but across the entire country. That is what Library and Archives Canada is doing.

If there is an issue or a problem in her riding that specifically affects a library, I am sure that we can discuss it and find a solution.

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[*English*]

HOUSING

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a new report from the City of Vancouver shows that homelessness doubled in the last year. Despite this urgent crisis, the government has not invested a dime for housing in the budget. In fact, it was not even mentioned.

How can the government justify no new federal investments when housing in Vancouver is so unaffordable or non-existent for so

many? Vancouver's city council has led the way to end homelessness, but it cannot do it alone.

Will the government heed Vancouver's call to invest in housing to keep thousands more people from becoming homeless in the next two years, which is what it is predicted ?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has made unprecedented investments in helping people fight homelessness by ensuring they have access to affordable housing. Through our economic action plan, over 14,000 projects that would help many more families than that, were initiated. Unfortunately, the NDP voted against them.

We also signed five-year agreements with the provinces so they would have stable, predictable funding to fight homelessness and to promote affordable housing and, sadly, the NDP voted against every one of those initiatives as well.

• (1155)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister knows that the federal investment was a one-time deal that ended and fell far short of what actually needs to be done for affordable housing in this country. The fact is that over 600,000 families in Canada rely on social housing. With the end of the federal money, low-income households will see their housing costs skyrocket, leading to more insecurity.

Why is the government so oblivious to maintaining the affordability of the social housing we have, like co-ops, and ignoring the desperate plight of Canadians who still remain homeless today? Why is the minister not addressing that?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are addressing it. Those 600,000 families that rely on affordable housing are getting support for that housing from our government. Again, the NDP voted against that support.

We have tens of thousands of families that now have access to affordable housing that did not exist before this government came into power. That is because we have made a commitment to help them. We signed a five-year agreement with the provinces to support affordable housing and combat homelessness. It is working. There is a ways to go, but we have made our commitment to support Canadians in need. It is too bad the NDP will not support us in supporting them.

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WINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Dan Albas (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadian wine producers are eagerly awaiting the passage of Bill C-311, my legislation that would allow Canadians to bring a bottle of wine across provincial borders. It is absolutely vital that we get this popular bill passed before the summer so Canadian wine producers can market and grow their businesses.

Oral Questions

Unfortunately, the NDP members have decided to put their own partisan political interests ahead of those Canadian businesses by unnecessarily delaying this legislation.

Could the Minister of Justice please inform the House of the government's position on my legislation?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that wine producers across this country are eagerly looking forward to the passage of this bill. In that regard, I thank the hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla for introducing this bill, as well as the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo for getting it through committee so quickly.

Now I would like to call on the leader of the NDP to apologize for unnecessarily delaying this important legislation. Why do the NDP members always take aim at small businesses across this country? It is one more reason that it would be dangerous to ever let the NDP have anything to do with managing the economy of this country.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I met with Dr. Frank Hayden at the opening ceremonies of the Ontario Special Olympics in Kingston. His research proved that, for the intellectually disabled, athletic training enhanced fitness, motor skills and emotional and social development. The research in Canada led directly to the creation of the Special Olympics. This was curiosity-driven research in Canada at its best.

Will the government please reverse its multi-year cuts to funding for curiosity-driven research in Canada?

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question gives me an opportunity to again tell the House that we recently funded 3,750 researchers to do exactly that: curiosity-driven research in fields such as botany, zoology, physics, mathematics, earth sciences, and the list goes on and on.

I also had the opportunity last Friday to announce almost \$70 million for social sciences and humanities research for 92 different research teams across the country.

This week, I was in Montreal announcing another—

The Speaker: The hon. member for British Columbia Southern Interior.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, apple growers and their associations in British Columbia are worried about the approval of the genetically modified non-browning Arctic apple. The release of this apple will harm organic and conventional apple growers, it will damage the local economy and it will cause irreparable damage to the good reputation of B.C. apple growers and their product. The verdict is in: Neither farmers nor consumers want this genetically modified apple.

Will the minister commit today to protect the B.C. apple industry and its farmers? Will he stop this reckless experiment?

• (1200)

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that any decisions about genetically modified products are subject to a rigorous science-based assessment process. These assessments ensure that the environment and human and animal health are protected. This government is working hard to ensure that Canadian farmers continue to have access to the best technology in the world, but that the Canadian consumer has safe and reliable food.

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FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Asian carp have decimated the Mississippi watershed and are threatening the Great Lakes. In fact, Asian carp are like the Liberal Party. They destroy fisheries, no one wants them and, when spooked, they are fish out of water.

Our recreational fishery is a vital fishery and provides annual economic benefits in the billions.

Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans please tell this House what our government is doing to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is well aware of the catastrophic potential of this biological invasion, which is why we are committed to preventing the Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes.

In fact, just this week the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans stood on the shores of Lake Ontario and announced the creation and funding of a plan to fight Asian carp. The fund will focus on prevention, early warning, rapid response and management and control.

As the Prime Minister said when he announced the hunting and angling advisory panel on Wednesday, “We gladly accept the duty of protecting Canada's environment and its natural endowments for the benefit of future generations”.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. François Pilon (Laval—Les Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the FCM is meeting in Saskatoon today to talk about the challenges that municipalities will face over the coming years. Cities are all facing the same problems. All of them, including Laval and Montreal, will have to find ways to fund infrastructure for the long term. Last fall, the Conservatives promised to introduce new funding programs, but now they have nothing to say about it.

When will they start addressing the needs of municipalities?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, two decades ago, there was no federal funding for matters within municipal jurisdiction. Now we have the gas tax fund and the building Canada fund for investment in specific projects. This huge increase in transfers to municipalities is already in place. The challenge is to transform that money into results. We are working to make that happen. These projects are yielding results.

* * *

[English]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the quite unprecedented letter from four federal fisheries ministers all residing in British Columbia has been the subject of questions earlier today in the House.

I will quote from their letter to the Prime Minister. It reads:

...Canadians are entitled to know whether these changes were written, or insisted upon, by the Minister of Fisheries or by interest groups outside the government. If the latter is true, who are they?

I would like to ask an additional question. Where are they, in Canada or in Beijing?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is a bit of a strange question, but let me just reaffirm that we are fully committed to protecting the habitat of fisheries that provide tremendous benefit to Canadians.

We have come to the conclusion, with which many Canadians agree, that without greater focus, we are not able to do that in an effective way. Therefore, we will be focusing on recreational, commercial and aboriginal fisheries and doing that with excellence.

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CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, top Mounties have revealed that the government intends to allow U.S. law enforcement officers to operate on Canadian soil.

Is the minister actually planning to allow this as part of a Conservative security deal? Would it include the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. immigration?

Will the minister table any draft agreement in the House so that this deal gets the scrutiny it deserves?

Ms. Candice Hooppner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians and Americans share common security issues as well as economic interests. To protect and create jobs for Canadians, we must protect and strengthen our relationship, including our trade relationship and our security relationship with the United States.

The Conservative government has taken strong actions to make our borders more secure, while keeping them open to legitimate trade and travel.

There is more work to be done. Canadians can count on our government to get it done.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1205)

[Translation]

SYRIA

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion:

That a take-note debate on the subject of the ongoing violence in Syria, pursuant to Standing Order 53.1, take place on Tuesday, June 5, 2012; and

notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, when the House begins proceedings under the provisions of Standing Order 53.1 on Tuesday, June 5, 2012, no quorum calls or dilatory motions shall be received by the Chair and; any member rising to speak during debate may indicate to the Speaker that he or she will be dividing his or her time with another member.

Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent for this motion.

The Speaker: Does the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

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[English]

DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a second motion regarding the debate on the humble address to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee.

Routine Proceedings

CONFLICT MINERALS

I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, when Government Motion number 13 is called following routine proceedings on Monday, June 4, 2012, no member shall speak for more than twenty minutes, with no questions and comments, provided that the members may divide their time with another member; the Speaker shall not receive any amendments; and when no member rises to speak or after 80 minutes of debate, whichever is earlier, the motion shall be deemed adopted.

The Speaker: Does the hon. minister have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

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PETITIONS

CHILD CARE

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition today that is signed by hundreds of people from across Canada.

The petitioners are concerned about the lack of accessible and affordable child care. They want to know that their children are getting care of the highest quality and they want the government to know that child care is not only a recognized human right, but that it also creates jobs, makes Canada more competitive, helps achieve women's equality and builds local economies.

For all of these reasons, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to legislate the right to universal access to child care and provide multi-year funding to provincial and territorial governments to build a national system of affordable, high quality, public and not-for-profit child care that is accessible to all children.

I know it is not appropriate for members to endorse petitions, but I want to indicate what a pleasure it is to be able to table this petition in the House today.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from Canadians from Cardston, Alberta, who point out that Canada's 400-year-old definition of a human being says that a child does not become a human being until the moment of complete birth, contrary to 21st century medical evidence.

The petitioners point out that Parliament has a solemn duty to reject any law that says some human beings are not human. They call upon the House of Commons to confirm that every human being is recognized by Canadian law as human by amending section 223 of our Criminal Code in such a way as to reflect 21st century medical evidence.

As the House would know, this would only support the high principle of universal human rights.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here signed primarily by folks from Winnipeg, Manitoba, who are concerned about the issue of conflict minerals.

The petitioners ask the government to have conflict minerals certified as conflict free, that any imported products be graded and labelled as to what degree it can be certified that they are conflict free and that all Canadian companies trading in these minerals be legislatively mandated to avoid all transactions with conflict minerals.

● (1210)

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present 856 petitions calling on the government to produce a national action plan to combat human trafficking.

As the House knows, in the last election the government committed to doing that, but there are people across the country who are eagerly awaiting for the contents of that national action plan.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in addition, I have 1,984 signatures from all across this great nation.

The petitioners call upon the government to amend the Criminal Code to decriminalize the selling of sexual services and criminalize the purchasing of sexual services and to provide support to those who want to be free of the prostitution crime.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present.

In the first petition, the petitioners call upon the House of Commons to support Bill C-257, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (mandatory labelling for genetically modified foods).

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the second petition, the petitioners call upon the Minister of Justice to introduce government legislation to amend the Criminal Code provisions on animal cruelty based on Bill C-229.

[*Translation*]

POVERTY

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the last petition I am presenting in the House of Commons has to do with Bill C-233. The petitioners are calling on Parliament to quickly pass Bill C-233, An Act to eliminate poverty in Canada.

[*English*]

ABORTION

Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege today to present two petitions, both on the same topic, and both signed primarily by people from the Lower Mainland of British Columbia as well as the Fraser Valley.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners draw the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that Canada is the only nation in the western world, in the company of China and North Korea, without any laws restricting abortion. They point out as well that the Supreme Court of Canada has said that it is Parliament's responsibility to do so.

They call upon the House of Commons to speedily enact legislation that would restrict abortion to the greatest extent possible.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition signed by women and men from western Canada predominantly who are opposed to Conservative Motion No. 312, a thinly veiled attempt to reopen the abortion debate in Canada, a debate that Canadians had decades ago. Canadians are ready to move on.

Many women in Canada are stating their clear opposition and are hoping that not just the government front benches but all benches support a woman's right to choose and that they will look beyond debates that have all ready been dealt with. Women in Canada look forward to achieving true gender equality in Canada.

CANADA BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present three petitions. The first petition is from residents of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

The petitioners call upon the government to provide stable and predictable funding for the national public broadcaster, the CBC.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition comes from residents of Vancouver Island.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to move to implement a moratorium that would be legally enforceable along the entire coast of British Columbia, building on the 1972 moratorium against the transit of supertankers bearing oil on the waters and fragile ecosystems along the B.C. coastline.

BILL C-38

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the last petition comes from residents in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta.

The petitioners call upon the House to completely reject Bill C-38, an omnibus bill containing measures that have no place in a budget bill. They ask that we only be asked to vote on budget measures when an omnibus budget bill is put before us.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions to the House, both of which call for action on climate change.

The petitioners call on Parliament to sign and implement an international agreement replacing the Kyoto protocol and to commit to science-based national carbon and greenhouse gas emissions targets and a national renewable energy policy. They also call on the government to play a role in the green climate fund under the United Nations.

● (1215)

PENSIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many residents of Winnipeg North have asked me to present this petition as a clear message to the Prime Minister of Canada.

The petitioners believe that people should be able to continue to have the option to retire at age 65 and that the government not in any way diminish the importance and value of Canada's three major senior programs: the old age supplement, the guaranteed income supplement and the Canada pension plan.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present today.

The first petition is from over 125 residents of Trail, Montrose and Fruitvale in my riding.

The petitioners state that Parliament has a solemn duty to reject any law that says some human beings are not human. They call upon the House of Commons and Parliament assembled to confirm that every human being is recognized by Canadian law as human by amending section 223 of our Criminal Code in such a way as to reflect 21st century medical evidence.

ABORTION

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by residents of Winnipeg and Regina.

The petitioners call on the House to reject Motion No. 312 based on the fundamental confusion between the medical and biological aspects of what is a human being in the legal and social aspects of personhood.

[Translation]

MEAT INSPECTION

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the third petition is in support of my Bill C-322.

The petitioners are saying that horsemeat products for human consumption are likely to contain prohibited substances, as are Canadian horsemeat products currently being sold for human consumption in domestic and international markets.

The petitioners, who live in Quebec, are encouraging the House of Commons to adopt my bill, Bill C-322.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PROTECTING CANADA'S IMMIGRATION SYSTEM ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-31, An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act, the Marine Transportation Security Act and the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): When the House last left this motion, the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley had five minutes for the period for questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Newton—North Delta.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about the fact that the NDP was opposing this legislation. He said it was because we wanted to let in terrorists and people who would endanger citizens across Canada.

