



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, June 14, 2000**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 14, 2000

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1400)

**The Speaker:** As is our practice on Wednesday we will now sing O Canada, and we will be led by the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

*[Editor's Note: Members sang the national anthem]*

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

*[English]*

### SOLICITOR GENERAL

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we have all heard about the circle of life, well I will introduce you to the circle of patronage in the Department of the Solicitor General.

To reward his voters, the solicitor general builds a multimillion dollar research facility in his riding. Old fashioned Liberal politics at its finest. In turn, the Commissioner of Correctional Service Canada uses his facility as a meeting place for his international corrections; good for the local economy and good for the solicitor general. In return, the commissioner's reward was absolute authority. He does not have to answer to anyone.

This is where the story gets bizarre. To reward the solicitor general for staying out of his way while he paves his golden road to retirement, Ole Ingstrup has created an award in the name of the minister.

With the commissioner buttering up to the solicitor general this blatantly, we had better steel ourselves for the next bombshell to come. What could it be, a private plane for Ole? No, he has that. A driving range for inmates? No, he has that too. A boat cruise on a coast guard ship? He has done that.

Hang on taxpayers, it's going to be an expensive and dangerous summer.

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### SAULT COLLEGE AND ALGOMA UNIVERSITY

**Mr. Carmen Provenzano (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our educational institutions have consistently provided Canadians with the knowledge and skills essential for success in the global economy. In Sault Ste. Marie, 35 years ago the first 80 graduates accepted their diplomas from Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology. Thirty-four years ago Algoma University was founded.

Today, Sault College offers general and expanded programs in such fields as aviation, engineering technology, health sciences and natural resources. Algoma University offers degrees in arts and science, as well as business administration and computer science.

This spring, 951 students graduated from Sault College. Algoma will grant 134 degrees to its graduating class. These are the first graduates from each of these institutions in this exciting new century. All have successfully completed another phase in their continuum of learning. May each be successful in applying their skills in the fulfilment of their aspirations. May Sault College and Algoma University survive into the next century.

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*[Translation]*

### LES BRAVES DU COIN

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on May 20, the members of a Hull sports and social association, Les Braves du Coin, got together to recognize excellence in sports and in voluntarism.

Today I would like to congratulate the organizing committee of the 27th gala of excellence, under the direction of Alain Forest, as well as all the volunteers who make the evening such a great success.

Congratulations as well to all the awards winners, who included Denis Desjardins, Pierre Chartrand, Robert Chartrand, Norbert Roy and Léo Martin, and to the guest of honour, Jean Labonté, a member of the national sledge hockey team.

Since 1962, Les Braves du Coin have been involved in the Hull community, through their big provincial peewee hockey tourna-

*S. O. 31*

ment and other events. Such devotion to their community would never have been possible without the devotion of the association's 450 members and the able leadership of Gilles Parent.

Congratulations to all and best wishes to the Braves du Coin for a long life.

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**PARENTAL LEAVE**

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at the last negotiations with the Government of Canada, the premier of Quebec, Lucien Bouchard, never wanted any change in parental leave available under the employment insurance program.

Only one province in Canada offers a program of preventive withdrawal from the workplace, and that is the province of Quebec. When he was a Canadian MP here in Ottawa, Lucien Bouchard never did anything about such program for expectant mothers.

Today, the Government of Canada has doubled the duration of parental leave, effective December 31, 2000, while Lucien Bouchard wants his own program, but only in the year 2002. This is a program that will \$10 million to workers, \$14 million to employers and \$20 million to the self-employed.

The federal government has been administering parental leave for close to 30 years. Thanks to those years of experience, all of the mechanisms are in place to ensure that parents benefit from this improved federal program, starting December 31 of this year, not the year 2002.

What is essential today is that Canada and Quebec work together to find the real solution to making more resources available to mothers.

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[English]

**OVARIAN CANCER MONTH**

**Ms. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, many of us here today have had our lives touched in some way by cancer. With Ovarian Cancer Month just over, I wish to draw the attention to this important form of cancer.

Ovarian cancer is the fifth leading cause of death among cancers in women and causes more deaths than any other cancer of the reproductive system. It affects women of all ages, particularly those over 30.

[Translation]

The survival rate with early detection is 95%. Unfortunately, only one-quarter of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are in

the early stages. Most of these cancers are detected at a stage where the survival rate drops to 28%.

The survival rate of women with ovarian cancer can be improved by raising public awareness and by patient and physician education.

[English]

On their way into the Chamber, fellow members of parliament may have noticed the Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Canada information booth. Further facts on symptoms, treatments and support can be found there.

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**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Okanagan—Coquihalla to inform the House that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is negotiating a flawed self-government treaty with the Westbank Indian Band.

The B.C. treaty commission process, though far from perfect, allows for some third party input and includes the B.C. government. These secret negotiations between the minister and the Westbank Indian Band excludes any input from the citizens of British Columbia.

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities along with concerned landowners are troubled that the federal government is negotiating a treaty in a veil of secrecy that will ultimately entrench preferential rights for certain Canadians at the expense of others. Not only that, it will arbitrarily assign resources, tax dollars and crown property to a distinct group.

Given the concern expressed in B.C. over the Nisga'a final agreement, it is essential that the remaining negotiations be opened to all concerned parties in B.C. and then be put to a British Columbia referendum.

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● (1405)

[Translation]

**BROMONT INTERNATIONAL**

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the Attractions Canada awards were given out, Bromont International won top honours in the sports event category.

I would therefore like to congratulate all those involved in organizing this equestrian competition, which has become over the years one of Quebec's most prestigious sporting events.

I want to pay tribute to the extraordinary work done by the person who might easily be called the father of these events, René

Deslauriers. All of these honours are the product of 25 years of work and perseverance. [English]

Bromont International has achieved extraordinary renown over the years. Last year alone, there were over 600 horses and riders from eight countries. Over 40,000 people attended the competitions.

This great Canadian award confirms the fact that Bromont International is a member of the very select club of exceptional events, marked by the quality of their organization.

Congratulations, again.

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#### CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we all know now that former journalist Robert-Guy Scully will have to pay the price of lost professional credibility for his conflicts of interest. As we say commonly, he was looking for it.

However, those who want to put this situation down to a quarrel in Quebec between sovereignists and federalists are really missing the point of the issue and simply repeating the spin put on it by National Public Relations Inc.

What this unfortunate story reveals is the scope of the federal government's propaganda operation, which goes so far as to make use of a few of its rich Liberal friends as figureheads in order to whitewash and hide its budget.

Let us not forget Option Canada and the Council for Canadian Unity. When the Minister of Canadian Heritage tells us that she will be delighted to display the maple leaf when her department spends more millions of dollars in "federal communications" operations, we do not believe it for a minute. Secrecy and concealment are key elements of the success of propaganda.

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#### PARENTAL LEAVE

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the national program for maternity and parental leave.

This program has demonstrated its value for 30 years and is now in the process of being enhanced. The revised program will be ready this year. Indeed, as early as at the end of the year 2000, parents will receive a bigger cheque and, more importantly, lower income families will be eligible for a supplement under that program.

We invite the Quebec government to build on the national foundations to provide an even better program if it so wishes.

*S. O. 31*

#### NATIONAL PARKS

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Kejimikujik National Park is the most heavily infested gypsy moth area in Nova Scotia. The moth destroys our forests because it is not native to North America and has no natural predators. The spread of this insect threatens the forest industry.

The federal government has a mandate for forest health and the responsibility to act but is lacking the will. The root of the problem appears to be a philosophical resistance to the control of an introduced pest in a national park.

One observer, who has managed local gypsy moth control measures, told me that if he had the federal money to eradicate this moth that has been spent on travelling around to study the problem, there would not be a problem.

The province is taking firm control measures for the brown spruce longhorn beetle in Point Pleasant Park in Halifax. When is the federal government going to do the same thing to control the gypsy moth in the national park?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### QUEBEC PREMIER

**Mr. Claude Drouin (Beauce, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not only as the member for Beauce, but also as the president of the Quebec Liberal caucus and on behalf of its members that I condemn the offensive remarks made yesterday by Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard on the Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada.

In a democracy, it is normal to have disagreements, but it is unacceptable to have a head of government make such low personal attacks as those made yesterday by Premier Lucien Bouchard.

For the quality of the public debate, and considering the example parliamentarians are expected to set for the public and for young people in particular, Premier Lucien Bouchard must apologize and withdraw his remarks.

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[English]

#### HEALTH

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is the National Day of warning for Medicare. Thank goodness frontline health care workers are sounding the alarm bell, because our health minister sure is not. All we get are empty words and flowery speeches.

In speeches, the minister says he will come up with cash. In reality, there is \$24.7 billion less.

*S. O. 31*

In speeches, the minister says he hates for profit hospitals. In reality, he allows them.

• (1410)

In speeches, he promises action on reproductive technology. In reality, 10 years after the royal commission, there is still no legislation.

In speeches, he boosts about health safety. In reality, the health protection branch is gutted.

In speeches, he cares about drug prices. In reality, there is no action on patents.

In speeches, he drips sincerity about hepatitis C victims. In reality, it has been two years and three months and not a penny paid.

No wonder the finance minister and provinces are not listening to the minister. Maybe words are not what we need. How about some action?

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[Translation]

#### PARENTAL LEAVE

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while the Government of Quebec is offering young Quebec families flexible parental leave suited to their needs, the Prime Minister continues to live in the past and reject the National Assembly's unanimous call for greater flexibility and openness with respect to the needs of Quebec families and Quebec's jurisdiction over family policy.

Instead of applauding the originality and the necessary generosity of Quebec's parental insurance plan, the Prime Minister has once again preferred to adopt the confrontational attitude of a reactionary and run the risk of derailing a plan that meets with the solid support of Quebecers.

If the Prime Minister refuses to listen to the repeated requests from the National Assembly, the Bloc Québécois and the Quebec people, could he at least listen to his Liberal organizers in Quebec who are calling on him to reverse steam and bow to the legitimate requests of the Government of Quebec?

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#### HULL HUMAN RESOURCES CENTRE

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was with great pleasure that I and the member for Hull—Aylmer took part in this morning's official ISO 9002 certification ceremony for the Human Resources Centre of Canada in Hull.

This centre is part of a very select group, for there are only three other ISO 9002 certified centres in Canada, one of them being the Laval human resources centre.

This ISO 9002 certification points up the exceptional work being done by the employees of the Hull human resources centre under the direction of Bertrand Duclos.

On behalf of the House and all my constituents who benefit from the excellent service being provided by the devoted staff of the Hull human resources centre, I extend our sincere congratulations and thanks for a job well done, something which too often goes unnoticed.

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[English]

#### SOCIAL BENEFITS

**Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC):** Mr. Speaker, there are many Canadian women between the age of 50 and 60 who find themselves displaced in society. They cannot work because they are seriously ill. Their EI sick benefits have run out. They cannot qualify for CPP disability. They are widowed or divorced and have no savings and no family to help them. They are not old enough for old age security or spousal allowance. They cannot exist on the small welfare benefits they receive.

These women in my riding are calling me to tell me they cannot pay their rent. They have no money for food. They have no hope and they do not know where to turn. They have worked for years and paid into the EI and the CPP, yet they are left destitute by this government.

Women are living longer today and there are bound to be more of them in this situation. It is a real shame that the Liberal government and the HRDC minister are not ready to take concrete steps to help these individuals.

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#### RONALD REID

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege and pleasure today to honour Mr. Ronald Reid, a Canadian volunteer from my riding of Simcoe North.

Mr. Reid is a member of the Canadian volunteer advisers to business, and recently returned from working on assignment in Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Reid worked with the youth ecological movement, an organization that focuses on the preservation of the environment and the development of ecological activities.

Mr. Reid helped to develop a business plan and a fundraising strategy to expand the work of the organization. He held meetings with five potential lending agencies and, as a result, the organization has reworked its submission to the World Bank small branch programs.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Ronald Reid on his outstanding efforts, and a special thanks to all volunteers who have committed time, energy and talent to this successful project.

### PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Canadian Alliance, I am pleased to rise today in the House and offer my sincere best wishes and congratulations to the hundreds of thousands of public servants who are celebrating Public Service Week from June 11 to 17.

Canadians are well served by highly professional and dedicated public servants who are ready to meet the challenges of governing as we enter the 21st century.

Through the dedication of people like our public servants, Canada has become one of the leading nations in the world. For this, all Canadians can be proud.

As treasury board critic for the Alliance, I want to thank all public servants who work hard on behalf of Canada and for all our citizens. They can be truly proud of the work they do for our country.

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• (1415)

### CANADIAN CONSERVATIVE REFORM ALLIANCE PARTY

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the other day I was reading the *Hill Times* and I could not believe my eyes. Tom Long, the leadership candidate for the Canadian Alliance, had a little picnic up in cottage country in the Muskokas. Over 100 people attended.

What did they charge for the tickets? Was it \$10 like the old Reform Party, or \$20, or was it \$500? It was \$5,000 per ticket for caviar and champagne. It was some grassroots party.

The old Reform Party has come and it has died. It has changed its spots and moved from Main Street to Bay Street. Now it is a party of the rich, a party of Bay Street, a party of backroom boys, a party that is trying to imitate Brian Mulroney. That is the long and short of it. It is a party that calls democracy catering to the rich. It is a party that calls democracy catering to Bay Street.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

**Miss Deborah Grey (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I guess I ain't nobody's backroom boy.

There is more proof today, though, that something fishy is going on over at HRDC. Serge Lafrenière got \$15 million even though his

### Oral Questions

resumé is filled with multimillion dollar failures. He was a Liberal campaign manager before he hatched his own fish breeding scheme. His company, Scotia Rainbow, has donated thousands of dollars to the Liberal Party.

Why is it that every time the government gets a whiff of a Liberal HRDC spawns a cheque?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the chartered banks put in four times as much as ACOA and HRDC put together.

The leadership contenders in Nova Scotia said recently "We want to replace it with a support system similar to that in the United States". That is where one needs a credit card to get into a hospital. We will fight this anti-Canadian attitude on the part of the official opposition right to the ballot box.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is un-Canadian to ask the government to keep its hands in its own pockets, not in ours.

Media Express donated \$10,000 to the Liberal Party and then it got a \$1 million return from HRDC to set up a call centre in the riding of the President of the Treasury Board. She put out a press release saying "We ought to announce this". I am sure it did not mention the ten grand they got because that might just bother those pesky little constituents that believe in principle and merit.

Why does a donation to the Liberal Party always open the floodgates to these HRDC cheques?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the leading contenders for the leadership of that party said in Nova Scotia recently "In spending programs from this government they have three versions of vanilla. I am selling chocolate ice cream here and it tastes better".

The reform alliance will campaign on chocolate ice cream in the next election and Canadians will say "Where is the meat?"

**Miss Deborah Grey (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we would hate to think the meat was right between his ears.

The past several months have brought nothing but trouble to the HRDC minister and the entire government. The HRDC minister is responsible for a billion dollar bungle. HRDC cut cheque after cheque to friends in the Liberal Party. She led the charge. She has botched every attempt, sadly, to cover her tracks.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister, hello, if it is true that he is planning on having a cabinet shuffle as early as Friday.

*Oral Questions*

• (1420)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, cabinet shuffles are supposed to be my job. I know that the Leader of the Opposition will lose her job very soon, but I do not intend to invite her to become a minister in my cabinet.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, would you invest money with Mr. Lafrenière? Here is his track record: In 1998, Quebec operation shut down for polluting a recreational lake; in August 1999, went bankrupt owing \$3.6 million; in April 1999, Ontario operation went bankrupt; and in May 1999, independent accounting said he lost \$2.4 million in the last six months.

That was enough to impress the HRDC minister. She gave him \$1 million in September and another million in January. How does she explain such poor judgment?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the chartered banks put in four times as much as the federal government. Private enterprise put in three times as much as the federal government. The provincial government put in twice as much as the federal government.

They are just opposed to any money going to high unemployment areas in Canada, or to our farmers, or to our fishermen, or to our miners. We will fight this anti-rural Canada attitude on the part of the reform alliance.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the minister did not fight his deplorable tendency to bluster when the minister who was asked the question does not have a good answer.

I quote from today's *Ottawa Citizen*: "A Gatineau businessman with a history of failure but great Liberal connections gets \$15 million in grants and government loan guarantees", \$2 million from the HRDC minister after she knew of his dismal track record.

Why is she so eager to invest other people's money in clearly a money losing operation?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that party wants to replace all these programs with a fat cat flat tax and tax incentives to business.

Mr. Speaker, you and I know—we have been here a long time—that tax incentives to businesses are actually tax expenditures paid for by ordinary working Canadians. They do not want a tax take from that party. They want a tax break from the Liberal government.

[Translation]

**PARENTAL LEAVE**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the matter of parental insurance, the Prime Minister said yesterday that it suited him fine to have Quebec go before the courts.

Does the Prime Minister understand that this is not his concern, but rather the concern of young families?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, the federal government instituted a program of parental leave, long before the provincial governments started talking about it.

If the provincial government considers there are gaps in Quebec's social policy and it has the money to invest, it is welcome to do so.

But the program that provided six months' parental leave now provides 12. Everyone applauded when we announced it in the throne speech and the budget. Only after we concluded our plans and announced what we were going to do, they suddenly wanted to renegotiate, when they were the ones to leave the table—

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** The leader of the Bloc Québécois.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we will take a look at the Employment Insurance Act. At section 69, it provides, among other things that "the Commission shall, with the approval of the governor in council, make regulations to provide a system for premiums where an equivalent provincial program exists".

Despite the Prime Minister's statements, the commission cannot refuse to negotiate, it has to reach a settlement.

Does the Prime Minister realize that his own legislation requires him not only to negotiate but to reach a settlement?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the law provides that reaching a settlement is required but also stipulates with the approval of the governor in council.

We negotiated with them in good faith a few years ago, but we could not reach an agreement. We assumed our responsibilities and we believe that it was important to increase parental leave benefits so people could have children without losing their job. We extended the period to 12 months.

If, as I said earlier, the provincial government finds that it should inject more money, that there are social problems it is responsible for, it should assume its responsibilities. We have assumed ours.



*Oral Questions*

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the parental insurance matter is not a complicated one. We are dealing with two programs—

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

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon:**—one of which is more advantageous because it applies to all young families, while the other excludes a very large number of them.

Setting aside the confrontation with Quebec and his short-term political interests, does the Prime Minister not find that the best choice, the most obvious choice, the required choice, is to be on the side of these young families, by offering them the best program, that is the one that is part of Quebec's family policy?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the two are not mutually exclusive. We cover those who have contributed to employment insurance. If there are people who have not contributed to employment insurance and who are having problems, that comes under the social policy of the provincial government, and it is up to it to solve the problem.

This is all the more the case because we transfer funds to the provinces to help them in this field.

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

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Yes, we do, Mr. Speaker, but the only thing is that they do not always apply them to social programs.

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we cannot understand the Prime Minister's attitude in this matter.

All that we are asking him to do is to sit down and negotiate, in keeping with subsection 69(2) of the Employment Insurance Act. The more involvement he has in this matter, the less we understand where he is headed.

Why is he opposed to doing what is best for Quebec's young families?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would like us to intervene in the social policy of the Government of Quebec.

If they want to look after families who are not covered by employment insurance, that is their choice; they have the power to do so, and they have the opportunity to do so. They should thank us for covering a goodly proportion of families. They can cover the rest if they think that there is a problem that is of great concern to them.

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[English]

**HEALTH**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Today we have health care

workers across the country sounding another warning about health care. Meanwhile, we have the Prime Minister trotting around the country, dropping in on premiers to say "I feel your pain but I just cannot pay a cent until the eve of the next election".

Why is the Prime Minister delaying on the restoration of crucial cash transfers to health care?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we said, and the premiers agreed, that we have to sit down and look at what we should do collectively.

We have to make sure that we have the maximum return on the money that will be used by the provincial governments and by us. It is exactly why the minister is talking with the ministers this week. We hope there will be meetings of officials in the weeks to come. Eventually the ministers will meet and the first ministers.

• (1430)

That is the way we do things. We do it after there has been enough consultation, and if the premiers agree with me.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister just does not seem to get it. Backroom deals and pre-election posturing are the politics of the past. Maybe I can get an answer on another question.

On March 28 in this House we asked questions about queue jumping in Calgary and in Montreal. After three months of investigation, is the government now prepared to say that \$400 for an operating room or \$4,000 for vital eye surgery violates the Canada Health Act? Or, is this just another hep C fiasco where this government is all talk and no action?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister is looking into these cases.

To come back to the question before the hon. member changed the subject, I would like to say that in my negotiations with the provinces I have talked with the premier of British Columbia, who is a member of the NDP. I have talked many times with the premier of Saskatchewan. This week I have had conversations with Premier Doer of Manitoba. The premiers seem to understand us much better than the leader of the fourth, soon to become the fifth party.

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**LAND MINES**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, speaking of all talk and no action, the government has proved again that it is the world's worst project manager. This Liberal government undermined Canada's international reputation again through its bungled effort to remove land—

*Oral Questions*

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. We will hear the question.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, proving once again that the Liberal government is the world's worst project manager, evidence has come forward that undermines Canada's international reputation, again due to the bungled effort to remove land mines in Kosovo. Bureaucratic delays, contract squabbles, political interference and poor housing undermined Canada's effort and led to CIDA's confirmation that Canada is not living up to its commitment to remove land mines in Kosovo. Amid much fanfare, Canada was supposed to take a lead role in this humanitarian effort.

Why was our effort so ill-equipped and ill-prepared that a senior UN diplomat called it a joke and a laughingstock?

**Hon. Maria Minna (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact it is not as bad as the hon. member says.

First, there were 800,000 refugees on the move back to Kosovo. The United Nations asked for emergency action on the part of Canada. There were some problems at the outset of the program and that was why CIDA commissioned an internationally recognized consultant to look at the projects. We implemented every recommendation. In fact, the UN even wrote to CIDA asking that both projects be extended by a month, stating that they had "provided the UN mine action program with a much needed capability".

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, that does not have a lot of credibility coming from this minister because high ranking UN officials and Canadian consultants accused CIDA, the minister and foreign affairs officials of shoddy planning which resulted in ill-equipped Canadian demining crews.

Delays in the most recent contract awards mean that work cannot begin until late this summer, more than halfway through the removal season. Our international reputation has been diminished yet again, reminiscent of the Prime Minister's farcical foray in the Middle East.

Can the Prime Minister tell us if the Minister of Foreign Affairs has finally abandoned his Nobel Peace Prize winning aspirations in light of Canada's—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister for International Cooperation..

**Hon. Maria Minna (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the accusations are absolutely false. First of all, Canada is not out of the de-mining situation in Kosovo. We gave \$500,000 in core funding to the UN mine action committee early this spring to assist. As well, a team that was chosen will be on the ground within two weeks and in operation within the next month.

The process has been a very good process. When we went through the bidding, the UN had a part in the process to ensure that the winning company in fact would do a good job on the ground.

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**HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the HRDC minister's job creation scheme seemed to be limited to just a few professions. Liberal fundraisers, police investigators and forensic auditors seemed to be some of her favourites. It has been a while since she has informed us of how many police investigations are pending.

Would the minister please tell us today how many police investigations are under way?

• (1435)

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's question, most of the RCMP investigations have to do with ACOA operations in eastern Canada. There are 11 of them. Four of them concern only the application, for which no funds were dispersed. Four of them are to do with provincial governments and enterprise, and the remaining three have to do with grants given when the Tories were in power.

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed the HRDC minister could not answer that question. Whatever happens to her career, I am sure the forensic auditors will be eternally grateful for the gratuity.

The minister admitted yesterday that Price Waterhouse is conducting a forensic audit into the Strathroy community centre. Perhaps she would like to tell us how many forensic audits are currently under way.

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the leadership contender whom the hon. member seems to be promoting said the other day in Atlantic Canada: "Atlantic Canadians have got to get out from under their dependency mentality". They are attacking the poor—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister of Veterans Affairs.

**Hon. George S. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, they are attacking people on welfare, people on employment insurance and people on old age security. Canadians are going to reject the elitist attitude of the official opposition.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**BANKING**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the bank bill, the Minister of Finance confirmed yesterday that the federal government would have the final say in any decisions concerning the acquisition of Quebec banks.

He would like us to think that Quebec's interests are well defended just because he is looking after them. We do not see it that way.

Why should we be happy that the bill gives him the power to use his own subjective criteria to decide the future of banks in Quebec, without any other safeguard? Why should that make us happy?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said that, in any decisions having to do with Canadian banks, the public interest will be the determining factor. In the case of banks heavily concentrated in Quebec, the criteria will be the public interest and Quebec's economy.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is all very fine and well. But, in reality, who will ultimately decide what Quebec's interest is? Will it be the Minister of Finance or his successor? In either case, we are worried and not without reason.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first I must point out that I am a Quebecer.

I would simply like to quote what another Quebecer, Bernard Landry, Quebec's finance minister, said: "I recognize that, with respect to the objectives pursued, the interest of Quebec, Ottawa's Minister of Finance and I are on the same wavelength".

\* \* \*

[English]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has now had almost a year to deal with the boat migrants of last summer. Of the 600, fewer than one-quarter of the cases have been finalized. That is to say, they have either been accepted as refugees or deported. The rest are either still in detention—and now some are rioting—or they are quickly disappearing, including 21 children, into the hands of the smugglers who brought them here. The minister's record is shameful. She said that these cases would be finalized in six months.

