



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, February 26, 2002**

—  
**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

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

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, February 26, 2002

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*English*]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to three petitions.

\* \* \*

• (1005)

### PETITIONS

JUSTICE

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from constituents of mine concerning convicted child killer, Robert Latimer.

The petitioners make the point that a lenient sentence or executive clemency for Mr. Latimer would imply to all Canadians that killing a vulnerable person is a lesser crime than killing an able-bodied person. They therefore call upon parliament to uphold the Latimer decision of the Supreme Court of Canada.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** Apparently the hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt had risen and I am sorry I missed seeing him. Is he rising on a motion?

**Mr. Jim Pankiw:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to move concurrence in the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The members on this side expected that you might seek concurrence or unanimous consent to return to motions. Is it your feeling that there was an error with the situation?

**The Speaker:** Yes, the Chair heard the hon. member call a point of order when the hon. member for Scarborough Southwest was on his feet presenting a petition. I did not see him rise but I did not look up because I had not been told any motion would be moved. I assumed we would be sailing right through so I moved quite quickly.

Under the circumstances my inclination is to allow the hon. member to move his motion. Because we did not have notice I am proposing to put the motion to the House.

\* \* \*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon—Humboldt, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, presented to the House on Tuesday, February 19, 2002, be concurred in.

The public accounts committee made the report based on consideration of chapter 18 of the December 2000 report of the Auditor General of Canada pertaining to governance of crown corporations. Before I get into the findings of the committee report I will cover some factual pieces of information.

Crown corporations are administered under the Financial Administration Act. A board of directors oversees the management of each crown corporation. The federal government's responsibilities are as follows. First, it is responsible for appointing directors and chief executive officers to the boards of crown corporations including the level and degree of their remuneration.

Second, it is responsible for directives and regulations pertaining to crown corporations.

Third, it is responsible for approval of corporate plans and budgets.

Fourth, it is responsible for conducting special examinations every five years to provide the board of directors with an independent opinion of how well the corporation is being managed.

*Routine Proceedings*

The report of the public accounts committee is based on the findings of the auditor general. First, specific examinations revealed that 66% or two-thirds of crown corporations have serious deficiencies in corporate and strategic planning. The deficiencies are broken into two categories. Some 38% are described as extremely serious and 28% as serious to a lesser degree. Nonetheless, two-thirds of all crown corporations have serious deficiencies in corporate and strategic planning.

Second, the government's process for approving corporate plans is deficient.

Third, performance and accountability are inadequate.

Fourth, the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Department of Finance exhibit a weak understanding of crown corporations and demonstrate limited skill in analyzing and interpreting financial statements.

That is a scathing indictment of the bureaucrats in the finance department. They are the people responsible for drafting the annual budgets of the federal government. It is no wonder that when we look at the most recent federal budget we see no provisions for making payments on our massive \$547 billion national debt over the next three years. It is consistent with the findings of the report. The report says the bureaucrats in the finance department demonstrate limited skill in analyzing and interpreting financial statements. Why would we have bureaucrats in the Department of Finance who are not skilled at interpreting financial statements? It does not make sense. It is a scathing indictment of the competence of the Liberal government.

There are three more findings of special note.

First, audit committees lack financial literacy and accounting experience. This results in incomplete financial oversight. They lack the required capacity, knowledge and experience to effectively carry out their mandates. It begs the question of why. Why do we have incompetent people on the audit committees? How do they get there? Why do we not have competent people in these positions?

Second, members of boards of directors have serious weaknesses and lack key skills and capabilities in finance, administration and management. In my opening remarks I gave general information about crown corporations being managed by boards of directors appointed by the governor in council. The report finds members of the boards have serious weaknesses and lack key skills and capabilities in finance, administration and management. It again begs the question of why. Why do we have incompetent people on the boards of directors? Why were competent people not put there in the first place?

• (1010)

I might add that Canadians expect crown corporations to be managed effectively and efficiently. To find that the members of the boards of directors, who have been appointed by the government, are not qualified, raises some very serious questions. I will get to that in a minute but I want to cover the last and final finding.

The process of appointing crown corporation CEOs lacks transparency and accountability. Members of the boards of directors, CEOs and members of audit committees are being appointed by the

government in a process that the report has found to be lacking in transparency and accountability, and they are not qualified to be there.

What I am getting to is the scandal in the public works department and the fact that the former minister, Alfonso Gagliano, used political interference to land jobs and contracts with crown corporations for friends and supporters of the Liberal Party. That is a violation of the code of ethics, the very code of ethics that the government brought in itself in 1995. It is the same code of ethics that the Prime Minister himself broke when he lobbied the head of the Business Development Bank of Canada to get a loan for his friend.

What we see is pork barrel, patronage politics, using political influence and breaching the code of ethics to get jobs and contracts for Liberal friends and supporters. The government has structured a system of appointing CEOs and members of boards of directors to crown corporations in a manner that lacks transparency and accountability and allows them to appoint Liberal supporters. In the end Canadians pay the price because our crown corporations are not being managed properly.

As the report itself found, the members of the boards of directors lack key skills and capabilities in finance, administration and management. In other words, they are completely unqualified to sit in those positions, yet they have been appointed through a process that lacks transparency and accountability so that the Liberal government can play games of patronage and land contracts and jobs for its friends and supporters. This is not only an obvious breach of the code of ethics but we know that at least two ministers, and this is a matter of public record, the Prime Minister and the former minister of public works, Alfonso Gagliano, openly breached that code of ethics by using improper political interference. This is a matter of ethics and integrity in government. The stench of corrupt activity is overwhelming.

The report by the members of the public accounts committee concluded that the appointment process for members to the board of directors of crown corporations lacked accountability. That was pretty clear in the findings. It stated that CEOs and members of the board of directors of crown corporations should have the required skills and experience to effectively carry out the objectives and mandate of the corporation. Once again it is an obvious statement and makes us wonder why this was never the case in the first place.

The Liberal government has been in power since 1993. Why have corporations not been managed properly from the beginning? Why has there not been an open, transparent manner of appointing CEOs and boards of directors who are competent and capable of fulfilling their mandate?

I think we know the answer to that question. It is the same reason that the Prime Minister lobbied the head of the Business Development Bank of Canada: to get a loan for a friend. It is the same reason that the former public works minister and his staff inappropriately interfered in the management of crown corporations: to land jobs for Liberal friends and supporters.

*Routine Proceedings*

The report contains 10 recommendations but I will only highlight three specific recommendations. First, the selection criteria for members of audit committees must ensure that all members are financially literate and at least one member should possess the required knowledge and experience in financial management and accounting.

I stress the words “all” and “one” because the report itself had those words underlined. It is almost a facetious indictment of the government, in other words insinuating that there is not one member of those boards of directors who is financially literate. Surely the government could ensure that at least somebody on the board would know what he or she was doing instead of just stacking boards of directors of crown corporations with Liberal friends and supporters.

● (1015)

Another recommendation is that government and responsible ministers should take into account the skills of appointees to board chairs and directors of crown corporations.

Once again, stating the obvious, it is a scathing indictment of the Liberals and the degree to which they have been using inappropriate political interference to the detriment of Canadians. No wonder our crown corporations are not running effectively or efficiently when audits are done and we see that the proper processes were not being followed.

The final recommendation I want to highlight is that the process of appointing directors and CEOs to crown corporations must change. Not only must the appointment process of CEOs to the boards of these crown corporations change, but we need to seriously examine the code of ethics and the consequences that stem from inappropriate political interference and patronage and pork barrel politics.