I would like to know if the member is aware of the Balanced Refugee Act, the current legislation that actually captured the people he talked about, those who came off a boat. The current legislation, the Balanced Refugee Act, does allow for irregular refugees, or people who arrive without identification, to be held until security checks and identification have been done.

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the Balanced Refugee Act. I think this act would strengthen and enhance that act. It would make sure that Canadians are kept safe.

I think all of us in Parliament, particularly this week, know that there are dangerous people in this world. There are dangerous people in Canada, and we have seen that this week.

It is our job as parliamentarians, as the Government of Canada, to put legislation in place that would keep our seniors, children and all Canadians safe. That is what this legislation would do.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in part, this legislation would establish a two-tier refugee system. This goes against the UN conventions in the 1950s that indicated very clearly that we have an obligation to treat refugees equally. However, the Conservative government has decided to designate some refugees as “irregulars” and then treat them significantly differently.

My question to the member is this: why would the government go against a UN convention resolution that states we should be treating refugees equally here in Canada?

Denying these refugees the opportunity to sponsor family members until they have been in Canada for five years seems to be unfair. It is not the best way to allow for families to be together.

● (1220)

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, it is quite the contrary. We have a refugee system that Canada can be proud of.

We are one of only 20 countries in the world that allow refugees to settle in them. We actually take in 10% of the worldwide refugees and settle them here. This is a refugee system we can be proud of.

Government Orders

We are supporting the United Nations and its tenets on refugee access. However, we want to make sure that we put practices and legislation in place that will keep dangerous criminals out of our country. We also want to ensure that we do not have refugees trying to game the system or jump the queue in our immigration system.

The legislation would protect all Canadians. It would also protect legal and legitimate immigrants coming to Canada against the people trying to game our system and jump the queue.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague is referring to the terrorists and criminals that might enter Canada.

The only problem is that he clearly has not read former Bill C-11, which already prevents such individuals from entering. How can he justify new legislation to send away terrorists who are not even in Canada because they were already screened out at the gate?

Why pass legislation that simply oppresses people and incarcerates children, but does nothing to deal with terrorists because terrorists do not enter Canada?

[English]

Mr. Scott Armstrong: Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country know that this government is not going to incarcerate children, and the fact that the member stood in the House and made the accusation that this government would put children into jail is absolutely asinine. He should be ashamed of himself.

This government always stands for Canadian families, for the families of immigrants and for the families of refugees. We will stand up and protect both those children and our own children. By passing this legislation, we are going to make sure that all Canadians are protected so that we do not have illegal refugees coming here and posing a threat to the everyday Canadians in this country.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they always say that the government does not want to incarcerate children. Unfortunately for my colleague who just spoke before me, UNICEF does not share that opinion. UNICEF has made recommendations urging the Canadian government not to incarcerate children and those recommendations have been ignored by the government. That is the problem. All the witnesses who appeared before the committee, including the government's witnesses, indicated that this was not a good bill, and that they have some reservations about it.

I will share some of the most striking testimony. The Barreau du Québec said:

Accordingly, the Barreau recommends withdrawing Bill C-31 and promoting and improving the application of the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act* with regard to the [problems raised].

Government Orders

The Barreau du Québec is calling on the government to withdraw this bill. It believes that the bill is *ultra vires*. Echoing the Barreau du Québec is the Canadian Bar Association, which recommends that Bill C-31 in its current form be withdrawn—not amended, but withdrawn. They say this is not a good bill. That is serious.

The Supreme Court of Canada issued two important rulings in Singh and Charkaoui. In those rulings, the court indicated that, no matter what the government wants, when it incarcerates someone, it must provide that individual with access to justice and ask a judge to rule on the legality of his or her incarceration. That is fundamental.

The Conservatives are not adhering to that; they are dismissing it. They are giving the minister discretionary powers—very significant powers, too much power.

This has been reiterated by UNICEF, an organization that cannot be accused of being made up of crypto-communists or pro-terrorist militants. UNICEF has stated:

...we are concerned that many of the provisions of Bill C-31, as currently framed, are overly broad; provide for sweeping ministerial discretion without judicial accountability or other checks and balances in the system; are unconstitutional under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and violate Canada's international obligations, as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Those comments were made by UNICEF, the organization responsible for defending children's rights around the globe. It issued a series of recommendations aimed at excluding children under the age of 18 from the application of this legislation. I would remind the House that, at present, despite what the government member who spoke before me said, under this bill, children can be incarcerated. Anyone between 16 and 18 can be sent to prison.

Furthermore, we need to understand that these are people who arrive with families. Are parents who are incarcerated going to stand for their three- or four-year-old child being sent who knows where? These people have no guarantee that any children who do not go with them to a detention centre will be treated properly elsewhere. There will be language barriers, cultural differences, and so on.

This means that, at present, children can be and will continue to be incarcerated. UNICEF condemns this. It is calling on the government to guarantee that no one under the age of 18 will be sent to an immigration detention centre. It is pretty simple, yet this government does not seem to understand.

• (1225)

So they really must not have listened to the testimony that was given. Everyone said it: these detention centres do not respect this at all.

People who claim to support the safety of children—and I would like to believe that the members opposite do too—say that children can find themselves in these detention centres with their parents but also with criminals that Canada rightly deports.

So, for a certain period of time, children are being detained with common criminals. They are being detained with people who engage in anti-social behaviour and who have to be deported from Canada. These are not just illegal refugees, but serious criminals. They are being deported because of their anti-social behaviour and they are being given the opportunity to interact with children. That is

unacceptable. Many people testified in this regard. Everyone agreed on this point. No one who testified disagreed with this position. Yet the government did not approve this resolution.

There is also the matter of the child's age. Sometimes, when children are between the ages of 16 and 18, it is difficult to determine their exact age. UNICEF proposed a procedure that is in place in every other country. Canada has not implemented it yet.

People asked that the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, Canada's obligations with respect to the status of children, the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms be respected. They made a series of recommendations, which were all presented. Not one of them was approved by the government. Not one. None of the recommendations to protect children and the rights of all Canadians—because they are also our rights—were approved.

Detaining someone without giving him the opportunity to explain his situation before a judge does not just violate the rights of refugees, it also violates the rights of all Canadians. When the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not applied to one Canadian, it is not applied to every Canadian.

It is striking that all of the witnesses said that this is not a good bill. Yet there is a law that could come into effect in June. It is a good law that was unanimously supported by the House and by witnesses. It respects the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and our international obligations, and it enhances our global reputation. But no. The Conservatives are replacing it with—and I am sorry to have to say it—a bill that is complete garbage.

This legislation gives a minister powers that should never be given to a single man. These include discretionary powers to determine what constitutes a safe country, an irregular arrival and the definition of a child.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for letting me know that I have just two minutes left.

The experts have spoken. They have said that this is at odds with the charter. It is not hard to understand. Two Supreme Court rulings have made it clear that the government does not have the right to do this, yet it is going ahead. It is truly a tragedy that we are wasting our time on legislation that, as soon as it is enacted, will be dragged into court on the basis of the charter and the case law. The Supreme Court justices have already ruled on these issues, and they have said no.

Constantly ignoring good advice suggests some level of ill will. According to the experts, we have a law that protects us.

• (1230)

There is already a law that prevents criminal and terrorist elements from entering Canada. All of those who are unacceptable or bad for Canadian society already get weeded out. They do not get into Canada. That bears repeating. The government likes to scare people into thinking that bad guys are coming to Canada to kill and rape. The Conservatives like using those words, but their assertions have no basis in reality.

Government Orders

The truth is that, when irregular arrivals by boat land in British Columbia, government officials sort through them to identify common criminals and war criminals. Those people do not get into Canada.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, it is obvious that the hon. NDP member is very ill-informed about Bill C-31.

For example, he said that the bill will result in the incarceration of minors and children, which is not true. The bill includes a clear provision that exempts minors who are designated as irregular arrivals—smuggled human cargo—from detention.

I must point out that there is a huge difference between the incarceration that he spoke about and the detention of immigrants. Incarceration suggests imprisonment. However, no immigrant is imprisoned in immigration detention centres. All immigrants are free to leave Canada at any time. It is not imprisonment.

Living conditions at detention centres are like those at a two star hotel with a bit of security. What we have heard is nothing but rhetoric.

In addition, he said that the government had not accepted any amendments, which is not true. For example, the committee adopted a provision that will allow a review of the detention by the IRB after 14 days of detention, and after six months of detention in the case of immigrants who were smuggled into the country. Is he not aware of these amendments?

• (1235)

Mr. Alain Giguère: Mr. Speaker, not only am I aware of them, but I know the difference between a prison and a two star hotel.

Being incarcerated in dormitories and not having the right to go outside without one's feet and wrists in chains is not equivalent to living in a two star hotel. I feel sorry for him if that is the kind of two star hotel found in his riding.

How can I express how out of touch with reality he is? People should go and look at these prisons and speak to the people who provide services to those who are incarcerated. To be locked in a building surrounded by barbed wire, monitored by armed guards and not have the right to leave, that is tantamount to being in prison. That is a prison.

According to the minister, the people in the detention centres can leave whenever they want to. They are free to go if they want to leave Canada and be killed in their home countries. Is that the alternative? That is really very generous of the government.

I invite him to reread the Charkaoui case. That was the situation he found himself in. He was free to go when he wanted to, if he returned to Morocco. However, he did not want to return there and chose to live in safety in Canada. The Supreme Court justices sided with him.

Really, he should reread it.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will give a hypothetical example that could reflect reality. If a single mother escapes from a country like South Africa, with a child of

eight or nine years old and arrives in Canada, this minister would say that the parent is an irregular arrival. That would mean she would have to go into a detention centre. Once in a detention centre, the mother would have to make a decision whether to have her child put into some form of foster care and let the government take control of the child or to have the child stay with her in the detention centre.

What type of decision does the member believe a parent has in that sort of scenario?

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Mr. Speaker, that is the main reason why children currently end up in a detention centre or prison.

Parents are worried. They do not know where the child will go. They do not know the quality of the services that will be provided. Right now, young children end up in a detention centre because these services are not provided, and this can last for a period of several months. That is the problem.

It is even more serious than that. The minister has the exclusive authority to decide whether this person was an irregular arrival, and whether they come from a safe country. Is Israel a safe country for a Palestinian? Is South Africa a safe country for a man with black or white skin? Is Brazil a safe country for someone who lives in an aboriginal community? That is up to the minister—and the minister alone—to decide. He is not accountable to anyone.

[English]

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to add my voice today to the debate on this important piece of legislation.

As we know, Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, would help us carry out long-needed reforms to the refugee system and help crack down on human smugglers who may try to abuse Canada's generous immigration system. However, I would like to focus my remarks today on another important component of Bill C-31: the measures in this legislation that would allow the introduction of biometric technology for the screening of temporary resident applicants.

Currently, when individuals make immigration applications, in most cases, they only need to initially provide written documents to support their applications. Quite frankly, a modern immigration system can do a better job of ensuring safety and security. Indeed, biometrics, photographs and fingerprints to be more specific, provide greater certainty in identifying travellers than documents, which, as we all know, can easily be forged or stolen.

Our government is facilitating the travel of legitimate travellers to Canada. However, it is no secret that there are countless numbers of people each year who are not allowed to come to Canada who, nevertheless, find ways to enter. There are countless examples on an almost daily basis of violent criminals, terrorists, human smugglers and war criminals among others, who have entered Canada using false documents.

Government Orders

In fact, there are several examples of criminals entering Canada on multiple occasions after being deported. There are even examples of criminals re-entering Canada using false identities and documents up to 15, 19, 21 different times. This has to stop, and biometrics will help our government end this fraud and abuse. Biometrics will help our government protect the safety and the security of Canadians.

Biometrics is one of the most effective ways to correctly identify individuals. Biometrics would be an important new tool to help protect the safety and security of Canadians by reducing identity fraud and identity theft. As fraudsters become more sophisticated, biometrics would improve our ability to keep violent criminals and those who pose a threat out of Canada.

The legislation being debated today, and regulations that would follow, would allow the government to make it mandatory for travellers, students and workers from certain visa-required countries and territories to have their photographs and fingerprints taken as part of their temporary resident visa, study permit and work permit applications. This would mean that photos and fingerprints would be collected as part of a standard visa application process before the applicant arrives in Canada. This would help with processing visa applications and later, with confirming the identity of visa holders when they arrive at our borders.

The use of biometrics as an identity management tool in our immigration and border control systems is a welcome development that is a long time in the making.

It would also bring Canada in line with what is quickly becoming the international norm in this area.

As my hon. colleagues may know, many governments around the world have already introduced biometric collection in their immigration and border programs. They include the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, New Zealand, Japan, countries of the European Union, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Although the use of biometrics for visa applications would be a new development for Canada, the fact that so many other countries have already adopted biometrics has an added benefit. Many visa applicants to Canada would already be familiar with the process. This would make for a smoother transition to this system.

By providing a fast and reliable tool to help confirm identity, biometrics would strengthen the integrity of Canada's immigration system and help protect the safety and security of Canadians while helping facilitate legitimate travel. This would greatly help our front-line visa and border officers to manage high volumes of immigration applications and the growing sophistication in identity fraud.

At the same time, the use of biometrics would be beneficial to applicants themselves because, in the long run, as I noted, the use of biometrics would actually facilitate entry to Canada by providing a reliable tool to readily confirm the identity of applicants.

• (1240)

For instance, in cases where the authenticity of documents is uncertain or in doubt, biometrics could expedite decision-making at Canadian ports of entry. Using biometrics could also protect visa

applicants by making it more difficult for others to forge, steal or use the applicants' identity to gain access into Canada.

The legislation and regulations would also allow for biometric data collected from foreign nationals to be used and disclosed by the RCMP for domestic law enforcement. For instance, in a criminal investigation, if there is a match to a temporary resident's fingerprints, the RCMP would be authorized to disclose that information to another law enforcement agency. This may help, for example, in cases where unidentified fingerprints are found at a crime scene, or where assistance is needed in identifying victims.