● (1440)

Is the minister going to step in and deport the remaining cases, or is she going to set up detention centres and refugee camps right here in Canada?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the party opposite, this party believes in due process. We believe in our charter of rights and freedoms. We are not going to scrap our charter. We are not going to embarrass Canada internationally by ripping up the Geneva convention. We are going to live up to our legal obligations and ensure that anyone who comes to us making a serious claim and asking for protection under our refugee protection act will receive the due process of the law.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I believe in due process, too. However, this minister's ill-advised delay in processing is making the situation worse for the migrants, to the point that they are rioting. They languish in detention centres at taxpayer expense. Now it is too late to do anything that will act as a deterrent for boats coming this summer. The minister's weak response to this new slave trade, people smuggling, has exacerbated an already serious situation.

Will the minister commit today to cleaning up the backlog from last summer, or is she planning on setting up permanent refugee camps right here in Canada?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only thing that has caused a delay has been this member and his party's rhetoric in delaying Bill C-31, which is presently at committee. With their help we could pass that bill more quickly so that we could streamline our processes.

Unlike the member opposite, this party believes in the charter of rights and freedoms. We believe in the due process of law. We support the Geneva convention. We will not humiliate Canada internationally. We are proud of our humanitarian and compassionate response.

If he and his party want to be helpful, they could help pass Bill C-31, which will streamline our processes.

**The Speaker:** I notice both in the questions and in the responses that we have members interjecting without stop. I would ask for order, please.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FRANCOPHONE ATHLETES**

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages is clear: in Canada, being francophone is a handicap for an athlete.

They have to leave their language behind if they want to mount the podium, because national organizations have neither a policy

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nor the ability to provide services in French, and the federal government is directly responsible for this situation.

Instead of denying the problem as he did on the weekend, will the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport finally invest some money to ensure that the francophone athletes receive services in their own language?

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Secretary of State (Amateur Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first off, I salute—

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

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** They are not interested in the answer, but all of Canada is. One thing is sure—

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

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** If they could just listen, they will see. First off, I salute and thank the commissioner for the thoroughness of his study.

I would remind members that one reason the study was done was because I asked for it. Just yesterday, I met with representatives of the national federations and I can tell you that not only are we aware of this issue, but when they ask us to do something specific, I will talk about it.

First, there is a new funding framework in which accountability is all and official languages are part of the criteria. Second, we increased by 30%—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Longueuil.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting if the secretary of state could tell the whole truth when he announces things.

The Bloc Québécois was the first to make a complaint. Eleven years ago, another report noted the same situation that exists today. So this is very serious. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Does the secretary of state understand that francophone athletes are fed up with fine speeches? They want change.

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Secretary of State (Amateur Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the ten months I have been the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport, I have taken part in over 100 events. The sports community knows that any increase in budget percentages comes from our sensitivity to their requests.

• (1445)

I totally reject what the hon. member has just said, and I would go further. I am the former deputy chair of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, the former vice-chair of the Sub-Committee on the Study of Sport in Canada and now the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport. The member need only ask around, ask anyone, and she will discover just who is serious about official languages.

[English]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, by allowing the illegal Chinese migrant problem to fester on Canadian soil, the minister is opening Pandora's box. The minister should establish processing centres that deal with these problems in days, not years. She is increasing bounties per head and smuggler profits by her failure to act.

How much more rioting will the minister spawn before she deports these Chinese illegals?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite wants to be helpful, his critic and his party could help us pass Bill C-31 as quickly as possible. That is the way we are going to solve these problems, not by the delays that party has caused in dealing with legislative change.

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, by sticking her head in the sand the minister is only helping the snake heads.

Ten months ago the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration said that the Chinese illegal migrant cases would be finalized in six months. Does the Liberal definition of finalized include smashing windows, setting fires, breaking doors or toilets? The B.C. riot required a lockdown for 82 of these aliens. Does the minister expect Canadian taxpayers to accept this, or will she deport the Chinese illegals before this season's boats start arriving?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot condone the actions of individuals who are frustrated because they will soon have to leave Canada and return to their own country. But I can tell the member opposite that those individuals have had due process of Canadian law. They have had a chance to have their say.

Unlike the member opposite and his party, this party wants to ensure that the charter of rights and freedoms applies to everyone in Canada all the time, not some people selectively as that party would do. We will not scrap the charter. We will not deny due process of law. We will not humiliate Canada on the international scene.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TRANSPORTATION IN MONTREAL**

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with a view to correcting highway congestion problems in Montreal, three projects must be undertaken.

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The first is the introduction of light rail to run on the Champlain Bridge structure, and the others are the completion of autoroute 30 on Montreal's South Shore and 35 in the Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu sector.

Does the Minister of Transport acknowledge that the funds allocated in the last budget to transport infrastructures are not enough for these projects, which are deemed to be priorities for the City of Montreal and the Government of Quebec, to be accomplished?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have discussed this matter with my Quebec counterpart and I agree with the priorities of the Province of Quebec as far as transportation in the Montreal region is concerned.

I believe that the infrastructure program provides sufficient funds for this project to be begun.

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[English]

**WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION**

**Mr. Lou Sekora (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification. Could the minister tell the House what western economic diversification is doing to help western entrepreneurs participate in the new e-business economy?

**Hon. Ronald J. Duhamel (Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification)(Francophonie), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, because of the expected phenomenal growth in e-business from \$28 billion to \$155 billion in three years, and the creation of 180,000 new good jobs along the way, Industry Canada and western economic diversification have been conducting round tables and have undertaken studies to describe the state of e-business and the potential it has. We and our partners will be holding a conference in each of the four western provinces to see where the industry is at and to see what can be done in the future in order to take advantage of this tremendous potential.

\* \* \*

• (1450)

**GUN REGISTRY**

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister refused to say who was responsible for the \$320 million deficit in the government's gun registration scheme. That deficit is 150 times larger than originally forecast.

Will the Prime Minister tell us today, was it his previous Minister of Justice who told parliament there would only be a \$2 million deficit over five years, or was it his current minister who wrote the Toronto *Star* saying, "User fees will cover the entire cost of the program"?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, I

think it is most unfortunate that the official opposition does not get behind the firearms registry program. Why do they not come on side with 75% of Canadians—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. We will hear the response, colleagues. The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Anne McLellan:** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I would encourage the official opposition to get behind Canadians and get behind this government and support the Canadian firearms program.

Unlike the Canadian Alliance, we do not see Charlton Heston of the NRA as anyone worth emulating.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in May 1999, PricewaterhouseCoopers presented the Minister of Justice with a report exposing huge problems at the firearms centre and in the gun registration scheme. Now another internal report warns, "We noted no major changes since the May '99 report. The future of the Firearms Act is presently hanging in the balance".

Last fall we were told everything had been fixed. Now we find out the mess is bigger than ever and nothing was fixed. The system is collapsing. How much more will it cost taxpayers to clean up the mess at Miramichi and how much bigger will the deficit become?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I point out to the hon. member that in fact I asked for the independent report of the firearms registry system. Let me reassure the hon. member that we have implemented almost all the recommendations in that report.

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**SCOTIA RAINBOW**

**Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, ACOA's mandate states clearly that applicants must provide full disclosure of all sources of public funds but an internal memo states that the rules regarding funding from ACOA relating to Scotia Rainbow do not apply.

Why four days after his own officials recognized the company's lack of disclosure did the minister give millions of dollars to Scotia Rainbow?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have received a petition from the hon. member's riding from the Committee for Economic Survival which says, "We the undersigned do hereby call upon the federal government to continue to support projects and businesses located on our island and do hereby", and this is signed by a thousand people, "roundly condemn our member of parliament for her

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unwarranted and unfounded attacks on job creation in our community”.

**Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, NDP):** Obviously, Mr. Speaker, there is something fishy going on on the other side of the House.

Internal financial statements by KPMG show Scotia Rainbow lost \$2.4 million in the first five months of 1999. Again the government ignored the facts and its own rules and gave the company even more money.

With all these flags waved in his own department, why did the minister continue to funnel money to Liberal friends?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, an editorial in the Cape Breton *Post* which covers the hon. member's riding said, “Scotia Rainbow is regarded as an important employer paying out \$4.5 million last year in wages”.

When is the NDP going to start supporting job creation in Cape Breton?

\* \* \*

• (1455)

**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Is the minister's department poised to issue an offshore shrimp licence to a P.E.I. consortium to catch northern shrimp off the Labrador coast and bring it to P.E.I., bypassing the adjacent communities on the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador?

**Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at this time I am looking at a multi-year plan on the northern shrimp. I have had representations from Quebec as well as from Atlantic provinces. I will be reviewing those representations.

I assure the hon. member that I will make a fair and reasonable decision in the northern shrimp plan so that we take into consideration the adjacency but also other factors in terms of historical links to ensure that we are fair and reasonable to all parties that are requesting access to it.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, that probably means the answer is yes. Why is the minister announcing the shrimp management plan in Ottawa, not in Newfoundland and Labrador adjacent to the resource? Has the government completely given up on the principle of adjacency?

**Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the northern shrimp fishery has

increased from 37,000 tonnes to 100,000 tonnes. The lion's share of that shrimp fishery goes to Newfoundland, recognizing the adjacency principle. Quebec and other provinces also have access to that.

I will take the representation from the hon. member as well as other members to make sure that we have a fair and reasonable allocation of that resource.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mrs. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The people of the north know better than any others that environmental damage created thousands of miles away is having a huge effect on our children's health. When the minister met with his American and Mexican counterparts earlier this week, what decisions were made that will protect all our children from environmental damage?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I met with my American and Mexican counterparts, we agreed to focus our efforts on the specific problems of respiratory problems of children, asthma, other respiratory diseases, and the effects of toxic substances. This is also part of our domestic policy.

The member will recollect that recently we tightened controls on sulphur and gasoline. We are reducing the level of sulphur in diesel from 500 parts per million down to indeed 15.

I will be discussing a specific side agreement with the United States. In fact, discussions are on today on the ozone agreement with the United States. In addition—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

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**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government is continuing to prove that it is big on press releases and promises and real short on delivery.

Less than 30% of the \$2 billion promised to farmers has gone out while the further \$400 million in transportation assistance for Saskatchewan and Manitoba will be clawed back from any future AIDA payouts in those two provinces.

The only help the Liberal government has given to farmers is that everything it touches turns to fertilizer. I ask the minister how many times can the same promised money be recycled through the same failed programs?

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member

*Tributes*

knows, the government has been very generous over the past year and a half in assisting western farmers.

We have given over \$2 billion to the western farmers because of the conditions in the marketing of their grain and in transportation. Overall, I think the farmers are very pleased with the government and the efforts it is making on their behalf.

\* \* \*

• (1500)

[*Translation*]

**GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS**

**Ms. Hélène Alarie (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, summer is approaching and the public is concerned about what is going to happen, as far as GMOs are concerned, over the summer when MPs are in their ridings and no longer able to question the government in the House.

Can the Prime Minister guarantee there will be no new GMOs approved by the Canada Food Inspection Agency as long as the Standing Committee on Agriculture has not finished hearing witnesses and made its recommendations to the government?

[*English*]

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, the hon. member knows very well that in the standing committee we are conducting investigations and hearings into GMO products as to whether the labels should be voluntary or mandatory.

She also knows that we have a number of committees that are working and will be working all summer to give the government advice on the policy we should pursue in view of GMOs.

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**MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS**

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced long overdue payments to our merchant marine veterans he talked about “their enormous contribution and sacrifice”.

Now that the funds set aside appear to be drying up, will the minister clearly state to these veterans and their surviving spouses right now that the Liberal government will ensure that all qualifying applicants receive their maximum payment, or is he now qualifying how much sacrifice and contribution he believes these veterans made?

**Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all veterans organizations, including the national council representing veterans groups, the army, air force and navy, the merchant navy organization and the Royal Canadian

Legion, will be holding a meeting at the end of July to examine the situation.

The hon. member should be standing in his place to congratulate the government for giving \$50 million for this initiative.

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[*Translation*]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Ms. Angela Vautour (Beauséjour—Petitcodiac, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

Now that the period of consultation with respect to the review of the boundaries of EI economic regions is over, will the minister assure us that the changes proposed by MPs and by the public will be taken seriously, and that the necessary adjustments will be made in order to ensure that the new zones are indeed representative of the economic reality of every region across the country?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, without question the comments from citizens across the country will be taken seriously.

\* \* \*

**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**The Speaker:** My words today are for our pages who have been with us for one very brief year in the life of our parliament.

Pages of the House of Commons for 1999-2000, today we the parliamentarians of Canada bid you farewell. It seems a little strange since the House is still sitting and we are all still on duty, but the weeks before summer recess have a way of becoming a little hectic and we may not have another chance to thank you properly.

• (1505)

[*Translation*]

On behalf of all my colleagues here in the House, I wish to thank you and congratulate you on the work you have done for us over the past year, the first of the new millennium. Your job has not always been an easy one, but you have all behaved professionally and we appreciate it.

[*English*]

I would be the first to admit that sometimes we have been a little tired and preoccupied, maybe even impatient.

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

**The Speaker:** Some of us have been that way. We have not always taken the time to acknowledge you, but today I ask you to receive our collective thanks and our best wishes for your future careers.

*Points of Order*

Perhaps some day soon we will have the pleasure of seeing you sitting at these desks and thinking perhaps it was your experience with us that gave you the desire to serve as a member of parliament.

I thank you very much for what you have done for us. We have paid you I think the greatest compliment we can pay our pages, that is we have trusted you so implicitly that we have virtually ignored you in all of our conversations. We treat you as one of us. We treat you as part of the family, which you are now and always will be.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** I see that most of us are still here. As is the custom every year, I will be having a reception for our pages in my chambers. I do hope that you will take just a few minutes to come in to say a personal farewell to them. It will be continuing until 5:30.

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**POINTS OF ORDER**

MOTION NO. 425

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with regard to Motion No. 425 standing on the order paper in my name. The motion reads as follows:

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their honours that this House wishes to convey its dismay regarding the undue delay in the Senate's progress on Bill C-247, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. Members of the House of Commons have expressed their distress at the unnecessary delay in dealing with this legislation and in the interest of co-operation between the two chambers, and, ultimately service to the Canadian public, the House feels compelled to express its serious concerns regarding the handling of Bill C-247 by the Senate.

On the notice paper this motion is listed as a private member's motion. I intended this motion to be placed on the order paper so as to be moved at Routine Proceedings under the rubric motions. I believe this is the only way a private member can realistically and practically deal with the Senate with respect to a private member's bill. I will also argue that placing this motion on notice for Routine Proceedings is in keeping with our practice.

• (1510)

On September 16, 1996, a number of members raised questions of privilege to complain that the Standing Committee on Justice was not dealing with Private Member's Bill C-234. It was argued that while a government could use time allocation to dislodge a bill from committee, a private member had no means to do this except by way of introducing another private member's motion.

It was pointed out that a second private member's motion dealing with the issue would have little chance of being considered

by the House because of the complex and sometimes awkward process of private members' business. It would be like lightning striking the same place twice and very unlikely to ever happen.

Members felt that since the majority sent the bill to committee, the committee should respect the will of the House. This principle was so important to members that the standing orders were changed to ensure that this situation would never happen again. Before this change was instituted, the Speaker felt that one way of dealing with the matter was to allow a motion to be moved by a private member during Routine Proceedings.

The principles regarding the fate of Bill C-234 in 1996 are similar to the principles regarding Bill C-247 in this parliament. In both cases the government leadership was out to kill a private member's bill. Fortunately both bills enjoyed the support of the majority.

In the case of Bill C-247 it was gutted at committee by the government leadership. Thankfully it was restored by the power of the backbench and opposition members when it was reported back to the House. Through all its stages and despite the efforts of anyone else the majority supported the bill, and finally the House sent it to the Senate.

Unfortunately the Senate has unduly held up Bill C-247. I suspect this hold-up is due in part to the many friends that the government side may have over in the Senate, possibly because of the appointments that have been made there. Sadly this may cause more problems for private members' bills that do not enjoy the support of the Prime Minister in the future.

On September 23, 1996, the Speaker made his ruling on the questions of privilege regarding Bill C-234. He did not rule the matter to be a prima facie case of privilege but he did make the following comment and suggestion:

Should a member or a minister be of the opinion that a committee charged with the review of a bill is defying the authority of the House, he or she may choose to bring it to the attention of the House by placing on notice a motion to require the committee to report by a certain date.

As hon. members know, this can indeed be done under Government Orders or Private Members' Business, but such a notice of motion could also be placed under the rubric motions and be dealt with under Routine Proceedings.

As Speaker Fraser ruled on July 13, 1988, at page 17506 of the *Debates*, referring to the then Standing Order 56(1)(p), which is our current Standing Order 67(1)(p):

"This Standing Order lists as debatable items usually raised under Routine Proceedings motions concerning the management of the (House) business (and) the arrangements of its proceedings.

"The rubric motions usually encompasses matters related to the management of the business of the House and its committees, but it is not the exclusive purview of the government, despite the government's unquestioned prerogative to determine the agenda of business before the House."

Under our current practices the Chair may well accept, after due notice, such a motion.



*Points of Order*

Standing Order 67 lists motions that can be moved during Routine Proceedings. They are:

—for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers, the management of its business, the arrangements of its proceedings, the correctness of its records, the fixing of its sitting days or the times of its meeting or adjournment.

The Senate's failure to deal with Bill C-247 in a timely manner relates to the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of its authority and the management of its business.

Since we are talking about a private member's bill, it stands to reason that a private member should be allowed to move a motion under the rubric motions and send a message to the Senate regarding the progress of the said bill.

• (1515)

If a government bill was stuck in the Senate, the government could move a motion under motions to send a message to the Senate. Mr. Speaker, as you ruled on September 23, 1996, motions are not for exclusive use by the government. Therefore, I should be allowed to move my motion under motions.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister has been talking about an election perhaps in the fall, certainly within 12 months. If the Senate does not deal with Bill C-247 it will die. This government, through its power to send a message to the Senate and through the leader of the government in the Senate, can easily set the government's priority in the other place. Private members cannot.

On the eve of an election, if we are on the eve of an election, this House should be allowed to send a message to the Senate without going through the many hoops and the impossibility of timing of the private member's system. There is not time to do that.

In the interests of the people who elected us to this House and those who want Bill C-247 to become law, which is a majority of people in this place, the House has an obligation to communicate to the Senate its concern about the fate of Bill C-247. Once again, the motion says:

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their honours that this House wishes to convey its dismay regarding the undue delay in the Senate's progress on Bill C-247, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, members of the House of Commons have expressed their distress at the unnecessary delay in dealing with this legislation and in the interest of co-operation between the two chambers and, ultimately, service to the Canadian public, the House feels compelled to express its serious concerns regarding the handling of Bill C-247 by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask for your consideration of that point of order.

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. House leader for the official opposition has made a plea that the situation of Bill C-247

was, in his view, substantially similar to that of Bill C-234 and therefore the judgment of the Speaker on Bill C-244 applies equally to Bill C-247.

The issues are not at all the same. In the case of the other bill that the hon. member referred to, it had to do with the House exercising its authority over one of its committees. In this case, the situation is totally different. This does not take away from the merits of the bill in question and so on. I am not pronouncing myself on that. This is a procedural argument as to whether or not what was used in the case of one applies to the other. I submit to your honour that it does not.

The hon. member also referred to 67(1)(p) of the Standing Orders. Standing Order 67(1)(p) refers to:

such other motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House,—

It is not of the Senate. That is not covered by that particular item. The order goes on to say:

—the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers, the management of its business—

“Its authority” means the authority of the House. “Its officers” means officers of the House not the Senate. “Its business” is the House's business, and so on and so forth.

In reference to the Senate, there are only two applications under the standing order where it applies. This has to do with a conference of the Senate which only applies in the case where a bill has been passed by the House, refused by the Senate, sent back to the House, the House has disagreed with the Senate and then a conference is necessary in order to re-establish how to deal with the matter. That is the only place where it applies to the Senate. It has to do with a conference stage of the bill which is about three steps away from what we have now, in any case, a very long time from the period that we have in question.

The standing order in question applies only to the House.

There is only one minor exception where it could apply and that is Standing Order 67(1)(g) when we are considering Senate amendment to a House of Commons bill. Again, that proposition is not before us. Although the hon. member may have made an interesting point, I do not believe that the reference to motions as being applicable for this particular case works at all. I am convinced that it does not.

• (1520)

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting procedural argument, but I would just like to say that whatever its outcome, I would think all members of parliament, no matter how they voted on the particular private members' bill in question, should be concerned about any developments which tend to sanction or portray an inability on the part of the

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House to have the Senate deal expeditiously with things that have been passed here in the House of Commons. This is, after all, the elected Chamber in this parliament and the Senate should not take upon itself the role of deliberately withholding the appropriate procedural passage of anything that has already gone through the House of Commons.

**The Speaker:** I do not want to get into a debate, but if the opposition House leader has something to offer for my consideration, then I want to hear it.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl:** Mr. Speaker, I do realize that the Standing Order 67, which I quoted, does only refer to the Senate and how we can handle House business and so on and does not necessarily refer to the Senate.

The government House leader has pointed out that we are probably three steps away before the normal process of dealing with business coming back from the Senate. Of course, that is the essence of my argument. We will never get those three more steps going if the Senate continues to wilfully block it in that place.

If this is allowed to continue, the logic is that the Senate could take a bill and we would never see it again.

**The Speaker:** Let me understand this. First, the Senate is the master of what it does in the Senate and we are the master of what we do here in the House.

As I understand the member's point of order, he is suggesting that this item, which he has brought forward in a private members' bill, should be moved over into motions. Is that correct?

**Mr. Chuck Strahl:** Yes.

**The Speaker:** Thank you. I have received advice from both sides and I will deal with that specific point. What is in the bill is of no concern to me at this point. I am dealing with that procedural issue. I will deal with that, have a look at it and come back to the House if necessary.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the standing orders, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 30 petitions.

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and honour today to present the government's response to the second report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, entitled "Refugee Protection and Border Security: Striking a Balance", in both official languages.

### NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Fanshawe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. The subject of this report is the procurement of military equipment.

I would like to note that the report has been unanimously supported by all members in all parties. It makes some 38 recommendations calling for improvement of the procurement process with which the government is involved.

• (1525 )

I want to thank all members for their hard work on this particular study which took many months. We had very diligent help from our staff, from our committee clerk and, in particular, from our researcher, Corinne McDonald, who was seized with this report and helped to put most of it together. I also want to thank my colleague, the hon. member for Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, who chaired a number of meetings in my absence on parliamentary business.

We are very pleased with this report. It notes that there are some definite shortcomings in the procurement process. It lays out very specific proposals and how that can be improved. We await with alacrity the response from the government.

### INDUSTRY

**Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present in both official languages the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Industry concerning the committee's recent examination of the Competition Act.

Although varied opinions exist among the competition policy experts, they were not so diverse as to prevent a consensus that we believe is captured in this report.

Due to the public policy forum process underway and the necessity for further study, we have limited this report to preliminary findings suggesting a direction for future work.

On behalf of all committee members, I would like to thank those who participated in our hearings for sharing their insights with us

and to thank our clerk, Richard Rumas, and our researchers, Dan Saw and Geoffrey Kieley, for their diligence.

I am confident that the public will agree that this report reflects both their concerns and common Canadian values and priorities in the domain of competition policy, law and enforcement.

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present in both official languages the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee examined the conflict in Kosovo and its aftermath.

[*English*]

Between February and June of this year, the committee has held public hearings on Kosovo. It has heard from government officials, academics and others, reflecting a wide variety of views on Canada's role, both during and after the Kosovo campaign.

On the first anniversary of Canadian and other international forces entering Kosovo, the committee is pleased to table this concise and forwardlooking report on this extremely important subject.

\* \* \*

**ELDORADO NUCLEAR LIMITED REORGANIZATION AND DIVESTITURE ACT**

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-39, an act to amend the Eldorado Nuclear Limited Reorganization and Divestiture Act and the Petro-Canada Public Participation Act.

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

\* \* \*

**REFERENDUM ACT**

**Mr. Cliff Breitkreuz (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-490, an act to amend the Referendum Act (to permit a referendum and a general election to be conducted at the same time and on the same polling day).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce my private members' bill which proposes to amend the current Referendum Act to permit a referendum and a general election to be conducted at the same time on the same day and, of course, at the same poll.

*Routine Proceedings*

Few people would disagree that a majority of Canadians would welcome the opportunity to have a direct vote at virtually no extra cost on one or two issues that are uppermost in many Canadians' minds. This amendment adds a whole new dimension to the concept of participatory democracy that ostensibly is a hallmark of our democratic process.

I ask all members from all sides of the House to support this bill.

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**OLYMPIC GAMES**

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Secretary of State (Amateur Sport), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the motion I am about to read is, in my view, an extremely important one, for it concerns the Olympic Games.

I move the following motion, with particular thanks to the member for Ahuntsic, who gave me a hand.