I put forward two motions to the committee responsible for the public works department on two separate occasions in the last month requesting that Jon Grant, the former president of the Canada Lands Company, come before the committee to testify to the degree of political interference, patronage and pork barrel political games played by the former minister, Alfonso Gagliano. The Liberals stacked those committee meetings and refused to allow the committee to even call witnesses to try to understand or reveal the extent of corruption and wrongdoing. It is quite unbelievable.

Just for the record, and as it pertains to the former minister. Mr. Gagliano, and his inappropriate interference in crown corporations, I want to cover a background of deals by that individual, a former Liberal cabinet minister and the cabinet minister for whom the current public works minister has refused to request an RCMP investigation and for whom the Liberal whip has whipped Liberal backbenchers into preventing the committee from investigating.

In 1993, a background check revealed a link to convicted criminal Agostino Cuntrera. He remained a client of Mr. Gagliano's accounting business from the 1970s until 1993.

In 1998, 20% of all the cultural and sporting grant money given out by the federal government found its way into just 2 of the 301 ridings in Canada, the ridings of the Prime Minister and Alfonso Gagliano. Is anyone surprised? In 2001, he was accused of conflict of interest after Communication Canada subcontracted federal

advertising contracts to a Montreal firm employing Alfonso Gagliano's son.

In 2001 it was also revealed that former Italian senator, Maurizio Creuso, who was convicted on corruption charges and has known Mr. Gagliano since 1983, received two lucrative government contracts from Canada Post and CMHC. These are the very crown corporations whose boards of directors are staffed with Liberal funds and supporters. Do members see the corruption? Do members see the extent of patronage and pork barrel politics?

These were complete violations of the code of ethics and fly in the face of everything that is right. It reveals everything that is wrong in the Liberal government and the extent to which it will go to engage in wrongdoing in an effort to shore up the Liberal machine.

In 2002 the former chair of Canada Lands Company alleged that Gagliano and his staff interfered in the day to day management of the crown corporation.

The former minister has quite a record indeed.

I will conclude by saying that, according to the auditor general, the Liberals should end their ability to play pork barrel politics when appointing directors of Canada's crown corporations. The evidence revealing that Liberal cabinet ministers were involved in these scandals has destroyed the notion that crown corporations are independent.

Liberal MPs are using crown corporations as a trough for their supporters and friends. Canadians are fed up with such a lack of ethics in the administration of government departments.

● (1020)

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, having been involved in foreign affairs for about seven years in this House, I was insulted when I heard that a guy without credentials and without having been presented to the Danish government beforehand, would become its new ambassador for Canada. It all seemed pretty shady and underhanded, and certainly against what I would hope my country would do in the area of foreign affairs.

As to the question the member raised, it appears that this could be the Enron of Canada. There are so many shady things happening it would seem to me.

Does the hon. member believe that an investigation of this case is necessary and that it must be done now in order to clean up this patronage corruption, which everyone knows goes on? Would this not be the opportunity for the government to come clean and really explain all this?

● (1025)

**Mr. Jim Pankiw:** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned a couple of things. The first is the fact that Alfonso Gagliano, after leaving behind a track record of very questionable deals, unethical conduct, breaches of the code of ethics and having no apparent credentials to receive an appointment for an ambassadorship, was appointed ambassador to Denmark. One of the first questions that comes to mind is: What did Denmark do to deserve this?

*Routine Proceedings*

It is pretty clear that not only, according to the committee's report and the recommendations of the auditor general, should the process of appointing CEOs and members to the boards of directors of our crown corporations change so that they are not staffed with incompetent Liberal supporters and friends, but that the appointment process for ambassadors should also be looked at very closely.

My hon. colleague asked if I thought it was essential that an investigation be conducted. I believe the answer to that is obvious. Even the Liberal MPs themselves know it. We have tried repeatedly to have the appropriate committee investigate the degree of corruption, scandal, wrongdoing, breach of the code of ethics and political interference in the crown corporations but they have been whipped into voting that down.

Twice in the past couple of weeks in the House during question period I asked the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to either have a committee properly investigate it or to conduct an RCMP investigation and he refused. I might say that is the same minister who, when he was the public works critic in opposition, said that any time there were allegations of wrongdoing by a minister of the crown, the RCMP should investigate. Why this double standard on ethics and integrity? Why is it okay to investigate allegations of wrongdoing when someone is in opposition but when in government one just uses the whip and the Liberal machine to cover it up?

It is clear that this corruption is being covered up. Actually, it is not even covered up. It is out in the open. We know the Prime Minister broke the code of ethics by lobbying the head of the Business Development Bank of Canada for a loan. We know that Alfonso Gagliano, the former minister of public works, and his staff politically interfered in the operations of crown corporations to land lucrative contracts for friends and Liberal supporters. An investigation is essential. It is clearly required. This scandal is growing in proportion by the day.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to what my colleague had to say with great interest.

When the Auditor General of Canada made recommendations, as he did to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, was he not, essentially, expressing concern about a real potential danger, that the appointment of friends of the government could very well reach proportions, maybe not like the Enron affair in the United States, but that could lead to investments? Take the pension fund for government employees, for example, and many other funds managed by the government that are the government responsibility and managed by incompetent Liberal hacks whose only qualification is their party membership card.

In this example, one has to wonder if this could not, at some point, lead to poor investments that could result in not only taxpayers dollars, but also money from the pension plans of those who worked their entire lives for the government, disappearing completely because of poor choices, choices made by people who were incompetent, in the end.

I would like to know if this was included in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts study, and in the recommendations

of the auditor general—the last auditor general—and if it was one of his concerns. If so, what impact might this have on the corporation?

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Pankiw:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question. He raises a very good point.

The concern expressed was that appointees to these boards of directors of crown corporations did not have the skills to be there. I do not know myself what the consequences would be. I do not know whether anyone knows what the total degree of the consequences are or what they would be. The auditor general did allude to it of course, and that is why these recommendations came forth.

One of the member's questions referred to wrongdoing and how we would know the extent of it. We would not. We know that people who are not qualified for these positions are being appointed because they are Liberal supporters. Does it end there?

We know that in Quebec federal assets from land was sold at far below market value. People on the boards of directors made that decision. Were there kickbacks? What was the level of corruption? Did money find its way back into the hands of the Liberal minister himself? We do not know.

I will say this however. When former Italian senator Maurizio Creuso, convicted on corruption charges and a friend of Gagliano since 1993, receives two lucrative government contracts from crown corporations, it definitely raises a question. Were those members of the boards of directors giving payback to the minister for having been appointed. Was the minister doing a favour by giving his friend the contracts? Did he get a kickback? I do not know. How do we know the extent of the corruption?

My hon. colleague made another point regarding the poor choices made by incompetence. Not only were there probably shady deals going on but crown corporations themselves were not being managed properly. That has an underlying effect on Canadians through our tax dollars and we will suffer as a result of that.

● (1030)

**Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, these types of allegations do not help Canada's reputation abroad in terms of the strength of the dollar and our general reputation. I believe it is important to Canadians and to our reputation to clear up these types of allegations and get to the bottom of the matter one way or the other.

Would the hon. member expand a little on what sort of process he feels should take place, in what sort of timeframe, and how we could resolve this quickly and improve Canada's reputation?

**Mr. Jim Pankiw:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first part of the question on process and off the top of my head I do not recall the two countries that were referred to specifically in the report, but two Commonwealth countries have adopted different methods.

*Routine Proceedings*

One of them, I believe it might be Great Britain, has some kind of a commissioner of appointments. When an appointment is required to a board of a crown corporation or an appointment of a CEO, this commissioner is involved. He functions in an open and transparent fashion and reports to parliament, certainly not just to the Prime Minister as is the case of the ethics counsellor in Canada. Our Prime Minister appoints an ethics counsellor who answers only to him. It is like having his own little lapdog who is not accountable to parliament at all.