This is yet another tool to help enforce Canadian laws and to ensure that Canada's doors are not open to those who would break the law or endanger the safety of our citizens. Let me stress, however, that the use of biometric information for law enforcement purposes would be conducted in accordance with Canada's privacy legislation.

Allow me to quote from a recent editorial on Bill C-31 which appeared in the *Montreal Gazette*. It noted:

The collection of biometric information is a sensible security precaution that will be a valuable tool in preventing people from slipping into the country with false identities.

It would be hard to disagree with this take on biometrics. After all, the many benefits of introducing biometric technology for screening visa applicants make it a welcome and, as the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism has described it, a "historic" development for our immigration system.

Furthermore, the use of biometrics is increasingly becoming the standard by which other countries operate. By passing Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act, we would be ensuring that Canada keeps up with the many countries already using biometrics in their immigration and border programs.

The implementation of biometrics makes so much common sense, I cannot for the life of me understand how the opposition NDP and Liberals could vote against these provisions.

Canadians, including my constituents in Newmarket—Aurora, do not want criminals to be able to enter Canada, live in their neighbourhoods and roam their streets. I am quite certain neither do the constituents of any of the NDP and Liberal MPs in this House.

The NDP and Liberals are trying to gut biometric provisions. They are voting against one of the most important measures to prevent criminals and terrorists from entering our country. They are voting against a tool that will help protect the safety and security of all Canadians, including their constituents.

It is only our Conservative government that is supporting measures that will help prevent any more innocent Canadians from being victimized by foreign criminals who should not be in Canada in the first place.

Government Orders

Biometrics would protect the integrity of Canada's immigration system. It is an important new tool to help protect the safety and security of Canadians by reducing identity fraud and identity theft. As fraudsters become more sophisticated, biometrics would improve our ability to keep violent criminals and those who pose a threat to Canada out.

For these reasons and many others, I wholeheartedly and without reservation urge all members to vote against the irresponsible NDP and Liberal amendments that would stop the government from implementing biometrics, and instead support Bill C-31 and ensure its speedy passage.

• (1245)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in regard to biometrics, I do not know if the member is aware of it, but it was actually the Liberal government that initiated the pilot project on biometrics. It has taken the government five or six years now to act on that initiative.

In regard to detentions, the current system works. The government is claiming to fix something that is just not broken. The current system has been working.

With respect to terrorists and the return of criminals, the government has been negligent on the biometrics aspect, but when it comes to the detention aspect of it, the government created the issue. The issue was not there.

Besides those two points, could the member tell me what other measures in this legislation are going to prevent terrorism or punish criminals who are not landed immigrants or in fact refugees? What other initiatives is the member referring to in this bill?

• (1250)

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, we know the detention system is not working for Canadians.

I would like to talk about biometrics and the opportunity this presents for people who are coming into Canada legitimately. When people provide this kind of information it gives the Canadian immigration system new tools to help legitimate people get into Canada far more quickly. We are just following in the steps, and late in so doing may I say, of many other countries in the world that are already implementing this kind of technology. It is time Canada got on board.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about all these people who are trying to get into Canada illegally, but the Geneva convention does recognize asylum seekers. When we look at people from Hungary, even though there were many applicants, Canada did recognize at least 160 of them last year as asylum seekers under the Geneva convention.

Why is this bill going out of its way to discriminate and punish victims instead of going after the smugglers?

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, I would like to relay to the House a little story about my own daughter. When she was in Spain her passport was stolen from her backpack. She reported the passport stolen. Two years later we received a phone call from the RCMP, which was trying to identify the status of my daughter's passport because it was being used for the fraudulent purpose of trying to bring someone into the country.

These are the kinds of things we absolutely have to stop. By using biometrics we are going to cut down on the number of people who are fraudulently attempting to get into Canada. We will make our system work far more expeditiously.

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciated my colleague's message with respect to biometrics. She noted a number of countries that have moved aggressively in this area. We are trying to work with them, whether it be the United States or countries in the EU. In particular, this is one of the key pieces of the work we are doing with the United States on the perimeter agreement.

I wonder if the hon. member could comment on the importance of our relationship concerning identification and pursuit of the security of our border with the United States.

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that question because it gives me the opportunity to mention again the number of countries that Canada is lagging behind in getting this technology into place. The United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, New Zealand, Japan, countries of the European Union, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Malaysia are countries that have already implemented biometrics.

One of the things we can consider is many members of the House have already participated in biometrics when they have applied for or received their NEXUS card. It is a tool that the United States has used as a pilot project. It already collects biometrics to facilitate the border crossings between Canada and the United States.

It has expedited the opportunity for business transactions to take place between our two countries. We know that by implementing these kinds of biometrics for our immigration system, we are going to expedite the process and have the tools we need to bring legitimate people into our country, who will be great participants in Canada.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I kind of wish I did not have to speak to Bill C-31 at report stage because it is a bill that we in the NDP very much oppose. We are very concerned about its passage through report stage and on to third reading.

Our colleague, the member for Newton—North Delta, has worked so hard in committee. She tried valiantly to make amendments to the bill at committee to improve it.

I will begin my remarks by reflecting on the history of the bill. It has an interesting history. There was an original bill which was amended to become Bill C-11, as a result of the Conservative government being in a minority Parliament. It was interesting that at that time there was some co-operation and collaboration to actually remove some of the worst aspects of the bill and to move forward with a bill that was more acceptable to members of Parliament. Of course, now there is a majority Conservative government and it is very disturbing to see that what the Conservatives did was rather than continue with former Bill C-11, they came back with a bill that is quite horrifying in terms of what it will do.

Government Orders

What I find disturbing is that when we hear the speeches from the government members, on the one hand they say that the bill is all about fairness and balance and that we are going to be treating refugees in a proper way and respecting international conventions and Canada's history around refugees. Then on the other hand, everything that comes out of the Conservatives' mouths is basically about abuse of the system.

It is the same kind of mantra we hear so much on the government's legislation around law and order, the Criminal Code and criminal justice. It is always about focusing on what the Conservatives see as abuse and changing laws in massive widespread ways that have an impact on society as a whole. It is a very disturbing pattern that we have seen with the government. It is a tactic the Conservatives use to divide people.

There are fears about people coming to Canada. People have many fears, but when we see a government deliberately playing on those fears and exploiting people's concerns, whether it is about immigration, refugees, or whatever it might be, it feels really bad. It feels like this is absolutely what we should not be doing. Our laws should be based on overall merit, objectivity and the public interest, rather than singling out abuse. We have seen that many times in the political environment. An example would be the attacks on people who are poor, who live on welfare. We call it poor-bashing, where laws are designed to basically scapegoat people on welfare when the rate of abuse is no more than for people in the financial sector who are involved in abuse. It becomes very much a class issue, a term which we do not use very often in the House. It becomes a way of singling people out, of targeting particular segments of our community by saying there are good people and bad people, there are criminals and there are victims, making that very simplistic division.

I wanted to begin that way because we see it so often in much of the legislation that is coming forward. Unfortunately, Bill C-31 is no different. It is a bill, like many other bills from the Conservative government, that confers greater power and authority on the minister.

I am the health critic for the NDP. We have seen recent changes in the health field around the Food and Drugs Act that will do the same thing for the Minister of Health. It will confer much greater power in terms of decision-making away from expert advice, away from a broader notion of public interest. It becomes much more of a partisan, and I would say ideological, decision-making process. Bill C-31 which deals with our refugee system is no different and in fact is probably worse.

There are many reasons to oppose the bill. One is that it concentrates more power in the minister's hands. For example, he would designate what are safe countries without any advice from independent experts.

● (1255)

Another major concern is it will restrict access to the humanitarian and compassionate consideration grounds for a refugee. This will be very problematic. It means that people will have to claim, at the beginning of the process, whether they will file for refugee status or humanitarian and compassionate grounds consideration. This will be a huge issue because people may not know at that point which avenue they will need to pursue. As it is now, people can go through

the process and they can also file on humanitarian and compassionate grounds and know it is a due process on which they can rely.

The big concern is the arbitrary designation of so-called irregular arrivals and all that means. This raises huge alarm bells. I remember reading over the years what had occurred in places like Australia where it had mandatory detention and the kind of xenophobia and violent public discourse that took place as a result of that kind of government practice and legislation. Many of us feel this is something Canada now seems to be embarking upon. It is absolutely the wrong way to go.

I feel very concerned because when we have the minister making decisions without expert advice, those decisions can become very political and partisan. Yes, we are in politics, we all make political decisions, but when we deal with something as fundamental as a refugee process that is governed under international, UN and Geneva conventions, how we approach that is critical. Therefore, having the minister saying what is a safe country or saying that, for example, the European Union is not a safe country misses the complexity of our global environment.

I recently saw a film called *Never Come Back*, which is about the Roma in Canada. The film begins by speaking about Roma people who have settled in, particularly in the communities of Hamilton and Toronto. At the beginning, we think these are great contributors to the local society. There were people working in schools and long-term care facilities as cleaners and in pizza places and they had a soccer team. We wonder whether these people have been persecuted or are they refugees. Then the film takes us back to their home communities and we see the unbelievable persecution that the Roma had experienced, which was horrifying. It is something that is going on as neo-Nazism, xenophobia and violence against targeted minorities grow.

It is very alarming that the simplistic approach of the bill and the fact that it would give the minister so much power would possibly mean that many people who would be refugees legitimately fleeing persecution, hard-working Canadians who will make an enormous contribution to our society when they come here, would be cast aside for political reasons. We have been told that the bill is about getting at abuse. There is this heavy-handed approach at basically eliminating the possibility of many legitimate people from also coming through.

That is only a bit of what I wanted to say. However, it is another sad day that this legislation will go through. The bill has been resoundingly criticized by every major organization that deals with this issue. Even new groups, like the Canadian Doctors for Refugees in Canada, are so concerned about regulatory changes involving refugees and their health coverage. Because of that, they formed a new group and 50 of them visited the offices of elected members. We have not seen this before. I think it is because this kind of legislation will impact so many levels of our society that people who have not spoken out before are now saying they have to speak out.

Government Orders

We hope that possibly some of our amendments on report stage will be approved. I am skeptical about this, but nevertheless we will continue to speak out against this kind of legislation.

• (1300)

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Vancouver East said that the bill would eliminate the possibility for some asylum claimants to get protection in Canada. Is she not aware that every asylum claimant from every country, regardless the mode of their arrival, would have access to the same kind of full fact-based oral hearing before an independent highly-trained IRB decision maker on the merits of their asylum case with no negative prejudice associated with it and that the bill would maintain Canada's absolute obligation of non-refoulement for bona fide refugees?

Furthermore, she mentioned particularly Roma refugee asylum claimants. Is she aware that over 95% of the asylum claimants coming from the European Union have abandoned or withdrawn their own claims of their own accord, admitting that they do not need Canada's protection? Is she aware of that fact and would she care to reflect on it?

Also, the member has proposed repeatedly that we grant old age security to immigrant seniors after their third year of residency in Canada. It now appears that she also believes we should provide free supplementary health benefits to even smuggled migrants and rejected asylum claimants in Canada. I think I heard her endorse the position of those criticizing our changes to the interim federal health program. I would like her to clarify this. Is she in favour of granting supplementary benefits to even failed asylum claimants and smuggled migrants, which benefits are not normally available to Canadian citizens?

• (1305)

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I have a great fear that the changes in the bill that will give the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism more power will mean that the system will not work the way it used to. I guess it is a matter of trust. I simply do not trust that minister nor his government to engage in a fair process. I think they have another agenda. That is why we feel so very concerned about the bill.

Whatever the minister might put forward today, at the end of the day the bill is about the process, about the minister's powers and the potential of what could happen. We can say very clearly, along with every other group that has examined this bill—

Hon. Diane Finley: Is that a yes or a no?

Hon. Jason Kenney: I'm going to guess yes.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Doesn't sound very good for Canadians.

Hon. Diane Finley: Is that a yes?

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I guess they do not want to hear the answer, but I will continue.

Any group that has examined this bill has come to the same conclusion as the NDP, that the bill should be defeated.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member a question in regard to Canada's international reputation.

If we take a look at it, we have somewhere in the neighbourhood of 10 million plus refugees around the world. Canada was respected as one of the countries that played a leading role on the whole refugee policy. We do get a good percentage of refugees compared to other countries. We see that as a positive thing.

Numerous people came to committee while the bill was being debated. A consensus was developing that in fact Bill C-31 would in fact tarnish Canada's leadership role on the whole refugee file. We should all be concerned about that. Most Canadians are quite compassionate and feel very strongly in protecting those individuals, even if it means not necessarily being able to come to Canada, and our influence in the world to make a better home for people around the world.

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I was not at the committee so I did not hear the witnesses, but I certainly talked with my colleagues who were on the committee and I heard a very similar description of what took place at committee. There is a lot of concern about what it means in not only Canada's reputation, but what our obligations are under various conventions for refugees. The bill, if it goes through, there is the suggestion that it will violate the charter in terms of arbitrary detention, so it may well face a legal challenge and there may be other challenges on how it contravenes international conventions.

Again, one would think this would give the government some pause for thought to think about what our role is in the international community. However, it appears that it is not willing to be thoughtful, that it does have a very political mission on the bill, and that is to create this them and us situation to focus on abuse and in the process deny many legitimate refugees the opportunity to be in our country.

• (1310)

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in support of Bill C-31, the protecting Canada's immigration system act.

Canada enjoys a global reputation as a nation that champions democracy, equality and freedom of speech. I believe strongly in the benefits and opportunities that come from a diverse society.

The fact is that most Canadians have a chapter in their family history that includes immigration and resettlement. It is what helps define Canada. There are countless individuals and families around the world who want to add the same chapter to their family history by coming to Canada. This is a source of pride for our government and for all Canadians.