● (1530)

I move:

That this House recognize and support the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly adopted every two years since October 25, 1993, concerning the implementation of an Olympic truce, so as to inform all Canadians of the objectives and missions of an Olympic truce, which are to promote global peace and security and to pursue the Olympic Games in the spirit of fraternity and solidarity of ancient Greece.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations with the House leaders of the other parties and I trust they have a copy of my rather lengthy motion. It was sent to them and it was reviewed earlier this day. I move:

That any division standing deferred to the expiry of the time for consideration of Government Orders today shall be taken at 5.30 p.m. and, after that time during this day's sitting, the Chair shall not receive any quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent and any division demanded shall be deemed deferred until the conclusion of consideration of Government Orders on June 15, 2000;

That at the conclusion today of any proceedings pursuant to Standing Order 38, the motion to adjourn shall be deemed withdrawn and the House shall continue to sit for the purpose of considering Bill C-34, Bill C-18 and Bill S-18;

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, the third reading stage of Bill C-34 may be taken up in the same sitting that the report stage of the said bill is disposed of;

*Routine Proceedings*

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, Bill S-18 shall be referred to a committee of the whole House after second reading, and the said bill may be considered at the third reading stage during the present sitting;

That, immediately after disposal of Bill S-18, the House shall adjourn to the next sitting day; and

That on Thursday, June 15, 2000, in Standing Order 24(1) and Standing Order 30(3) the words "10.00 a.m." shall be read as "9.00 a.m.", in Standing Order 81(18)(a), (b) and (c) the words "6.30 p.m." shall be read as "5.30 p.m." and in Standing Order 81(18)(c) the words "10.00 p.m." shall be read as "9.00 p.m."

**The Deputy Speaker:** Having heard that crystal clear motion, does the hon. government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## INDUSTRY

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I also have another motion upon which there has been consultation, and agreement has been reached to pass it without debate by unanimous consent:

That the Standing Committee on Industry shall be the committee designated for the purposes of section 12 of the Lobbyists Registration Act.

This has to do with conducting the review of that act next fall. It was agreed to at the House leader's meeting last week and I submit it to the House.

• (1535)

(Motion agreed to)

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations on the following motion and I would like to propose to the House that it be adopted by unanimous consent and without debate. I move:

That the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be granted leave to travel from October 15 to 25, 2000 to Quebec, New Brunswick, Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Labrador and P.E.I. to continue its comprehensive study on aquacultural, its statutory review of the Oceans Act and fisheries issues, and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the leaders of the various parties and I believe that there would be unanimous consent that the following motion be adopted without debate or amendment.

That, in relation to its study of Canada's economic relations with Europe, six members of the Sub-Committee on International Trade, Trade Disputes and Investment of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, one clerk and one research officer be authorized to travel to London, Paris, Geneva, Berlin and Brussels from October 23 to November 4, 2000.

(Motion agreed to)

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the various parties and I believe that there would be unanimous consent for the adoption of Motion No. 85 on today's notice paper, which reads as follows:

That the 34th Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on Friday, June 9, 2000, be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to)

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe there would be unanimous consent to adopt the following motion without debate or amendment, as there have been consultations among the leaders of the various parties in the House.

That five members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and three staff persons of the Committee be authorized to travel to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to attend the Twenty-First Annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Account Committees from September 17 to 19, 2000.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[English]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the House that discussions have taken place among all the parties and the member for Churchill River concerning the taking of the recorded division on Motion No. 298, scheduled at the conclusion of Private Members' Business today, and I believe you would find consent for the following motion:

*Routine Proceedings*

That at the conclusion of today's debate on M-298, all questions necessary to dispose of the said motion be deemed put, a recorded division deemed requested and deferred to Thursday, June 15, 2000, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, after broad consultation with all parties in the House I would like to seek unanimous consent that Bill C-487 be deemed read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Toronto Centre—Rosedale have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** No.

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

## LESTER B. PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I present the following petitions.

The petitioners argue that 26 million passengers are serviced by Lester B. Pearson International Airport and that this number is due to double within the next few years.

• (1540)

The petitioners call upon parliament to enter into an agreement with the Greater Toronto Airport Authority and Nav Canada to ensure that the communities surrounding Pearson International Airport benefit from the development and timely adoption of noise reducing technologies and airport management procedures.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a number of petitions containing 700 signatures. The petitions are from concerned Canadians, mostly from my constituency of Surrey Central.

The petitioners are asking why parliament was not recalled immediately to invoke section 33 of the charter of rights and Freedoms, the notwithstanding clause, to override the B.C. court decision and to ensure that the possession of child pornography in B.C. is illegal.

[Translation]

## PETROLEUM PRODUCT PRICING

**Mr. Ghislain Fournier (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to table, on behalf of my fellow citizens of Manicouagan, a petition containing over 2,000 names.

This petition calls on parliament to take all the steps necessary to identify and recommend, as quickly as possible, specific ways to put an end to the unreasonable increase in the price of petroleum products and to regulate these prices permanently. The petitioners also ask parliament to take every measure to develop energy alternatives at affordable prices.

[English]

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to present two petitions this afternoon on matters that are most important and on the minds of Canadians. The first has to do with food safety and the question of genetically modified foods.

The petitioners call upon the government to implement legislation which would provide for the clear labelling of all genetically engineered seed and foods derived from or consisting of genetically engineered organisms.

## HEALTH

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition has to do with the future of our health care system and our ability to ward against a two tier American style health care model.

The petitioners call upon the federal government to take immediate action to save public health care in Canada and to stop two tier American style health care from coming to Canada.

## CBC

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present two petitions. The first petition comes from 2,500 Newfoundlanders from every part of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The petitioners are very disturbed and upset that the CBC nationally is cutting the supper hour news program *Here and Now* from one hour to half an hour. They ask parliament to intervene to protect the program, which is essential to the culture of our very large and sparsely populated province.

## ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition comes from a number of Newfoundlanders who make the case for the automatic harvesting of organs at death for transplant. The petitioners ask parliament to enact legislation to allow the automatic harvesting of organs at death for transplant, unless a specific request to the contrary has been made.

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## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Mount Royal which deals with environmental protection and the protection of health.

The petitioners call upon parliament to enact an immediate moratorium on the cosmetic use of chemical pesticides until such time as their use has been scientifically proven to be safe and the long term consequences of their application are known.

This petition reflects the recommendation of the report of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development tabled on May 16, 2000, and it received unanimous support in the meeting of the residents of the constituency of Mount Royal on June 1, which also called upon the government to immediately adopt Private Member's Bill C-388 as a government bill.

[Translation]

## SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition asking parliament to pass legislation to extend its sessions and reduce the time between them so they reflect a typical Canadian work year.

[English]

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition signed by 646 people in my riding.

The petitioners believe that it is the duty of parliament through the enactment and enforcement of the criminal code to protect the most vulnerable members of our society from sexual abuse.

Therefore, the petitioners pray that parliament take all measures necessary to ensure that possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and that federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of our children.

• (1545)

[Translation]

## CANADA POST CORPORATION

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wish to table a petition signed by 92 rural mail carriers who live in my riding of Laval West and surrounding regions in the Province of Quebec.

These persons feel that the Canada Post Corporation Act deprives rural mail carriers of the right to a collective agreement. They are therefore asking parliament to repeal subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act.

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to table two petitions, each signed by 75 people,

calling for an improvement in the working conditions of rural letter carriers.

## GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition signed by several hundreds of people who are calling on the federal government to do something about the increase in gasoline prices.

To date, over 5,000 of my constituents have signed this petition calling on the federal government to take action to bring down the price of gasoline.

[English]

## BIOARTIFICIAL KIDNEY

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present another petition from the people of Peterborough. They ask parliament to support the bioartificial kidney which will eventually eliminate the need for both dialysis or transplantation for those suffering from kidney disease.

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in this petition the petitioners call upon parliament to legislate clear labelling on all genetically engineered seeds, foods and their byproducts available in Canada.

## ABORTION

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Lastly, Mr. Speaker, this petition is from citizens of Peterborough who are concerned about the fact that statistics have not been systematically collected on abortion. They call upon parliament to act immediately to request the provision of Canada's annual statistics in this respect.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present two petitions today.

The first is from the hardworking people of my riding who know that high taxes kill jobs, increase poverty, limit investment and reduce prosperity. The petitioners are calling for a major tax reduction of 25% over the next three years. Some 2,268 people have signed that petition.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with the subject of child pornography. The petitioners ask that the government use the notwithstanding clause to override the B.C. Court of Appeal decision and reinstate subsection (4) of section 163.1 of the criminal code making possession of child pornography in B.C. illegal and by doing so reinforce and reaffirm our objection to the B.C. Court of Appeal decision. Some 3,093 hardworking people of Okanagan—Coquihalla have signed the petition.

## PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

**Mr. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have a petition signed by more than 600 people from New Brunswick. They draw to the attention of parliament that the present method of passenger transportation using highways is expensive, is often very dangerous and presents environmental pollution problems. Our economy could be greatly improved by the use of passenger service via railways which would improve the situation for senior citizens, for our youth and for tourism. They petition parliament to restore passenger rail service for the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and connections with the rest of Canada.

[Translation]

## GASOLINE PRICES

**Ms. Hélène Alarie (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table four petitions, one of which calls on the government to take action to bring gasoline prices down to a reasonable level for the consumer.

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

**Ms. Hélène Alarie (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I also wish to table three petitions containing 1,459 signatures calling on the government to make labelling of transgenic goods mandatory.

In my riding, a total of 16,000 signatures have been collected on this issue.

[English]

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the pleasure of tabling a petition containing 75 names requesting the labelling of foods containing genetically modified organisms.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present more petitions containing 32,000 more names of people from all across Canada who are dissatisfied with the government's inaction in protecting our most vulnerable from child pornography.

• (1550)

It has been almost a year and a half since the original Sharpe decision in B.C. which struck down the law against child pornography.

These petitions tabled today are added to the hundreds of thousands of signatures on petitions already tabled. By a large margin it is the single largest petition tabled in the House of Commons in this parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I concur with these petitions.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member knows that it is quite out of order for him to make such comments on presentation of

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petitions. I know that when we draw to the end of the session, members want to comply with the rules in every respect.

[Translation]

## BILL C-23

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the pleasure of tabling a petition signed by 58 people in my riding calling for the withdrawal of Bill C-23 and a better definition of marriage.

## CANADA POST CORPORATION

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to table.

The first calls for the repeal of subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act so that rural route mail carriers will have the right to collective bargaining.

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition calls for legislation making it mandatory to label all transgenic foods.

## GASOLINE PRICING

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my third petition is a protest against the high price of gasoline and again calls upon the federal government to intervene as promptly as possible.

[English]

## RELIGIOUS BROADCASTERS

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition on behalf of 122 of my constituents. They note that on July 22, 1997 the CRTC ruled against the licensing of four religious broadcasters, including one Roman Catholic and three multi-denominational broadcasters, while at the same time approving, in their definition, the pornographic program *Playboy*.

As a consequence, the petitioners request that parliament review the mandate of the CRTC and direct the CRTC to administer a new policy which will encourage the licensing of single faith religious broadcasters, including EWTN and TVN.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Dennis Gruending (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have several petitions, two of which deal with health care. These citizens say that the federal government has vastly reduced its funding for health care. They are calling upon the government to increase its share to 25% of the total bill and to implement the national home care and national pharmacare programs.

## WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

**Mr. Dennis Gruending (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the second petition the petitioners refer to

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the WTO. They do not like it in its present format whatsoever and suggest that the House of Commons work to build an alternative model of globalization, a stable rules based global economy protecting the rights of citizens and environment workers.

## CHILD CARE

**Mr. Dennis Gruending (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, finally, I have a petition from a group of people in Saskatoon who point out that the federal government has not kept its promise to provide 50,000 new child care spaces as it said it would in 1993. The petitioners urge parliament to support a national child care program.

Mr. Speaker, these petitioners, without knowing so, named a figure for which this program would cost and I have been told by the clerk of petitions that they are not allowed to name a figure. I am not repeating it but I ask the indulgence and unanimous consent of the House that this petition be tabled in any event.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to permit the tabling of this petition?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Agreed and so ordered.

## CHILD POVERTY

**Mr. Julian Reed (Halton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present two petitions. In the first one the petitioners urge parliament to fulfil the 1989 promise to end child poverty by the year 2000.

## MAMMOGRAPHY

**Mr. Julian Reed (Halton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the second petition the petitioners call upon parliament to enact legislation to establish an independent governing body to develop, implement and enforce uniform and mandatory mammography quality assurance and quality control standards in Canada.

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Cliff Breitkreuz (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present petitions bearing thousands upon thousands of signatures from petitioners right across the country. The petitioners pray that parliament take all measures necessary to ensure that possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and that police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of our children.

• (1555)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 36(6) the 15 minutes allowed for presentation of petitions has expired. Is there agreement to continue with petitions for a little while?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Translation]

## COMMUNITY TELEVISION

**Mr. Maurice Godin (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, community television, which has developed throughout Quebec in recent years, has been a response to community needs and has focused on local identity, a sense of community, providing emergency information, and generally bringing the community together. Today, it is experiencing serious operating difficulties, even threats of having to close down. This is all because of ambiguity in the interpretation of its role and mission between the community television corporation on the one hand and the cable company on the other.

I have a petition to table, signed by 1,575 people on behalf of the population of Châteauguay. The petitioners call upon the government to intervene with the CRTC in order to restore community television to our community that is dictated by its needs and not by the economic imperatives of the cable company.

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, like my colleague, the hon. member for Châteauguay, I am pleased to table a petition signed by 891 people in my riding which brings to the attention of the House that the cable company Vidéotron is not respecting the community programming slot it promised the CRTC it would preserve.

The petitioners are asking for CRTC intervention in order to obtain the re-opening of our community television channel as soon as possible, as well as asking the CRTC to carry out the public examination of broadcasting distribution that was promised in January 1998.

[English]

## CANADA POST

**Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to present petitions this afternoon from people who represent areas such as Port Elgin and Southampton.

The petitioners are speaking on behalf of the rural mail couriers and have outlined the adverse working conditions of their profession. They believe that their low wages are unfair, their bargaining positions are generally bad, and they have generally less than positive feelings for the way Canada Post has addressed their issues. They are therefore calling upon parliament to repeal section 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act.

[Translation]

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table five petitions, three of which relate to GMOs.

Obviously, the petitioners are calling for the mandatory labelling of genetically modified organisms.



*Routine Proceedings*

## CANADA POST CORPORATION

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table a petition concerning rural mail carriers.

Basically, what the petitioners are calling for is the right of association and repeal of subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act.

## GASOLINE PRICING

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the last petition concerns the high price of gasoline, in addition to the thousands of names on the other petitions that have already been tabled in this House.

The petitioners call upon the government to do its job as far as the exorbitant price of gas is concerned.

[*English*]

## GASOLINE ADDITIVES

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I wish to present a petition on behalf of the citizens living in Grand Bend, Port Franks and Thedford, who urge this government to eliminate the gas additive MMT, as it has a negative impact both on people's health and on our ecosystem at large.

## PARENTAL LEAVE BENEFITS

**Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have the honour of presenting petitions signed by more than 35 concerned constituents.

The last throne speech promised more accessible employment insurance benefits for parental leave. The petitioners want parliament to begin the new program prior to the end of the year 2001. They also want a parent who has finished his or her parental leave prior to the new program to be allowed to extend their leave and receive their payments.

Finally the petitioners ask that the legislation provide a full year of parental leave benefits.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I notice that at the same time I am presenting this petition there is a rally in Kamloops on the same topic. It is quite a coincidence.

The petition is on behalf of residents of the Kamloops area and the North Thompson Valley. It brings the total now to 6,722 petitioners who point out their concern about the state of Canada's health care system.

They say that the last budget gave only two cents to health care for every one dollar spent on tax cuts. They also point out that the government seems to be spending only 13% on health care as opposed to 50% on health care, which has led to extreme shortages of nurses, hospital beds and emergency room spaces across Canada. They point out a whole number of other reasons for their concern about the state of health care in Canada.

• (1600)

They ask parliament to take whatever steps are necessary to stop for profit hospitals and restore federal funding for health care, to increase the federal government's share of health care funding to 25% immediately, and to implement a national home care program and a national program for prescription drugs. That is one petition.

## GASOLINE PRICING

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have another shorter petition to present from people in Kamloops and the lower Thompson Valley who are concerned about excessively high gasoline prices.

They are asking the government to consider some form of regulation or to do what is done in the United States, that is to separate the vertical integration parts of oil companies from their retail outlets so that retail outlets are all independently owned, which would therefore bring some competition back into the system.

## RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I rise to present to the House five petitions certified by the clerk of petitions. They contain the signatures of constituents from my riding of Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh.

In the first petition the petitioners pray that parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the criminal code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

## ABORTION

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 the petitioners pray that parliament act immediately to request the provision of Canada's annual abortion statistics.

## MAMMOGRAPHY

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, in the third petition the petitioners call upon parliament to enact legislation to establish an independent governing body to develop, implement and enforce uniform and mandatory mammography quality assurance and quality control standards in Canada.

*S. O. 52*

## CHILD POVERTY

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the fourth petition the petitioners call upon parliament to honour the commitment made by the House of Commons in 1989 to end child poverty.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the last petition the petitioners pray that parliament will make changes pertaining to employment insurance and the clawbacks on EI.

## VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY WORKERS

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present the petition I have before me requesting the introduction of new legislation that would provide a \$1,000 tax deduction to all volunteer emergency workers so that the current inequality that exists would be addressed.

It has been my pleasure to present this petition on behalf of citizens of my riding of Fundy—Royal.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** I ask, Mr. Speaker, that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-27, in the name of the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, is acceptable to the government with the reservations stated in the reply. The documents are tabled immediately.

Motion P-27

That a humble Address be presented to Her Excellency praying that she will cause to be laid before the House copies of all documents, briefing notes, memos, minutes of meetings, consulting contracts and reports concerning public opinion polls and polls of producers conducted by, for, and/or about the Canadian Wheat Board during the last two years.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Subject to any reservations or conditions expressed by the parliamentary secretary, is it the pleasure of the House that Motion No. P-27 be deemed to have been adopted?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. Derek Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I ask you to be so kind as to call Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers No. P-6, in the name of the hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla.

Motion P-6

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of the Corrections Canada report into the 24-hour delay by Corrections Canada officials in reporting the disappearance of Kevin Machell from day parole on September 6, 1997.

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw Motion No. P-6.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion withdrawn)

**Mr. Derek Lee:** Mr. Speaker, for the record, there is another Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers in the name of the hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla, Motion No. P-35.

There has been a material change in the circumstances out of which the notice of motion has been put and that may give the government an opportunity to take a fresh look at the request. I put that on the record for the benefit of the hon. member.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion is not being called.

**Mr. Derek Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all other Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

● (1605)

## REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am in receipt of a notice of motion under Standing Order 52 from the hon. member for West Nova.

**Mr. Mark Muike (West Nova, PC):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the PC Party I am requesting an emergency debate on the urgent situation facing the CBC throughout the regions of Canada, as the House is scheduled to adjourn in the next couple of days.

The changes that have taken place with local regional news broadcasts being cut by some two-thirds with very little savings give the impression the situation is such that these programs are bound to fail.

The CBC is a vital institution that plays a very important role in enhancing and promoting our Canadian identity. Canadians have been phoning, writing and contacting our offices with their concerns.

It is for these reasons and as a strong supporter of the CBC that I respectfully request that you grant us leave, Mr. Speaker, to adjourn the House so that we may debate the future of the CBC, a very important Canadian institution.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair has considered the request of the hon. member and is of the view that the requested debate does not meet the exigencies of the standing order at this time.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

### CANADA TRANSPORTATION ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-34, an act to amend the Canada Transportation Act, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Deputy Speaker:** There are six motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill C-34, an act to amend the Canada Transportation Act.

Motion No. 4 is the same as an amendment presented and negated in committee. Accordingly, pursuant to Standing Order 76.1(5), it has not been selected.

Motion No. 1 will be debated and voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 6 will be grouped for purposes of debate, but they will be put to a vote as follows:

(a) if Motion No. 2 is agreed to, it will not be necessary to vote on Motion No. 3;

(b) however, if Motion No. 2 is not agreed to, it will be necessary to vote on Motion No. 3;

(c) Motions Nos. 5 and 6 will be voted on separately.

[*English*]

I shall now propose Motion No. 1 to the House.

#### MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC)** moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-34, in Clause 2, be amended by adding after line 27 on page 1 the following:

“(2.1) If the Minister wishes to communicate information for the purpose of monitoring the grain transportation and handling system,

#### *Government Orders*

(a) the Minister must provide to the appropriate committee of the House of Commons a copy of the contract for the monitoring work, and

(b) the person to whom the contract is awarded must appear before the committee to answer all questions on

(i) the terms of reference of the contract, and

(ii) any monitoring reports that they have given to the Minister, except that they need not reveal confidential information about an identifiable person.”

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it. I declare Motion No. 1 lost.

(Motion No. 1 negated)

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC)** moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-34, in Clause 9, be amended by adding after line 26 on page 5 the following:

““shipper”, in respect of a contract for the movement of grain, means the person who is identified as the shipper on the bill of lading;”

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance)** moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-34, in Clause 9, be amended by adding after line 26 on page 5 the following:

““shipper”, in respect of a contract with a carrier for the movement of grain, means the person responsible for transferring the grain to the carrier;”

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-34, in Clause 10, be amended by adding after line 16 on page 9 the following:

“153. If there is a conflict between this Act, or any regulations made under this Act, and any other Act that applies to the movement of grain, or any regulations made under that other Act, this Act prevails.”

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-34, in Clause 10, be amended by adding after line 16 on page 9 the following:

“153. On or before July 31, 2005, all contracts for the movement of grain are to be entered into between a carrier and

(a) a person holding a grain dealer's licence under the Canada Grain Act, or

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(b) a producer of grain.”

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make some brief comments on Motions Nos. 3, 5 and 6. Motion No. 3 is put forward by the Canadian Alliance to make sure that there is an accountability factor in the issue of shipping and that the definition of shipper is clarified in the legislation. This amendment would do that.

Motion No. 5, also put forward by the Canadian Alliance, would make this act precede over all others. Anybody working under the auspices of this act could not go to another one to seek loopholes and to find ways of getting exemptions.

• (1610)

As well Motion No. 6 is put forward by the Canadian Alliance. It is a motion that would make clear that the government would move to a commercially accountable contract based system. Of course the whole bill should have done that in a more dramatic manner than it has.

**Mr. Stan Dromisky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to address Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 6 put forward by the member for Brandon—Souris and the member for Lethbridge.

Motions Nos. 2 and 3 seek to add a new definition of shipper to the Canada Transportation Act. One proposed definition states:

“shipper”, in respect of a contract for the movement of grain, means the person who is identified as the shipper on the bill of lading.

The other states that a shipper means the person responsible for transferring the grain to the carrier. Let me point out that there is already a definition of shipper in the current transportation act. The act already defines the shipper as a person who sends or receives goods by means of a carrier or intends to do so.

In Bill C-34 the government did not change that definition. If we were to accept the proposed definitions, we would end up having two definitions of shippers in the act. Similar motions were debated at committee stage and were not supported.

Adding a special definition for grain shippers would be confusing, should an interested party wish to file a complaint with the Canadian Transportation Agency. It seems that this is a back door attempt to get at the issue of the Canadian Wheat Board's transportation role.

Let me say that the Canadian Wheat Board's transportation role is being addressed through a memorandum of understanding that was shared with the Standing Committee on Transport last week. A memorandum of understanding is a document to be signed by the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and the Canadian Wheat Board itself.

The MOU reflects the government's decision, which was made after very careful consideration of the recommendations made by Mr. Justice Estey and Mr. Kroeger, and the extensive feedback from many stakeholders. The changes move to a more commercially based system involving tendering while at the same time addressing the concerns of producers about the ability of the wheat board to successfully fulfil its marketing mandate.

Motion No. 5 states that if there is a conflict between the Canada Transportation Act or any regulations made under this act and any other act that applies to the movement of grain, or any regulations made under that other act, the Canada Transportation Act prevails.

I draw attention to subsection 4(1) of the Canada Transportation Act. This section already addresses the issue of conflicts between orders or regulations made under the Canada Transportation Act and orders or regulations made under any other act in respect of a particular mode of transportation. The Canada Transportation Act states that the order or regulation made under the Canada Transportation Act shall prevail. I believe that this is once again an effort to change the government's policy decision on the transportation role of the Canadian Wheat Board.

As for Motion No. 6, it would preclude the Canadian Wheat Board from entering into contracts with the railways for the movement of grain, beginning no later than July 31, 2005. The Canadian Wheat Board's transportation role has been covered in the memorandum of understanding.

As part of its decision on grain handling and transportation, the government will establish a mechanism of continuous monitoring, measurement and reporting to provide information to the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board on the impact of these reforms and the overall performance of the reformed grain handling and transportation system. Should the monitor identify any problems or opportunities to improve the system further, the government will be in a position to act. I do not support the motions as presented.

• (1615)

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC):** Madam Speaker, I will speak very briefly to the proposed amendments. I must stand after those last comments made by the parliamentary secretary.

The amendments were put forward by witnesses and by organizations that appeared before the committee. They were amendments that were, in most cases, approved and suggested by those organizations in order to make the legislation better than what it is.

I will speak specifically to the amendment that was put forward by myself as well as the member from the Canadian Alliance Party, that being the definition of shipper. That speaks to the essence of the bill which was to have a true commercial system. Unfortunately, the Canadian Wheat Board once again got its wish and its way

*Government Orders*

in order to manipulate the process to the point where this will not be a true commercial system.