I might add that with respect to the scandals surrounding all these crown corporations and the department of public works the ethics counsellor is refusing to investigate as well. We have the Prime Minister's personally appointed ethics counsellor refusing to investigate. We have Liberal members stacking the committees refusing to allow the committees to investigate. The minister is refusing to request an RCMP investigation. All the while we know that the Prime Minister and the former minister of public works breached the code of ethics and improperly interfered in the operation of crown corporations

The second part of my hon. friend's question dealt with timelines and process to clean this mess up. I do not know about timelines but I think as soon as possible, today if we could. We should strike a special committee to investigate all of the circumstances of corruption, patronage, political payoffs, scandal, wrongdoing and breaches of the code of ethics. We should get to the bottom of it and let that committee make recommendations on how to proceed from there.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am rather disturbed that the government has moved that we proceed to orders of the day. I was hoping I would not have to discuss this point of order but I will.

My point of order concerns the attempt by the government to bypass the business that is before us at this time. There was a ruling on this very matter in 1987 and it is outlined on page 369 of Marleau and Montpetit. It states:

On April 13, 1987, the government attempted to skip over certain rubrics under Routine Proceedings when the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister moved that the House proceed from "Tabling of Documents" to "Motions" which, if carried, would have had the effect of superseding all intervening rubrics. The Speaker had ruled out of order a similar motion only a few months earlier.

In his ruling, Speaker Fraser expressed concern and in the end he ruled that the motion could stand, but stand for one time only. He said at page 370 of Marleau and Montpetit:

...the House would be served best if the government were allowed to proceed, in this instance only,...

He elaborated further:

...that the decision was circumscribed by events for which the rules of procedure offered no solution and was not to be regarded as a precedent.

That particular issue arose because the government's agenda and the agenda of the House were being seized by various motions and issues that disrupted the proceedings of the House and the House could not do its business.

That cannot be said of what we are debating today. We are debating a report that was tabled by myself in the House last week. It is a serious report on the issue of governance of crown corporations.

The government's agenda is not at risk here. In fact, it could be argued that it does not have an agenda. There are just a few bills on the order paper and a whole year ahead of us. How can a motion regarding the Public Accounts of Canada be considered a disruption as defined by Speaker Fraser in 1987?

I would argue that any other business that attempted to displace the motion of concurrence that is before us would be a disruption. I question the government's use of the motion to go to orders of the day.

It concerns me greatly that parliament's rights would be thwarted by the government. There is an ancient rule in parliament that says before parliament listens to the government, the government will listen to parliament. That rule was instituted about 400 or 500 years ago when the King, the monarch of the day, would go to parliament seeking authority to raise taxes. When he got that he would then dissolve parliament and send the members home. They would ask about the business they wanted to transact. The rule and fundamental principle of parliamentary democracy was instituted that says before parliament listens to the government, the government will listen to parliament.

That has evolved to routine proceedings today and every day. It is important that we deal with all the items of routine proceedings, right from tabling of documents through to questions on the order paper, before we go to government orders.

This is an important point of order that is fundamental to the administration of this place. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the reason you have the title of Speaker is because you speak for this House and therefore it is important that the Speaker stand up for the rights of this House. No one else has that authority but you and the person in your chair.

This is a serious point of order. Parliament has to be heard by the government before parliament listens to the government. That is a fundamental practice. If this House loses that we have nothing left. We are only an instrument of the government.

• (1035)

At page 366 Marleau and Montpetit says:

As the Speaker calls each rubric in Routine Proceedings, Members who wish to bring forward matters rise in their place and are recognized. Usually they will have previously indicated to the Chair or the Table their wish to raise an item. The amount of time required to complete Routine Proceedings varies from day to day depending on the number of items dealt with under each rubric.

All rubrics up to and including "Introduction of Government Bills" must be called each sitting day.

I believe the Speaker did call for petitions before he realized that the member was standing under motions but we did not deal with petitions. Therefore we did not complete the routine proceedings of the day even though the Speaker had called petitions.

It is important, according to Marleau and Montpetit, that each item be called every day. It goes on to say:

*Routine Proceedings*

Thus, at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, "Statements by Members" interrupts Routine Proceedings if the rubric "Introduction of Government Bills" has not yet been completed. The ordinary daily routine of business then continues at 3:00 p.m., immediately after Question Period, until all items under "Introduction of Government Bills" are completed, suspending as much of the hour set aside for Private Members' Business as necessary.

It continues on and I do want to read this into the record because it is important.

Obviously, this does not apply on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, since on those days "Statements by Members" and Question Period take place before Routine Proceedings. If the proceedings are not completed by the ordinary hour of daily adjournment on any sitting day, the House continues to sit until such time as all rubrics under Routine Proceedings up to and including "Introduction of Government Bills" have been called and completed.

Continuing on page 369 of Marleau and Montpetit and this is dealing with Speaker Fraser:

In his ruling, Speaker Fraser expressed concern about the disruption which these procedural tactics—

It is talking about at that particular time the House was in a little bit of an uproar.

—had on Routine Proceedings and the inappropriate use of the rules of procedure as a substitute for debate: "It is a practice which can supersede the presentation of petitions, delay indefinitely the introduction of Bills—those of Private Members as well as those of the Government—and completely block debate on motions for concurrence in committee reports as well as on allocation of time motions."

As the House will see Speaker Fraser said, because of the circumstances of the time, for that time and that time only he would allow the motion to move beyond orders of the day.

However there is no disruption of the House today. The agenda of the government has been continuing. The debate on the concurrence of an important report is not a disruption of the business of the House. If the House wants to talk about the concurrence of a report of its own committee, surely the House has that right. To deny otherwise would be to say this whole place is an absolute farce and a talking shop that means nothing.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you take this issue seriously and recognize the fundamental principle of parliamentary democracy that has been thwarted by the motion from the government side who want to shut down parliament to talk about its business. It does not want to listen to parliament at all. Therefore the motion must be ruled out of order.

• (1040)

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief and will not reiterate the same points raised by my hon. colleague from St. Albert. The issue of a concurrence report being discussed by parliament is something that is very fundamental. The issues that are raised in the report, as alluded to by my friend, are extremely important. They go to the very root of the integrity and the importance of debate. The relevance of parliament itself is at stake when we simply thwart every attempt that is made to have these discussions.

I suggest that in the context of your decision, Mr. Speaker, you do have to weigh the legislative agenda itself that is before the House and the level of disruption that would occur. What we have before us is an attempt by my colleague from Saskatchewan to bring forward an extremely important debate to allow other members to engage in that same discussion, and the parliamentary secretary for the government House leader suggests that we have to cut this off

immediately by some emergency circumstance and resort to orders of the day.

This is not consistent with the aims and goals of parliament whatsoever. It is reminiscent of Mr. Jeffrey Simpson's recent book, *The Friendly Dictatorship*, where we are told that parliament is not to be heard from, that we have a very autocratic system in place which is thwarting the very purpose of parliament.

The Fraser ruling is germane to your decision on this issue. Government must give the opposition and parliament the opportunity to have its say. I would suggest it would be a dangerous precedent if in every case we allow the government to shut down these types of debates.

An important issue is at stake here. It is Shakespearean tragedy if we ignore this. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark, to which my friend alluded. There is no disruption. There is no hue and cry from the members, other than from the government side, and I would suggest it is the palace guard on the government side who is upset by this.

All members would like the opportunity to engage, so I would very much support the words and the actions of my colleague from St. Albert and urge the Chair to allow the debate to continue.

• (1045)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would like to thank the hon. member for St. Albert for a well prepared point of order. I also thank the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough for his intervention.

It is not for the Chair to decide what the practice could be or should be. I can only act according to what the practice has been and continues to be. Certainly at this point the Chair is satisfied that the motion brought forward by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is consistent with those practices.