Unfortunately the reality is that there are individuals and criminal organizations that see our generosity as an easy target to make a high profit with low risk. These criminal elements use Canada's great reputation to spin false and malicious stories of how refugees can bypass the proper channels by paying a set fee.

Government Orders

Until recently most Canadians believed that large-scale human smuggling was something that did not happen here, that it was something that they just read about, that it happened in countries like Australia.

All that changed in 2009 when Canadians witnessed the arrival on the west coast of the MV *Ocean Lady*, carrying 76 migrants, and then less than a year later 500 migrants arrived on the second vessel the MV *Sun Sea*. Shortly after that a sea container was uncovered at the port of Montreal, concealing yet more individuals who wanted to enter Canada illegally.

Suddenly Canadians' eyes were wide open. Suddenly they realized this was a problem. Canadians reacted. They told us they wanted our government to act decisively to crack down on those who would endanger the lives of men, women and children by selling them false dreams and transporting them in unsafe vessels or shipping crates.

I realize my time is short, but members on this side of the House have done extraordinary work in this area. The member for Kildonan—St. Paul has her human trafficking private member's bill. The Minister of Immigration is probably the best immigration minister that Canada has ever had.

The Minister of Immigration has a very strong understanding of the bill. He has consulted extensively. He knows what is right for Canada and he knows what is right and fair for everyone involved in immigration or as a refugee.

Our bill would put a stop to foreign criminals, human smugglers and bogus refugees abusing our generous immigration system and receiving lucrative tax-funded health and social benefits. At the same time, the bill would protect those who would be truly in need more quickly.

Those who are truly in need is a very important aspect. Why should those who are in need be penalized by those who abuse the system, the criminals or the people who are not genuine refugees? There is a system, but the old system is broken. The new system, under the greatest Minister of Immigration ever, will be a better and fairer system and, most important, the best system for Canada.

• (1315)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It being 1:15 p.m., pursuant to an order made Tuesday, May 29, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 1 stands deferred. The recorded division will also apply to Motions Nos. 2 to 5, 8 to 11, 13 to 18, 20, 21, 23, 25 to 27, 33, 36, 46, 48 to 54, 57 to 70, 73 to 79, 82 to 99 and 104 to 109.

I shall now propose Motions Nos. 6, 7, 55, 56, 71, 72, 80, 81 and 100 to 103 in Group No. 2 to the House.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 6.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-31, in Clause 6, be amended by replacing line 16 on page 3 with the following:

“prescribed biometric information, which must be done in accordance with the Privacy Act.”

[*English*]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 55

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 36.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 56

That Bill C-31, in Clause 36, be amended by replacing line 32 on page 17 to line 35 on page 18 with the following:

“110. A person or the Minister may appeal, in accordance with the rules of the Board, on a question of law, of fact or of mixed law and fact, to the Refugee Appeal Division against

(a) a decision of the Refugee Protection Division allowing or rejecting the person's claim for refugee protection;

(b) a decision of the Refugee Protection Division allowing or rejecting an application by the Minister for a determination that refugee protection has ceased;

or (c) a decision of the Refugee Protection Division allowing or rejecting an application by the Minister to vacate a decision to allow a claim for refugee protection.”

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 71

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 51.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 72

That Bill C-31, in Clause 51, be amended by replacing lines 36 to 39 on page 25 with the following:

“170.2 Except where there has been a breach of natural justice, the Refugee Protection Division does not have jurisdiction to reopen, on any ground, a claim for refugee protection.”

Government Orders

•(1320)

[English]

Ms. Jinny Jogendera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 80

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 59.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 81

That Bill C-31, in Clause 59, be amended by adding after line 15 on page 29 the following:

“(3) The regulations referred to in subsection (1) must provide, in respect of all claims for refugee protection, that the documents and information respecting the basis of the claim do not have to be submitted by the claimant to the Refugee Protection Division earlier than 30 days after the day on which the claim was submitted.

(4) The regulations referred to in subsection (1) must provide

(a) in respect of claims made by a national from a designated country of origin, that a hearing to determine the claim is not to take place until at least 60 days after the day on which the claim was submitted; and

(b) in respect of all other claims, that a hearing to determine the claim is not to take place until at least 90 days after the day on which the claim was submitted.

(5) The regulations referred to in subsection (1) must provide, in respect of all claims for refugee protection, that an appeal from a decision of the Refugee Protection Division

(a) does not have to be filed with the Refugee Appeal Division earlier than 15 days after the date of the decision; and

(b) shall be perfected within 30 days after filing.”

Ms. Jinny Jogendera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 100

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 78.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 101

That Bill C-31, in Clause 78, be amended by adding after line 19 on page 37 the following:

“(4) An agreement or arrangement entered into with a foreign government for the provision of services in relation to the collection, use and disclosure of biometric information under subsection (1) or (2) shall require that the collection, use and disclosure of the information comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act.”

[English]

Ms. Jinny Jogendera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 102

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 79.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 103

That Bill C-31, in Clause 79, be amended by replacing line 22 on page 37 with the following:

“79. In sections 80 to 83.1, “the Act” means”

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I will now proceed to put the questions on the Group No. 2 amendments.

The question is on Motion No. 6. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 6 stands deferred.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The question is on Motion No. 55. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion, the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

•(1325)

[English]

The next question is on Motion No. 71. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

Government Orders

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 71 stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 80. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 80 stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 100. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 100 stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 102. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 102 stands deferred.

I shall now propose Motions No. 28, 29, 32, 38, 41, 43 to 45 in Group No. 3 to the House.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 28

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 23.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motion No. 29

That Bill C-31, in Clause 23, be amended by replacing line 28 on page 12 with the following:

“foreign national is”

Motion No. 32

That Bill C-31, in Clause 23, be amended by adding after line 5 on page 13 the following:

“(3.2) A permanent resident or foreign national who is taken into detention and who is the parent of a child who is in Canada but not in detention shall be released, subject to the supervision of the Immigration Division, if the child’s other parent is in detention or otherwise not able to provide care for the child in Canada.”

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 38

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 26.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 41

That Bill C-31, in Clause 26, be amended by replacing, in the French version, line 33 on page 14 with the following:

“critère”

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 43

That Bill C-31 be amended by deleting Clause 27.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP), seconded by the member for Winnipeg North, moved:

Motions No. 44

That Bill C-31, in Clause 27, be amended by replacing lines 1 to 6 on page 15 with the following:

“58.1(1) The Immigration Division may, on request of a designated foreign national who was 18 years of age or older on the day of the arrival that is the subject of the designation in question, order their release from detention if it determines that exceptional circumstances exist that”

Motion No. 45

That Bill C-31, in Clause 27, be amended by replacing line 10 on page 15 with the following:

“foreign national who was 18 years of age or”

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I will now put the questions on Group No. 3.

Private Members' Business

• (1330)

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 28. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The recorded division on Motion No. 28 stands deferred.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 38. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The division on Motion No. 38 stands deferred.

The next question is on Motion No. 43. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The division on Motion No. 43 stands deferred.

Normally at this time the House would proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions at the report stage of the bill. However, pursuant to Standing Order 45 the recorded divisions stand deferred until Monday, June 4, 2012, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

It being 1:33 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The House resumed from April 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-279, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code (gender identity and gender expression), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have a few minutes today to discuss Bill C-279, an act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. Quite simply, Bill C-279 seeks to provide human rights protections to a group that remains a significant victim of discrimination in our society. Specifically, Bill C-279 seeks to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to add both gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination. It seeks to amend the Criminal Code to include gender identity and gender expression to the definition of identifiable groups in its provisions on hate propaganda. It seeks to add gender identity and gender expression to the Criminal Code's list of aggravating factors that affect sentencing.

As the Ontario Human Rights Commission has noted:

There are arguably few groups in society today who are as disadvantaged and disenfranchised as the transgendered community. Transphobia combined with the hostility of society to the very existence of transgendered people are fundamental human rights issues.

Given that the purpose of the Canadian Human Rights Act is to provide protection to the most vulnerable groups in Canadian society, it is my sincere hope that all members of the House will join the Liberal Party in supporting these logical and necessary modernizations of our existing laws. It is our belief that the amendments contained in Bill C-279 are an appropriate way to improve the human rights protections of a socially and economically marginalized group.

Private Members' Business

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

I would like to briefly comment on human rights in Canadian society.

Thirty years ago, Canada established the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It was a very, very important initiative. At the time, the protection of Canadians' rights was not as strong as it is today. The charter was the means used to strengthen these basic rights.

The charter also protected Canadians' rights by being entrenched in the country's Constitution.

Why did the other political parties, such as the NDP and the Conservative Party, not celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms? Why did they ignore its anniversary in March 2012?

At the time, it took courage to promote the creation of this charter. Today, it is up to our society to respect the rights and freedoms of Canadians. This is not a divisive or a shocking issue. Why did the other political parties not say a few words to celebrate the 30th anniversary of such an important event in the history of our country?

[*English*]

Moving back to Bill C-279, this is the culmination of years of effort and already represents the will of the House. Since 2005 this bill has been introduced on six occasions by the member for Burnaby—Douglas of the NDP. It was introduced once by my hon. colleague from Vancouver Centre and most recently by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

In 2010 the bill, which at the time was Bill C-389, was passed by the House of Commons without amendment, only to die on the order paper after being referred to the Senate.

The statistics on transphobia, which my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca eloquently pointed out in his remarks, are as striking as they are disturbing. Indeed, 95% of transgendered students feel unsafe at school and 9 out of 10 have been verbally harassed due to their gender expression. If this were one of our sons or daughters, feeling unsafe in school, all of us would take action to protect those rights.

Furthermore, statistics from the United States reveal the significant incidence of de facto discrimination experienced by transgendered individuals. A recent national survey found that transgendered respondents experienced unemployment at twice the rate of the general population and were significantly more likely to be homeless and low-income earners. This is just wrong. Attitudes in society must change and this bill is directed to that result. As well, a shocking statistic is that 97% of transgendered respondents in a recent survey reported experiencing harassment or mistreatment at work on the basis of gender identity or expression. I am quite certain we can all agree that this too is simply wrong.

As gender identity and gender expression refer not to an individual's biological sex or sexual orientation but rather the individual's inner knowledge of being male, female, both or neither, it is essential that Parliament send a clear and unambiguous message

that this is a crucial equality rights issue. Adopting the amendments proposed in Bill C-279 is not just about ensuring transgendered Canadians enjoy the legal protections accorded to other targeted groups. It is also an opportunity for Parliament to send an unequivocal message of support to transgendered Canadians that we in this House affirm their identity and acknowledge their struggles. This would be a humanitarian step that would cost nothing. It is in alignment with the basic principles of fairness, humanity, equality, inclusion and respect. It is an opportunity for all parliamentarians to really look into their hearts and to express their values and principles of inclusion.

As my hon. colleague from Mount Royal noted, a failure to explicitly refer to gender identity in the Canadian Human Rights Act leaves transgendered people invisible. By amending the Canadian Human Rights Act to include gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination, Parliament would enable the Canadian Human Rights Commission to keep statistical accounts of incidents of discrimination against transgendered individuals. The ability to compile and analyze such data would be crucial in confronting the scourge of discrimination that transgendered people continue to face in our society and might also guide educational efforts in the broader community.

We know well that having clarity and being able to measure and compile statistics has been essential in Canada's efforts to reduce other forms of discrimination against Jews, against people who are other-abled and in many other cases. What we do not measure, we cannot have objectives to improve. When we do not have objectives, we will be unlikely to achieve that goal.

I am proud that in 1996, guided by the principles of equality, justice and the fundamental need to protect vulnerable groups in Canadian society so we may prosper together, the Liberal Party amended the Canadian Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination. It is now time to carry on the fight against discrimination by making it clear that gender identity and gender expression are also prohibited in our society. Our job, as members of Parliament, is to do our very best for the common good and our very best to show respect, inclusion and humanitarian care for all members of our society.

For the group that this bill addresses, its turn has come. That is why I encourage all members on the opposite side of the aisle to also support this bill.

• (1340)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise in the House today to support Bill C-279, which is An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code in regard to gender identity and gender expression.

Private Members' Business

This bill has had a long history, and I want to first of all thank the NDP member from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca for the tremendous work that he has done on this new version of the bill, as it has been in previous Parliaments. He has done an incredible amount of work within Parliament and by talking to individual members of Parliament and helping people understand the importance of this bill and what it means. He has also done significant work in the community, not just in the trans community but in the broader community, to bring about a better understanding of this bill. I certainly want to pay tribute and give respect to the work that my colleague has done.

This bill has actually had a long history. It was first introduced in the House in, I believe, 2005, and again in 2006 and then again in 2008 by Bill Siksay, who was the former member of Parliament for Burnaby—Douglas. He too did an incredible amount of work. It was a great day when the bill actually did pass in the House of Commons, as the member for Vancouver Quadra just noted a few minutes ago.

In February 2011, it did actually go into the Senate. Had it not been for the election, it is very possible that the bill would have gone through the Senate and would now be law. That history is interesting because it gives a sense of the importance of private members' business, bills and motions and of how we have to keep plugging away and working at an issue. Sometimes it can be a very long and difficult road, with barriers and frustrations and sometimes elections arising before the goal of having a bill finally approved is reached.

This bill and its history have been quite remarkable. I want us to reflect on that today, because this is the fourth time around with this bill. It has already passed in a Parliament. We have an opportunity here today to do something historic, which is to affirm the rights of transgendered, transsexual and gender-variant Canadians who do not have the same degree of protection for their rights and freedoms as all other Canadians. That is why this bill is seeking to remedy that gap in the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code.