As for the memorandum of understanding, we wanted to have that open and transparent, as the government has always indicated that it should be. The fact is that now the memorandum of understanding need not come before parliament and need not come before members of the committee. It need only be dealt with by the Canadian Wheat Board and the minister, as well as the monitor. It goes specifically to the minister as opposed to parliament. I believe that speaks specifically to not having it open and transparent and having a system in place that is not only the same as we had before but in fact worse than what we had. I will speak to that on third reading.

The amendments are solid, good amendments. Unfortunately, they are not going to be passed because the government does not want to see better legislation.

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I too want to rise at report stage on this group of amendments and run through the position of the New Democratic Party. I will be ever so brief.

With regard to Motions Nos. 2 and 3, I agree with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, these are fundamental to the whole debate. Implementation of either of these amendments would weaken the Canadian Wheat Board and result in more power to the railways. We believe that being recognized as the shipper is fundamental and a key for the wheat board to negotiate overall rail capacity.

We in this caucus believe that the Canadian Wheat Board does maximize returns for farmers through meeting sales commitments and by holding railways and grain companies accountable for their service obligations. The board can only continue to perform these vital functions if it remains the shipper. We are opposing those two particular motions.

We are, however, supporting Motion No. 4 submitted by the member for Brandon—Souris on rural prairie roads and what happens when railways exceed the revenue cap.

We recognize that the changes to the grain transportation system will increase the pressure on roads. Indeed, the government recognizes that as well and has announced that it will be contributing \$175 million over the next five years to help to do something about improving the condition of those roads. It is noteworthy that Bill C-34, in and of itself, does not deal at all with funding for rural roads and this amendment simply implements the government's announcement concerning funding. We concur with that and will be supporting it.

With regard to the revenue cap, the amendment says that if and when the railways exceed the revenue cap in any given year the railways will have to pay to producers the amount of their revenue that exceeds that cap. This too will help producers, and we will be supporting that.

Motion No. 5, which was put forward by the Canadian Alliance, would ensure that the Canadian Transportation Act prevails over the wheat board. If implemented, we believe that the railways could argue through the CTA against the board's ability to provide grain transportation services to producers on a train, at a station or on a branch or shortline. The railways could argue, therefore, that providing these services affects its ability to meet their common carrier and level of service obligations. This too, we believe, would have a negative impact on the wheat board's ability to return the best possible value to producers through providing access to the system. The amendment attempts to use the Canada Transportation Act, in our opinion at any rate, to regulate the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

• (1620)

**Mr. Dennis Gruending:** A Trojan horse.

**Mr. Dick Proctor:** It is a Trojan horse, as my colleague for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar reminds me.

The CTA is intended to regulate transportation providers with regard to rates and how those providers conduct business with shippers. The purpose of the CTA is not to regulate other pieces of legislation, such as the Canadian Wheat Board Act. Regulating the Canadian Wheat Board Act is accomplished through the regulations in the act itself.

The NDP caucus will not be supporting Motion No. 5, nor will we be supporting Motion No. 6 which says that by August 1, 2005 there will be a fully commercial system to move grain from elevator to port. In our opinion, that would obviously leave the Canadian Wheat Board with no role whatsoever in transporting western grain to port. We believe that this is another excessive gift to the railways and the grain companies that will ultimately be injurious to producers.

The wheat board cannot be an effective marketer of grain if it is unable to fulfill its sales contracts by ensuring an adequate supply of that commodity. This can only be accomplished if the board maintains a significant role in grain transportation from the country elevator to the port spout. There can be no protection for producers without wheat board involvement in grain transportation. We will be opposing that motion as well. I will have more to say on this at third reading.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The question is on Motion No. 2. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** In my opinion the nays have it.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I declare the motion lost.  
(Motion No. 2 negated)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The next question is on Motion No. 3. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** In my opinion the nays have it.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I declare the motion lost.  
(Motion No. 3 negated)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The next question is on Motion No. 5. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** In my opinion the nays have it.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I declare the motion lost.  
(Motion No. 5 negated)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The next 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 (Ms. Thibeault):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** In my opinion the nays have it.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I declare the motion lost.  
(Motion No. 6 negated)

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.)** moved that the bill be concurred in.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I declare the motion agreed to.

(Motion agreed to)

**Hon. David M. Collette** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

• (1625)

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak today at third reading of Bill C-34 which amends the Canada Transportation Act to implement part of the government's May 10 announcement of its decisions on grain reform.

As the House will know, at second reading I spoke about the overall purpose of the bill and explained many of the measures found in the bill. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the extensive work done by the Standing Committee on Transport which took written submissions and heard testimony from about 30 different organizations in the short space of one week. I congratulate the members of the committee, in particular the hon. member for Hamilton West who was the chair, and my parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan who did an outstanding job at the committee stage.

This committee has worked wonders in this parliament. They had the airline restructuring proposals last fall, the airline bill, this grain bill, plus three other bills. They have certainly worked extremely hard. I want all Canadians to know that members on this side of the House and on the other side of the House have worked with due diligence on behalf of Canadians.

The western grain industry is one of the largest segments of the Canadian agri-food sector. In dollar terms, it ranks close to the forestry industry, the automobile industry, the mining industry and the fishing industries. Total Canadian grain production averages 60 million tonnes a year, with about half of this amount being exported. Production which is not exported is consumed domestically by the livestock industry, flour milling and other value-added processing activities.

The efficiency of the grain handling system has been the subject of much debate over the past few years. Most contend that the current system cannot continue to operate as it is and still allow for the industry to maintain its competitiveness in an international marketplace.

The present system is managed centrally, making it difficult to hold anyone accountable when things go wrong. Freight rates do not vary to encourage more efficient use of the transportation assets over the crop year or during peak periods. The majority of wheat board business is allocated to grain companies and to railways by historic shares rather than by competition.

Three years ago, as I said earlier when I spoke on this at second reading, I went with my colleagues to Winnipeg to meet with all the stakeholders. We agreed that we would try to do something about

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the breakdown of the system that occurred in the winter of 1996-97. I feel particularly good about the process that has been followed. We appointed an eminent jurist, Mr. Willard Estey, a native of Saskatchewan, who gave us a very comprehensive report advocating reforms toward a more competitive system.

I then asked the former distinguished deputy minister Arthur Kroeger, a native of Alberta, to take the theory of Mr. Estey and put it into practical form, to put some bones to the framework, as it were, and both of those gentlemen worked exceptionally hard and brought forward their recommendations.

We have been criticized for not entirely following the recommendations of those two gentlemen. However, it was always assumed that those gentlemen would give us the overall conceptual framework and some ways that the framework could be implemented. However, ultimately it was government and parliament that had to make the political decisions. We have to make the political trade-offs.

I think we have done that successfully. The fact that even though members on the other side are not entirely happy with every aspect of this bill, the fact that there are really no dissenting voices on the other side, means that we have it right. I like to be accurate, but I cannot believe that there is actually one member of the Canadian Alliance in the House that would say no to a measure that will put money in the pockets of the western farmers. I am sure that I have not heard any dissent on the other side. I am not used to covering up for anyone, and certainly not for the misdemeanours of the opposition, but I take them at face value.

I know that everyone in the House agrees that we have it right, that we are putting money in the hands of the producers and that there has been significant changes made throughout the system. The bill will not be proclaimed unless the MOU is satisfactory. We are still holding consultations on the MOU. I have talked with the presidents of the railways. We have talked with the grain companies. My colleague, the minister responsible for the wheat board, who was here a few minutes ago, has worked very hard at trying to calibrate that MOU so that it deals with the concerns of the various stakeholders.

• (1630)

I think this shows that we are sensitive. We are trying to get this particular measure right.

There are four main measures within the bill which have a large impact on the problems that were uncovered over three years of discussion. First, there is the annual limit on railway grain revenue, what we now call the revenue cap. Second, there have been enhancements to the final offer arbitration. Third, enhancements have been made to the branch line process. Finally, we have added measures to help obtain and share information required for the monitoring of the grain system in a secure manner.

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I do not want to unduly hold up the passage of this bill at third reading, but I would be remiss if I did not emphasize once again that the bill does contain a limit on rail revenues of \$27 a tonne for the crop year commencing August 1, which is 18% lower than the effective revenue per tonne in 2000-01 under current law, announced recently by the Canadian Transportation Agency after its deliberations.

Railways will have the flexibility to vary individual grain rates at any time to reflect efficiency and to offer more innovative services to shippers.

The bill also designates the agency as having the responsibility to monitor compliance based on actual grain movements and distance hauled. If the agency at the end of the year determines there are any railway earnings in excess of the cap, the excess amounts will be repaid with a penalty.

The revenue cap will be adjusted annually to reflect railway inflation, starting in 2001-02. Shippers whose traffic starts from branch lines will have an assurance that the tariff rates for single car movements originating on branch lines will not be allowed under this bill to exceed main line tariff rates for similar movements by more than 3%. I think that is an effective guarantee.

Amendments to the CTA in Bill C-34 will also make significant improvements to the final offer arbitration process. It will require shippers to submit their whole proposal as part of the application, excluding dollar amounts. After 10 days the shipper and the railway will exchange their complete final offers simultaneously, including dollar amounts.

A simplified arbitration mechanism is proposed for arbitration involving freight charges that total no more than \$750,000. In this faster process the time between the shipper filing the initial submission and the final decision will not exceed 30 days. At the request of the shipper or for arbitration of disputes above \$750,000 a 60 day process will be followed.

The bill allows the establishment of a three person panel on agreement by both parties to hear more complex disputes. Of the three arbitrators, one would be chosen by the shipper, one by the railway and one by the two arbitrators. Failing that, the agency could select the third arbitrator.

There were many members of the House on both sides who were concerned with the provisions of the CTA in 1996 which allowed the railways a certain procedure for the abandonment of branch lines without recourse to the governor in council. I know this is going to be an ongoing discussion as we start the review of the act on July 1. I will be announcing the appointment of prominent people to conduct that review very shortly.

We have included in this bill, because of the urgency and the need for balance in the system, specific provisions that would not

only allow the two railways to reduce their costs, but facilitate the transfer of branch lines for continued operation.

The main goal of these provisions was to ensure that a community could maintain the rail line, which is so often the lifeblood of the town. I am proud to say that since the act came into effect in July 1996 about 80% or 9,200 kilometres of track are operated by short line railways and only 1,800 kilometres of track have been discontinued. This process has resulted in the creation of 36 new short line operators.

Despite this success, Justice Estey identified some issues related to branch lines. Some of the problems included the ability of railways to transfer grain dependent lines in small segments, making a viable short line operation very difficult, and the fact that when a community does lose a grain dependent branch line it is not directly compensated. I believe the bill addresses these particular issues.

• (1635)

We are extending the notice period before a railway can take steps to discontinue a rail line from two months to twelve months. This would give more time for potential short line purchasers to come along. It would also allow a community based group which is ready to proceed with an offer to trigger an early curtailment of the twelve month notice period and extend the negotiation period from four months to six months. Also, either party may request the Canadian Transportation Agency during this stage to provide its estimate of the net salvage value of the line.

Bill C-34 requires that both parties negotiate in good faith. The Canadian Transportation Agency may order the railway to enter into a commercially fair and reasonable agreement, or it may allow a railway to end negotiations and continue to abandon the line if parties are not negotiating in good faith.

Not all grain lines will be retained or transferred. Therefore, the bill requires a railway that abandons a line to make three annual payments of up to \$10,000 per mile to each of the municipal governments located along the line, related to the length of the line that falls within each municipality. This will ensure that the municipalities which are feeling the impact of the changes will see the benefits from these railway payments.

With respect to the monitoring provisions, I believe that these measures will ensure that we obtain information that is critical to a full and fair assessment of the results from the changes to the grain transportation and handling system. The bill ensures that the information can be forwarded to a third party monitor. The confidentiality of the information obtained for monitoring purposes is ensured.

The standing committee adopted an amendment that calls on the minister to table an annual report on the monitoring of the system to parliament no later than January 31, which is six months after the end of each crop year. The Minister responsible for the



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Canadian Wheat Board, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and I support this amendment. We are very confident that there will be much progress to report.

Under the decision we announced on May 10, the issue of more open access to rail lines will be referred to the upcoming review of the Canada Transportation Act for priority consideration on effective ways to enhance competition in the railway sector, including enhanced running rights, regional railways and other access concepts. This review will be launched within the next few days and will be ready by July 1. In the mandate letter for the review I will request that an interim report be provided on the open access issue no later than six months after the start of the review.

Three of the government's measures on grain are realized through non-statutory means. First, a memorandum of understanding will be put in place to guide changes to the wheat board's transportation role. Second, a mechanism will be put in place to ensure the continuous monitoring, measurement and reporting of the changes by a professional private sector third party. Third, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food will provide for a five year, \$175 million grain roads program at the rate of \$35 million per year from 2001 to 2005-06. This grain road program is to be modelled on the Canada agri-infrastructure program, as implemented in Saskatchewan.

On the whole, the statutory and non-statutory measures are designed to turn a new page in Canada's grain transportation and handling system. I think they create a significant opportunity for the parties to commence a different set of relationships and to work together to build a more commercial, more accountable and more effective system.

Before I sit down I would like to thank all members on both sides of the House who have worked really hard on this measure. I know that it came late, but as I said at second reading, this was a very tough measure to adjudicate and to do things properly. The fact that there is no significant technical opposition to the bill underscores the fact that we have gotten it right, that the producers will benefit and that productivity gains will be shared.

I realize that while producers may be happy, the railways and the grain companies may not be as happy. We are trying to work out modalities in the MOU with the wheat board to address some of their concerns.

I think we have done justice to the railways by moving the open access provisions and the regional railway provisions to the CTA review to allow for a broader debate which will allow all shippers, not just shippers of grain, to have an influence on the decisions and an impact on policy changes which are coming forward.

I think the coming year will be an interesting one because the review will deal with some of the unfinished business. I am firm in my view that we have started on the road to true commercialization and reform of the system. I applaud members of both sides of the House who have agreed that this objective will be met.

• (1640)

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst, Employment Insurance; the hon. member for Prince Albert, Indian Affairs and Northern Development; the hon. member for Lotbinière, Transfer Payments; the hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Agriculture; and the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, Human Resources Development.

[English]

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is with some sadness that I stand at this time. I want to join with the minister, however, in congratulating the men and women who served on the transport committee. I think it was a very good committee. The hearings were good, we heard good witnesses and we had good discussion and good debate.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask for the unanimous consent of the House to share my time with the hon. member for Lethbridge.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent for the hon. member to share his time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Roy Bailey:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, this was a good committee, but I want to point out and make it very clear that the passage of this bill, and why we are supporting this bill, is not so much the content but the emergency that goes with it.

As Justice Estey said in committee, there is no choice. He said it is like having a gun at your head. When I asked the hon. justice what he thought about what the government had done to his recommendations, he said that it had every right to do so, but only 1 per cent. The government did exactly the opposite of what the hon. justice wanted.

I also want to make it abundantly clear that our support for this is for the short term gain, but there is going to be long term pain. Make no mistake about it. This bill will be back before the House within a year. The way the bill stands now, it does not address agriculture in the year 2000 on the prairies.

Even members in the caucus opposite knew what was wrong. They wanted a complete and open commercial system, but somehow through the back door they said "No, no, no". It is all right for the potash companies to have an open agreement with the railways. It is all right for the coal companies to have an open agreement with the railways. But over 50% of all the money realized from the sale of farm commodities on the prairies today does not come from

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board grains handled by the wheat board. No consideration was given to that fact.

There was even an attempt to blame us for bringing in amendments, such as that brought by the member for Brandon—Souris, to bring the meaning of shipper into the year 2000. They said “No, we are trying to get at the wheat board”. The wheat board does not handle the goods whatsoever for which we wanted that meaning.

This reminds me of the poem about Casey at the bat. There was no joy in Mudville because mighty Casey struck out.

I was home on the weekend. There are some very disappointed producers who really thought the Estey and Kroeger report was going to go through. There is no joy in the producers, those same producers who appeared before the committee, the canola people who lost millions of dollars because for some reason there were four or five long trains backed up in Vancouver and their goods could not get to port.

• (1645)

When I asked in committee whose fault that was, there was no question it was the wheat board's fault. That is what they said; I did not say that.

What was the opinion of the majority of the people who came before the committee? The vast majority of people who came before our committee, the five major grain companies, basically said we should scrap the whole bill. That is why I say that this bill will be back before this house.

The individual producers, and there are going to be more of them, are worried because now the wheat board is taking on more of a role even to control the transportation industry.

The railways said if what is wanted is to save the farmers a lot of money in freight, as well as the grain companies, the five major grain companies which handle over 90% of all the grain, then let us go to an open accountable freight system. Somehow the wisdom opposite was to say no, they do not trust the people who handle more than 90% of the grain. They do not trust the pulse growers. They do not trust the canola growers. They do not trust anyone but themselves. And they do not trust the railways. Which stakeholders are left?

The government promised money for roads. I want to put it on the record that the money that has been allocated for prairie roads is going to be a pittance to what the government should have done with this bill and gone to an open commercialized system.

The day will come when those same people will not grow products that go to the wheat board because they do not trust it. That was the reason for Estey in the first place. I am not trying to condemn the wheat board. I am not trying to come through the back

door or anything. All I am saying is I respect the grain producers, the barley producers, the pulse growers and the canola growers. I respect all of those farm organizations, the majority of which said to scrap the bill.

It makes good sense to get those points across. The majority of the witnesses and the majority of the stakeholders disagreed big time with this bill. We do have a gun at our heads. Therefore, we have decided that for temporary gain and the long term pain that could well be experienced by the producers, we will support the bill. But let the record clearly show that the Canadian Alliance pointed out the need to bring grain transportation into the year 2000 and not take it back to 1945.

We are going backward; we are not moving ahead, as the minister said. The move that was put into this bill is a concession by those people who want full commercialization. Those people said they will concede that and give a little bit of money and have 25% going into a tendering process and then it is not between the grain companies and the railways.

I have been living with this issue since 1996, a good year before I came to the House. No one in the House has been around and watched the failures of the grain handling system more than I have. I am not bragging, it is just a fact. It is just my age.

We had an opportunity to do something. We had an opportunity to move into the new century, but no, we had to play a little politics here. That is exactly what we did.

If I am still around and I suspect that I will be, we will be back debating this bill within a year's time because it is doomed to fail.

• (1650)

Who will take the blame the next time the canola or pulse shippers' cars cannot get to Vancouver because of unnecessary grain cars with no boats in the harbour? Who will take the blame for that? Nobody took the blame last time. It is always the railways' fault. The railways were told to take the grain there, but there can never be anybody but the railways to take all of the blame.

I am not here to support the railways. I am simply saying that for centuries now, when anything goes wrong it is blamed on the railways. As I said in a speech over a year ago, in our part of the country when the kids are in grade 6, part of the curriculum is how to hate the railways.

It is time we became honest with ourselves and with all of the stakeholders. This bill has not been honest with all of the stakeholders. This bill scrapped what the government spent thousands and thousands of dollars on simply because it was a good idea. We were ready for the 20th century, but somebody was not.

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We will be back; I will be back. And let me say that the next time we are back on this issue, we will do it right. That will be the last time. We did not do it right the first time.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would certainly like to commend my colleague, the member for Souris—Moose Mountain, for all the work he has done on this issue, his understanding of it and the hours and hours of endless committees where he carried the ball for the Canadian Alliance. I thank him for that.

One of the reasons we are looking at the grain transportation act and grain movement is that our primary producers in the grain and oilseeds sector are suffering. We need to look at ways to give them a little more cash in their pockets because it is a desperate situation.

There have been groups that have said that as much as \$300 million could be left on the prairies if the grain transportation system was commercialized. That is \$300 million. The estimate of the government as a result of this bill is \$178 million. We will not stand in the way of any dollars flowing to the primary producers because they do need it.

I have a letter which was sent to me today by an organization which represents 90,000 farmers in western Canada, the Prairie Farm Commodity Coalition. The group represents the Alberta Barley Commission, the Alberta Canola Producers Commission, Alberta Marketing Choices Implementation Group, the Alberta Rye and Triticale Association, the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission, the Prairie Oat Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association, the Western Barley Growers Association, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association and the Western Producer Car Group.

This group represents 90,000 primary producers. Instead of giving some words here that could be construed to be just those of the Canadian Alliance, I would like to read the letter from the chairman of the group, Greg Rockafellow:

On June 8, 2000, the Prairie Farm Commodity Coalition was invited to make a submission to the House of Commons transport committee on Bill C-34 which is part of the government's so-called "reform" package on grain transportation. The position taken in the PFCC submission was that the grain transportation reform package put forward by the federal government is a sham, and will do precisely nothing to resolve the problems that have been studied for almost three years.

The consequences of the federal government's inaction on these problems will have profoundly negative effects on farmers, the grain industry and the federal government. The consequences for the federal government will come to bear during the next tie-up in grain movement, when vessels are once more lined up in Vancouver harbour, sales are lost, and Canada's reputation as a reliable supplier is further tarnished. The responsibility for this event, when (not if) it occurs, will rest fully on the federal government's shoulders.

It is our position that this package of so-called reform is in fact worse than the current situation. It moves the grain industry and the farmers back towards the old Crow rate regime which gave us nothing but inefficiency, system breakdowns and restricted

investments. If the federal government was motivated in the smallest degree by principle, this package would be withdrawn. If members of parliament on both sides of the House wanted to do what is best for western farmers, they would vote against Bill C-34.

More serious than the loss of three years of study and discussion is the shabby political games that have been played in Ottawa by the government over the package. Putting forward this backward looking and empty set of proposals, and then accusing anyone who opposes it of "denying farmers \$178 million in freight savings" is itself symptomatic of a government which is bereft of ideas and principle. This trap, however, is only one way among several in which the federal government has abused parliamentary democracy campaign over the last few weeks:

Railroading the package through with no opportunity for debate;

Having the farmers' presentations to the transport committee occur after the deadline for any amendments to be submitted to the committee for clause by clause consideration;

Bringing in the party whip to sit at the committee table, driving Liberal members who dared to criticize the package off the committee at the last minute, and replacing them with other MPs who had not heard the presentations of any of the witnesses.

We find it repugnant in the extreme that the federal government has put political gains ahead of the interests of farmers, has abused the democratic and parliamentary system, and has insulted the farm groups who travelled to Ottawa on their own time and at their own expense to provide their views on this disgraceful package.

Farmer representatives from the PFCC organizations spent all of last summer working in good faith on the Kroeger facilitation process. Each devoted considerable time and personal expense on the premises clearly stated on May 12, 1999, that the federal government had accepted Justice Estey's recommendations and Mr. Kroeger was to develop an implementation plan. Clearly, the only party that was not operating in good faith was the government, which had no intention of implementing the Estey report. The federal government's actions on this file over the past year have completely undermined any trust that we will have in the future in any consultation process.

• (1655)

That letter alone from an organization that represents 90,000 primary producers pretty much puts in black and white what this process has done and what it will not do. The faith the farmers put in the government has been totally destroyed.

As the member for Souris—Moose Mountain said, when this bill comes back the next time, it will be done right.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois to Bill C-34, which is intended to govern the transportation of grain, particularly in the west.

Right off, for the benefit of those watching, I will point out that our party, the Bloc Québécois, will vote against this bill at third reading. We will do so for on simple reason, a matter of equity, or perhaps I should say a matter of inequity.

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I would not want the members from out west to assume that this is another chapter in the unending dispute between eastern and western Canada. On the contrary. It is our view that the government has once again decided, using this bill, to pit the east against the west.

If this bill is passed, western producers will enjoy a considerable reduction in the cost of transportation, on the order of \$178 million. This reduction will be achieved in the form of discounts that the two railway companies—Canadian National and Canadian Pacific—will be required to give western producers.

On behalf of my party, I say that this is unfair to eastern producers. When I say eastern producers, I am talking about producers from Quebec, but also those from Ontario.

The Liberal majority across the way often tells the members of the Bloc Québécois, the Canadian Alliance or the Progressive Conservative Party that they are regional parties.

• (1700)

I would remind our Liberal friends opposite that we might ask ourselves whether the same is not true of them. We know that there are 155 Liberal members—

**An hon. member:** There are 157.

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** —the member from British Columbia tells me there are 157—and that 101 of these 157 members come from Ontario. We might therefore wonder whether the Liberal Party of Canada is not a regional party too—the regional party of Ontario.

I appeal to Ontario's farmers. Do they feel that they are well represented by the federal Liberal members from Ontario, the ones who are supporting this subsidy for western producers?

Moreover, my colleagues of the Canadian Alliance were certainly delighted to learn that this bill was rushed through a few days before the summer adjournment. This is a totally vote-seeking bill, one introduced literally to buy the votes of western farmers. They are being given some nice little goodies in order to win them over and to get their votes.

The Canadian Alliance will have to deal with this matter when the election comes around, which appears to be imminent for this fall. However, it seems obvious that this is a program aimed at buying the western farm vote.

I would like to take a few minutes to return to the \$178 million cut the two rail carriers, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, will be forced to make. I had the opportunity in the Standing Committee on Transport to question directly Mr. Tellier, the president of CN, and Mr. Ritchie, the president of CP, and their responses leave me concerned and confused.

What I asked them was this: we know that the rail carriers have, for the past 10 years, made the railway workers bear the brunt of their lack of productivity. As a result, when the financial reports were not to their liking, they announced major staff cuts when releasing their annual financial statements.

I wish to say that my Bloc Québécois colleagues share those concerns. We are concerned that the companies, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, not to name them, will be very tempted to have railway workers bear the brunt—because their job will be cut—of the \$178 million drop in revenues the railroads will have to absorb.