I might add, if it should be the desire of the House at some point in time to bring the matter to the committee on procedure and House affairs to look at and possibly implement changes to what is the customary practice as of this moment, that is entirely in the hands of the House. However I would remind colleagues and draw their attention to the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* of Montpetit and Marleau on page 460. Under the rubric of motions to proceed to the orders of the day, it states:

The motion "That the House do now proceed to the Orders of the Day" may be moved by any Member prior to the calling of Orders of the Day; however, once the House has reached this point, the motion is redundant. The Chair has ruled that a motion to proceed to the Orders of the Day is in order during Routine Proceedings...

I thank members for their interventions, but I am satisfied that everything at this point in time is in order.

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.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (1130)

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

*(Division No. 233)*

### YEAS

#### Members

Adams	Alcock
Assad	Assadourian
Bagnell	Barnes
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Boudria
Brown	Bryden
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chrétien
Coderre	Collenette
Comuzzi	Copps
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dion	Dromisky
Drouin	Duplain
Easter	Eggleton
Eyking	Farrah
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvey
Hubbard	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keyes	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte
Lastewka	LeBlanc
Lee	Longfield
MacAulay	Macklin
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marcil	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews	McCallum
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	McTeague
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)	Mitchell
Murphy	Myers
Nault	Neville
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Pratt
Price	Redman
Reed (Halton)	Regan
Richardson	Robillard
Rock	Scherrer
Scott	Serré
Sgro	Shepherd
Speller	St-Jacques
St-Julien	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart
Szabo	Thibault (West Nova)
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)	Tirabassi
Tonks	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Volpe
Wappel	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood— 120

### Government Orders

#### NAYS

##### Members

Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bailey	Bellehumeur
Benoit	Bergeron
Bigras	Blaikie
Borotsik	Bourgeois
Breitkreuz	Brien
Brisson	Burton
Cardin	Casey
Casson	Chatters
Clark	Comartin
Crête	Dalphond-Guiral
Desjarlais	Desrochers
Doyle	Duceppe
Epp	Fitzpatrick
Forseth	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gallant	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godin
Guay	Guimond
Hearn	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Jaffer
Johnston	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Laframboise	Lanctôt
Lebel	Loubier
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Marceau
Mark	McDonough
Ménard	Merrifield
Mills (Red Deer)	Moore
Nystrom	Pankiw
Paquette	Penson
Picard (Drummond)	Proctor
Ritz	Roy
Sauvageau	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
St-Hilaire	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Toews	Venne
Wasylcia-Leis	Williams— 72

#### PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Prince Albert missed the boat because he was looking in the corner. I am watching everything.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Clearly and respectfully, that is not a point of order.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1135)

[*English*]

### SPECIES AT RISK ACT

The House resumed from February 25 consideration of Bill C-5, an act respecting the protection of wildlife species at risk in Canada, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 3.

**The Deputy Speaker:** As we begin debate on Group No. 3, I will endeavour where possible to first recognize members who have motions in their name in this grouping.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as I start I want to commend you for your Latin and for your translation. I certainly apologize for any inconvenience that created for you, but I believe that there are biologists, scientists and, more important, Canadians who really want to know what is on the list. If there is one question that we are asked a lot it is: What are these endangered species and how we are going to know when we destroy one or when we have one on our land? In past debate I have used some examples from Saskatchewan but I have not seen them from other provinces. While that might have been a long ordeal, Mr. Speaker, and while the Latin probably was not picked up by a lot of people, certainly the English listing was important to Canadians.

I believe that in Group No. 3 we have further insulted our committee and we have insulted farmers and environmentalists. Each of these groups worked very hard on the bill. Our committee worked together very well to try to make it a better bill. Farmers are concerned because they are worried about their land values. They are worried about whether they will be compensated if they lose some of their quality of life and some of their income. Environmentalists are concerned because they want to know that habitat is being protected. They know that a species will not survive without that habitat being protected. They are concerned that the bill does not do that.

In Group No. 1 we talked about compensation, which the government has not put in the bill. In Group No. 2 we talked about due diligence versus mens rea, in other words, one is guilty until proven innocent, and the terrible toll that might take in terms of court costs and how that might eat up the little money available.

We are now debating Group No. 3 and we can talk about sustainable development and the whole socioeconomic impact of a bill like this, which is what I would like to dwell on, not specifically amendment by amendment, but I would like to talk about a few of these amendments and some of the things that I believe are problems in the bill.

First, there are a number of technical amendments in the group. Many of them do not change the bill very much and it is difficult to say anything about them. The biggest problem when it comes to technical amendments is that the government did not have time to do a technical amendment on compensation. Again it has said it will do that in the regulations so all land users out there should just be patient and trust that the government will in fact will include some form of compensation, but saying "trust us" does not go very far. There are not very many landowners or land users who will accept that. It is too bad that there was not a technical amendment covering compensation rather than the government saying it will just leave that to the regulations.

As well, there is no technical amendment that explains to provinces how the federal government will overrule what the provincial government already is doing. Again, the government is basically saying to the provinces "Trust us. We won't impose our federal jurisdiction on your species at risk legislation that is already there". Again I say that the landowners and the provinces are not very happy with "trust us" when it comes to the technical part of the bill.

Second, co-operation should be there. There is a feeling within government, which we have detected in some government witnesses,

some bureaucrats in Environment Canada, that the government knows best, that it can save species at risk and will do it with tough legislation and tough penalties. The government will charge \$250,000 if people break the law and throw them in jail for five years and give them a criminal record. That hardly conjures up the idea of friendly co-operation among people.

● (1140)

Then we come to the key issue of the amendments, the socioeconomic impact. We heard many witnesses talk about how government should be concerned about the socioeconomic impact of preserving a species at risk. We listened to members of COSEWIC who said they will establish the scientific list. I believe they have been doing it for some 20 plus years and have probably been doing a pretty good job of establishing the list. Mr. Speaker will appreciate the list because he got to read it both in English and in Latin so he really knows the job COSEWIC has done.

However, the most troubling part of this whole thing is the issue of the group called SARWG, the species at risk working group, which is made up of groups from environment and industry. Let me mention a few of the names: the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, the Sierra Club, the Canadian Nature Federation and the Mining Association of Canada. Let me quote what this group, these environment and industry people, said. I am speaking to Motion No. 15. They stated:

The purposes of this Act shall be pursued to the extent possible while taking into account social and economic interests of Canadians.

That is the key issue. A group of environmentalists and people from industry say that we must be concerned about the socioeconomic impacts of preserving a species. If this is not done adequately the bill will be a complete failure. That is why we have made some amendments, specifically Motion No. 15. We cannot just simply say we will go by the scientific listing. We in fact must consider those socioeconomic impacts.

The second point is this: How much will the bill cost? Environment Canada basically has no idea of what it might cost. When it was questioned we did not get a figure. The environment minister says he has \$45 million. The problem with saying \$45 million, which seems like a lot of money, particularly to the farmer or rancher out there, is that it could be used up in a heartbeat just on litigation costs around the bill. The money, according to Environment Canada and the environment minister, should be used for conservation projects and for all kinds of stewardship programs, but how many stewardship programs will there be when the government is faced with all the litigation charges resulting from the bill?

*Government Orders*

I will very quickly mention public consultation. What kind of public consultation will there be? We talk about having round tables. What will these round tables consist of? What I am afraid of is that they will consist of a bunch of political appointees, friends of the party, who will get together to talk about how well the bill is or is not working. The round tables should consist of all of the interest groups: environmentalists, industry groups, farmers and ranchers. All the groups must be consulted. We must get the message out that it is not just due diligence and heavy penalties that make up the bill.