I know some Conservative members may just oppose the bill outright. I would have serious questions about that, because it is a bill based on establishing our understanding about human rights and protection under the law. Other members may support the issue in principle but may believe that the bill is possibly not necessary and that somehow that protection already exists. However, I think we need to be very clear that although other minority groups do have protection under human rights and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, those rights are not guaranteed specifically to transgendered, transsexual and gender-variant Canadians because they are not identified as an identifiable group. While the charter now spells out race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted, it does not include transgendered persons. Therefore, it is really important that we actually make this move.

I would point out that the Canadian Human Rights Act review panel in 2000 recommended that these changes take place. In other words, an independent evaluation beyond this bill in Parliament came to the same conclusion, the conclusion that these changes are needed.

I would also point out that gender identity and gender expression are grounds for protection under the UN Declaration on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, to which Canada was a signatory back in 2008, so we can see the international frame for this as well as see that our own experts in Canada are saying that this change needs to take place.

• (1345)

The bill is very timely. It is warranted. It has already been approved by a previous Parliament, so I am very hopeful that we will see our way here, on all sides of the House, to have the bill go through at second reading and pass on to committee.

The support in the community has been quite magnificent. A lot of people have worked very hard on this bill. They include the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, as I pointed out earlier, and also groups like Egale Canada, Jer's Vision, Gender Mosaic, Ottawa Trans PULSE Project and Trans Pride Canada.

These groups, and many individuals as well, have worked very hard to bring about greater awareness of issues facing transgendered people and greater awareness that discrimination still exists in daily life. Whether we consider health care or employment, housing or social interactions and social acceptance, there is still discrimination, there is still persecution and there is still violence.

It is very interesting. When the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca spoke in the first hour of debate, he laid out very well some of the reports that have been done. One done by Trans PULSE Project Canada, for example, shows that the level of depression among transgendered Canadians is as high as 61% to 66%, and there are issues around mental health. This all has to do with people feeling they are excluded, that they are facing discrimination and harassment, so it is very important that we address this inequality.

A bill like this is really just the first step. Putting something into law, enshrining a right and improving and strengthening the rights that we have, is surely the most important and significant first step that needs to be done, but it is only the beginning. From there, we have to ensure continual vigilance to make sure those rights and protections are upheld because, unfortunately, much discrimination still takes place, so the application of the law and an understanding about the law are really important.

We as legislators, as parliamentarians, have a really important leadership role to play in making it clear that we live in a society where, in our own communities and our own constituencies, we have transgendered constituents and that all people have the right to protection and dignity and respect under the law.

We can begin at that place, but we have to go further. We have to make sure, for example, that there is equal access to health care. Transgendered Canadians often find it very difficult to access health care services and are often denied medically necessary care. They are forced to deal with the issue of their gender before they can access the service. There are many examples, including not having equal access to surgery, an inequality that certainly exists in the provinces where there are different variations and standards. Some very important issues need to be dealt with, but first and foremost we need to get the bill through.

Private Members' Business

I want to appeal to all members of the House. This is a vote on principle in this bill, and if we accept the principle of what the bill is laying out, then let us get it to committee. At committee we can have a very constructive discussion about the bill, and there may possibly be amendments. The member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, who brought the bill forward, has made it very clear and has shown in all of his work that he wants to engage, hear different points of view and find a way that the bill can be supported by all sides.

We have something very strong and healthy here. We are very close to getting this bill through, so again I want to appeal to all members of the House to consider the principles of the bill, which are about the protection of all Canadians in human rights and dignity and respect, and to allow the bill to go to committee so that there can be a further discussion in much more detail.

I am proud to be here today. Our NDP caucus, the official opposition, is 100% behind the bill, and we really hope other members of the House will find their way to support this bill as well and let it go to committee.

● (1350)

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging the work of my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca for what he has been attempting to do here, including across the aisle, in a very effective and open way, and also the work of Bill Siksay, a former member of this House, who began the project over six years ago, and to remind everybody that this bill has in effect already passed the House once, only to stall in the Senate when the House was dissolved.

I have three main messages in my remarks.

First of all, I think it is really important that we see this bill as being centrally about recognition of humanity through recognition of distinct identity as part of our commitment to equality in Canadian society. I have found in the past the following approach to identity from an author south of the border, Audre Lorde, in her book *Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference* to be very informative, and it might help the members of this House.

Allow me to read, and I quote.

She says:

...I find I am constantly being encouraged to pluck out some one aspect of myself and present this as the meaningful whole, eclipsing or denying the other parts of self. But this is a destructive and fragmenting way to live. My fullest concentration of energy is available to me only when I integrate all the parts of who I am, openly, allowing power from particular sources of my living to flow back and forth freely through all my different selves, without the restrictions of externally imposed definition. Only then can I bring myself and my energies as a whole to the service of those struggles which I embrace as part of my living.

The connection here between identity, its recognition and one's ability to participate and contribute to society at large is extremely well put in this quotation, and I hope that we can all keep the ideas in that quotation in mind.

The second message I have is that this bill is hardly revolutionary. We already have an act in the Northwest Territories that reflects it. The Cities of Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver have already taken this step. We have a bill that has passed second reading, the bill known as "Toby's law", Bill 33 in the legislature of Ontario, and we have a recently tabled bill—I believe it is a government bill—in Manitoba.

Also, as has been mentioned several times, we have a declaration of the United Nations, the UN declaration on sexual orientation and gender identity, which Canada has signed, which has to be used as some kind of a normative reference point for our domestic law. As well, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has recently tabled a report at the end of last year on gender identity and sexual orientation that makes clear that even at the United Nations level, with all the diversity of member states, this is now recognized in human rights terms, and in the European Convention on Human Rights community, where we have almost 50 European countries, gender identity, through the recognition of transsexuals' rights in different parts of the European Convention on Human Rights, has for over a decade been recognized in that area of the world.

But my third, and most important, message comes from Ontario. It is to Ontario that I wish to focus, although what I am about to do is not very elegant or eloquent as a way of giving a speech. What I would like to do is share with the House some of the speeches that have already been given on Bill 33, Toby's law, in Ontario. That is an act to amend the Ontario Human Rights Code with respect to gender identity and gender expression. I want us to see what is happening in the House today as part of a bigger picture and not to have the House end up falling behind the rest of Canada.

Central to what is happening in Queen's Park is that it is a multi-party process, including Progressive Conservative MPPs who are as enthusiastically in support of the bill as Liberals and NDP members. Indeed, it is important to note that it is a co-sponsored bill, sponsored by Cheri DiNovo, MPP, of the NDP, Yasir Naqvi of the Liberals and Christine Elliott of the Progressive Conservatives.

● (1355)

My purpose in bringing this up in this way is to ask my Conservative colleagues to take notice of the developments in Queen's Park, and to allow to happen here what has already happened in Queen's Park, which is the bill has passed second reading and has gone to committee. Once this bill gets to committee, we can have a very different kind of discussion. I think it is very important not to cut this off before that stage.

Now allow me to do what I already indicated would not be very elegant or eloquent, and that is to dip in and out of some speeches.

First is a quote from a speech by Christine Elliott, who is the Conservative MPP for Whitby—Oshawa. She is referring to Susan Gapka, a trans rights activist from my area of Toronto, whom I also have the pleasure of knowing.

She stated:

[W]hen I first met Susan, which was in 2006...as a member of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy...at that time Susan appeared and was making the same arguments that she has continued to make, which are that everyone is entitled to the dignity and protection of the Human Rights Code, and that the inclusion of gender identity and gender expression, along with race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, and all the other things that we talk about when we speak about the Ontario Human Rights Code, should be included. Gender expression and gender identity should be included with that, to clarify and make sure that the rights of trans people are included as well.

*Private Members' Business***The Conservative MPP for Whitby—Oshawa continued:**

Fundamentally, I agree that this is a matter of basic human rights, and that's why I'm really proud to be able to co-sponsor this bill. I truly believe that everyone has the right to be fully included in our society, and everyone deserves the rights and protection of the Ontario Human Rights Code, period, end of sentence, no exceptions. That's what I think we're fundamentally dealing with here.

She went on to say:

There was a letter that was sent by Ontario Human Rights Commissioner Barbara Hall in 2007 on this issue, and she noted that "the lack of explicit inclusion in the legislation means that trans people's distinct experiences of discrimination remain unacknowledged.... Amending the code would provide clarity and greater recognition of the dignity of transgender people, and would leave no doubt, in the eyes of the public or the law, that they are entitled to the same human rights protections as everyone else."

The MPP for Whitby—Oshawa concluded:

I totally agree...and I think that some of the problems that people have encountered in terms of obtaining identification and obtaining travel documentation clearly show the fact that it hasn't been completely accepted and understood by everyone. I hope that obtaining all-party support of this...would absolutely clarify the issue once and for all and we could move forward on this issue.

I think I only have time to move to one other speech in the Ontario *Debates*, and that is one by Mrs. Jane McKenna, Conservative MPP for Burlington, who stated:

I have said before that I believe we are all God's children. I firmly believe this to be so. I have said before repeatedly that no one should suffer discrimination or persecution because of who they are and the road they walk in this life. We pride ourselves on being a modern society, a progressive place. We aspire to the ideas enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights....

And yet, under the current language of the Ontario Human Rights Code, the equalities and freedoms that most of us enjoy, and which far too many of us take for granted, are spelled out clearly for some and are implied for others.

If we truly want all Ontarians to enjoy these fundamental rights and freedoms, they should be extended to all Ontarians.

My intent in reading these two quotations from two members of the Progressive Conservative Party in Queen's Park who are in support of the analogue bill in Queen's Park is to plead to my colleagues in the Conservative Party to at least allow this bill to go to committee after second reading, where we can have a deeper discussion about the fundamental values of our country and the need to recognize the fundamental humanity of transgendered people.

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the House to support Bill C-279, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code.

I am very proud to have the opportunity to speak to the bill introduced by my hon. colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. I would like to take a moment to congratulate him on all his hard work on this issue.

I would also like to congratulate the former member, Mr. Siksay, who worked very hard in previous years to get his bill passed, a bill that was very similar to the one before us here today.

At the time, his bill was supported by the Canadian Bar Association and the Public Service Alliance of Canada. Today, we also have the support of many other unions, such as the Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

I am very proud of the fact that Canada's labour movement has given us its support so that we can finally pass legislation that will strengthen the rights of Canadians. I think that is very important. Canadians generally believe that our rights must be interpreted in a broad sense. However, when it comes to transsexuals' rights, there are limitations. I am very proud of the work done by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

Passing this bill would be an important step in protecting the rights of all Canadians. As a member of Parliament and an openly gay man, I am very aware of the fundamental importance of the legal protection of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

In fact, had my rights as a gay man not been enshrined in the law, I would likely not be here before you today. If I was not able to express my identity, I would be living a very different life, likely a double life, a life filled with fear.

I would not be married. I would never have been able to openly share the joy of that relationship with my family and friends. I would likely never have developed the confidence needed to become a notary and a politician.

I support this bill. It will help transsexual and transgendered Canadians achieve a degree of freedom that they do not currently enjoy. It will be a freedom that will allow them to exercise their right to express themselves fully and freely as human beings, knowing that the law will protect them against bullying and discrimination.

Federal law does not provide specific protection for transsexual and transgendered Canadians any more than it provides protection against hate crimes.

Often, the courts and human rights commissions consider these types of complaints as discrimination, but the legal arguments have to be made over again every time. Enshrining this right in our legislation would prevent such complaints from ending up in court and would prevent transsexual and transgendered people from always having to spend large amounts of money to protect rights that others take for granted.

It is time to stop doing things this way and to protect transsexual and transgendered Canadians against the discrimination, harassment and violence they experience in their everyday lives. It is time to protect transsexual and transgendered Canadians.

Some believe that terms such as "gender identity" and "gender expression" are poorly defined, but that is not true. These expressions are very clear in scientific research and in the law.

Gender identity is an individual's self-conception as male or female, both or neither, as distinguished from one's birth-assigned sex.

Gender expression is how a person's gender identity is communicated to others through emphasizing, de-emphasizing or changing behaviour, dress, speech and/or mannerisms.

Private Members' Business

•(1405)

Some have argued that there is no need for specific protection of transgendered rights as sexual orientation is already included in the Canadian Human Rights Act and in the hate crimes section of the Criminal Code. This argument confuses sexual orientation (who one is attracted to sexually) with gender identity and gender expression.

Transgender, transsexual, gender non-conforming and gender variant individuals may profess any of a range of sexual orientations: attracted to people of their own gender identity, of the other binary gender or of several different genders. Assimilating gender identity and gender expression with sexual orientation is scientifically outdated and contradicted by the facts.

Trans people are regularly denied things that we all take for granted, such as access to adequate health care and housing, the ability to obtain or change identification documents, access to washrooms and other gender-identified spaces, limits on the ability to exercise the right to vote, and on the ability to acquire and keep meaningful employment.

Canada is a signatory to the UN statement on sexual orientation and gender identity. To meet our obligations it is necessary to add gender identity to our own Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code.

Transsexual and transgender Canadians currently have no explicit protection in the Human Rights Act leaving trans Canadians open to discrimination, prejudice, harassment and violence on a daily basis. Adding specific protections for the rights of transgender Canadians will close a specific gap in Canadian human rights law and will help raise public awareness about this important issue.

Since 1970, at least 645 trans people have been murdered worldwide. We know that this is only the tip of the iceberg as most countries do not keep records on trans identities or trans-related violence. This is an opportunity for all parties to join together to help complete basic protection of human rights in Canada by including protections for transgender, transsexual, and gender variant individuals in Canadian law.

We have seen this House pass similar legislation before. We had the support of many members from all parties. It would only make sense this time around to pass a bill on which this House has already spoken and for which it has given its approval.

Moving forward with a new bill today will simply confirm the state of Canadian law as it should be and as the House has already declared it to be in the past. Unfortunately, we have lost several months debating the bill again, only to come here today and end up where we were two years ago.