We should remember today, June 14, 2000, because I am warning you that I will point out once again—I will no doubt have another opportunity to talk on this issue—that I predicted on June 14, today, that the railways will not absorb this \$178 million within their operating costs. They will not pass it on to their shareholders through considerable dividends. They will not deprive their shareholders. They will deprive railway workers of their jobs because of the number of cuts resulting directly from Bill C-34.

Another reason we oppose this bill is that it changes the role of the Canadian Wheat Board without our knowing how these changes will affect its ability as a marketing agency to honour its commitments to grain producers and its clientele worldwide.

• (1705)

The Canadian Wheat Board is strange beast. It is an independent agency. A number of the members of its board are appointed by the government, as political payback. The Canadian Wheat Board tries to make us believe that it will, with this legislation, attempt to find the most cost effective shipping point and port for producers.

I would like to give an example. My colleague from Thunder Bay and I were members of a sub-committee on the future of the St. Lawrence Seaway. One of the Bloc Québécois' demands has always been to have Manitoba wheat pass through Thunder Bay.

Why is a member of the Bloc Québécois defending the Port of Thunder Bay? The answer is obvious. Because every tonne of wheat that goes through Thunder Bay has to go through the ports on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. This means that wheat that goes through Thunder Bay stands a good chance of being redirected into other bigger ships, in the ports of Montreal, Sorel, Trois-Rivières, Quebec City, Baie-Comeau or Sept-Îles.

That is why the Bloc Québécois called on this government—and the government has not agreed to do this in Bill C-34, which we are debating today—to give preference to Thunder Bay and the St. Lawrence Seaway as an efficient way to move wheat to European markets in particular.

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During the hearings on privatizing the St. Lawrence Seaway, which I attended in 1995 with the member from Thunder Bay, the then commissioner of the Canadian Wheat Board admitted to us that wheat headed for Belgium and Luxembourg went through the Port of Vancouver.

Is it more cost effective to ship a tonne of wheat out of the Port of Vancouver, when it has to travel down the west coast of the United States, go through the Panama Canal and travel back up north on its way to its final destination in Luxembourg or Belgium, essentially shipping wheat to western Europe through Vancouver rather than through Thunder Bay, when the ports of Montreal, Quebec City or Sept-Îles are a few hundred kilometres from western European ports?

Such thinking is the reason for a bill like this. That is why we in the Bloc Québécois cannot support Bill C-34, because, for one thing, it does not help ports on the St. Lawrence.

Another feature of this bill with which the Bloc Québécois has major difficulties is the fact that it contains provisions for \$175 million worth of highway infrastructures for rural roads in the western provinces—yet another sop to western producers. I am sorry.

Once again, we have a double standard. Once again, Quebec is treated differently. The government will hand over \$175 million to improve rural highway infrastructures in the west. Does this mean that the roads used to transport grain, the highway infrastructures for rural roads, are adequate? To ask the question is to answer it.

• (1710)

The Bloc Québécois cannot accept bills such as Bill C-34, which create inequities.

Unfortunately, since I am running out of time, I will have to rush. The Minister of Transport himself recognizes that the reforms affecting the grain transportation and handling system will increase pressure on rural roads. I spoke about this issue already.

We will oppose Bill C-34 for the three reasons we have mentioned, the first one being the \$178 million income reduction for railroad companies, both CN and CP, which will necessarily result in railway workers being laid off; the second is that nothing in this bill guarantees that there will be an increase in grain traffic, via the port of Thunder Bay, on the St. Lawrence ports network; and the third reason why we oppose this legislation is the \$175 million budget allocated to upgrade rural roads, while no money is provided for eastern Canada. Quebec gets nothing, and nor does Ontario for that matter.

I see the chief government whip, who comes from the Cornwall area. There must be agricultural producers in that region and there

must be rural roads around Cornwall. I am convinced that Ontarians could team up with Quebec on this issue because the situation is the same for both.

For these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will vote against Bill C-34 at third reading.

[English]

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to take part in this important debate today on Bill C-34. My only wish is that we had more time to debate and discuss this. I think we all felt that it was terribly telescoped, which is not to take anything away from the witnesses who presented to us last week.

However, in all honesty and clarity, I must say that for the government to have brought in background notes, a major press release on May 10 and then require a full three weeks before the House, the parliamentarians and the transport committee ever got to see the legislation was, it seemed to me, a strange way to run a railroad, if I could use that metaphor in this context.

Before I get into the thrust of my remarks, I want to comment briefly on the remarks made by the transport critic for the Bloc Québécois and also the remarks made by the transport critic for the Canadian Alliance Party.

I would just say, first to the Bloc member, that he seems to be saying, if I understood him correctly, that this is legislation or a bill for western Canada and nothing for the people in Quebec. I would say to him, with respect, that the Crow's Nest Pass freight rate agreement predated the entry of Manitoba and Saskatchewan into confederation. We in those provinces are a long way from tidewater, whereas in Quebec, I would submit that most of the agriculture that is carried out in that province is very close to the St. Lawrence Seaway system and, indeed, to tidewater. One of the problems we have always had in western Canada is getting our product to market, which is why we have needed help for more than a century in this regard.

With respect to the member for Souris—Moose Mountain, the transport critic for the Canadian Alliance, I congratulate him on getting the only amendment that anybody got through that committee last week, in the rush, rush, rush that we were in, that I do not understand. He spent most of his speech denigrating this bill. The words that he used to emphasize it were short term gain for long term pain. However, at the end of the day the Alliance appears to be going to vote for this bill.

• (1715)

We in the New Democratic Party caucus will not be doing that. We took the position at second reading that we oppose the bill. We wanted to see some amendments. As I mentioned we received none. Specifically the only amendment that was acceded

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to was the one by the member for Souris—Moose Mountain and his party.

We just do not feel that the bill is deserving of support, notwithstanding what the Minister of Transport said about the taunting about \$178 million and how it would look if we stand opposed to it on behalf of the producers who will be supposedly in receipt of the \$178 million.

One of our concerns is that the memorandum of understanding between the government and the Canadian Wheat Board was not part of this process. The joint running rights open access question to be negotiated involves the CTA doing a review of it. It will be another shoe that will drop later on, some months from now.

Everyone in committee seemed to get very exercised about the fact that MOU was not a public document. Everyone seemed to be upset and wanted to point a finger at the Canadian Wheat Board for the delay. I suggest that procrastination on the part of the government in bringing forward the legislation should not result in a crisis in terms of due diligence on the part of the Canadian Wheat Board on this very important memorandum of understanding.

With regard to some of the amendments we moved that were all rejected by members opposite, we note that there is no productivity gains sharing. It has been identified by usually reliable sources that some \$700 million have accrued to the railways since 1992 as a result of more fuel efficient locomotives, larger hopper cars, and particularly a significant downsizing in the workforce of the railways.

Prior to the dismantling of the Western Grain Transportation Act those productivity gains, those windfall profits, were shared between producers and the railways. They have not been shared since 1992, and there is nothing in the legislation which suggests that they will be shared in the future. That is one of our major concerns.

Also no rate differential disciplines are mentioned at all. It is single cars on branch lines versus single cars on main lines and the 3% differential. We have some real concerns about that. We believe it will come back to haunt people on main lines. It does not deal with single cars versus multi-cars on main lines. There are darn few single cars these days loaded on main lines.

We are also concerned about who will get the price premium. Depending on the calendar and what commodity is being shipped, there is nothing to ensure that we will be able to deal with that in an adequate way.

We need clear rules for short line revenue sharing. I thought we needed something on salvage. The Canadian government and Canadian taxpayers have spent many millions of dollars on upgrading railways. When a branch line is being sold off we think it

should be net of any federal taxpayer money that has gone into it. It was an amendment moved by our caucus but not agreed to.

There is much to say on the bill, but I will keep my remarks as brief as I possibly can. Another member wants to participate in this debate and I do not want to shorten his time.

During the debate a very interesting remark was made. Someone who appeared before the committee quoted William Lyon Mackenzie King and said that the problem with most countries was that they had too much history and too little geography. King apparently said that in Canada we had too much geography and too little history. Frank Scott, a great Canadian poet, also said that Mackenzie King never did by halves what he could do by quarters.

• (1720 )

That is how I feel about Bill C-34. All members in the House are being asked to accept the bill on blind faith. The transport minister said they got it right. I am not sure that they got it right.

What if the five, six or seven major grain companies that are around these days go through a streamlining process and are reduced to two or three in the future? What if the two railroads are merged into one, perhaps dominated by the United States? How will competition work, which is the be-all and end-all according to the government?

We are very concerned. The minister responsible for the wheat board said that it was time to stop the bickering, that it was time most people agreed. Most of the expert witnesses that came before the committee had many concerns about the bill. I think the concerns are growing rather than diminishing.

I was also disturbed when the Minister of Transport said that they had it right but recognized that the railways and the grain companies were not very happy with it. Mark my words. We will be back here in a few months and there will be additional sops to those two institutions because they have perhaps not been treated as fairly as the government would want. It will be making the necessary adjustments to correct that in the near future. Those are my remarks. Our caucus will be opposing Bill C-34 at third reading.

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I extend my thanks to the member for Palliser who has allowed me to speak as the last speaker to this bill. We can get on with life after my few comments.

At the onset of my seven minutes or so I thank the transport committee. I do not normally sit on that committee. Nor does the member for Palliser. Nor does the member from the Canadian Alliance. Normally we sit on the agriculture committee, but we sat on the transport committee specifically because we had a bit more knowledge with respect to western grain transportation than per-

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haps my own colleague who was sitting on the transport committee.

I thank the chairman of the transport committee who is in the House today. I thought he did a very commendable job. He was fair. He was honest. He was open in the process. I also thank members of the government who sat on that committee. They were very attentive. They listened to the petitioners and the witnesses that came forward with very logical presentations and points of view.

From that point on it sort of went downhill, but let us talk about the process itself. I must spend a couple of seconds dealing with that. The process is certainly a prime example of the manipulative process the government has put into place with respect to this piece of legislation.

As was mentioned earlier, this was not something that snuck up on us. This was not an issue that jumped out of the hall closet. We had to fix this problem. Rail transportation in western Canada has been an issue for years and decades. As a matter of fact, for three years now the particular issue has been studied by what I consider to be two of the best known experts in the industry, a gentleman by the name of Justice Willard Estey and another gentleman by the name of Arthur Kroeger.

These individuals put forward a process that was very gruelling and grinding. They came forward with what they thought were the necessary changes to the system. A systemic change was necessary. Mr. Kroeger came forward in September 1999 with his report based on the Estey report. Mr. Kroeger said that in order to make it work we would have to change the system. It had to become a commercialized system. On May 10 the three ministers came together at a press conference and told us what they would put together with this piece of legislation.

• (1725)

What happened between September 1999 and May 10, 2000, is kind of a black hole. I suspect the Canadian Wheat Board had a lot of ongoing negotiations with the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board to try to fix the problem to the best of its advantage, not to the advantage of producers, not to the advantage of what Mr. Kroeger and Mr. Estey saw was a commercial system.

Between May 10 and when we received this piece of legislation is again kind of a black hole, a bit of a vacuum. All of a sudden there is an urgency and a necessary 11th hour demand that the legislation had to be passed before the House rose for its summer recess. We had to have it in place by August 1, the crop year.

I do not disagree that we need to have the legislation in place so that it can take effect for the next crop year. What I disagree with is the process the government followed to get it there. There was an 11th hour requirement. All stakeholders were asked to come

together for two grinding and demanding days of committee hearings so they could tell us what was right and what was wrong.

The Minister of Transport is either delusional or is totally under a misconception. He stood before us and said that they must have got it right, that everybody liked the legislation. I sat through those two grinding days of hearings. Not one person, not even the Canadian Wheat Board, said that what was being proposed was the right legislation for the system. Out of the 30 witnesses that appeared nobody came forward and said "Hallelujah, you got right". In fact I heard quite the opposite.

Organizations like the Hudson Bay Route Association said to scrap it, that it was not good. I heard other producer organizations come forward and say that what had been done would exacerbate the problem of rail transportation in western Canada. A rail coalition came forward and said nothing in the legislation indicated who would be accountable for transportation. We would still have the finger pointing of the past and the system would still break down. Not one organization or producer group said that it was the right thing to do.

Let us talk about what is not right. What is not right is the fact that this is not a commercial system. The legislation allows 25% of the business now performed by the Canadian Wheat Board to be tendered. That is wonderful. It also says, and I have also heard it, that the Canadian Wheat Board will control not only the tendered portion but the untendered portion. It will rebalance that tendered and untendered portion to the two railways. That is not a commercial system. It is a manipulated system between the Canadian Wheat Board and the railroads.

There is a monitoring process that is very positive. The monitor is a third party that will be chosen by the government. The monitor will report to three ministers. It will not report to parliament, except for once a year which was a minor amendment that was put through. Unfortunately it will not be open and transparent like the government said it would be.

What happened when we got to the amendments at committee level turned my faith off with respect to the particular process. We listened to some very good people make some very good presentations. The government then decided to take some members from the committee who I believe were very understanding, knowledgeable and supportive of some of the changes. It replaced them with individuals who had never listened to the presentations and never understood what was going on.

Believe it or not, we had the wonderful opportunity of having the whip of the government party sitting in during the voting on those amendments. I have a lot of respect for the whip, but why was it necessary for him to come in at the 12th hour to make sure government members would toe the party line? Was it necessary?

*Government Orders*

• (1730)

We will support this legislation not because the government got it right but because there is a carrot being dangled to my producers who desperately need some financial recompense. One hundred and seventy-eight million dollars may—and I stress may—go back to them from the revenue cap on the railroads. That is not a given in itself. We do need that \$178 million to go back to producers, plus much more. If we had a truly commercial system, I believe that \$178 million could have been \$350 million.

I will reluctantly support this legislation, but the government did not get it right. We will be back in the House within three years to deal with other issues. We will be back in six months.

**Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the motion for third reading of Bill C-34. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion agreed to on division.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed from June 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-37, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act and the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act, be now read the third time and passed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5.30 p.m., pursuant to order made on Monday, June 12, 2000, the House will proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-37.

Call in the members.

• (1800)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 1365*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Adams	Alarie
Anderson	Assad
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Baker
Bakopanos	Barnes
Beaumier	Bélair
Bélanger	Bellehumeur
Bellemare	Bennett
Bergeron	Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Cadman
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Cardin
Carroll	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chan	Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Cloutier
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Cotler
Crête	Cummins
Dalphond-Guiral	de Savoye
Debien	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dockrill	Dromisky
Drouin	Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Duncan
Earle	Easter
Eggleton	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fournier	Fry
Gagliano	Gagnon
Galloway	Gauthier
Gilmour	Girard-Bujold
Godfrey	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Godin (Châteauguay)	Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)	Gruending
Guarnieri	Guay
Guimond	Harb
Hardy	Hart
Harvard	Hubbard
Ianno	Iftody
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh)
Knutson	Laliberté
Lastewka	Laurin
Lavigne	Lebel
Lee	Leung
Limoges	Lincoln
MacAulay	Mahoney



*Private Members' Business*

(Bill read the third time and passed)

● (1805)

**The Speaker:** It being 6:07 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]

**NATURAL GAS**

The House resumed from May 12 consideration of the motion.

**The Speaker:** Earlier this motion was moved by one hon. member in the name of another hon. member. I think the author of the motion should have a chance to pronounce himself in the House. I think it is only fair that I give the hon. member for Churchill River 10 minutes to speak on his own motion.

**Mr. Rick Laliberte (Churchill River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate today in the third and final hour of debate on Motion No. 298. To clarify the meaning of the motion, I will read it. It says:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should provide initiatives to deliver natural gas to unserved regions and address environmental concerns and high energy costs.

As parliamentarians, it is our duty and our responsibility to act in the best interests of our specific constituencies and for the betterment of Canada. It is our elected duty to represent the best interests of all Canadians. It is our actions in this House and in the everyday legislative process that will affect this and future generations. What we debate and decide impacts on the country as a whole, whether it is a bill, an act or, as in this case with Motion No. 298, a motion to provide guidance to this House in its vision and understanding of Canada's best interests.

● (1810)

The intent of this motion is not to interfere with free market enterprises. The motion's purpose is not, and I repeat not, for the federal government to build pipelines to every corner of this vast and great country. The purpose of this motion is to provide recognition of the economic disparity that some regions face without access to clean and efficient energy sources.

Malhi  
Manley  
Mark  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
Matthews  
McDonough  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
McTeague  
Ménard  
Mifflin  
Minna  
Murray  
Nault  
O'Brien (Labrador)  
O'Reilly  
Paradis  
Patry  
Perron  
Pettigrew  
Picard (Drummond)  
Pratt  
Proud  
Provenzano  
Reed  
Riis  
Robinson  
Rock  
Sauvageau  
Sekora  
Sgro  
Speller  
St-Hilaire  
Steckle  
Stewart (Northumberland)  
Telegdi  
Torsney  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)  
Ur  
Venne  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Wilfert

Maloney  
Marceau  
Marleau  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
McCormick  
McGuire  
McLellan (Edmonton West)  
McWhinney  
Mercier  
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Nystrom  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Pagtakhan  
Parrish  
Peric  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Proctor  
Proulx  
Redman  
Richardson  
Robillard  
Rocheleau  
Saada  
Scott (Fredericton)  
Serre  
Shepherd  
St. Denis  
St-Julien  
Stewart (Brant)  
Szabo  
Thibeault  
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)  
Turp  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Whelan  
Wood—197

**NAYS**

## Members

Ablonczy  
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)  
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)  
Brien  
Casson  
Doyle  
Epp  
Goldring  
Grose  
Herron  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Johnston  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Lowther  
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Muisé  
Plamondon  
Ritz  
Stinson  
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)  
Vautour

Anders  
Benoit  
Borotsik  
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)  
Brison  
Chatters  
Elley  
Forseth  
Grey (Edmonton North)  
Hearn  
Hill (MacLeod)  
Jaffer  
Keddy (South Shore)  
Konrad  
Lunn  
Meredith  
Morrison  
Penson  
Ramsay  
Schmidt  
Strahl  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Wayne—46

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Anderson  
Hoepfner  
Normand

Goodale  
Lefebvre  
Nunziata

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion agreed to.

*Private Members' Business*

While citizens in most cities can enjoy the benefits of natural gas energy, there are entire regions of this country that do not. There are entire unserved regions that are being limited in their opportunities for sustainable development. There are regions in this country that are not only enjoying access to clean fuels but are reaping billions of dollars of revenues, royalties and profits.

At a time when the Prime Minister states to the country that one of our core values is the principle of sharing our wealth and opportunities, neglect and short-sightedness are hampering our efforts as parliamentarians to utilize this 36th session of parliament to improve the lives of Canadians.

We are not here to ensure the multinational corporations have the first and exclusive access to the very raw resources that are shared and owned by all Canadians. We are not here as parliamentarians to ensure that disparity between regions continues. We are not here as parliamentarians to ensure that our natural resources are plundered by outside nations and our citizens forced to repurchase our birthrights at inflated rates of foreign currency exchange.

Canadians are sick and tired of watching our natural resources flow south with little in return for ourselves except for federal royalties. Canadians are sick and tired of listening to governments state that there is nothing unfair or obscene with fluctuating energy prices and overflowing corporate coffers. Canadians are sick of dirty air and polluted water.

The motion that we are debating today is about a vision of where we want our country to be in a year, in a decade, several decades, as every tonne of carbon saved and cleaner energy helps in our successful Kyoto protocol challenge.

The current federal policy in relation to natural gas is to assist big pipelines with incentives and write-offs to ship our natural gas, Canada's natural gas south for foreign markets.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** Order, please. I am sorry to have to interrupt the hon. member, but even sitting close to the hon. member who has the floor I can barely hear him. I would therefore request a bit more quiet and co-operation from hon. members.

[*English*]

**Mr. Rick Laliberte:** Madam Speaker, that is part of the free market economy. The NDP are not anti-business or anti-trade. As long as it is fair business on a level playing field that will benefit Canadians, the NDP will support.

Thousands of jobs are tied to the natural gas resource sector. This is good. We believe that thousands of more jobs could be created by increasing access to unserved areas.

The intent of this motion is to contribute to value-added enterprises in the forestry sector, in the agricultural sector and all sectors of industry across this country. As harvesting moves further and further north in mining and forestry, there are opportunities for kilns and processing centres scattered across the Boreal forest. It is wasteful energy to expend energy to have access to raw matériel only. Let us make sure that this energy is used for value-added products.

Increased jobs come with access to natural gas. Following the principles of sustainability, it ensures long term and constant profitability.

The intent of this motion is a better future rather than today's cap and ship policy, a policy that dates to the past century and encouraged by unfettered free trade markets where domestic concerns and issues are secondary to invisible shareholders, the Bay or Wall Streets speculative markets, or the whole term of colonization.

We should avoid speculation, and the facts are too real. Forced to go head to head at outlandish inequities of foreign exchange rates, many opportunities for Canadian enterprises are lost even before they begin.

● (1815)

The motion does not state to turn off the taps or put a definitive domestic cap on natural gas. It asks that we as parliamentarians recognize the disparities and provide initiatives to level the playing field for Canada and its citizens. It is our gas. Why endorse policies to strip our children and future generations from their birthright? Indeed, the future is now.

Forced to go head to head with American rates of consumption, our natural gas rates for heating Canadian homes in the winter are expected to rise by 50% to 100%. Chicago is being placed before Selkirk, Burlington or Wascana. In the north, including in my own riding, the gas flows right under our feet and away to southern regions but not into our homes.

The north is about to enter into unrivalled natural gas exploration and development and exports in the several decades to come. What message will parliament send on our vision of the future?

We understand that the government is now moving forward on energy efficiency initiatives partly because of Canada's international responsibilities with Kyoto. The main reason to go forward into a cleaner century is not the limitations but the basic fact that clean energy and efficiency means profits for our country. Monetary gain and precious savings from cleaner air and reduced costs will be a lot less of a burden on our health care system. Cleaner lungs for our children and the next generation will reduce the impact on our health care system.

On this premise of efficiency the current federal policy, lies. We recognize that efficiency savings over time create benefits for action. Not all communities can proceed on this premise.

An example is the often repeated concern in the Churchill River constituency where excellent community efforts are bringing natural gas across the distances to provide economic opportunity in regions that did not have it before.

I call special attention to the Anglin Lake natural gas committee led by its outstanding member, Alice Tatryn. It has achieved success, but national initiatives would have accelerated this promise years ago.

I call attention to the outstanding efforts of my constituency assistant Judy Bridle. Day in and day out she listens to the concerns of constituents who want natural gas. Residents know and trust her judgment. They know very well that the resources are under their feet but not in their homes. A disheartening fact and reality is that many Canadians who want natural gas extensions are forced to go without access to clean energy because of minor percentage points in access to capital and related endeavours. This portrait is repeated across Canada in unserved areas.

Canadians would like to do their part for energy efficiency in their homes and workplace. In Labrador and New Brunswick, Nunavut or the Yukon these advantages do not exist.

We acknowledge that the Bloc Quebecois and the Progressive Conservatives support this motion. They demonstrate the vision necessary to go beyond the shortsighted profiteering as reflected in the agreements between Quebec and New Brunswick to encourage regional natural gas access for better development opportunities for their citizens and future generations.

It is time that other parliamentarians recognized and contributed their support in a similar manner by voting for this motion.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to speak to the motion. I spoke to the issue earlier in parliament before the member for Churchill River had an opportunity to introduce his motion. It is a well thought out and timely motion as events are unfolding in the history of the country and how we deal with our future energy needs.

So everyone understands what we are debating here, Motion No. 298 put forward by the hon. member for Churchill River reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should provide initiatives to deliver natural gas to unserved regions and address environmental concerns and high energy costs.

The motion speaks to more than just that. Many regions in Canada already have natural gas distribution. In much of Alberta, which was government assisted, there is natural gas distribution, as

well as in much of Ontario and Saskatchewan. There is less in Manitoba; there certainly is some but most of it is close to the pipeline.

• (1820)

The motion speaks to a more comprehensive federal plan to assist that distribution of natural gas throughout the country. On the east coast of Canada at the present time, we are just beginning to understand and enjoy the benefits of natural gas usage. There is a pipeline now from Sable Island, on which I had the good fortune to work as a driller on the offshore from 1980 to 1988 on Sable Island, Newfoundland and the Gulf of Mexico.

That natural gas is being delivered into Goldboro going into the Maritimes & Northeast pipeline, throughout the riding represented by the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, throughout the riding represented by the member for Cumberland—Colchester, through New Brunswick into Maine and down into the north-eastern United States.

It is important to understand that certainly those areas close to the pipeline will be fed automatically. There are many other areas including northern New Brunswick, the Beauséjour—Petitcodiac riding, and the South Shore riding which I represent, that will not benefit immediately from the natural gas in the pipeline, natural gas off our own shores.

We can look at what is going on in this country as far as energy requirements and the major gas and oil players in Canada. The Alliance pipeline, when it is built, will go from northern B.C. and northern Alberta to the Peace River district all the way to Chicago. It will feed the energy needs of the mid-central industrialized United States, but will not necessarily benefit the energy needs of northern Alberta and northern B.C.

We need a more holistic look at this. How do we deliver natural gas to the outlying and more remote areas of Canada? That is what the motion speaks to.