We have put forward Motion No. 4 in which we say landowners must be notified that they have a species at risk on their land. The government does not want to do that until it has its final plan in place and we just think that is wrong.

• (1145)

The whole bill is based on government saying “trust us” and we are saying that is not good enough. There is no compensation in the bill; it says trust us. People are guilty until proven innocent. It is a top down federal control over the provinces through the safety nets. There is total ministerial discretion. There is no communication plan. There is no habitat protection plan. How will this bill ever work? For all these reasons and many more we believe that the bill will in fact endanger the endangered species.

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have heard much in the last two weeks about the importance of basing the decisions about establishing lists of species at risk to which the act will apply on the best available science. We have heard from some who would want us to believe that the government will refuse to act on the advice of the recommendations of COSEWIC. I think it is important to look at what is actually being done rather than to speculate endlessly about what might happen.

The protection of endangered or threatened species is a responsibility the government takes seriously. We agree that COSEWIC's species assessments must be addressed in a timely manner and the government is taking steps to do just that. The government supports the amendment made by the standing committee to add to the bill a new schedule 1 that contains 198 species at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I must compliment you on providing us a reading of that list yesterday, and not only in both official languages but in Latin. Indeed, the motion to add 198 species to the legal list was proposed by our Minister of Environment during the standing committee review of the bill. This means that the statutory obligations would immediately apply to these species as soon as the act is proclaimed.

However, the government is going even further. COSEWIC has continued its work while Bill C-5 has been making its way through the legislative process. Assessments and reassessments of species with the new and improved criteria have been done and have yielded some very important results.

I wish to speak in favour of the government's motions to add another 35 species to that initial list. This is the list to which the statutory obligations automatically apply when the act is proclaimed. This brings the initial list to 233 species. Every species that COSEWIC has assessed against the new criteria, every single one,

not just the cute, furry, fuzzy ones but the lichen, the fish and the slugs, has been reassessed. This is very significant and is an indication that the federal government is committed to species at risk.

Adding all 233 species to the legal list under species at risk legislation clearly demonstrates how seriously the government takes COSEWIC's advice. It demonstrates further our commitment to acting on that advice. The assessment and the listing of species is a perfect partnership. The scientists with the expertise will determine the threats as well as the status, and the elected members of parliament will move forward on actions that address the threats and the status. It is a partnership that will work very well.

We must give both the scientists and the government what they need to get this important job done. As an example, I support the proposed amendments that restore a more workable definition of the term wildlife species. We need to give COSEWIC a definition that can be interpreted and put to good use rather than one that narrowly restricts its work, as the proposed wording from the standing committee would have done.

While I am speaking about definitions I would also like to express my support for the proposed change to the definition of residence. While it may seem like a small change, it is an important one that will re-establish the concept of the residence as a clearly defined place associated with an individual or individuals of the species in question and it will not extend the definition to the broader concept of critical habitat which is covered extensively in other parts of this act.

This is important, as prohibitions against the destruction of the residence of a threatened or endangered species will apply automatically upon listing. Canadians deserve to be able to understand the concept and to identify those residences with some clarity. It is also important for a listed species because it enables the protection of the automatic prohibition against the destruction of a residence to come into play quickly and unambiguously.

The government motions are also intended to delete the new, broad, open ended authority added by the standing committee for the minister to take any interim measures to protect species from the time of listing to the finalization of recovery strategies. This contradicts the transparent and accountable nature of the bill.

• (1150)

It is important that we state as clearly as possible that there is no need to wait for recovery strategies and action plans. The species at risk legislation would contain emergency provisions to give the minister authority to take interim measures between the time of listing and the time of recovery. Moreover, the minister could at any time enter into stewardship agreements to protect species and critical habitat.

*Government Orders*

Speaking of stewardship, at the farm gate in Saskatchewan there are signs that proudly announce the recovery of the burrowing owl. Woodlot owners across Ontario and Quebec proudly display membership in conservation organizations and talk about such matters when they get together. Fishers in Atlantic Canada invest in different kinds of nets to avoid trapping sea turtles and whales. Ranchers in Ontario and Alberta assist in recovery efforts for the loggerhead shrike. Landowners in the southern Okanagan take time out of their busy lives to participate in the development and implementation of projects to protect habitat and help species.

These people and thousands like them are stewards. They are Canadians who are protecting species at risk. They are people who want to do the right thing and whose actions speak far louder than words. This is a land with an ethic of farmers, an ethic of protecting woodlands, prairies, and waters where fishers have worked for generations. That is stewardship. It is what we know will work as a first step in protecting critical habitat.

I will address the government's position on socioeconomic matters and how they relate to the proposed act.

Bill C-5 is designed to protect and recover species at risk. It is the whole reason we have the legislation before us. Assessments of species are prepared by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. They are based on the best available information about the biological status of species. It is the only information that influences species assessment. Social and economic factors do not, nor would they under the proposed act.

Equally clear is the recovery part of the act. Its objectives have everything to do with biology and nothing to do with social or economic factors. It is important to read the amendments and the act instead of the interpretations of others, interpretations that have not changed while we have listened, adjusted and listened some more. The act says clearly that there would be no interference with science. There would be none.

When would we take economic and social impacts into account? When would we determine how to respond to them? Consideration must be given to social and economic factors. At this phase the process is still truly open and transparent.

We have stated over and over that science is an untouchable piece of the proposed act. We would not allow undue influence over scientists. We have emphasized and continue to emphasize that the people of the land and the waters in Canada are doing the right thing and want to continue to do the right thing. We should not insult them any further by saying they would deliberately avoid doing the right thing. We should read what is proposed in the act and the motions, avoid the spin, and move on with passage of Bill C-5.

• (1155)

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, now that we are on orders of the day we will speak to Bill C-5. I would rather be speaking to the 15th report of the public accounts committee but that is perhaps for another day.

Bill C-5 is the species at risk act. Today we are dealing with its socioeconomic impacts. The previous speaker said the science was indisputable and the government wanted to do the right thing. Those are wonderful words but we wonder how much they mean. In many

cases when it comes to the Liberal government words are empty commitments, promises and rhetoric. They are made only when it suits the Liberals. When it suits them otherwise they stand and absolutely insist things be done their way.

Clause 32(1) of Bill C-5 states:

No person shall kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual of a wildlife species that is listed as an extirpated species, an endangered species or a threatened species, except in accordance with an agreement, permit, licence, order or document referred to in section 74 or 75.

On page A-11 of today's *National Post* there is an article about beluga whales dying of cancer at an alarming rate. The article talks about a drug whose full name I will not worry about trying to pronounce. It is called PAH, a carcinogenic compound that appears to be causing cancers in the beluga whales.

We are not sure, but according to my hon. colleague the science is indisputable. It either is or it is not. I have a great concern about ensuring we protect the beluga whales in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The point is that the science is not indisputable.

The article may be absolutely correct in pointing to PAH as the chemical that is killing the whales. Clause 32 of Bill C-5 says no person shall kill, harm, harass or capture an endangered species. The aluminum plants in the Saguenay are putting effluent into the water and the water may be causing cancer among the beluga whales. That is what they think. If it is true, and I am not saying it is not, we had better shut down the aluminum smelters because no person shall kill, harm or harass the beluga whales.

Apparently we have been spewing out about 200 tonnes of the substance. Through management it has been reduced to 70 tonnes but it exists in the sediments at the bottom of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the whales continue to die of cancer.

I agree that the issue is serious. We should do what we can to protect the beluga whales. It is interesting that while the article says the issue is serious and appears quite confident in its diagnosis, it goes on to talk about people in the area who also happen to be dying of cancer. The article says:

According to Dr. Martineau, humans in the area are exposed to the same contaminants as whales, although no direct link can be drawn between carcinogen levels in belugas and any possible risk to people.