In closing, I think it is very important for us to move forward and confirm our support once again. I hope that all members here in this House who were here the last time will reaffirm their support for this bill and that the other MPs, those who are new like me, will also lend their support. Nearly a dozen Conservatives have even participated in the *It Gets Better* video project in response to high rates of LGBT suicides.

We hope that all those who have demonstrated their concrete commitment to making it better for transgender people will vote in favour of this bill.

•(1410)

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to close second reading debate on Bill C-279 with a great deal of optimism.

In the brief time I have available, I will not try to review all the arguments in favour of the bill. One reason is that this is essentially the same bill that passed in the House in the previous Parliament and stalled in the Senate. The second is that I had the privilege of opening this debate some weeks ago and laid out my arguments then. The third reason is the arguments in favour that have been ably put before the House today by my colleagues.

In the brief time I have available I want to deal with concerns we have heard from the other side of the House. I have listened carefully to speeches and I have talked a great deal with individual members on the other side. What I have heard is much goodwill on the question of protecting the rights of transgender, transsexual and gender variant Canadians despite some concerns about specifics of the bill.

One concern is a lack of definitions of key terms in the bill. I personally still do not believe a definition of gender identity is needed in the same way that we do not define other terms in the human rights code.

The other concern is with the breadth of the term “gender expression”. Again, this is not a concern that I share personally, but it is one that I have come to understand in my discussion with members on the other side. I will concede that this term is not as precisely defined in law as “gender identity”.

A third argument that has been made against the bill is that it is not needed because transgender rights are already protected in existing legislation. Once again, I do not share this opinion. I believe there is a gap in our law. As we just heard from my hon. colleague, one of the problems in law if it is not specifically mentioned is that those legal arguments have to be rebuilt in every legal case. Even if this were the case and transgender rights were covered in some general terms, there are still good reasons to proceed with this legislation and its specific protection of the rights of transgendered Canadians.

One good reason is to remove any doubt or ambiguity about the protection of those rights and to state very clearly that transgender, transsexual and gender variant Canadians are entitled to the same protections as all other Canadians, and that discrimination against transgender Canadians must end now.

Progress is being made in other jurisdictions, such as Ontario and Manitoba, and even in some unexpected places like Argentina, which now has perhaps the most progressive legislation in the world on transgender rights.

In response to that large measure of goodwill that I found on the other side of the House, I am committing today to support changes to the bill which I believe will preserve the essence of the bill while still meeting the concerns of many of those on the other side of the House.

If we can get support at second reading to get the bill to committee in the vote next Wednesday, we on this side will support amendments to do two things. We will support an amendment to remove the term “gender expression” from the bill, and we will support an amendment to add a definition for “gender identity” to the bill. I trust that this commitment will secure enough support to move forward on the protection of transgender Canadians.

I urge all members to join me in supporting this bill and helping to build a truly inclusive Canada where we can all live our lives as who we are, and we can each make our own special contribution to Canadian life.

I want to remind the House once again that transgender, transsexual and gender variant Canadians are our brothers and our sisters, our children, our parents, our grandparents, our family, our co-workers and our friends.

I urge everyone in the House to join together. Let us move forward together to make progress for the protection of rights of all Canadians, including transgender Canadians, transsexual Canadians and gender variant Canadians. The time to act is now.

• (1415)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The time provided for debate has expired.

Private Members' Business

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to an order made on Wednesday, May 30, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 6, at the expiry of the time provided for government orders.

It being 2:18 p.m. the House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:18 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. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MR. NATHAN CULLEN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MS. NYCOLE TURMEL

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs) | Calgary—Nose Hill | Alberta | CPC |
| Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs | Mississauga—Brampton South | Ontario | CPC |
| Adler, Mark | York Centre | Ontario | CPC |
| Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency | Nunavut | Nunavut | CPC |
| Albas, Dan | Okanagan—Coquihalla | British Columbia | CPC |
| Albrecht, Harold | Kitchener—Conestoga | Ontario | CPC |
| Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence | Ajax—Pickering | Ontario | CPC |
| Allen, Malcolm | Welland | Ontario | NDP |
| Allen, Mike | Tobique—Mactaquac | New Brunswick | CPC |
| Allison, Dean | Niagara West—Glanbrook | Ontario | CPC |
| Ambler, Stella | Mississauga South | 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 |
| Andrews, Scott | Avalon | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Angus, Charlie | Timmins—James Bay | Ontario | NDP |
| Armstrong, Scott | Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley | Nova Scotia | CPC |
| Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway | Fredericton | New Brunswick | CPC |
| Ashton, Niki | Churchill | Manitoba | NDP |
| Aspin, Jay | Nipissing—Timiskaming | Ontario | CPC |
| Atamanenko, Alex | British Columbia Southern Interior | British Columbia | NDP |
| Aubin, Robert | Trois-Rivières | Québec | NDP |
| Ayala, Paulina | Honoré-Mercier | Québec | NDP |
| Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Ottawa West—Nepean | Ontario | CPC |
| Bateman, Joyce | Winnipeg South Centre | Manitoba | CPC |
| 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 |
| Benskin, Tyrone | Jeanne-Le Ber | Québec | NDP |
| Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism) | Beauce | Québec | CPC |
| Bevington, Dennis | Western Arctic | Northwest Territories | NDP |
| Bezan, James | Selkirk—Interlake | Manitoba | CPC |
| Blanchette, Denis | Louis-Hébert | Québec | NDP |
| Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane | Pierrefonds—Dollard | Québec | NDP |
| Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs | Lévis—Bellechasse | Québec | CPC |
| Block, Kelly | Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar | Saskatchewan | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Boivin, Françoise | Gatineau | Québec | NDP |
| Borg, Charmaine | Terrebonne—Blainville | Québec | NDP |
| Boughen, Ray | Palliser | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Boulerice, Alexandre | Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie | Québec | NDP |
| Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine | Hochelaga | Québec | NDP |
| Brahmi, Tarik | Saint-Jean | Québec | NDP |
| Braid, Peter | Kitchener—Waterloo | Ontario | CPC |
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton—Melville | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Brison, Hon. Scott | Kings—Hants | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Brosseau, Ruth Ellen | Berthier—Maskinongé | Québec | NDP |
| Brown, Gordon | Leeds—Grenville | Ontario | CPC |
| Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation | Newmarket—Aurora | Ontario | CPC |
| Brown, Patrick | Barrie | Ontario | CPC |
| Bruinooge, Rod | Winnipeg South | Manitoba | CPC |
| Butt, Brad | Mississauga—Streetsville | Ontario | CPC |
| Byrne, Hon. Gerry | Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage | Oak Ridges—Markham | Ontario | CPC |
| Calkins, Blaine | Wetaskiwin | Alberta | CPC |
| Cannan, Ron | Kelowna—Lake Country | British Columbia | CPC |
| Carmichael, John | Don Valley West | Ontario | CPC |
| Caron, Guy | Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques | Québec | NDP |
| Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health | Oshawa | Ontario | CPC |
| Casey, Sean | Charlottetown | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| Cash, Andrew | Davenport | Ontario | NDP |
| Charlton, Chris | Hamilton Mountain | Ontario | NDP |
| Chicoine, Sylvain | Châteauguay—Saint-Constant | Québec | NDP |
| Chisholm, Robert | Dartmouth—Cole Harbour | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Chisu, Corneliu | Pickering—Scarborough East | Ontario | CPC |
| Chong, Hon. Michael | Wellington—Halton Hills | Ontario | CPC |
| Choquette, François | Drummond | Québec | NDP |
| Chow, Olivia | Trinity—Spadina | Ontario | NDP |
| Christopherson, David | Hamilton Centre | Ontario | NDP |
| Clarke, Rob | Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Cleary, Ryan | St. John's South—Mount Pearl | Newfoundland and Labrador | NDP |
| Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Ontario | CPC |
| Coderre, Hon. Denis | Bourassa | Québec | Lib. |
| Comartin, Joe | Windsor—Tecumseh | Ontario | NDP |
| Côté, Raymond | Beauport—Limoilou | Québec | NDP |
| Cotler, Hon. Irwin | Mount Royal | Québec | Lib. |
| Crowder, Jean | Nanaimo—Cowichan | British Columbia | NDP |
| Cullen, Nathan | Skeena—Bulkley Valley | British Columbia | NDP |
| Cuzner, Rodger | Cape Breton—Canso | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Daniel, Joe | Don Valley East | Ontario | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Davidson, Patricia | Sarnia—Lambton | Ontario | CPC |
| Davies, Don | Vancouver Kingsway | British Columbia | NDP |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | British Columbia | NDP |
| Day, Anne-Marie | Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles | Québec | NDP |
| Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs | Mississauga—Erindale | Ontario | CPC |
| Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Peterborough | Ontario | CPC |
| Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock | Ontario | CPC |
| Dewar, Paul | Ottawa Centre | Ontario | NDP |
| Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Québec | Lib. |
| Dionne Labelle, Pierre | Rivière-du-Nord | Québec | NDP |
| Donnelly, Fin | New Westminster—Coquitlam | British Columbia | NDP |
| Doré Lefebvre, Rosane | Alfred-Pellan | Québec | NDP |
| Dreeshen, Earl | Red Deer | Alberta | CPC |
| Dubé, Matthew | Chambly—Borduas | Québec | NDP |
| Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development | Vancouver Island North | British Columbia | CPC |
| Duncan, Kirsty | Etobicoke North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Duncan, Linda | Edmonton—Strathcona | Alberta | NDP |
| Dusseault, Pierre-Luc | Sherbrooke | Québec | 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. |
| Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence | Vaughan | Ontario | CPC |
| Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway | Abbotsford | British Columbia | CPC |
| Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice | Delta—Richmond East | 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 (Transport) | Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia | Manitoba | CPC |
| Foote, Judy | Random—Burin—St. George's | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Fortin, Jean-François | Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia | Québec | BQ |
| Freeman, Mylène | Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel | Québec | NDP |
| Fry, Hon. Hedy | Vancouver Centre | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Galipeau, Royal | Ottawa—Orléans | Ontario | CPC |
| Gallant, Cheryl | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | Ontario | CPC |
| Garneau, Marc | Westmount—Ville-Marie | Québec | Lib. |
| Garrison, Randall | Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca | British Columbia | NDP |
| Genest, Réjean | Shefford | Québec | NDP |
| Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan | Manicouagan | Québec | NDP |
| Giguère, Alain | Marc-Aurèle-Fortin | Québec | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gill, Parm | Brampton—Springdale | Ontario | CPC |
| Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance | Saint Boniface | Manitoba | CPC |
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie—Bathurst | New Brunswick | NDP |
| Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice | Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe | New Brunswick | CPC |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton East | Alberta | Ind. Cons. |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph | Wascana | Saskatchewan | Lib. |
| Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario) | Cambridge | Ontario | CPC |
| Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport) | Bramalea—Gore—Malton | Ontario | CPC |
| Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec | Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière | Québec | CPC |
| Gravelle, Claude | Nickel Belt | Ontario | NDP |
| Grewal, Nina | Fleetwood—Port Kells | British Columbia | CPC |
| Groguhé, Sadia | Saint-Lambert | Québec | NDP |
| Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister | Calgary Southwest | Alberta | CPC |
| Harris, Dan | Scarborough Southwest | Ontario | NDP |
| Harris, Jack | St. John's East | Newfoundland and Labrador | NDP |
| Harris, Richard | Cariboo—Prince George | British Columbia | CPC |
| Hassainia, Sana | Verchères—Les Patriotes | Québec | NDP |
| Hawn, Hon. Laurie | Edmonton Centre | Alberta | CPC |
| Hayes, Bryan | Sault Ste. Marie | Ontario | CPC |
| Hiebert, Russ | South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale | British Columbia | CPC |
| Hillyer, Jim | Lethbridge | Alberta | CPC |
| Hoback, Randy | Prince Albert | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety | Portage—Lisgar | Manitoba | CPC |
| Holder, Ed | London West | Ontario | CPC |
| Hsu, Ted | Kingston and the Islands | Ontario | Lib. |
| Hughes, Carol | Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung | Ontario | NDP |
| Hyer, Bruce | Thunder Bay—Superior North | Ontario | Ind. |
| Jacob, Pierre | Brome—Missisquoi | Québec | NDP |
| James, Roxanne | Scarborough Centre | Ontario | CPC |
| Jean, Brian | Fort McMurray—Athabasca | Alberta | CPC |
| Julian, Peter | Burnaby—New Westminster | British Columbia | NDP |
| Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway | Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission | British Columbia | CPC |
| Karygiannis, Hon. Jim | Scarborough—Agincourt | Ontario | Lib. |
| Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway | South Shore—St. Margaret's | Nova Scotia | CPC |
| Kellway, Matthew | Beaches—East York | Ontario | NDP |
| Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism | Calgary Southeast | Alberta | CPC |
| Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment | Thornhill | Ontario | CPC |
| Kerr, Greg | West Nova | Nova Scotia | CPC |
| Komarnicki, Ed | Souris—Moose Mountain | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Kramp, Daryl | Prince Edward—Hastings | Ontario | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry ... | Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont..... | Alberta | CPC |
| Lamoureux, Kevin | Winnipeg North | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Lapointe, François | Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup | Québec | NDP |
| Larose, Jean-François | Repentigny | Québec | NDP |
| Latendresse, Alexandrine | Louis-Saint-Laurent..... | Québec | NDP |
| Lauzon, Guy..... | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary | Ontario | CPC |
| Laverdière, Hélène | Laurier—Sainte-Marie | Québec | NDP |
| Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec | Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean..... | Québec | CPC |
| LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic | Beauséjour..... | New Brunswick..... | Lib. |
| LeBlanc, Hélène..... | LaSalle—Émard..... | Québec | NDP |
| Leef, Ryan | Yukon..... | Yukon | CPC |
| Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour | Simcoe—Grey | Ontario | CPC |
| Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture..... | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell . | Ontario | CPC |
| Leslie, Megan | Halifax | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism ... | Willowdale | Ontario | CPC |
| Liu, Laurin..... | Rivière-des-Mille-Îles..... | Québec | NDP |
| Lizon, Wladyslaw | Mississauga East—Cooksville . | Ontario | CPC |
| 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 |
| 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 | Oxford | Ontario | CPC |
| Mai, Hoang | Brossard—La Prairie | Québec | NDP |
| Marston, Wayne | Hamilton East—Stoney Creek . | Ontario | NDP |
| Martin, Pat..... | Winnipeg Centre | Manitoba | NDP |
| Masse, Brian..... | Windsor West | Ontario | NDP |
| Mathysen, Irene | London—Fanshawe..... | Ontario | NDP |
| May, Elizabeth | Saanich—Gulf Islands..... | British Columbia | GP |
| 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, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue..... | Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo | British Columbia | CPC |
| Menegakis, Costas | Richmond Hill | Ontario | CPC |
| Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance) | Macleod | Alberta | CPC |
| Merrifield, Hon. Rob | Yellowhead | Alberta | CPC |
| Michaud, Éline | Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier..... | Québec | NDP |
| Miller, Larry | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound... | Ontario | CPC |
| Moore, Christine | Abitibi—Témiscamingue | Québec | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages..... | Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam | British Columbia | CPC |
| Moore, Hon. Rob | Fundy Royal | New Brunswick..... | CPC |
| Morin, Dany | Chicoutimi—Le Fjord | Québec | NDP |
| Morin, Isabelle | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine | Québec | NDP |
| Morin, Marc-André | Laurentides—Labelle | Québec | NDP |
| Morin, Marie-Claude..... | Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot | Québec | NDP |
| Mourani, Maria..... | Ahuntsic | Québec | BQ |
| Mulcair, Thomas, Leader of the Opposition | Outremont | Québec | NDP |
| Murray, Joyce | Vancouver Quadra | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Nantel, Pierre | Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher | Québec | NDP |
| Nash, Peggy | Parkdale—High Park | Ontario | NDP |
| Nicholls, Jamie | Vaudreuil-Soulanges | Québec | NDP |
| Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Niagara Falls | Ontario | CPC |
| Norlock, Rick | Northumberland—Quinte West | Ontario | CPC |
| Nunez-Melo, José | Laval..... | Québec | NDP |
| 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 |
| Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources | Eglinton—Lawrence | Ontario | CPC |
| Opitz, Ted | Etobicoke Centre..... | Ontario | CPC |
| Pacetti, Massimo | Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel .. | Québec | Lib. |
| Papillon, Annick | Québec..... | Québec | NDP |
| Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture) | Mégantic—L'Érable..... | Québec | CPC |
| Patry, Claude | Jonquière—Alma | Québec | NDP |
| Payne, LaVar | Medicine Hat..... | Alberta | CPC |
| Péclet, Ève..... | La Pointe-de-l'Île..... | Québec | NDP |
| Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada | Labrador | Newfoundland and Labrador..... | CPC |
| Perreault, Manon | Montcalm..... | Québec | NDP |
| Pilon, François | Laval—Les Îles | Québec | NDP |
| Plamondon, Louis | Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour | Québec | BQ |
| Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario | Nepean—Carleton | Ontario | CPC |
| Preston, Joe | Elgin—Middlesex—London ... | Ontario | CPC |
| Quach, Anne Minh-Thu | Beauharnois—Salaberry | Québec | NDP |
| 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 |
| Rathgeber, Brent | Edmonton—St. Albert..... | Alberta | CPC |
| Ravnat, Mathieu..... | Pontiac..... | Québec | NDP |
| Raynault, Francine | Joliette | Québec | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Regan, Hon. Geoff | Halifax West | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Reid, Scott | Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington | Ontario | CPC |
| Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment | Calgary Centre-North | Alberta | CPC |
| Richards, Blake | Wild Rose | Alberta | CPC |
| Richardson, Lee | Calgary Centre | Alberta | CPC |
| Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario | Kenora | Ontario | CPC |
| Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board | Battlefords—Lloydminster | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Rousseau, Jean | Compton—Stanstead | Québec | NDP |
| Saganash, Romeo | Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou | Québec | NDP |
| Sandhu, Jasbir | Surrey North | British Columbia | NDP |
| Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker | Victoria | British Columbia | NDP |
| Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification | North Vancouver | British Columbia | CPC |
| Scarpaleggia, Francis | Lac-Saint-Louis | Québec | Lib. |
| Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons | Regina—Qu'Appelle | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Schellenberger, Gary | Perth—Wellington | Ontario | CPC |
| Scott, Craig | Toronto—Danforth | Ontario | NDP |
| Seeback, Kyle | Brampton West | Ontario | CPC |
| Sellah, Djaouida | Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert | Québec | NDP |
| Sgro, Hon. Judy | York West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue | Egmont | Prince Edward Island | CPC |
| Shiple, Bev | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Ontario | CPC |
| Shory, Devinder | Calgary Northeast | Alberta | CPC |
| Simms, Scott | Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Sims, Jinny Jogindera | Newton—North Delta | British Columbia | NDP |
| Sitsabaiesan, Rathika | Scarborough—Rouge River | Ontario | NDP |
| Smith, Joy | Kildonan—St. Paul | Manitoba | CPC |
| Sopuck, Robert | Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette | Manitoba | CPC |
| Sorenson, Kevin | Crowfoot | Alberta | CPC |
| St-Denis, Lise | Saint-Maurice—Champlain | Québec | Lib. |
| Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker | Simcoe North | Ontario | CPC |
| Stewart, Kennedy | Burnaby—Douglas | British Columbia | NDP |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville—Eastern Shore | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Storseth, Brian | Westlock—St. Paul | Alberta | CPC |
| Strahl, Mark | Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon | British Columbia | CPC |
| Sullivan, Mike | York South—Weston | Ontario | NDP |
| Sweet, David | Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale | Ontario | CPC |
| Thibeault, Glenn | Sudbury | Ontario | NDP |
| Tilson, David | Dufferin—Caledon | Ontario | CPC |
| Toet, Lawrence | Elmwood—Transcona | Manitoba | CPC |
| Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety | Provencher | Manitoba | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Toone, Philip | Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine | Québec | NDP |
| Tremblay, Jonathan | Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord | Québec | NDP |
| Trost, Brad | Saskatoon—Humboldt | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Trottier, Bernard | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | Ontario | CPC |
| Trudeau, Justin | Papineau | Québec | Lib. |
| Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women | London North Centre | Ontario | CPC |
| Turmel, Nycole | Hull—Aylmer | Québec | NDP |
| Tweed, Merv | Brandon—Souris | Manitoba | CPC |
| Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform) | Edmonton—Sherwood Park | Alberta | CPC |
| Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie) | Madawaska—Restigouche | New Brunswick | CPC |
| Valeriote, Frank | Guelph | Ontario | Lib. |
| Van Kesteren, Dave | Chatham-Kent—Essex | Ontario | CPC |
| Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | York—Simcoe | Ontario | CPC |
| Vellacott, Maurice | Saskatoon—Wanuskewin | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Wallace, Mike | Burlington | Ontario | CPC |
| Warawa, Mark | 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 |
| Wilks, David | Kootenay—Columbia | British Columbia | CPC |
| Williamson, John | New Brunswick Southwest | New Brunswick | CPC |
| Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors) | Richmond | British Columbia | CPC |
| Woodworth, Stephen | Kitchener Centre | Ontario | CPC |
| Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification) | Blackstrap | Saskatchewan | CPC |
| Young, Terence | Oakville | Ontario | CPC |
| Young, Wai | Vancouver South | British Columbia | CPC |
| Zimmer, Bob | Prince George—Peace River | British Columbia | CPC |