There are trillions and trillions of cubic metres of natural gas in the Canadian Arctic. There is drilling for natural gas in the Canadian Arctic today. There is drilling for natural gas in the Northwest Territories. We hold tremendous potential to fill Canada's energy requirements of Canada and much of the rest of North America, but while we are doing that, and it is certainly profit motivated, let us take a look at meeting our own energy requirements.

Take for example the branch line that will come off the Maritimes & Northeast pipeline. Sempra Gas has already won the bid to supply gas to Nova Scotia. I think it has a pretty solid plan and will be able to deliver on that plan. That branch line will go into the Musquodoboit area, feed into Halifax, Dartmouth, Sackville, the

*Private Members' Business*

Burnside industrial park area. That is the main area it will be supplying.

We need another branch line that does not just go down the Annapolis Valley and feed that area all the way to Yarmouth, but two branch lines, one down the Annapolis Valley and the other one down the South Shore. The last time I spoke to this issue, I talked about the development of that branch line, the possibility of running it down the abandoned railroad lines that are being used for recreational purposes as walking, hiking and biking trails. That is a realistic opportunity for Sempra Gas to develop.

In the South Shore area there is a very real opportunity that we may get gas into Bridgewater. We may be able to run it down the abandoned rail line past East River and feed the hardboard plant in East River. We may get to Michelin Tires. We may get to Bowater Mersey in Liverpool. From there on we are going to have to squeeze government a lot harder in order to get that natural gas into the other areas of the province. There is the little community of New Ross which I come from, and communities like New Germany, Caledonia, Lockeport, Shelburne, Barrington and Gunning Cove.

• (1825 )

Everyone in this room has heard of clear water lobster. I am sure it is no surprise to anyone. Only a handful of people in this room would understand that 60% to 70% of the lobster exported out of southwest Nova Scotia comes from Cape Sable Island. All the lobster is held in holding pens. A lot of it is refrigerated. Natural gas can be used to produce refrigeration.

There are hundreds of fish plants in South Shore and West Nova and the southwestern region of Nova Scotia. Natural gas could be a primary driver of those plants. It could be a primary driver of the refrigeration units that are required to run those operations.

The motion speaks not only to a requirement in rural Nova Scotia and other rural and remote areas in Canada, but to a requirement for cheap energy costs, a requirement to meet our Kyoto obligations, and a requirement to meet our acid rain obligations. If we feed natural gas into the United States, obviously it will have cleaner energy and there would be less acid rain coming up north.

The House has looked at endangered species legislation. I am astounded when I talk to members of parliament that they do not understand the threat to Atlantic salmon stocks. We had 1.2 million Atlantic salmon returning to the rivers in eastern Canada. Today, 80,000 Atlantic salmon return to the rivers in eastern Canada including Nova Scotia.

I live near the Gold River, a small river which runs into Mahone Bay. Twenty years ago 1,000 or 2,000 fish would come up that river but today we would be lucky if there were 70 or 80 and maybe

fewer. Atlantic salmon is an endangered species. We talk about legislation but we are doing nothing to protect it.

The easiest way to bring back our salmon stocks is to get rid of acid rain in the northeastern United States. The easiest way to bring salmon stocks back in Europe, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Greenland is to get rid of acid rain coming out of industrialized Europe. One way is to feed the power generators with natural gas. It is clean, efficient and fairly cheap.

We have seen rising fuel costs straight across North America and not just at the gasoline pumps and not just for furnace oil.

I would like to congratulate the member for Churchill River for introducing the motion. It was timely and it was put forward in good faith. It is incumbent upon parliament to support this as much as we can. There is a real need and it is not just to supply natural gas to remote and rural areas of Canada, but to also meet the energy requirements under our Kyoto obligations and to meet the needs of our children in the future, to keep Atlantic salmon in eastern Canada and other species of fish, plants and wildlife in this country.

I support the motion and I congratulate the member for bringing it forward.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Surrey Central to participate in the debate on Motion No. 298. The motion calls for the government to provide initiatives to deliver natural gas to unserved regions in Canada.

As always in private members' business, it is appropriate to commend the hon. member for raising a matter in the House that otherwise would not be raised. The matter the hon. member for Churchill River has raised shows clearly that his heart is in the right place. The availability of environmentally friendly clean fuel for the remote areas of Canada is important.

As a member from one of the largest metropolitan centres in Canada, one of the fastest growing in population, our hearts go out to the small towns and villages and very remote areas in our country.

• (1830 )

There are many of us who can only imagine what it is like to not enjoy the conveniences and easy access to things that we frankly take for granted in our busy cities. These things include many types of infrastructure, such as roads, water, sewers, electricity, telephone and other things that become very precious when we talk about Canada's communities bordering on our hinterland. The member can be assured that the people of Surrey Central respect and acknowledge what this motion is trying to address.

We take for granted the natural gas that heats our homes and cooks our meals. It is not our fault. In our daily lives, with all of the

*Private Members' Business*

hustle and bustle, we consider certain things as given, but Canada's northern climate creates unique heating needs, not only in homes but also in schools and workplaces.

As parliamentarians we would like to help provide areas unserved by natural gas with initiatives to reduce heavy oil and diesel dependency. Where natural gas is available, a variety of energy efficiency opportunities are possible. Coal generation and mixed fuel power production are two examples.

Energy efficiency in Canada will be a contributing factor in our ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Natural gas is the cleanest burning and most acceptable carbon energy source. Canadian natural gas is distributed to more than four million customers in six provinces.

Natural gas provides 26% of Canada's energy needs, and this percentage is increasing each year. In addition, Canada's natural gas exports are experiencing exponential growth. Canada has plenty of natural gas. It is an economical source of energy and it is clean, but it is under provincial jurisdiction. The provision of natural gas is a matter for the provinces to deal with.

We have to be sure that justification exists for bringing in natural gas over a significant geographical hurdle. We need to ensure that there is considerable demand for the commodity. To fulfil what the motion is asking may require that a remote community have a special need, or at least more of a need than normal business activity and activity in the residential sector would ordinarily demand. This may mean that remote communities with a potential major consumer, for example a large business, would be seen to have a greater demand than another community. What is the solution?

There is room for governments to regulate rates so that averaging would make services and commodities more affordable and increase total demand by making them more attractive for more consumers. The provinces and the territories have a very important regulatory role to play in these activities. All of these things are already happening where they are needed, where demand is sufficient and where they are not a burden on the taxpayers. They are market sensitive and regionally sensitive and they properly allocate our energy resources.

The governments of Quebec and New Brunswick recognized the need for regional natural gas distribution. They signed an agreement in February for improved services and allocation.

There is opportunity in northern and other remote areas for natural gas exploration incentives that would place the source close to unserved communities. This would create a whole new affordability index in terms of servicing remote communities. In these situations there is opportunity for provincial and territorial governments to put incentives in place to try to expand the servicing area of natural gas distribution.

• (1835 )

However, this is an entirely different matter from what this private member's motion contemplates. This motion contemplates federal spending when the jurisdiction is almost exclusively provincial or territorial. In other words, the motion contemplates a massive intrusion of the federal government into provincial and territorial affairs.

As I have said, Canada is a major global natural gas producer and a major exporter to the United States. Canadian companies are at the forefront in developing natural gas alternatives to traditional engine fuels. Many people are aware of this, as much attention has been paid to the stock market and publicly traded companies.

The major environmental benefit is that this reduces vehicle pollutants. The economic benefits come from the reduced fuel cost, as well as reduced maintenance costs and increased engine life.

Natural gas is an excellent fuel source and Canada, as we know, is blessed with large reserves. It is important that we properly manage our wealth in this respect. We must do it right in terms of how we develop, distribute, market and creatively manage our legacy.

Earlier in the spring, the foreign affairs committee travelled to Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Armenia. There is a great deal of oil and gas in these parts of the world and there exists a well-knit pipeline in the region. There is a potential for the rest of the world, particularly Canadian companies, to explore those possibilities.

In Canada gas prices increase because we rely on Middle East countries for our supply, among other factors. Whenever the Middle East decides to jack-up its prices, it affects the prices at home. We now see the average Canadian paying more at the gas pumps because the prices are fluctuating significantly. We do not want to be susceptible to the gulf crisis of the early 1990s or other kinds of crises that occur in that region of the world which cause our energy costs to rise.

If the government takes on an initiative to help construct more natural gas pipelines to remote areas in Canada, we would hope that it would work with the provinces, the territories and the private sector. The private sector could take over the pipelines once they were up and running and allow market forces to prevail. That would be sustainable development. That would accomplish the intent of this motion.

Once again, I appreciate the intent of the motion and I appreciate the work done by the hon. member from the NDP on this issue.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** Pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of Motion No. 298 are deemed put, a recorded division deemed demanded and

*Adjournment Debate*

deferred until Thursday, June 15, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Derrek Konrad (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, about a month ago I raised a question in the House of Commons with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development concerning a \$10,000 grant to the Ottawa Tulip Festival. So far I have not had any answers that I like the sound of.

I asked how the general progress and welfare of poverty stricken people were promoted by making a \$10,000 grant to the Ottawa Tulip Festival. The minister replied that every single department, including his, had an education component to make Canadians aware of what aboriginal culture is all about and that is what his department was doing.

• (1840)

First, I doubt that every department of the government is making grants to make Canadian people aware of aboriginal culture. If every department in government is making such grants, then of course that is completely out of line with any common sense.

The \$10,000 grant story did not end there. Then there was a contract given to Poirier Communications for \$3,538.60 to set up a tent and take it down.

We looked into the price of setting up tents and taking them down and we found that people we knew had two tents set up on the same day, a 40 foot by 70 foot and a 20 by 20, for \$3,000. That is a little better price, but it is sort of in the ballpark. We do not know whether this tent was the size of this room or whether it was a pup tent, but it cost over \$3,000 to have it set up and taken down.

All of a sudden the cost jumped to \$13,000. That was in 1998.

The previous year there was no grant that I am aware of, but there was a \$25,000 contract for reservations for a booth at the tulip festival from May 8 to May 18. That is \$2,500 a day. I do not know if that is a reasonable price to make a reservation or not, but the reservation for a booth at the tulip festival is a maximum of \$650. We are wondering what became of the other \$24,350. I wonder if I could get an answer to that.

On top of that, we were wondering, would this not be better spent by Heritage Canada, if it has to be spent at all? Why is the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, whose mandate it is to see to the general progress and welfare of Indians, promoted by the use of this money? Surely Heritage Canada is the agency that should be making these kinds of expenditures.

These are some things for the minister to think about.

I had put another question to the minister concerning the situation on Canada's reserves. According to RCAP, 23% lack water, 65% of on reserve housing falls below standards, and the health of many, many people on reserve is not good. I asked the minister what the people who have to carry water to their rundown houses would think of this grant approval. His answer was that these people are the ones who applied for the grant.

The main question I would like to have answered is: Can the minister table in the House any documentation that will prove to me and to members of the House that it was poor people who live in rundown housing who approved the grant?

**Mr. David Iftody (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member for Prince Albert on behalf of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development concerning the department's \$10,000 grant to the 1998 National Tulip Festival.

Under the theme "A Celebration of Canada's Provinces and Territories", the 1998 National Tulip Festival was intended to mark and commemorate the wide range of cultural diversity in Canada.

Canada's north, especially the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, was a significant highlight of this particular celebration, particularly in the context of the creation of the new territory, which occurred, as members know, on April 1, 1999. Members of the House and most Canadians will recall the large and vast celebrations which occurred at that time in the northern region.

In addition to his responsibility for the department, the minister also has responsibilities in relation to Canada's north. The grant was allocated by the minister under the northern affairs program budget to contribute to and support the activities of the 11 day presentation of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, especially Northwest Territories Day on May 14 and Nunavut Day on May 16.

• (1845)

The festival provided a significant opportunity to raise the awareness of the public and the media of the upcoming creation of this territory, as well to heighten the understanding about the unique and diverse cultures of northerners, especially aboriginal people.

It also served to broaden knowledge about the north, the potential visitors and tourism, in this sense an investment. The funds allocated to this project were entirely consistent with the mandate and authorities of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and supported national objectives for the territories.

[*Translation*]

#### TRANSFER PAYMENTS

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière, BQ):** Madam Speaker, on behalf of my party, I take this opportunity to ask a question concerning transfer payments.

The Minister of Finance has been questioned on this on numerous occasions in this House. He has always come out with a series of figures that are totally unsatisfactory to my party and to the Government of Quebec, and in particular to Pauline Marois, the Minister of Health.

When I asked my question of the Minister of Finance, I quoted an expert who had worked along with Lester B. Pearson in his day. According to this expert, the federal government's behaviour, and that of the Minister of Finance in particular, made it extremely difficult to understand the logic used in determining transfer payments.

Again today, I was amazed to hear the Minister of Health's announcement, made in Ontario with great fanfare, of initiatives aimed at rural Canadians. That means another \$80 million that will be taken away, over the heads of existing structures, such as the Government of Quebec, its department of health, and all the health infrastructure in place in Quebec.

It would be much more simple to have the Minister of Finance tell us why he is refusing to reinstate the transfer payments at 1994 levels. This situation is causing major headaches to provincial health ministers. For example, in the case of Quebec, it involves a shortfall of \$1.5 billion.

If this government really wants to show it still has a social conscience and is concerned about health care, it will release the funds needed to reinstate the transfer payments.

Once again, I insist. Perhaps with all the rumours going around at the moment, with the health summit approaching in September, we can expect the government to be more open.

If, however, we go with the current reaction of the Prime Minister on parental leave, I have my doubts about the Minister of Finance's willingness to reinstate transfer payments.

Will transfer payments be reinstated soon? There is an urgent need for them everywhere, especially in Quebec. This money does not belong to the federal government. It belongs to taxpayers who paid it. Taxes are higher than usual. The middle class is hit hard.

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Why is the government refusing to reinstate transfer payments at their 1994 levels? Could the Minister of Finance, in accordance with the party line, take the word of the many experts who have criticized his action since he became Minister of Finance, especially his calculations? Already, major budget surpluses have been announced. With the minister there are often discrepancies between the forecasts and reality of between 50% and 60%.

When will transfer payments be reinstated? What new policies could the government announce to make things just a little fairer for Quebecers?

[*English*]

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, health care is a priority of the government. The federal government has restored social transfers to 1994-95 levels.

• (1850)

Total CHST, that is cash and tax points, will reach an all time high of close to \$31 billion in the year 2000-01, and it will continue to grow. This is up \$900 million from the previous peak in 1995-96 and up \$1.8 billion since the government took office in 1993-94.

Canada's strong economy has also significantly increased the value of other major transfers to the provinces. Equalization payments to less prosperous provinces are estimated at \$9.5 billion this year. Total transfers will reach an estimated \$40.6 billion this year and will continue to grow over the next four years. This increase in total transfers means that provincial governments can strengthen social programs that are important to Canadians, programs such as health care.

What does all this mean for Quebec? In 2000-01 transfers to Quebec will exceed \$11.5 billion. They will account for about 25% of Quebec's estimated revenues. They are expected to total about \$1,566 per person, which is about 18% above the national average. Over the next five years Quebec will receive about \$58.9 billion in federal transfers.

#### AGRICULTURE

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, on March 23 I raised the matter of the new farm safety net agreement announced earlier this year. My riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, the true heart of agriculture in Ontario with Lambton county alone producing more than the entire province of New Brunswick, the safety net agreement came as welcome news to those confronting historically low commodity prices and mother nature.

After meeting with the local federations of agriculture in Lambton, Kent and Middlesex, and hearing from many farmers, whether

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it was in a grocery store on a Saturday morning or calls to my three constituency offices, they were unanimous on one point. Farmers in my riding, indeed across the country, were looking for a solid, national, effective and equitable long term safety net program.

Whether it was the corn, wheat or soybean growers, or the cattle, hog or lamb producers, they told me that fairness must be the end result. No one province or no one region of the country should be treated differently than any other with regard to the farm programs. I heard that loud and clear from my constituents in the farm belt.

I am therefore pleased that our agriculture minister, with his provincial counterparts, established the new three year agreement that will be proportionately based on the size of the industry in each province. That is eminently fair and supportable by all concerned. Farmers need useful, long term safety nets.

The \$3.3 billion agreement reached in March is a fine example of federal and provincial co-operation and is a step in the right direction, but we must keep up the fight on behalf of farmers in Ontario and across the country who are hit with the double effect of chronically low commodity prices and huge U.S. subsidies.

The announcement builds on the work of the standing committee on agriculture. We released our report in February entitled "Making the Farm Income Safety Net Stronger and More Responsive to the Farmers' Needs". We heard from farmers and their organizations in every province. The input was from those most affected and the most knowledgeable about exactly what is happening on the farm today.

After two years of intense negotiations our federal minister of agriculture has shown great leadership by compelling all ministers to pull together and overcome the challenges of Canadian agriculture and the challenges of the federal-provincial discussions.

Reaching consensus with the provinces that represent such a diverse group of farmers is no easy task at any time. I am pleased that the agreement is designed to prove the maximum degree of farm income stabilization possible. By working together, the provinces, the federal government, members of parliament, farmers and their organizations can shape a truly national vision for agriculture in the 21st century.

• (1855)

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex who, if nothing else, is a persistent supporter of agriculture in this country, especially agriculture in her riding. It gives me great pleasure to expand on my answer of March 23 to the question she posed on that date.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food has worked very hard with his provincial counterparts and the industry. He has an-

nounced a tentative agreement with all 10 provinces on a long term safety net plan. This will provide producers across Canada with the stability they need to thrive. The work before all governments now is to iron out the details of the agreement including the details of a disaster program.

The Government of Canada is pleased that an agreement has been achieved that provides for a three year farm income framework. We are confident that the plan will be ratified by each of the provinces as soon as possible. They have each committed to seek the authorities they need from their respective cabinets and provincial legislatures.

The tentative agreement provides annual federal funding of \$665 million for basic safety net programs and access to \$435 million in income disaster assistance in each of the next three years. When the agreement is finalized the federal commitment to safety net funding will be more than \$3.3 billion for the next three years.

[*Translation*]

## HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the adjournment debate on this next to last day of the session, which was marked by the scandal at Human Resources Development Canada.

As we know, the federal government lost control over \$1 billion in grants. We found very serious problems, administrative management flaws and a total lack of control by the ministers responsible, both the former one, now the Minister for International Trade, and the current Minister of Human Resources Development.

Worse, the government shamelessly used public funds for partisan purposes during the last election campaign. As we know, the RCMP is currently conducting 12 investigations.

Worse yet is the fact that the effectiveness of the job creation program was questioned. Today, newspaper headlines are to the effect that the Liberals are considering eliminating these programs. All this because of the mismanagement of public funds.

We must make a clear distinction between the relevancy of the job creation programs and the way they are managed. But this government will certainly be held responsible.

What sort of solution did the government propose? With respect to the issue of administrative management: dismantling the department. I would be in favour of that, and in fact I was the one who suggested it to the committee. But there has been no proposal from the Prime Minister or from the government for a department that is truly accountable.

Why was the present minister not asked to resign so that another minister could be appointed to oversee the dismantling of the



department? This minister's mandate could be for a specific period of time. At the end of the road, there would be a new and clear situation. The problem would not be carried over to future new departments.

As for the use of money for partisan purposes, that is very serious on the eve of a federal election. We have the same situation we had four years ago. If it wants to, the government will be able to use public money to try to win the election.

We will see the same scenario all over again. Money became available, particularly in the ridings of Bloc Quebecois members who were here in the 1997 election: 63% of the money spent under the transitional job fund over three years was spent during the election campaign, which is utterly shocking. The government has put no measures in place to correct this situation.

Why is it that the government does not have the political will to do something about this? Are there secret groups behind this? Is it because this was how the election was won in Saint-Maurice that the government does not want to sort this out for the future? Why did the government refuse to conduct an independent, public inquiry, as the opposition parties unanimously called for it to do?

[*English*]

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, grants and contributions is an important part of Canadian social programs and the government takes their administration very seriously.

• (1900 )

First, I want to clear the air that we did not lose \$1 billion. We did not lose control of \$1 billion. An internal audit identified administrative problems and that is why HRDC has taken steps outlined in an action plan to correct the problems.

As the hon. member knows perfectly well, this issue has been examined in great detail over the past months and continues to be looked at in great detail.

The Standing Committee on Human Resources Development, on which that member sits, tabled its final report on June 1. If one reads the report it is clear that it fully addresses the fundamental issues at hand, namely, the need to restore public confidence and the need to improve the management and administration of those programs.

The government is committed to reviewing the committee's recommendations in detail and to respond fully, as it does with any other committee report.

The auditor general, an independent officer of this House, is already auditing HRDC's grants and contributions and will report in the fall.

### *Adjournment Debate*

The Minister of Human Resources Development has received the best outside advice possible to assist her in correcting the situation, from private sector experts, from the auditor general himself and from the treasury board. Progress on correcting the situation will be reported on publicly.

We believe these steps will ensure that we correct the situation in an open manner so that Canadians can be assured that their tax dollars are properly accounted for.

[*Translation*]

### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on this next to last day of sitting, I welcome the opportunity to go back to a question I asked in this House back in April. I said:

Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, 300 people gathered on the Acadian peninsula to ask the federal and provincial governments to assume their responsibility in the matter of the black hole created by the changes to unemployment insurance in 1996 by this government.

This black hole, or gapper as it is called, is the time between the end of the EI benefit period in January and May, when fishing resumes, when forestry workers can start working again and when construction employees can find work.

In my question, I also said this:

Yesterday, the Premier of New Brunswick told a group of 200 people that New Brunswick was not responsible for the black hole. What is the Minister of Human Resources Development going to do to resolve the problem of the black hole once and for all?

The minister's reply was:

Mr. Speaker, we are very sensitive to the plight of seasonal workers.

How can the Liberals be sensitive to the plight of seasonal workers, when they are the ones who, in 1996, put them in that black hole? It is the federal Liberal government which put workers and seasonal workers in a black hole, and the minister says:

Mr. Speaker, we are very sensitive to the plight of seasonal workers.

Yet it was the Liberals who put seasonal workers in the black hole.

This is disgusting. That is the word I will use. I had a private member's motion, which was introduced in the House of Commons and passed by 100% of those present. The Liberals voted in favour of my motion, indicating that they were going to review unemployment insurance. But they have not yet had the gumption to do so.

In March, at the Liberal Convention that was held here in Ottawa, the Prime Minister said "We lost the Atlantic provinces because of the changes to employment insurance. The law has to be changed if we are to win their support back".

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I can say to the Liberals across the way, however, that the people of the Atlantic provinces cannot be bought. The Liberals' changes to employment insurance are not going to buy them votes.

What they need to do, in all honesty, is to make changes to employment insurance. They are supposedly not happy with the changes that have been made, and upset about the situation of the seasonal workers. I would therefore ask them to do the honourable thing, and make real changes in employment insurance for the seasonal workers, whether in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Northern Ontario—in Timmins, Kapuskasing or Hearst—or in Windsor, in Edmonton, Alberta, or anywhere else.

• (1905)

As the chief government whip has told us, Cornwall got \$500,000 from the transitional jobs fund in order for Wal-Mart to create jobs and so on. I think that he believes in the cause. Yet we know that even the Liberal Party whip had voted in favour of changes to employment insurance. All the Liberals did.

Now, before the House adjourns, I would like to see the parliamentary secretary rise in this House and tell us “Yes, the Liberals are going to make changes to employment insurance, not to buy votes, but because the situation we have put seasonal workers in back in 1996 saddens us and we want to remedy the situation, and because it is unacceptable, from the humane point of view”.

[English]

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government is very sensitive to the plight of seasonal workers. That is exactly why we modernized the EI system so that it can help get people back to work as quickly as possible. We also negotiated labour market agreements with the provinces to ensure that our job programs better meet the local needs.

This year's monitoring and assessment report of those changes shows that frequent claimants, such as seasonal workers, benefit from the new EI system. These claimants now have an average entitlement period of 32.8 weeks, which is three weeks longer than it was before the changes. Frequent claimants also continue to receive 42.9% of all benefits paid. Their share of benefits paid has actually increased.

It is important to remember that EI benefits are just one solution available for seasonal workers. Our priority is to work with our partners to improve job opportunities and economic development for individuals and communities that rely on seasonal work. It is the end result that really counts.

Since 1993, two million more Canadians are working and the unemployment rate has dropped to 6.6%, the lowest in 24 years.

Even in New Brunswick the unemployment rate has dropped nearly three percentage points since October 1993 and 32,000 more people are working today in that member's province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Just before we go on to the next bit of business, I understand my little grandchildren are watching. I want to say hello to Danielle and Colton.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Pursuant to order made earlier today, the motion to adjourn the House is deemed withdrawn.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Hon. David Anderson (for the Minister of Justice, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-18, an act to amend the Criminal Code (impaired driving causing death and other matters), be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. John Maloney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise this evening to speak to this legislation.

With Bill C-82 of the previous session and Bill C-18 of this session, the government will have implemented every recommendation for a specific criminal code change that the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights made in its report toward eliminating impaired driving.

It was a distinct pleasure to observe the non-partisan approach taken by all parties during the committee's review of the impaired driving provisions. I believe the collegial atmosphere in committee was an extension of the unanimous support given by the House to the motion of the official opposition in October 1998 which initiated the committee's review.

I am certain that all members agree that impaired driving is a totally unnecessary behaviour. The consequences of impaired driving are tragic precisely because, in hindsight, other actions so shocking in their simplicity could have avoided the heart-rending results.