I am at a bit of a loss. They say PAH is killing the belugas. People in the Saguenay are exposed to the same dangerous and carcinogenic chemical so there should be a higher risk of cancer among people in the area. However no direct link can be drawn between carcinogen levels in belugas and any possible risk to people.

*Government Orders*

•(1200)

What about the science? If PAH kills beluga whales it should kill us too. Do hon. members not think so? Maybe we should get ourselves included in the act as an endangered species. If we keep consuming PAH we may soon go the way of the beluga whale.

I am not trying to make fun of the beluga whale. The point is that the act is draconian. It would shut down the mills. Putting 70 tonnes of the substance into the Gulf of St. Lawrence every year would be a contravention of the act. It is fairly simple stuff. Will we shut down the mills? I do not know. We will have to wait and see.

Clause 32(1) of Bill C-5 talks about an exception:

—except in accordance with an agreement, permit, licence, order or document referred to in section 74 or 75.

Clauses 74 and 75 say permits could be issued. Subclause 74 (2) states:

The agreement may be entered into, or the permit issued, only if the competent minister is of the opinion that

- (a) the activity is scientific research relating to the conservation of the species and conducted by qualified persons;
- (b) the activity benefits the species or is required to enhance its chance of survival in the wild; or
- (c) affecting the species is incidental to the carrying out of the activity.

Aluminum smelters do not meet any of these criteria. No permit could be granted to aluminum plants or smelters in the Saguenay. If we passed the bill we would shut them down.

I do not see any exception or grandfather clause in the legislation that says the stuff should not have been put into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It has already been reduced from 200 tonnes to 70 tonnes. I hope plans are in place to eliminate it entirely but I do not know if it is possible. I am not here to debate the science. According to the previous member's statement the science is indisputable.

What would we do? Would we thumb our noses at a law we passed in this place, or would we shut places down because we wanted to protect people as well as beluga whales? We are pretty sure what is killing the whales but do not know what is killing the people even though they are exposed to the same substance. The science can be disputed. They are saying one thing but not the other because one seems logical and the other illogical. This is the type of stuff we are seeing.

I mentioned another thing yesterday that gets me upset. There is a federal jurisdiction and a provincial jurisdiction. There is a federal sovereignty and a provincial sovereignty. It has been pretty well cast in stone since 1867.

If the minister deemed that a province was not doing its job properly he would have six months to say forget all the provincial laws, we will impose our law in place of provincial law. There would be no mechanism to come back to the House to debate an issue. There would be no place for a province to appeal. The minister would be given dictatorial powers.

We are seeing this more and more in the House every day. The government has dictatorial powers. Its members can stand and move that we go to orders of the day rather than listen and debate concurrence motions about issues concerning crown corporations

that suggest the government is less than perfect. It shows that members over there are incompetent. They do not want to hear about it. They want to say it is their way or the highway. That is no way to do business.

•(1205)

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately in Group No. 3 as in other groups there are certain amendments proposed by the government which seriously weaken the bill as reported to the House by our committee.

The majority of committee members passed good amendments which help to strengthen the bill which is now before us. One example is in the definition of wildlife species for the purpose of listing because listing is crucial and very important. For that reason, after having listened to witnesses from the scientific community, the majority of committee members improved the bill in the definition of species. That definition is one which includes “geographically or genetically distinct populations” as one of the criteria in determining whether a species should be put on the list. That recommendation came from the committee of scientists.

When the committee started to examine the bill, the scientists told us that the government definition was scientifically vague and scientifically inconsistent. I stress that originally they found it was vague and inconsistent with the scientific approach. We therefore amended the definition of species accordingly. The majority of committee members agreed that species should include in the definition “geographically or genetically distinct populations”.

Now at report stage, the government in an amazing display of insensitivity to the advice of the scientific community, has proposed to remove the amendment made in committee by the majority of the members and to water it down with the words “biologically distinct populations”. This is the very same terminology which the scientific community told us was vague and inconsistent.

I must bring to the attention of the House that this is a bad development both in substance and procedure. It is bad in substance because it would weaken the definition of species. It is bad in procedure because it shows disregard for the parliamentary process. I therefore must urge members to vote against Motions Nos. 9 and 10 which would weaken the definition of species.

Motion No. 120 in this group is also bad. I cannot recommend it because it rejects another amendment passed by the majority of committee members.

When we debate Groups Nos. 4 and 5, I will continue to identify motions which undo the work done by the majority of committee members, as I have already done with Groups Nos. 1 and 2.

It should be noted that the committee majority amended the bill in a variety of ways. I will briefly outline the thrust.

*Government Orders*

Throughout the process of examination and study of the bill, the intent has been to refine the political role on the road to approving the listing of endangered species. There is now a better balance than there was before when the bill was passed at second reading.

●(1210)

Another thrust was to reinforce volunteerism, contrary to what has been said by some in the House.

The third thrust was to set deadlines to ensure results. Deadlines are important. In this particular area time is of the essence in ensuring that a species is protected.

The final thrust was to increase the powers of the present and future Ministers of the Environment, so as to make him or her less dependent upon other departments or on the will of the Privy Council Office.

Those are roughly the thrusts we adopted in amending the bill as it stands before the House. The government unfortunately is trying to undo the work done by the majority of committee members. I must ask for the support of the House to resist such a move.

There was an interesting intervention yesterday by the member for Halton who made an excellent contribution to the committee's work. He was quite right when he said that he was sure that if anyone ran over a burrowing hole with a mower, or a peregrine falcon with his car, there would be no chance of his being charged. I am glad he made that point because it rebuts allegations, assumptions and wrong interpretations made mostly by members of the official opposition who are trying to instill fear and unnecessary concerns on the population by interpreting the bill in a manner that is totally incorrect. I am grateful for that and I applaud him.

I would also like to put to rest the concerns he raised in his speech yesterday. He spoke about the possibility of a polarization between rural and urban Canadians, a split in attitudes. The majority of committee members who voted for the changes which are now incorporated in the bill as reported to the House are rural members.

In the remaining two minutes I would like to rebut, in a gentle form of course, the intervention by the member for St. Albert who spoke about the socioeconomic costs. He has to make up his mind as to whether action is needed, even when it has some economic consequences, because if action is not taken, there are very serious health consequences.

Too often the term socioeconomic costs has been used in a loose manner in this debate. It is also a concept that is inserted too often in the bill itself.

In the context of the bill it means that socioeconomic costs in a certain form are a sword of Damocles. Madam Speaker, you would remember Damocles better than I, not because of age but because of your culture. The sword of Damocles is the economic interest that could take precedence over the decision to declare a species endangered. This is important to remember.

For example, imagine that scientists recommend that cod should be declared as an endangered species because it has been so exploited for socioeconomic reasons that it is now endangered. We can imagine the surprise in finding in the bill numerous references to

socioeconomic considerations as reasons for not declaring a species endangered. Unfortunately many clauses in the bill are peppered with this contradiction.

●(1215)

If we lost the cod it would be because of socioeconomic considerations to a point where a moratorium had to be invoked. It would no longer be possible to say we must continue with the cod fishery in order to maintain the socioeconomic conditions of the villages in Newfoundland. At a certain point the resource would collapse.

Therefore to use socioeconomic considerations as a crutch is a very dangerous approach.

The member for St. Albert demonstrated it this morning in his intervention. At a certain point he has to make up his mind. When there are certain situations where the socioeconomic considerations can no longer be invoked because the species, the environment or human health are at such risk, difficult decisions have to be made because the socioeconomic considerations can no longer help us out.