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| ALBERTA (28) | | |
| Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs) | 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 |
| Dreeshen, Earl | Red Deer | CPC |
| Duncan, Linda | Edmonton—Strathcona | NDP |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton East | Ind. Cons. |
| Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister | Calgary Southwest | CPC |
| Hawn, Hon. Laurie | Edmonton Centre | CPC |
| Hillyer, Jim | Lethbridge | CPC |
| Jean, Brian | 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, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance) | Macleod | CPC |
| Merrifield, Hon. Rob | Yellowhead | CPC |
| Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs | Calgary East | CPC |
| Payne, LaVar | Medicine Hat | CPC |
| Rajotte, James | Edmonton—Leduc | CPC |
| Rathgeber, Brent | Edmonton—St. Albert | CPC |
| Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment | Calgary Centre-North | 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, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform) | Edmonton—Sherwood Park | CPC |
| Warkentin, Chris | Peace River | CPC |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA (36) | | |
| Albas, Dan | Okanagan—Coquihalla | CPC |
| Atamanenko, Alex | British Columbia Southern Interior | NDP |
| Cannan, Ron | Kelowna—Lake Country | CPC |
| Crowder, Jean | Nanaimo—Cowichan | NDP |
| Cullen, Nathan | Skeena—Bulkley Valley | NDP |
| Davies, Don | Vancouver Kingsway | NDP |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | NDP |
| Donnelly, Fin | New Westminster—Coquitlam | NDP |
| Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development | Vancouver Island North | CPC |
| Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway | Abbotsford | CPC |
| Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice | Delta—Richmond East | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Fry, Hon. Hedy | Vancouver Centre | Lib. |
| Garrison, Randall | Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca | NDP |
| Grewal, Nina | Fleetwood—Port Kells | CPC |
| Harris, Richard | Cariboo—Prince George | CPC |
| Hiebert, Russ | South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale | CPC |
| Julian, Peter | Burnaby—New Westminster | NDP |
| Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway | Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission | CPC |
| Lunney, James | Nanaimo—Alberni | CPC |
| May, Elizabeth | Saanich—Gulf Islands | GP |
| Mayes, Colin | Okanagan—Shuswap | CPC |
| McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue | 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. |
| Sandhu, Jasbir | Surrey North | NDP |
| Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker | Victoria | NDP |
| Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification | North Vancouver | CPC |
| Sims, Jinny Jogindera | Newton—North Delta | NDP |
| Stewart, Kennedy | Burnaby—Douglas | NDP |
| Strahl, Mark | Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon | CPC |
| Warawa, Mark | Langley | CPC |
| Weston, John | West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country | CPC |
| Wilks, David | Kootenay—Columbia | CPC |
| Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors) | Richmond | CPC |
| Young, Wai | Vancouver South | CPC |
| Zimmer, Bob | Prince George—Peace River | CPC |
| MANITOBA (14) | | |
| Ashton, Niki | Churchill | NDP |
| Bateman, Joyce | Winnipeg South Centre | CPC |
| Bezan, James | Selkirk—Interlake | CPC |
| Bruinooge, Rod | Winnipeg South | CPC |
| Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport) | Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia | CPC |
| Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance | Saint Boniface | CPC |
| Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety | Portage—Lisgar | CPC |
| Lamoureux, Kevin | Winnipeg North | Lib. |
| Martin, Pat | Winnipeg Centre | NDP |
| Smith, Joy | Kildonan—St. Paul | CPC |
| Sopuck, Robert | Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette | CPC |
| Toet, Lawrence | Elmwood—Transcona | CPC |
| Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety | Provencher | CPC |
| Tweed, Merv | Brandon—Souris | CPC |
| NEW BRUNSWICK (10) | | |
| Allen, Mike | Tobique—Mactaquac | CPC |
| Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway | Fredericton | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie—Bathurst | NDP |
| Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice | Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe | CPC |
| LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic | Beauséjour | Lib. |
| Moore, Hon. Rob | Fundy Royal | CPC |
| O'Neill Gordon, Tilly | Miramichi | CPC |
| Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie) | Madawaska—Restigouche | CPC |
| Weston, Rodney | Saint John | CPC |
| Williamson, John | New Brunswick Southwest | CPC |
| NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7) | | |
| Andrews, Scott | Avalon | Lib. |
| Byrne, Hon. Gerry | Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte | Lib. |
| Cleary, Ryan | St. John's South—Mount Pearl | NDP |
| Foote, Judy | Random—Burin—St. George's | Lib. |
| Harris, Jack | St. John's East | NDP |
| Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada | Labrador | CPC |
| 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. |
| Chisholm, Robert | Dartmouth—Cole Harbour | NDP |
| Cuzner, Rodger | Cape Breton—Canso | Lib. |
| Eyking, Hon. Mark | Sydney—Victoria | Lib. |
| Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway | South Shore—St. Margaret's | CPC |
| Kerr, Greg | West Nova | CPC |
| Leslie, Megan | Halifax | NDP |
| MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence | Central Nova | CPC |
| Regan, Hon. Geoff | Halifax West | Lib. |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville—Eastern Shore | NDP |
| NUNAVUT (1) | | |
| Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency | Nunavut | CPC |
| ONTARIO (106) | | |
| Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs | Mississauga—Brampton South | CPC |
| Adler, Mark | York Centre | CPC |
| Albrecht, Harold | Kitchener—Conestoga | CPC |
| Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence | Ajax—Pickering | CPC |
| Allen, Malcolm | Welland | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Allison, Dean | Niagara West—Glanbrook | CPC |
| Ambler, Stella | Mississauga South | CPC |
| Angus, Charlie | Timmins—James Bay | NDP |
| Aspin, Jay | Nipissing—Timiskaming | CPC |
| Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Ottawa West—Nepean | CPC |
| Bélanger, Hon. Mauril | Ottawa—Vanier | Lib. |
| Bennett, Hon. Carolyn | St. Paul's | Lib. |
| Braid, Peter | Kitchener—Waterloo | CPC |
| Brown, Gordon | Leeds—Grenville | CPC |
| Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation | Newmarket—Aurora | CPC |
| Brown, Patrick | Barrie | CPC |
| Butt, Brad | Mississauga—Streetsville | CPC |
| Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage | Oak Ridges—Markham | CPC |
| Carmichael, John | Don Valley West | CPC |
| Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health | Oshawa | CPC |
| Cash, Andrew | Davenport | NDP |
| Charlton, Chris | Hamilton Mountain | NDP |
| Chisu, Corneliu | Pickering—Scarborough East | CPC |
| Chong, Hon. Michael | Wellington—Halton Hills | CPC |
| Chow, Olivia | Trinity—Spadina | NDP |
| Christopherson, David | Hamilton Centre | NDP |
| Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario | Parry Sound—Muskoka | CPC |
| Comartin, Joe | Windsor—Tecumseh | NDP |
| Daniel, Joe | Don Valley East | CPC |
| Davidson, Patricia | Sarnia—Lambton | CPC |
| Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs | Mississauga—Erindale | CPC |
| Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Peterborough | CPC |
| Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock | CPC |
| Dewar, Paul | Ottawa Centre | NDP |
| Duncan, Kirsty | Etobicoke North | Lib. |
| Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | St. Catharines | CPC |
| Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence | Vaughan | 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 |
| Gill, Parm | Brampton—Springdale | CPC |
| Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario) | Cambridge | CPC |
| Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport) | Bramalea—Gore—Malton | CPC |
| Gravelle, Claude | Nickel Belt | NDP |
| Harris, Dan | Scarborough Southwest | NDP |
| Hayes, Bryan | Sault Ste. Marie | CPC |
| Holder, Ed | London West | CPC |
| Hsu, Ted | Kingston and the Islands | Lib. |
| Hughes, Carol | Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking | NDP |
| Hyer, Bruce | Thunder Bay—Superior North | Ind. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| James, Roxanne | Scarborough Centre | CPC |
| Karygiannis, Hon. Jim | Scarborough—Agincourt | Lib. |
| Kellway, Matthew | Beaches—East York | NDP |
| Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment | Thornhill | CPC |
| Kramp, Daryl | Prince Edward—Hastings | CPC |
| Lauzon, Guy | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry | CPC |
| Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour | Simcoe—Grey | CPC |
| Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | CPC |
| Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism | Willowdale | CPC |
| Lizon, Wladyslaw | Mississauga East—Cooksville | CPC |
| Lobb, Ben | Huron—Bruce | CPC |
| MacKenzie, Dave | Oxford | CPC |
| Marston, Wayne | Hamilton East—Stoney Creek | NDP |
| Masse, Brian | Windsor West | NDP |
| Mathyssen, 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. |
| Menegakis, Costas | Richmond Hill | CPC |
| Miller, Larry | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound | CPC |
| Nash, Peggy | Parkdale—High Park | NDP |
| Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Niagara Falls | CPC |
| Norlock, Rick | Northumberland—Quinte West | CPC |
| O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip | Carleton—Mississippi Mills | CPC |
| Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation | Durham | CPC |
| Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources | Eglinton—Lawrence | CPC |
| Opitz, Ted | Etobicoke Centre | CPC |
| Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario | 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 |
| Reid, Scott | Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington | CPC |
| Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario | Kenora | CPC |
| Schellenberger, Gary | Perth—Wellington | CPC |
| Scott, Craig | Toronto—Danforth | NDP |
| Seeback, Kyle | Brampton West | CPC |
| Sgro, Hon. Judy | York West | Lib. |
| Shiple, Bev | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | CPC |
| Sitsabaiesan, Rathika | Scarborough—Rouge River | NDP |
| Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker | Simcoe North | CPC |
| Sullivan, Mike | York South—Weston | NDP |
| Sweet, David | Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale | CPC |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Thibeault, Glenn | Sudbury | NDP |
| Tilson, David | Dufferin—Caledon | CPC |
| Trottier, Bernard | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | CPC |
| Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women | London North Centre | CPC |
| Valeriote, Frank | Guelph | Lib. |
| Van Kesteren, Dave | Chatham-Kent—Essex | CPC |
| Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | York—Simcoe | CPC |
| Wallace, Mike | Burlington | CPC |
| Watson, Jeff | Essex | CPC |
| Woodworth, Stephen | Kitchener Centre | CPC |
| Young, Terence | Oakville | CPC |