While we can easily agree on the pernicious problem, we are not always agreed on the solutions. I accept that we will not always fully agree on the appropriate solutions. Most importantly, I would not want to diminish our unity concerning the unacceptability of driving while impaired because that bedrock message needs to go

out from this House. That message is best supported when we show respect for views on impaired driving solutions that differ from our own but which are just as sincerely held. I say this because there are some differing opinions on one particular clause in Bill C-18.

• (1910)

The Bloc Québécois is concerned that raising the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death from 14 years imprisonment to life imprisonment, as proposed in Bill C-18, is too harsh. I respect the Bloc's view. However, I believe that this amendment would enhance deterrence and denunciation of impaired driving causing death. The amendment would harmonize the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death with the maximum penalty for manslaughter and for criminal negligence causing death.

The proposed amendment in Bill C-18 addresses only the maximum penalty that may be imposed. I again remind all members that a maximum penalty is reserved for the worst offender and the worst offence circumstances.

Governments, private and public organizations, families and individuals play key roles in the struggle against impaired driving. I want to acknowledge the successes that such combined efforts have achieved. I am happy to note that there has been significant improvement over the past dozen years.

Fatally injured drivers whose blood alcohol concentration was over the criminal law limit comprised 43% of all fatally injured drivers in 1987. By 1997 this dropped to 32%. This occurred at the same time that the number of road deaths from all causes was decreasing. Therefore, the lowered statistic of fatally injured drivers who were over the legal limit, as a percentage of all fatally injured drivers, is very significant.

Although we have seen progress in reducing alcohol involved road fatalities, we should not forget that impaired driving behaviour remains a very great challenge. A Traffic Injury Research Foundation survey published in 1999 suggested that in Canada there are some 12.5 million impaired driving trips taken each year. Some 2.6% of drivers account for 84% of impaired driving trips. In British Columbia in 1998 more than 80% of alcohol involved road fatalities were persons in or on the alcohol involved driver's vehicle, including the alcohol involved driver. In 1997 it is estimated that there were 1,350 alcohol involved impaired driving deaths nationally.

Impaired driving has shown itself to be a persistent problem. Parliament first introduced a driving while intoxicated offence in 1921. In 1925 it introduced the first intoxicated driving offence related to a drug. Prior to 1969 there were several significant changes to the impaired driving provisions, including the creation of an offence for driving while impaired by alcohol or a drug. In 1969 the offence of driving with a blood alcohol concentration exceeding 80 milligrams per cent was added.

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There were significant changes in 1985 that created the offences of impaired driving causing bodily harm or death. Since 1985 parliament amended the impaired driving provisions on at least a half dozen occasions. These changes address interpretations in the case law and drafting difficulties. The need for Bill C-82 and Bill C-18 remind us just how persistent a problem impaired driving is.

We should also bear in mind that every five years we have a new cohort of young people aged 16 to 21 who are entering the driving population. It is estimated that by 2010 the percentage of Canadians aged 16 to 24 will return to levels not seen since the early 1980s. Even if we could eliminate all impaired driving today there would be much work to be done for new drivers of the future. It is important to reach out continually to new drivers.

As we enter into this happy period of graduations and school proms, I urge our students not to drink and drive. Students are loved and cherished by their families and friends and should not, under any circumstances, become tragic statistics. Those who must drink should respect the designated driver tradition. All Canadians will be glad for that, especially the moms and dads.

The criminal law is an important measure amongst a combination of measures that can be brought to bear upon the problem of impaired driving. However, while criminal legislation must do its part, criminal legislation by itself cannot be expected to eliminate impaired driving. The conviction rate for criminal charges of impaired driving, at 77% in 1997, is amongst the highest, if not the highest, for any criminal code offence.

• (1915)

Yet the persons who are apprehended and charged with impaired driving offences represent a small percentage of the actual number of impaired driving trips taken. This is a very alarming and a disturbing thought.

It is the combination of efforts aimed against impaired driving that our hope for further progress is nourished. Bill C-18 is one part of the needed combination of measures.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to lend my support to this very important bill.

I think we can get lost in statistics and they can become very impersonal. However, I will never forget the day that one of my colleagues at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, where I worked, phoned to say that he would not be coming to work that day because his sister had just been killed. It turned out that she had been killed by a drunken driver. I believe she was 18 years old at the time.

When something like that happens, we realize that this is something that is very serious and something that we must take

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great action to stop. As the parliamentary secretary just said, we probably cannot pass laws that will eliminate this totally. What we need is a massive overhaul of public attitude toward this.

It should be an automatic given that if a person is impaired, or anywhere near impaired, that they decline to drive. There is always another way of getting from point A to point B if they are not able to drive.

I remember one day—and this person probably does not remember who did it to him—I was driving behind a driver who literally was bouncing off the curbs where there were three lanes in the road. He was going from one side to another. I was heading out into the country where my family lives, and he was going onto a two lane country road. Fortunately, the very last light before he left the town that I was in was red. I pulled up behind him, threw on my four-way flashers, jumped out of my car, ran up, opened the door and took his keys away. He was very surprised. In a way, I guess, I made a citizen's arrest. Maybe I could get charged for doing something illegal now.

However, I always think that perhaps what I did that day was not only to save him the anguish of knowing that he had injured or killed someone, but that I had also saved the life of some person who could have been his victim. I knew that I had to do that.

As parliamentarians, today we have the opportunity to strengthen the law with respect to impaired driving. This is a bill which I believe is long overdue. It is a very important bill. We must send a crystal clear message to people who contemplate driving when they are impaired that it is something they just do not do because the risks are too high.

I just thought of an example, Mr. Speaker. You just mentioned that your grandchildren were watching on television. The government whip just said that it was his twin grandkids' birthday today. I have four grandchildren. None of us would have a place, say a catwalk in a store, where we would take away some of the railing that prevents kids from falling down and hurting themselves. If that railing was broken, we would block that place off and not allow anyone to go there until the risk was removed.

Here we have an opportunity to remove the risk or at least reduce it, thereby saving lives and saving the anguish of those people who go through life knowing that they have taken someone else's life.

This bill is long overdue. As I have said, I would like to give a little credit to our colleague from Prince George—Bulkley Valley, who has headed up the campaign to improve the law in the area of impaired driving. I would like to give him accolades for having done that.

We have a responsibility to the victims of impaired driving to legislate this very important amendment to the criminal code. This is an amendment that will give judges the means of imposing a life sentence for impaired driving causing death, a very serious crime.

• (1920)

I support this bill and I am fairly certain that all of my colleagues in the Alliance support it as well. We call on all parliamentarians to support the legislation. We urge the government and the Senate to pass it quickly. Let us not have the same thing with this bill as we had with the consecutive sentencing bill.

Because this bill has been such a long time coming and Canadians can wait for it no longer, I would, therefore, like to move:

That the question be now put.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will also speak on Bill C-18, an act to amend the Criminal Code (impaired driving causing death and other matters).

Bill C-18 amends the criminal code by increasing the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death, which is presently of 14 years of imprisonment, to life imprisonment.

This bill will allow a justice to issue a warrant authorizing the taking of a blood sample in order to establish the presence of drugs in the blood of an individual involved in an accident causing bodily harm to himself or to another person or the death of the latter. Formerly, blood analysis was only authorized to determine the presence of alcohol in the blood.

The Bloc Québécois strenuously objects to increasing the maximum penalty for impaired driving from 14 years to life imprisonment. The Bloc Québécois believes that this bill would deny the characteristics of this offense and create a serious imbalance in our criminal justice system.

I will now explain the reasons for our opposition to this bill.

The courts, which are presently the most competent to analyze the characteristics of each offender, have not exhausted the resources of the criminal code, which presently sets at 14 years the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death.

As a matter of fact, so far the heaviest sentence handed down by a court for impaired driving causing death was 10 years of imprisonment. The percentage of individuals sentenced to imprisonment for impaired driving dropped from 22% in 1994-95 to 19% in and 1997-98. Prison sentences given in those cases were mainly less than two years.

Despite the rather serious nature of impaired driving causing death, it is false to claim that we are presently facing a rash of crimes of this type. In 1998, 103 persons were charged with

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impaired driving causing death, the lowest number of charges since 1989.

Canada has become a leader in incarceration. Its rates of incarceration are right behind those of the United States.

- (1925)

Canada imprisons twice as often as most European countries. In this regard, Justices Cory and Iacobucci of the Supreme Court of Canada recently criticized, in *Gladue*, the considerable ease with which the federal legislator has recourse to imprisonment in dealing with delinquency problems. Here is what they said:

Canada is a world leader in many fields, particularly in the areas of progressive social policy and human rights. Unfortunately, our country is also distinguished as being a world leader in putting people in prison.

Although the United States has by far the highest rate of incarceration among industrialized democracies, at over 600 inmates per 100,000 population, Canada's rate of approximately 130 inmates per 100,000 population places it second or third highest. Moreover, the rate at which Canadian courts have been imprisoning offenders has risen sharply in recent years, although there has been a slight decline of late.

A careful reading of the criminal code reveals the legislator's clear preference for imprisonment, because the sentences indicated for most offences are maximum sentences.

Representatives of the community have noted that imprisonment is not only extremely expensive but does not have the desired dissuasive and rehabilitative effects. The comments made by the Canadian Sentencing Commission are along that line. In a report entitled "Sentencing Reform in Canada: A Canadian Approach", the commission says the following:

Canada does not imprison as high a portion of its population as does the United States. However, we do imprison more people than most other western democracies. The Criminal Code displays an apparent bias toward the use of incarceration, since for most offences the penalty indicated is expressed in terms of a maximum term of imprisonment.

A number of difficulties arise if imprisonment is perceived to be the preferred sanction for most offences. Perhaps most significant is that although we regularly impose this most onerous and expensive sanction, it accomplishes very little apart from separating offenders from society for a period of time.

In the past few decades, many groups and federally appointed committees and commissions given the responsibility of studying various aspects of the criminal justice system have argued that imprisonment should be used only as a last resort and(or) that it should be reserved for those convicted of only the most serious offences.

However, although much has been said, little has been done to move us in this direction.

Given these extremely convincing comments by qualified people, one wonders what the minister hopes to achieve by increasing the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death from 14 years to life imprisonment. We think this govern-

ment is trying to please voters it is afraid to lose to the Canadian Alliance.

In an article published on June 3, 1999 in *La Presse*, editorial writer Pierre Gravel clearly explained what is happening with the Liberals when it comes to criminal issues. Mr. Gravel wrote:

But when the government, as it is currently the case, faces an ultra-conservative and populist opposition such as the Reform Party, which always advocates harsher sentences to ensure law and order everywhere, there is inevitably the risk of having the most radical solutions, which do not always reflect the reality and whose greatest value is to calm down an exasperated population whose desire for retaliation is constantly exacerbated by demagogues.

When, in addition to that, the party in office feels the imperious need to become more popular with a group of citizens who applaud the uncompromising attitude of the opposition, we find ourselves with an unacceptable bill such as the one that triggered the out-and-out and, in this case, fully justified opposition of the Bloc Quebecois.

By introducing Bill C-18, the Minister of Justice is showing her inability to manage complex problems without resorting to dangerously repressive measures. There is no justification for this attitude, because crime has been on the decline in Canada for many years. Furthermore, there are no studies showing the effectiveness of such an approach.

- (1930)

The Bloc Quebecois views impaired driving causing death as a very serious offence. We believe that the gravity of this offence is correctly reflected in the maximum sentence possible, which right now is 14 years in prison.

The Bloc Quebecois feels that prison is the worst tool for raising people's awareness, and that is why we are opposed to Bill C-18, which unjustifiably increases the sentence for impaired driving.

As members know, penitentiary is seen as the ideal school for crime and a person who does not start out with the profile of a hardened criminal could show severe behavioural problems after a prolonged stay behind bars. Prison must be the last solution for dealing with the problem of crime.

With this legislation, a drunk driver, whose negligence is not in any doubt, could be given a heavier sentence than a hired killer who, having deliberately set out to assassinate someone, gets a reduced sentence for being an informer. Should someone who has gone overboard on New Year's Day be treated in the same way as a member of organized crime? Both individuals have admittedly committed very reprehensible deeds. However, their profiles are very different and Bill C-18 does not address this.

If Bill C-18 is passed, the penalty for dangerous driving causing death will not be as heavy as for impaired driving causing death. In the case of dangerous driving causing death, the criminal code provides for 14 years in prison and, since 1995, Canadian courts of

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appeal have handed out jail sentences averaging 19 months for this type of offence.

How can the minister justify a shorter sentence for someone who cold-bloodedly and in full possession of his faculties kills someone while driving recklessly than for someone driving under the influence of alcohol? Logic would call for a life sentence for the offence of dangerous driving causing death.

Let me give more examples of serious crimes committed by people who are fully aware of what they are doing, and who would be less severely punished than drunk drivers if Bill C-18 were passed.

Take murder, for example. Attempted murder would be less severely punished than impaired driving causing death, which, under section 463(a) of the criminal code, carries a sentence of up to 14 years in prison.

My second example is that of an individual who is an accessory after the fact by helping a murderer escape. Our justice system would be more lenient with this individual than with one charged with impaired driving causing death, for which the criminal code provides a maximum sentence of 14 years in prison.

Criminals involved in gang activities and organized crime are subject to a maximum sentence of 14 years in a penal institution. What utter nonsense. An individual who commits aggravated assault, by wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of another person is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years, under section 268 of the criminal code.

For all these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will staunchly oppose Bill C-18. It is jeopardizing our justice system through a more repressive attitude in sentencing. This is both useless and futile, and the Bloc Québécois is against this.

• (1935)

[*English*]

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of my constituents and all those people who are affected by impaired driving. Bill C-18 is an act to amend the criminal code with regard to impaired driving causing death and other matters.

The bill has been long overdue and this weak Liberal government may not have introduced it if it were not up to hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley, the proud point man of the Canadian Alliance.

Immediately after the election in 1997 I was contacted by one of my constituents and friends who told me the story of a couple of young men that had just graduated. They were having fun at a

party. They got together in a pub and may have had a couple of beers. They decided not to drive home but to walk, which was the right thing to do. Their home was about one kilometre away. These youths were walking on the sidewalk on their way home when some drunk driver came from behind and lost control of his car. He ran over one of those kids and killed him on the spot. This incident did not affect only the family but it affected the whole community. It personally touched me.

Bill C-18 was brought to the House in a timely fashion by the justice minister. I congratulate the hon. for Prince George—Bulkley Valley for his efforts. The bill amends the criminal code by increasing the maximum penalty for impaired driving causing death to life imprisonment. It provides for the taking of blood samples for the purpose of testing for the presence of drugs and makes other amendments. I believe my constituents and all other Canadians will feel relieved that the bill has been introduced.

I will close by simply saying that I appreciate the efforts of the hon. member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley. I thank him for his efforts. Because of him we see some improvements. His efforts are paying off. I urge all hon. members to support the bill so that it will become law as soon as possible.

**Ms. Angela Vautour (Beauséjour—Petitcodiac, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that members of all parties have worked together to ensure that this very important bill gets passed before summer. The summer season brings with it travel holidays for a large number of families. It is imperative that we get the bill through the House as soon as possible to keep impaired drivers off busy roads.

I am glad the government and the other opposition parties have finally come around with their support for the bill. It was the PC Party that pushed for the reintroduction of a clause and we were very happy to see the issue come before committee.

I thank MADD Canada for its consistent support and help on this issue. I am glad the government prioritized the legislation and brought it to the justice committee. I thank the all party committee for the enabling legislation to make it through committee without delay or stalling tactics.

From day one the PC Party was the only party that agreed the government's priority at this time should be the protection of human life from needless tragedies and loss of life which we see on Canadian roads every year.

Bill C-18 deals with the life imprisonment provision that was originally part of Bill C-82, an act to amend the criminal code respecting impaired driving which became law in the last parliament. Bill C-18 will allow a judge leeway to invoke a life sentence for impaired driving causing death.

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• (1940)

[*Translation*]

I believe it is important to stop a moment and think about all those who lost their life because someone chose to drink and drive. It is a very serious crime.

Too many young people lose their life, too many parents lose their children, and too many children lose their parents because of alcohol. It is a very serious issue and I am very happy to see that today the House is recognizing the havoc alcohol can wreak on our families.

[*English*]

The PC Party supported Bill C-82 but wanted it to be improved upon from current outdated legislation with tougher sanctions, fines and suspensions. The bill did not give police enough power to protect society from the hard core drinkers who are resistant to change.

Tragically most people have experienced or have known a person whose life has been affected due to the careless actions of a drunk driver. Criminal offences involving drunk drivers have declined 23% between 1994 and 1997, but how many do not get caught?

High school proms and summer vacation time are upon us. MADD statistics state that one in every eight deaths and injuries in road crashes is a teenager. More teenagers die each year as a result of road crashes than any other cause of death. Teen statistics have declined in recent years but recent progress has stalled. In 1997, according to the most recent statistics available, 404 youths aged between age 15 and 19 were killed and another 28,780 were injured in road crashes.

It is also troubling that 40% of the teenage drivers killed had been drinking, three-quarters with alcohol levels in excess of the legal limit of 80 mg per cent and 44% with levels in excess of 150 mg per cent.

Dangerous habits that develop at an early age become the problems of chronic impaired drivers in later life. Groups like MADD are working hard to deal with this problem at an early age, trying to raise the minimum age for drinking, the minimum age for driving, and introducing SmartCard technology to verify the age of an individual trying to buy alcohol. Yet MADD has not been getting enough co-operation from the federal government.

It is hoped that the year long push of the PC Party for Bill C-18 to be passed will benefit the MADD members for all their hard work in stopping impaired driving among all ages of the population.

Continuing with the get tough approach, the Nova Scotia Tory government is considering whether it can charge room and board of \$100 or more per day to incarcerated drunk drivers. This idea is

only in its initial stages with many details which would need to be ironed out. It along with the results of Operation Christmas shows the positive tough steps the Nova Scotia Tory government is taking to solve this problem.

We also have in New Brunswick what we call Operation Red Nose in which volunteers drive people during the Christmas and New Year's holidays. It certainly works. We also need to have our young people involved in it so they learn that it is not right to drink and drive. As parents we have a responsibility to show our children that it is not right and to set the right example. Not only teenagers drink and drive. We all know that a lot of adult parents set the wrong example.

• (1945)

It is time for the federal government to follow the lead of other provinces. The most horrific side of impaired driving is when we see and hear of the fatalities, the innocent victims who are killed as a result of the thoughtless, selfish act of an impaired person who decides to get behind the wheel.

Last summer I had the opportunity to go to a high school in my riding, LJR, to see a play about a car accident which involved alcohol. Everyone was there, including the ambulance, the RCMP and the kids. According to the play, some kids had been killed in the accident. It was interesting to see these high school students acting out a very serious accident involving alcohol. It is very important that events like that take place in high schools so the teenagers see firsthand the impact of drinking and driving, of not wearing seatbelts and so on.

The federal government has an opportunity to send the message that drinking and driving will no longer be tolerated. Bill C-18 is a great step in the right direction, but we must continue. I commend the all-party justice committee that is sending a clear message through Bill C-18 that if a person drinks and drives and kills an innocent victim, that person is no better than someone who walks down the street with a loaded gun, chooses a victim at random and shoots the person dead.

Increasing the time limit for breathalyser and ASD testing to three hours and strictly enforcing the over .08% blood alcohol concentration limit are all effective amendments to help police in performing their duties.

Although I spoke earlier about the need to educate young drivers, education will only prevent future impaired driving fatalities. Currently the biggest problem is not with youth, but with a generation that should know better. This generation has to take a lot of responsibility for what is happening. A lot of us may be showing the wrong example.

The Canadian Automobile Association has said that the message of the danger of drunk driving is getting through to drivers aged 16 to 21, but impaired driving remains a startling problem for the age

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group 35 to 45. Thus, hand in hand with Bill C-18 we need more education. It is very important that our provincial counterparts also realize that there is a role to play in our school system and that they should make the time to speak to our students to explain the dangers.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada has said that over a two year period an impaired driving conviction costs at least \$5,000 in additional premiums to the consumer.

We certainly support this piece of legislation. It is long overdue. We have to send a very strong message that drinking and driving is not right. It kills and it will no longer be tolerated in this country.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very brief question. In the course of her speech the hon. member indicated that hers was the only party that had the lives and the well-being of Canadians at heart. Anybody in the House knows that is inaccurate. I would like to give the member the opportunity to correct the record and to say that she is one of many, in fact probably all MPs, who have that interest.

**Ms. Angela Vautour:** Mr. Speaker, if I made that statement I probably read my notes wrong. I am hoping that the Reform Party also has a conscience and is aware of the problem of drinking and driving. I have no doubt that those members support this legislation. I believe I mentioned in my speech that there was all-party support for the legislation.

• (1950)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Because of the motion made earlier today there will be two parts to this. The first will be the vote on the question that the question do now be put. The second will be on the question itself.

If we are to have a recorded division on the first question, that is, that the question do now be put, we would have two divisions tomorrow. If we pass the first question, that the question do now be put, we would then put the main motion and the opportunity to have a recorded division would still exist.

The question is on the previous question. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** I declare the motion carried on division.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Pursuant to order made earlier today, the division stands deferred until Thursday, June 15, 2000, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

\* \* \*

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE ACT

**Hon. Raymond Chan (for the Minister of National Defence)** moved that Bill S-18, an act to amend the National Defence Act (non-deployment of persons under the age of eighteen years to theatres of hostilities), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to lend my support to this important proposal to amend the National Defence Act. This government is determined to send a strong message of opposition to the use of child soldiers in conflict.

Our concern over the use of young children for purposes of violence, exploitation and warfare stems directly from our commitment to human security. In the Speech from the Throne, the government pledged to give increased prominence to human security in Canadian foreign policy.

This commitment is an important expression of the values held by Canadians. Values that this government has pledged to promote and protect.

We all recognize that the threats to human security are many. We know that all too often, and in too many parts of the world today,



governments ignore basic human rights. In societies wracked by civil conflict there are warring factions all too ready to exploit, intimidate and threaten the most innocent, the most vulnerable. Our television screens are filled with terrible images of people who are so victimized.

• (1955)

No one would argue that the international community has the resources or the ability to bring an end to all of these terrible deeds. But this does not justify inaction or indifference. We must take action where we can.

This government believes that the shameful use of children in conflict is as distasteful a practice as anyone can imagine. We can show leadership on this issue. We must.

I am pleased to inform this House that Canada is showing leadership and action. We will host a conference on child soldiers in Winnipeg this September. It will focus on ways and means to prevent such conflicts and to protect the children caught in the middle of hostilities. It will also examine how to reintegrate the children of war into the post-conflict environment.

While this conference is an important contribution, we in Canada and in the international community nevertheless have our work cut out for us.

The statistics tell a chilling tale. The UN reported in 1996 that during the preceding decade, nearly 2 millions children were killed and more than 4 million were disabled from violent conflict. Another 1 million were orphaned. More than 10 million were left psychologically scarred by the trauma of violence committed against them and their families.

Today, an estimated 300,000 children are serving in regular armies or as guerilla fighters. They are also pressed into service as mine layers, spies, sexual slaves, cooks or porters.

While the problem of child soldiers is a global one, the worst cases are in Africa and Asia. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers estimates that, in Africa alone, 120,000 children under the age of 18 are direct participants in armed conflicts.

These young people are being denied the kind of childhood that we in Canada expect our children to have as a matter of course.

There can be no doubt that this is a problem that demands our attention.

As appalling as the child soldier problem is, I am heartened by the efforts of the international community. The UN has been working diligently to focus attention on the problem.

In 1989, the UN developed a convention on the rights of the child. This convention established the age of 15 as a minimum

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standard for the voluntary and compulsory recruitment of children into military forces and participation in hostilities.

In 1994, the UN Human Rights Commission established a working group to prepare a protocol to the original convention in order to raise this minimum age standard. This effort has met with success, thanks to the efforts of Canada and other like-minded nations.

On May 25 of this year, the UN General Assembly adopted the optional protocol to raise the minimum age to 18 years of age for compulsory recruitment into the armed forces of state parties.

In addition, state parties commit to taking every feasible measure to ensure that any member of their armed forces under 18 years of age does not take part in hostilities.

The protocol also sets standards for 16 and 17 year olds who join voluntarily. This form of recruitment is to take place only with parental consent and reliable proof of age. And each recruit is to be made aware of duties involved in military service.

• (2000)

Finally, the protocol urges all state parties to co-operate in ensuring that the victims of acts contrary to the protocol receive appropriate physical and psychological assistance to deal with their trauma.

Canada has worked hard towards agreement on this protocol and we fully support it. And we have made our support clear by our actions. I am pleased to inform the House that on June 6 Canada became the first country to sign the optional protocol.

Our signature on the protocol will not result in any change to current recruiting practices by the Canadian forces. Canada does not practice conscription or any other form of compulsory service.

However, the Canadian forces do recruit volunteers under the age of 18. I want to assure all hon. members that our practices in this area do not contravene the protocol in any way.

Let me first provide some background on our recruiting activities for those under 18.

Each year, approximately 1,000 16 and 17 year olds join the Canadian forces. The majority of these men and women serve in the Reserve. Of those in the regular force, most are taking their university education at the Royal Military College of Canada.

These young Canadians are given a valuable range of educational experience in both military and non-military subjects. The leadership training they undergo exposes them to concepts of accountability and ethics. Their military training provides them such valuable skills as fire fighting, basic medical training and mechanics.