**Mr. Garry Bretkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to what the member for Davenport just said. I would like to reply to that at this point. I wish the rules of the House would allow for him to then come back and demonstrate where perhaps I am not correct in some of my challenges to what he is saying.

Suffice it to say that socioeconomic considerations are extremely important when we consider the species at risk bill which we are debating.

The accusation was made by my hon. colleague that we are interpreting the bill in a totally incorrect manner. If there is certain wording in legislation which allows certain groups in society to use that wording in a court of law to further their agenda, they will. It is as simple as that. We have to get the wording in this legislation right so that it does protect the species but also protects those who have an economic interest in the environment and the land on which those species reside. If we do not consider both issues, the issue of the species at risk and the economic impact on the landowner, we will accomplish the exact opposite of what the stated objectives of the bill are.

For example, if as the member has stated we have to ensure that the species is protected, and if in the end there are economic considerations, and we must put the priority on protecting the species and forget about the economic parts of it, I cannot agree with that. If we violate the rights of landowners to be properly compensated and simply plow ahead and say they cannot use that land as they wish and we do not compensate them properly, their property rights will have been violated and they will not go along with the objectives of the bill.

The whole premise that we are trying to protect species is based on whether it is going to be effective. That effectiveness will only happen if proper economic considerations are given to those whose land the species resides on. Therefore I cannot agree with it.

*Government Orders*

I will give an example of how this works. Right now there is a great debate in the country about the Kyoto agreement and carbon dioxide emissions. If in that agreement we have decided as a country that we will reduce our carbon dioxide emissions, but those objectives are not realistic, we will not achieve them. It is impossible.

It is quite clear that third world countries that are poor and do not have the resources to properly implement many of the objectives of the Kyoto agreement will not. We will actually move in the opposite direction. We have to consider the economic interests because unless the economy is functioning properly, we cannot meet the objectives of the Kyoto agreement.

It is the same with the species at risk bill. We have to have a strong economy. We have to consider the economic situation in order to properly protect species at risk.

That is why I was hoping the hon. member would be able to reply to my assertion that this has to happen.

There is so much I would like to address in the bill. I would like to tell those who are watching on television that we are debating a bill that is to protect endangered species. Our part of the debate is to ensure that the bill truly works because we agree with the objectives of the bill. We want to protect species that are endangered. However we as the official opposition are saying that if we do not get the legislation right, it is not going to happen. Various amendments have been put into groups and we are now debating the third group of amendments.

● (1220)

We are extensively trying to impress on the government that it should listen to us because we are in touch with many of the people who will be greatly affected by this. As I have said back in my riding, if we do not get the species at risk bill right, there will be a group of people, namely farmers, who will become a species at risk because they depend upon proper compensation if their land is deemed to have endangered species on it. That is the point we need to make.

The government has not looked at all of the social and economic impact of the bill on Canadians and it must do that. The minister came before the committee and was asked what kind of costs we would see from the bill. The minister said it would cost about \$45 million but he was not sure.

We must have some idea of how much this will cost and we must have the funds in place to properly compensate people. If that is not part of the study that is done before the bill is passed and if that is not part of the consideration after the bill is passed, then it will not work. There has to be proper resources available to compensate farmers, ranchers or anyone who has land on which an endangered species resides.

Has the minister taken into account the costs of enforcement? Have the costs that will be placed on the industry and property users been properly investigated? At this point we see no evidence of that.

I agree with the member who just spoke. The standing committee in the House of Commons that examined this legislation quite clearly made recommendations and the government ignored them. We have

concerns as well because so much of what we do as MPs is in committee. That is where we ensure we get the legislation right. If we do all that work and ensure that the committee has the proper recommendations but then those are ignored by government, we are wasting our time. I would agree with the member that we have to place importance on what committees have done.

The minister stated in committee that the legislation was open-ended in terms of what it would cost property owners. Property owners have to know. We cannot just leave it open-ended.

Compensation must be made available to property owners who lose their land due to the bill. To alleviate the social and economic costs of this bill, it is absolutely imperative that adequate compensation must be made. I may sound like a stuck record but that has to be part of the bill. We have to know what kind of compensation provisions will be made so that farmers and ranchers can plan for any expected costs and for the government to know what the total cost of this legislation will be.

The bill as it currently stands would preserve the minister's discretionary power. He would decide if someone would get compensation. He would decide whether provincial laws were effective or not, giving him the power to impose federal laws in provincial jurisdictions. This will never work. If there is no proper consultation, if there is no respect for lower levels of government which are closer to the people, this legislation will never be effective.

I had a great deal of experience with the gun control bill. Because the federal government plowed ahead with legislation and did not properly consult those affected, the provinces, the real stakeholders in this, the legislation will collapse. It is collapsing at this point already because of the huge error rate. However the costs have escalated and the non-compliance has made it that way.

We will have non-compliance with this legislation unless we get it right. We have talked about shoot, shovel and shut up. I will not go into that again but that is what will happen if we do not take into account the socioeconomic impacts this will have. This power in the hands of one person, namely the minister, totally eliminates any transparency in the bill. Dictatorial powers are being given to one person. If there is not a check and balance in this, it will simply not work.

I have gone through one-fifth of the notes that I have which express concern about the bill and I know that my time is just about up. However we have to have some kind of a balanced approach when it comes to listing endangered species. We cannot have the final decision resting with one person. There has to be checks and balances within the system.

● (1225)

We have committees and they should be allowed to do their work. I have heard that expression so many times from the government. This is an example of where it is not allowing the committee to have its say and to do its work.

*Government Orders*

National standards, developed in co-operation with the provinces, are absolutely imperative. We need some kind of accord or consensus agreement. The Canadian Alliance supports national standards that emerge from these sorts of consensus negotiations, but we reject that the federal government can create national standards all by itself. I hope at some further point I will be able to address this.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to address the proposed amendments to Bill C-5 that are part of Group No. 3.

It is of course the third time that I rise in the House, following the various stages that the bill went through. As members of the Standing Committee on the Environment, we had ample opportunity to discuss this bill.

I would like to point out a number of reasons why the Bloc Québécois is opposed to this federal legislation, which will inevitably, through some of its clauses, apply to Quebec.

Let me say from the outset that we are not opposed to legislation to protect threatened species. Why? Because a commitment was made at the Rio earth summit, in 1992. As we know, in a few months, that is in early September, the international community will meet at the Johannesburg summit. It is important to remember what decisions were made ten years ago in order to see if Canada has achieved its objectives regarding the protection of species.

At the 1992 Rio summit, Canada signed the convention on biodiversity. What did the convention have to say about threatened species? Let me quote an excerpt:

Each Contracting Party shall develop or maintain necessary legislation and/or other regulatory provisions for the protection of threatened species and populations.

So, in 1992, Canada pledged to adopt legislative provisions, to pass an act to protect threatened species. It is rather paradoxical to see, just a few months before the Johannesburg summit, Canada come up with a bill, as if its objective were simply to be able to show up at this summit with an act to protect species.

Quebec did not take long to ensure that the protection of species on its territory became and remained a priority. In 1989, even before the earth summit and the Rio summit, Quebec passed an act on threatened species, regulations on fisheries and an act on wildlife conservation to protect threatened or vulnerable species on its territory. Even before the international community came to an agreement in 1992, Quebec had been proactive and had passed its own legislation.

Now, the federal government has come up with a bill which we feel should, in principle, apply only to federal jurisdictions, including federal territory and, at the most, migratory birds, but should certainly not jeopardize a bill which was passed by the national assembly under the government of Robert Bourassa.

This bill was sponsored by the federal member for Lac-Saint-Louis, then Quebec's minister of the environment. Now, he is part of the government team, whose goal it is to have the House approve amendments and clauses in this bill which will, for all practical purposes, destroy the work done by his own province.