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

| | | |
|---|---------------|------|
| Casey, Sean | Charlottetown | Lib. |
| Easter, Hon. Wayne | Malpeque | Lib. |
| MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence | Cardigan | Lib. |
| Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue | Egmont | CPC |

QUÉBEC (75)

| | | |
|--|---|------|
| Aubin, Robert | Trois-Rivières | NDP |
| Ayala, Paulina | Honoré-Mercier | NDP |
| Bellavance, André | Richmond—Arthabaska | BQ |
| Benskin, Tyrone | Jeanne-Le Ber | NDP |
| Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism) | Beauce | CPC |
| Blanchette, Denis | Louis-Hébert | NDP |
| Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane | Pierrefonds—Dollard | NDP |
| Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs | Lévis—Bellechasse | CPC |
| Boivin, Françoise | Gatineau | NDP |
| Borg, Charmaine | Terbonne—Blainville | NDP |
| Boulerice, Alexandre | Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie | NDP |
| Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine | Hochelaga | NDP |
| Brahmi, Tarik | Saint-Jean | NDP |
| Brosseau, Ruth Ellen | Berthier—Maskinongé | NDP |
| Caron, Guy | Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques | NDP |
| Chicoine, Sylvain | Châteauguay—Saint-Constant | NDP |
| Choquette, François | Drummond | NDP |
| Coderre, Hon. Denis | Bourassa | Lib. |
| Côté, Raymond | Beauport—Limoilou | NDP |
| Cotler, Hon. Irwin | Mount Royal | Lib. |
| Day, Anne-Marie | Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles | NDP |
| Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Lib. |
| Dionne Labelle, Pierre | Rivière-du-Nord | NDP |
| Doré Lefebvre, Rosane | Alfred-Pellan | NDP |
| Dubé, Matthew | Chambly—Borduas | NDP |
| Dusseault, Pierre-Luc | Sherbrooke | NDP |
| Fortin, Jean-François | Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia | BQ |
| Freeman, Mylène | Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Garneau, Marc | Westmount—Ville-Marie | Lib. |
| Genest, Réjean | Shefford | NDP |
| Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan | Manicouagan | NDP |
| Giguère, Alain | Marc-Aurèle-Fortin | NDP |
| Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec | Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière | CPC |
| Groghé, Sadia | Saint-Lambert | NDP |
| Hassainia, Sana | Verchères—Les Patriotes | NDP |
| Jacob, Pierre | Brome—Missisquoi | NDP |
| Lapointe, François | Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup | NDP |
| Larose, Jean-François | Repentigny | NDP |
| Latendresse, Alexandrine | Louis-Saint-Laurent | NDP |
| Laverdière, Hélène | Laurier—Sainte-Marie | NDP |
| Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec | Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean | CPC |
| LeBlanc, Hélène | LaSalle—Émard | NDP |
| Liu, Laurin | Rivière-des-Mille-Îles | NDP |
| Mai, Hoang | Brossard—La Prairie | NDP |
| Michaud, Éline | Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier | NDP |
| Moore, Christine | Abitibi—Témiscamingue | NDP |
| Morin, Dany | Chicoutimi—Le Fjord | NDP |
| Morin, Isabelle | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine | NDP |
| Morin, Marc-André | Laurentides—Labelle | NDP |
| Morin, Marie-Claude | Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot | NDP |
| Mourani, Maria | Ahuntsic | BQ |
| Mulcair, Thomas, Leader of the Opposition | Outremont | NDP |
| Nantel, Pierre | Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher | NDP |
| Nicholls, Jamie | Vaudreuil-Soulanges | NDP |
| Nunez-Melo, José | Laval | NDP |
| Pacetti, Massimo | Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel | Lib. |
| Papillon, Annick | Québec | NDP |
| Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture) | Mégantic—L'Érable | CPC |
| Patry, Claude | Jonquière—Alma | NDP |
| Péclet, Ève | La Pointe-de-l'Île | NDP |
| Perreault, Manon | Montcalm | NDP |
| Pilon, François | Laval—Les Îles | NDP |
| Plamondon, Louis | Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour | BQ |
| Quach, Anne Minh-Thu | Beauharnois—Salaberry | NDP |
| Ravignat, Mathieu | Pontiac | NDP |
| Raynault, Francine | Joliette | NDP |
| Rousseau, Jean | Compton—Stanstead | NDP |
| Saganash, Romeo | Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou | NDP |
| Scarpaleggia, Francis | Lac-Saint-Louis | Lib. |
| Sellah, Djaouida | Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert | NDP |
| St-Denis, Lise | Saint-Maurice—Champlain | Lib. |
| Toone, Philip | Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine | NDP |
| Tremblay, Jonathan | Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Trudeau, Justin | Papineau | Lib. |
| Turmel, Nycole | Hull—Aylmer | NDP |

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

| | | |
|--|--|------|
| Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board | Cypress Hills—Grasslands | CPC |
| Block, Kelly | Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar | CPC |
| Boughen, Ray | Palliser | CPC |
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton—Melville | CPC |
| Clarke, Rob | Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River | CPC |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph | Wascana | Lib. |
| Hoback, Randy | Prince Albert | CPC |
| Komarnicki, Ed | 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, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons | 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)

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|-----|
| Leef, Ryan | Yukon | CPC |
|------------------|-------------|-----|

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of June 1, 2012 — 1st Session, 41st Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chair: | Chris Warkentin | Vice-Chairs: | Carolyn Bennett Jean Crowder |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| Dennis Bevington Ray Boughen Rob Clarke | Jonathan Genest-Jourdain Carol Hughes | LaVar Payne Greg Rickford | Kyle Seeback David Wilks | (12) |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|

Associate Members

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Eve Adams | Nathan Cullen | Ed Komarnicki | Michelle Rempel |
| Mark Adler | Joe Daniel | Daryl Kramp | Blake Richards |
| Dan Albas | Patricia Davidson | Mike Lake | Lee Richardson |
| Harold Albrecht | Bob Dechert | Kevin Lamoureux | Romeo Saganash |
| Chris Alexander | Dean Del Mastro | Guy Lauzon | Andrew Saxton |
| Mike Allen | Earl Dreeshen | Ryan Leef | Gary Schellenberger |
| Dean Allison | Rick Dykstra | Kellie Leitch | Bev Shipley |
| Stella Ambler | Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay | Pierre Lemieux | Devinder Shory |
| Rob Anders | Hedy Fry | Chungsen Leung | Joy Smith |
| David Anderson | Royal Galipeau | Wladyslaw Lizon | Robert Sopuck |
| Charlie Angus | Cheryl Gallant | Ben Lobb | Kevin Sorenson |
| Scott Armstrong | Parm Gill | Tom Lukiwski | Brian Storseth |
| Niki Ashton | Shelly Glover | James Lunney | Mark Strahl |
| Jay Aspin | Robert Goguen | Dave MacKenzie | David Sweet |
| Joyce Bateman | Peter Goldring | Colin Mayes | David Tilson |
| Leon Benoit | Jacques Gourde | Phil McColeman | Lawrence Toet |
| Tyrone Benskin | Nina Grewal | Cathy McLeod | Brad Trost |
| James Bezan | Richard Harris | Costas Menegakis | Bernard Trotter |
| Kelly Block | Laurie Hawn | Rob Merrifield | Susan Truppe |
| Peter Braid | Bryan Hayes | Larry Miller | Merv Tweed |
| Garry Breitkreuz | Russ Hiebert | Christine Moore | Dave Van Kesteren |
| Gordon Brown | Jim Hillyer | Rob Moore | Maurice Vellacott |
| Lois Brown | Randy Hoback | Rick Norlock | Mike Wallace |
| Patrick Brown | Candice Hoepfner | Tilly O'Neill Gordon | Mark Warawa |
| Rod Bruinooge | Ed Holder | Deepak Obhrai | Jeff Watson |
| Brad Butt | Bruce Hyer | Ted Opitz | John Weston |
| Paul Calandra | Roxanne James | Pierre Poilievre | Rodney Weston |
| Blaine Calkins | Brian Jean | Joe Preston | John Williamson |
| Ron Cannan | Peter Julian | James Rajotte | Stephen Woodworth |
| John Carmichael | Randy Kamp | Brent Rathgeber | Terence Young |
| Colin Carrie | Gerald Keddy | Mathieu Ravignat | Wai Young |
| Corneliu Chisu | Greg Kerr | Scott Reid | Bob Zimmer |
| Michael Chong | | | |

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Pierre-Luc Dusseault

Vice-Chairs:

 Scott Andrews
 Patricia Davidson

 Charlie Angus
 Charmaine Borg
 Alexandre Boulerice

 Brad Butt
 Blaine Calkins

 John Carmichael
 Dean Del Mastro

 Earl Dreshen
 Colin Mayes

(12)

Associate Members

 Eve Adams
 Mark Adler
 Dan Albas
 Harold Albrecht
 Chris Alexander
 Mike Allen
 Dean Allison
 Stella Ambler
 Rob Anders
 David Anderson
 Scott Armstrong
 Jay Aspin
 Joyce Bateman
 Carolyn Bennett
 Leon Benoit
 James Bezan
 Kelly Block
 Ray Boughen
 Peter Braid
 Garry Breitzkreuz
 Gordon Brown
 Lois Brown
 Patrick Brown
 Rod Bruinooge
 Paul Calandra
 Ron Cannan
 Colin Carrie
 Corneliu Chisu
 Michael Chong
 Rob Clarke
 Joe Comartin

 Joe Daniel
 Bob Dechert
 Rick Dykstra
 Wayne Easter
 Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay
 Royal Galipeau
 Cheryl Gallant
 Parm Gill
 Shelly Glover
 Robert Goguen
 Peter Goldring
 Jacques Gourde
 Nina Grewal
 Richard Harris
 Laurie Hawn
 Bryan Hayes
 Jim Hillyer
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| Mr. David Anderson | to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board |

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