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These kinds of employment opportunities are important for our youth. In the Speech from the Throne, the government also pledged to provide young Canadians with access to work experience and learning opportunities.

Few people realize that the Canadian forces are, in fact, the largest youth employer in Canada. For example, members of the Canadian forces reserve parade daily on Parliament Hill during the summer as part of the prestigious Ceremonial Guard. And hundreds of 16 and 17 year old reservists—part of a primary reserve of over 20,000—take part in military training from coast to coast.

Recruiting these young Canadians for the regular force and the reserve is vital to ensuring that the Canadian forces can attract top quality high school and university graduates. Their recruitment complies with the provision of the optional protocol. They join voluntarily with the consent of their parents. They are made aware of the responsibilities of military service. And unless they have reached 18 years of age, they are not considered for deployment to hostile theatres of operation.

These are long standing practices for the Canadian forces. They clearly demonstrate Canada's already existing full compliance with the terms of the optional protocol.

The government's proposed amendment to the National Defence Act would strengthen the Canadian forces' policy of not deploying anyone under the age of 18 to a hostile theatre by including it in legislation.

Canada has never been part of the child soldier problem but we believe that it is vital to take a strong stand on this issue.

• (2005)

The government is intent on making it clear to the international community that our refusal to send children into hostile theatres is not merely our belief or our policy, it is against our law.

I urge all members of this House to support this amendment. Such support will send a strong unmistakable signal that Canada and Canadians will never condone the use of child soldiers and the victimization of children in conflict neither morally nor, with this amendment, legally.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Okanagan—Coquihalla to speak to Bill S-18, an act to amend the National Defence Act. Of course this follows the government agenda as we have heard the parliamentary secretary speak about soft power. In this debate I want to make sure that we also do not lose sight of the fact that in order for soft power to work, we have to make sure that we maintain our military and have hard military assets available to use when needed.

Bill S-18 amends the National Defence Act by preventing the Canadian armed forces from deploying a person under the age of 18 to a theatre of hostilities. This is a personal thing for me and maybe for you too, Mr. Speaker. I joined the Canadian armed forces when I was 17 years old. I was an ordinary seaman in the Canadian navy. I think my hon. friend Mr. Speaker was an ordinary seaman as well. I enjoyed that experience in the Canadian armed forces and in particular in the navy.

Usually it takes about a year to train a 17 year old to a combat capable standard. In my case I think it was at least a year. The point I want to make is that my ship was deployed to Vietnam. In 1974 the HMCS *Gatineau* was on its way to oversee the removal of American troops as part of that UN mission. Unfortunately I was in Halifax on marine electrical training and had two weeks left on course so I was not able to go. When I came back to Esquimalt, from where my ship was being deployed, I had to go on another ship that was in refit, the HMCS *Kootenay*. I will never forget it.

It was a very depressing time in my life because in my eyes, at just 18 years of age, I was ready to go. I wanted to serve my country and be part of that. Therefore I have a special interest in this bill.

I want to make the point that the Canadian Alliance does support the spirit of the bill. We support the idea that it is unthinkable, especially now that I am 44, that we would agree to send a 17 year old into hostilities.

The intent of Bill S-18 is to strengthen Canada's position with respect to the optional protocol to the convention on the rights of children on the involvement of children in armed conflict which was finalized by the United Nations working group in January 2000. The optional protocol is intended to address issues of child soldiers, those children in less developed countries who are often sent into battle as soon as they are able to lift a weapon. Although I support the concept and the spirit of the bill, I wonder, and I think Canadians are probably asking themselves, how do we enforce this and make it work?

In 1994 I had the opportunity to travel with the special joint committee to Bosnia and Croatia. That was at the height of the war. The experience there was that entire villages were being attacked by militia groups and ethnic groups. Ethnic cleansing was going on. Oftentimes young men were taken out and they and their families were killed. Or the other circumstances were that the militia would come in, take the young men and tell them they were now in the army. That situation is one of fight or die. I just wonder if the government has really thought this one through.

• (2010)

It is interesting also that the government would introduce this bill in the dying days of this session of parliament. The designation S on the bill denotes that the bill is from the Senate; it is not from

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the House of Commons. The Senate is the place of sober second thought when it comes to looking at legislation. Senators are not really there to write legislation and introduce it for us to debate, but here we are tonight. I simply make the observation that if the government had as its number one priority only to allow people who were 18 years old and over to go into an area of conflict, probably the Minister of National Defence would have introduced the bill.

The parliamentary secretary also mentioned that approximately 1,000 16 and 17 year olds join the Canadian armed forces through the reserve or the regular force. I know he cannot answer a question, but I want him to think about this issue. If we have limited resources in the Canadian armed forces, which everyone knows we do, why would we put our efforts into training 16 and 17 year olds for combat missions?

The parliamentary secretary did point out that they are trained in the medical fields, they are trained as mechanics and they are trained in all kinds of support positions. The fact is those support positions go into combat. Let us look at our history in Croatia and Bosnia. During the battle of the Medak pocket in Croatia, the worst firefight that Canadian soldiers have witnessed since the Korean war, 50% of those people were reservists.

We have limited resources. This bill has been introduced through the back door, through the Senate. The government has a history since 1993 of cutting defence expenditures and reducing the number of personnel. I really wonder, and Canadians do too, if this is really a priority of the federal Liberal government.

It is really motherhood and apple pie, is it not? Would we rather see our 16 and 17 year old in schools or going off to Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo or somewhere else? Of course every member in this House is going to support this initiative. Sure we are.

The hair stands up on the back of my neck when I see a government that has a history since 1993 of not supporting our Canadian armed forces. Now it is supporting a bill to ensure that people cannot get into the armed forces if they have a desire to. Enough said on that issue.

That we are talking about youth and the Canadian armed forces gives me the wonderful opportunity to tell Canadians about one of the most fantastic programs Canada has. It is the cadet program.

The aims of the Canadian cadet program are to develop in youth the attributes of good citizenship and leadership, to promote physical fitness and to stimulate the interest of Canadian youth in the land, sea and air elements of the Canadian armed forces. It is a unique program. No other country in the world has a program like it. It is a partnership between the Department of National Defence and civilian organizations, such as the Air Cadet League of Canada,

the Sea Cadet League of Canada, the Navy League of Canada and the Army League of Canada.

As a matter of fact, for five years I had the distinct privilege of being a commanding officer and I started a cadet program in my hometown of Summerland, British Columbia. That organization was an air cadet corps and had the privilege of being sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Summerland. Currently I am trying to start a sea cadet corps in Penticton, another town in my riding. Another civilian organization, the Army, Navy, Air Force Association of Penticton has said it will financially support the sea cadets in Penticton.

The cadet program is a fabulous way for Canadian youth to get experience about the Canadian armed forces. It is not a way to recruit young people into the armed forces. It is very separate from that. It has a very distinct and different approach to how it attracts young people between the ages of 12 and 19.

• (2015)

These cadets participate in mandatory weekly training. There are 1,140 sea, army and air cadet squadrons for coast to coast to coast. This means that there are over 54,000 cadets in Canada. Each squadron is led by a group of officers who are usually but not always employed in other professions. I was in the advertising profession, but for five years I worked part time as a commanding officer of an air cadet squadron.

Here is another area where I think the government is failing Canadians. This is a fabulous program. The government should be putting more money and resources into cadet training. It should also be looking very closely at the issue of these officers. There are some 4,500 cadet instructors-cadre officers in Canada. In fact the parliamentary secretary can check this, but I am sure it will be found that out of the officer corps in the Canadian armed forces there are more officers in this segment of the armed forces than any other.

It is quite a responsibility to step up to the plate and be a real supporter of youth projects in this way. They are responsible for safety, supervision, administration and the training of cadets.

I wanted to bring this issue forward because there are so very few times that we have an opportunity to talk about the cadet program and that wonderful interaction between the Canadian armed forces and the youth of the country. It is very important.

I mentioned earlier that the Liberal government had failed the Canadian armed forces since it took office in 1993. While Bill S-18 protects our youth by not subjecting them to combat situations, the Liberal government has failed to protect those over 18 in the Canadian armed forces and reserves through its shameful treatment and inadequate funding of the Canadian armed forces.

The defence budget cuts is a prime example. We can look at that over the last seven years. The Liberal government has pursued a

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defence policy that has stripped the Canadian armed forces of much of its combat capability. The Liberal government slashed defence spending 24% to just over \$9 billion, far below that which was recommended by the special joint committee. Less money, less personnel, less equipment, less training, and ultimately less combat capability.

The government side will argue that there was an increase in defence spending in the last budget, but the fact is all that defence increase did was maintain the status quo. The people at national defence headquarters were talking about putting some of our brand new frigates alongside, shutting them down, taking the crew off and sending them home. They were talking about reducing the size of the army and reducing the size of the reserves. All the increase in the last budget did for the Canadian armed forces was to maintain the status quo.

The Canadian armed forces needs an injection of about \$2 billion to meet some of its current objectives. The Conference of Defence Associations said that the Canadian army was only combat capable at the company level, which is about 150 troops. That is very serious.

Another problem we are facing is rust out of our equipment in the Canadian armed forces. Last year the auditor general determined that equipment requirements of the Canadian Armed Forces exceeded the planned budget by \$4.5 billion. We only have to look at the situation with the replacement of the Sea King helicopter.

In fact today in the House a report was tabled by the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. One of the recommendations is that government finalize its procurement strategy and proceed immediately to tender a contract for the replacement of the Sea King helicopter.

I am proud of that report because it was a unanimous report. It was agreed to by all members of the committee on which I sit as vice-chair. It is very important, but let us look at the government's record. Its white paper in 1994 promised and made it policy in 1994 that the Sea King helicopter would be replaced by the year 2000.

• (2020)

From my recollection we are now six months into the year 2000 and to date not even the statement of requirements for the new Sea King helicopter has been issued to the industry that needs to look at it. It must compete for the tender. It probably has 12 to 18 months work just on the contract alone before it gets to actually delivering a Sea King. It will take some three years just to do that.

The government has revised its white paper commitment to the Canadian people. It now says that it will be 2005 before it will be able to meet its commitment to replace the Sea King. All the while young Canadians are flying those machines. It is no joke when we hear the people who train the Sea King helicopter pilots say that the

rule of thumb is only to fly them as high as one wants to fall. That is not funny. That is a desperate situation that has been created by the Liberal government.

By the year 2005 those machines will be over 40 years old. The Sea Kings are just one example. The chief of defence staff issued his annual report. There are three pages of priorities for replacing equipment. It just goes on and on.

I know I only have 40 minutes tonight. I do not want to take up the whole time because other members want to speak to the issue, but it is an important enough issue that we must talk about it.

The Canadian armed forces is also faced with the new changing world of technology and what is called the integrated battlefield as we face the costs related to the revolution of military affairs, the RMA. The Canadian armed forces must do it. Otherwise it will be left behind.

We do not operate as a single force when we go into Kosovo or other theatres of operation. We go in as part of an international group usually through NATO or the UN. We must be interoperable. We must make sure we can talk to the people. We must make sure that we have the best equipment.

This is one of the points we heard reported on in Kosovo with our CF-18 pilots. They did a great job. They did the best job they could with the equipment they had, but let us face it. The onboard computers in our CF-18s have been compared to a Commodore 64 computer. Did any member ever have a Commodore 64? It is old stuff. The CF-18s did not have night vision.

We put our fine pilots in peril each and every time we send them on a mission. Yes, they did a great job, but that is not the point. If we are to send young people out on dangerous missions, we had better give them the best possible equipment we can. We in the House have an obligation to ensure that happens.

Another area is the national missile defence program. The Liberals are waffling on this issue. It is vital for Canada to support the establishment of an effective NMD system for North America.

It is required for three reasons. The first is to maintain the effectiveness of NORAD, one of our very important bilateral defence agreements with our closest ally, the U.S.A. The second is to counter ballistic missile threats from rogue states armed with weapons of mass destruction. The international community has recognized that ballistic missiles are now a threat to North America. The third is to ensure that Canadian companies can benefit from future contracts to develop and improve this system.

Some would argue that the missile defence system will break the 1972 ABM treaty. I would submit that ballistic missiles are as much a threat to Russians as they are to Americans. The Americans have said on several occasions that technology would be shared.

The cold war is over. There is no reason these type of things cannot be shared. It is not star wars. The deployment of such a system would not destabilize a strategic balance between the United States and Russia. The Liberal government is failing to protect Canada's vital interest in ensuring the continued effectiveness of NORAD.

• (2025)

Another reason it is very important is that 90% of all Canadians live within 500 kilometres of the U.S. border. If the United States says that ballistic missiles are a threat to U.S. security, they are also, by extension, a threat to Canadians and Canadian security. We must be a part of that agreement.

I know hon. members across the way are wanting to go home tonight and I know that this is very important meaty stuff. I have but a few more pages to relay to the government before we close off and I know other members want to speak.

Let us talk about the reserves. *In Service of the Nation: Canada's Citizen Soldiers for the 21st Century* is more commonly known as the Fraser report just released last week. Speaker Fraser used to sit in the House of Commons. He is a very well respected person on military and environmental matters and an honorary colonel of one of the units in British Columbia.

Mr. Fraser states that the militia is currently at less than 60% of the strength that was directed by the Liberal government in the 1994 white paper. It is less than 60% of the strength that was promised by the Liberal government to Canadians in its 1994 defence white paper. The Liberals proposed 23,000 by 1999, of which 18,500 were militia. The militia is the army reserves. Now the numbers equal less than 14,500 in the militia, far lower than what was promised by the government.

Of all Canada's allies, excluding Iceland and Luxembourg, Canada has the smallest reserve force. Most of our allies maintain reserve forces several times that of their regular forces. I will give the House some examples. Belgium, with a population of 10 million, has a regular force of 41,000 and a reserve force of 152,000 people. Canada, with a population of 30 million, has a regular force of 58,000 and a reserve force of 32,000. That number includes the supplementary ready reserve list, people long retired from military service who once a year go in for a medical and make sure their uniforms still fit.

That is pretty pathetic, especially when we consider that if Canada were ever forced into a situation where it would have to mobilize its troops and respond to an international crisis with a large number of trained combat capable soldiers, we would not be able to do it. Canada has a four point mobilization plan, but it could not get past point number two in the four point plan. No concrete mobilization plan has been put together by the government.

In conclusion, while Bill S-18 protects our youth by not subjecting them to combat situations, from an international point of view

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it is impossible to enforce. What is truly embarrassing and a real shame is the fact that the Liberal government has failed to protect those over 18 in the Canadian armed forces and reserves through its treatment of inadequate funding of the Canadian armed forces.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, very young Canadians have no place in combat. I am sure every member of the House would agree that one of the greatest tragedies of human history is the death and injury of children due to decisions of adults to go to war. No story, no accounting, no photos, no listing of the savaging of our children by war could ever begin to encompass this tragedy, for children who are killed and injured in war are killed and injured by us as adults and especially as federal legislators.

We are the ones in the country responsible for the actions not only of Canada but to some degree of other countries, for it is our actions and sometimes even more so our lack of action that give silent credence to acts of war and aggression by other countries. Children die as a result.

• (2030)

We need to do more to protect all children in the world. Therefore, we should be doing much more to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF in particular and the UN in general to have greater strength and influence in moving toward an end to both the use of children in war—and surely this is the most despicable form of the term “use”—and, in turn, the impact of war on children.

On behalf of the federal New Democratic Party I stand in support of this bill to prevent any person under 18 years of age from becoming deployed by the Canadian forces to a theatre of hostilities.

Graca Machel was appalled that Canada, of all countries, had not raised the minimum military age to 18. In September 1998, when visiting Canada with her husband, Nelson Mandela, she said “This is one of the things that breaks my heart”.

While passing this bill is important, Canada should do much more. We should play a much stronger role in working within the United Nations to raise to 18 the minimum age of recruitment in the convention on the rights of the child. This age is currently set at the absolutely unacceptable age of 15 years.

Graca Machel, as part of her work on the global partnership for children, stated:

We also know that world-wide, some 300,000 children world-wide are involved in some phase of armed conflict. And that each year between 8,000 and 10,000 children are maimed or killed by anti-personnel mines.

On a technical point with regard to this bill, I would be happier if the bill had said that a person who is under the age of 18 may not be deployed by the Canadian forces to any hostility or to a theatre of

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hostilities. I feel such wording may be more encompassing and inclusive; however, I understand that the wording used in this bill may in the last instance suffice.

This legislation should pass for two reasons: one, to protect our own children and, two, to send a message to the international community. Having said that, I fear that all too often this parliament passes motions and bills about which we can feel proud and good, but the work stops there. In this case, passing this bill is simply not enough. We must do more. For all the children who are suffering and who will suffer in war, we should be doing much more as a country.

Canada has the opportunity to become a leading character on the world stage on this issue. Failure to support this bill would be abominable, but failure to take more action on the world stage would be an atrocity.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight on behalf of the people of Saint John, New Brunswick, and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada to speak in support of Bill S-18, an act to amend the National Defence Act with respect to the non-deployment of persons under the age of 18 years to theatres of hostilities.

A few hours ago it was my pleasure to help present an all-party unanimous report prepared by the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. It is the view of our committee and all of its members that where it concerns the Canadian forces our politics must always be placed on the back burner.

Bill S-18 may not seem like a very controversial piece of legislation, but it is extremely significant to our country, our world and our young people.

I have seen firsthand the battlefields of the last century, where our young Canadian soldiers gave their lives for our country and our freedom. I had the honour of going to Vimy Ridge in France to bring back the remains of the unknown soldier. While I was there we went down into one of the trenches. What did we see but a little YMCA mug, a mug where they had picked up all the little pieces and put them together. Yes, one of our young persons in the first world war, who was a member of the YMCA, went overseas so that we could be here with our freedom today.

Too many of our sons and daughters have been taken from their families by war long before their time. This legislation trumpets the end of that old world when our country needed to send every able-bodied person it could find, irrespective of age, to the front lines of armed conflicts.

• (2035 )

Bill S-18 legislates the current policy and practice of the Department of National Defence, where young people—and 18

year olds are still children—are not asked to offer their young lives to face the dangers and threats we now thankfully see in decline.

The world is still ripe with hostility and anger, but the type of warfare and the types of enemies we now face are different.

Bill S-18 will also put Canada in compliance with the recently negotiated optional protocol to the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. The United Nations convention on the rights of the child was adopted by the United Nations in 1989 and has been ratified by 191 countries. I am proud that the former Conservative government under the Right Hon. Brian Mulroney was an important actor in these negotiations.

I have spoken in this House in the last two nights and I have seen a House of Commons seized with issues of political concern affecting a small percentage of our country's population. I am, therefore, especially proud to stand here tonight to offer my support and the support of the Progressive Conservative Party for Bill S-18, as I know that we are doing a great measure of good for our nation as a whole and for all of our young people.

Members of the House know very well that I had brothers who fought in the second world war. I will never forget the day that my five brothers came home. My mother was standing in the kitchen and I was a tiny little girl of six years old. They said "Mom, we all signed up today". She looked at them, and I can still see her little face when she said "Oh, but not Glenn", and they said "Yes, Mom, Glenn too".

Glenn was my youngest brother. Glenn would have been one of the ones who would have been protected under this act. He was in the armed forces throughout all of the conflict in the second world war, but God was kind to us and brought Glenn back home.

I am so pleased to see Bill S-18 in the House tonight. Bill S-18 will not end war, but it will end war for our young people under the age of 18. It will keep us from placing our youngest into harm's way at a time of crisis when our judgment might not be the very best.

As I said, we may not be doing more here tonight than confirming the existing practice of our armed forces, but we may exit these doors tonight knowing that what we have done is both noble and right for all of our people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. McClelland in the chair)

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. House in committee of the whole on Bill S-18, an act to amend the National Defence Act with respect to the non-deployment of persons under the age of eighteen years to theatres of hostilities.

Shall clause 1 carry?

(Clause 1 agreed to)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Shall the title carry?

(Title agreed to)

• (2040 )

(Bill reported)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Raymond Chan (for the Minister of National Defence)** moved that the bill be concurred in at report stage.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**Hon. Raymond Chan (for the Minister of National Defence)** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this important amendment to the National Defence Act. This amendment will clearly show that the government is concerned about the issue of child soldiers.

The recruitment of children for the purpose of sending them to war is a problem which cannot be ignored. Statistics on that are depressing, and the images regularly shown in the media strikingly remind us that we are facing a serious problem with regard to human security.

In the last throne speech, the government clearly indicated that our foreign policy would put more emphasis on human security. Our desire to play a leadership role in the international campaign against child soldiers is part of a broader program to promote human security.

As I mentioned earlier, our Canadian forces recruit young people of 16 and 17 years of age, but that is done in a way which is fully in

line with the protocol. Some may say that we must put an end to this kind of recruiting practice.

[*English*]

This is not necessary or wise. It is not necessary because, as I stated a moment ago, recruitment of 16 and 17 year olds is fully in line with the new protocol. It would not be wise because of the benefits these young Canadians derive from their attachment to the Canadian forces. They volunteer because they want to serve their country. They are interested in a career in the Canadian forces that will provide them with valuable skills and which in some instances will pay for their post-secondary education.

[*Translation*]

Members of this House can help the cause of child soldiers. They can do it by supporting this amendment to the National Defence Act, which will make the deployment of children to theatres of hostilities illegal.

As I explained, this is not done in Canada. Nevertheless, in entrenching this policy in law, we are sending a clear message to the other members of the international community.

Therefore, I urge all members to help us by giving their full support to this bill.

[*English*]

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the constituents of Surrey Central and on behalf of the Canadian Alliance to participate in the debate on Bill S-18. The bill originated in the Senate and that is why it is numbered S-18. Usually the bills we debate originate in the House of Commons, but the weak, arrogant Liberal government which lacks vision did not have the stamina to introduce the bill in this House. The bill started in the other house which normally gives sober second thought to what we debate here and send there for senators to comment on.

The Liberal government proposes to amend the National Defence Act by adding a section declaring that a person who is under the age of 18 years may not be deployed by the Canadian forces to a theatre of hostilities.

• (2045 )

The Canadian Alliance supports the intent of the bill. All Canadians support protecting our children from harm. We do not like to see children in contact with aggression. We see this all the time in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries.

As my eldest son will be 17 years old this year, I can understand the state of health, the mental maturity and the views of a 17 year old.

As a nation we feel helpless watching the images of sometimes very young children trapped in combat situations. We have

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watched on TV the young children used or abused in civil wars in third world countries, such as in Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda and many other countries.

Some kids who are in the combat role cannot even lift the heavy weapons they are using. A loaded AK-47 is too heavy for some of the children who are shooting and killing people mercilessly. This causes us to want to do something to protect our own children in Canada and send a strong message to the rest of the world, particularly to the countries I mentioned where the children are used and abused in the civil wars.

The sentiment of the bill is understandable. We do not want minors serving in combat. In that sense, the Alliance agrees with the objective of the bill.

The Canadian forces has a policy that precludes members under the age of 18 from participating in hostilities or from being deployed to hostile theatres of operation. Bill S-18 proposes to print this policy in the National Defence Act.

The Canadian Alliance believes that Bill S-18 should be amended to say the following, "A person under the age of 18 years may not be deployed in a combat unit which has been placed on active service and deployed to a theatre of hostilities".

Active service under the National Defence Act means service: (a) by reason of an emergency, for the defence of Canada; or (b) in consequence of any action undertaken by Canada under the United Nations Charter, the North Atlantic Treaty or any other similar instrument for collective defence that may be entered into by Canada.

This ensures that minors will not be deployed in combat but still allows for flexibility in employing soldiers in support of active operations. As my hon. colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla has mentioned, soldiers are employed by support units like engineering, signals or other support activities in defence.

The genesis of Bill S-18 is an optional protocol that has been proposed for adoption at the United Nations. By the end of this year, once this optional protocol is adopted, the United Nations will want member countries to sign on. Clearly, the deployment and recruitment practices and policies of the Canadian armed forces satisfy the provisions of the United Nations optional protocol.

The terms of Bill S-18 are left completely undefined. What constitutes a theatre of hostilities? It is not defined in the bill.

To the Prime Minister, a theatre of hostilities may be a Canadian Alliance townhall meeting.

● (2050)

Are the Liberals going to prohibit the activation of underage reservists within Canada in the event of some internal emergency? Is it necessary to ban persons under the age of 18 from serving in rear area duties in theatres where hostilities may be taking place? Certain terms or definitions in this bill remain undefined.

Yesterday I was debating another bill, Bill C-19. Many terms in that bill, even the procedures and rules of evidence, were not defined, but the government still rushed it through because it did not want to wait. There will probably be an election so it wanted to do something in a rush without properly monitoring and taking care that the bill would serve its intended purpose. It tried to put the horse before the cart.

We see that again here in this one line bill. There are no details and no definitions. If we are going to expand the reserves, we should not place artificial and ill-defined restrictions on the use of personnel in theatres of operation. We should try to convince the government to amend the bill to say that a person under the age of 18 years may not be deployed in a combat unit which has been placed on active service and deployed to a theatre of hostilities. This would ensure that minors would not be deployed in combat, but would still allow for flexibility in employing soldiers in support of active operations.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** The question is on the motion for third reading of Bill S-18. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** It being 8.52 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m., pursuant to order made earlier today.

(The House adjourned at 8.52 p.m.)





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