This is ironic, because Quebec passed its own legislation in 1989, the earth summit was held in 1992, and in 1996 Quebec signed the accord to protect endangered species on its territory.

• (1230)

I mention this because we now expect the federal government to make an effort at co-operation. We do not want the Government of Canada to play a policing role. I use the word policing because in the bill the government makes provision for federal enforcement officers, who will duplicate the work being done by our wildlife enforcement officers.

We want a government that works co-operatively, not a policing body. We feel that the government should respect the spirit and the principle of the national accord for the protection of species at risk in Canada, signed in Charlottetown in 1996.

What did this accord do? It established a mechanism for co-operation among the federal, provincial and territorial governments. One feature of the accord was that it committed governments to complementary legislation and programs to ensure that endangered species are protected throughout Canada. The idea was to have complementary, not overlapping, programs, which is what we see in the spirit of the bill before us.

Why have a bill that will create overlap with what Quebec is doing? For let us not forget that while the federal bill provides for recovery plans for endangered species, so does Quebec's 1989 legislation.

Whereas the government of Quebec has put a system in place for law enforcement by its wildlife officers, under the Quebec wildlife conservation legislation, with this bill, the federal government and its own officers will be duplicating the work done by ours. This is duplication; here we have a government policing and refusing to co-operate or collaborate. What is more, the legislation sets out offences, as of course the Quebec law did already.

In my opinion, this bill is contrary to the first principle of the national accord for the protection of species at risk. I would remind hon. members of one of the objectives on which the federal government had made a commitment, which is that the governments are to enact regulations and complementary programs to guarantee protection of endangered species everywhere in Canada.

What is more, a council of ministers was created to establish the directions to be taken, report on progress and resolve disputes. That was the second aspect of the accord.

This leads me to set out the reasons behind our decision to introduce an amendment, the one moved by my colleague from Mercier, which is found in Group No. 3 and amends clause 57 of the bill, which reads as follows:

57. The competent minister may, after consultation with the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council and any person whom he or she considers appropriate, establish codes of practice, national standards or guidelines with respect to the protection of critical habitat.

*Government Orders*

So we have the competent minister establishing national standards for species protection, when the second statement of the accord signed in 1996 stated that the minister will establish “a Council of Ministers that will provide direction, report on progress and resolve disputes”.

In my opinion, clause 57 is contrary to the second principle contained in the national accord. In addition, I believe that clause 34, which creates a safety net for species protection, is in direct contravention of the first principle set out in the 1996 accord.

There is a high likelihood that I will be speaking again on Group No. 4.

●(1235)

[English]

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, once again we are debating the species at risk act, Bill C-5. I would like to make an initial comment about yesterday when the Speaker was reading the list of endangered species. It was quite a benefit for members of the House to hear and be forced to recognize that there is a long proposed list of endangered species. That is what the debate is all about. The problem up to this point is that it has not been brought home personally to individual MPs. I think the effort initiated by the Canadian Alliance yesterday had a beneficial effect even though some doubted the sincerity of the effort.

I would like to talk about my personal area of Manitoba for a moment. In Manitoba we have the eastern loggerhead shrike. This bird is considered to be endangered, as the Speaker mentioned yesterday. The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association is working with local ranchers and farmers and environmental groups to take care of and improve the habitat for that endangered species. I mentioned that because the idea of co-operation as opposed to the big stick of government is what will make it work for the birds, animals, flowers and for the human component, and also the socioeconomic impact that bad legislation can have.

All of us on the opposition side are trying to bring in amendments that will improve and make the legislation work.

In my area, where my ranch is, we have the piping plover. I was aware of this one and did not need the Speaker to tell me. However we have a funny situation with it. We have a place called North Shoal Lake. My ranch is on the edge of that. I made the effort and fenced off the shoreline of that lake area, as did many of my neighbours.

At the north end of the lake, in the swamp area, Ducks Unlimited has put in a large project called the Vestfold project. I assume it is designed to have several cells that will hold large amounts of water for the benefit of ducks. The fact is that I do not think there are very many ducks that nest there anymore. I think they still mostly nest along our fencelines and in other small potholes.

Ducks Unlimited wants to keep that full of water. The RMs have been more than happy to oblige. They have dug big drainage ditches which have put a lot of water into the project.

When we get more rain and it is not managed properly, the excess water overflows the weirs out of the Vestfold project into Shoal

Lake. The habitat of the piping plover, which is an endangered species, is being flooded by excessive water. There is no outlet for Shoal Lake but right now they are considering digging a drainage ditch.

While saying it is environmentally good, mankind is ruining the habitat of the piping plover endangered species because the water levels are so high in Shoal Lake. Piping plovers require a lot of beach and sand to properly nest or have what is described in the bill as a residence. I find that term strange. However the nesting area is being ruined.

We have one environmental group, Ducks Unlimited, on one side and the legislation, which is to protect the piping plover, on the other side. What should be done? The only solution is to have a decent drainage ditch from North Shoal Lake into Lake Manitoba with a control structure that would allow the lake to be at a lower level.

What is the problem and why have we not done that? For the simple fact that the government has not put up two cents worth of infrastructure money. None has flowed significantly outside of the big cities like Winnipeg to the countryside to allow us to do drainage work. We have managed to get a few town water supply projects out of it, but there has been massive underfunding. That is our problem with the piping plover.

●(1240)

These endangered species are not just an easy thing to figure out. We have to be careful that the one hand does not ruin what the other hand is trying to do in government. I see a lack of co-operation between government departments in this whole area.

This brings up the other point of lack of co-operation. I spoke of this the other day so I will not go into any great detail on it.

We have the Department of Fisheries and Oceans protecting fish habitat. While it is protecting fish habitat, it has said that we cannot dig the drains because there are little grass minnows and such in that area. If a drain is dug, it wants us to do a big environmental study with biologists involved. It is holding up the protection of the very habitat of these piping plovers because those water levels should be lower.

If the farmers and ranchers in my area, myself included, had our druthers we would like to see everything the way it was before Ducks Unlimited came in and let nature take care of the ups and downs of the water in that lake. That way the species would be much better off.

Another example of mankind is the provincial government of Manitoba. The water levels are being kept so high in the big lakes such as Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba that it is ruining the habitat in the delta marshes. At the south end of Lake Manitoba is a big delta marsh which is internationally renowned as a habitat for many water species. These species include birds, plants, animals, crustaceans and all kinds of species which live in the mud. Due to massive hydro projects in Manitoba, the water levels are constantly being kept at such a high level that it is ruining the marsh. This is a major issue in Manitoba. Therefore, by not using co-ordinated and well thought out plans, governments right now are in fact probably creating more endangered species which will have to be added to these lists.

*Government Orders*

I mention these things because I do not think that members of the House realize that this act is impacting on average Canadians like myself and my neighbours. In fact, every family across the country will be impacted.

I was in Kamloops, British Columbia the other day. While I was there, a local rancher told me that a local environmental group had an idea to reintroduce the badger. The group managed to get some badgers from the prairies, where there are a lot, brought them back and put them on crown lands. The dumb old badgers did not know any better and the first thing they did was migrate from government lands to private lands. Now the farmers and ranchers have badgers digging great big holes on their lands. I do not know if members have seen badger holes but they are quite large. However they now have to protect that habitat for the badgers. They cannot just tell the badgers to head back on to crown lands because they do not seem to understand English very well.

I am making light of it, but the fact of the matter is the protection of habitat and the idea of reintroducing species has to be kept in the context of the socioeconomic impact of the area. While we hate to see any particular species become extinct, it seems as though the act is suggesting the following. A species might be doing pretty good in western or southern Ontario, which is its main habitat area, but the fringe of the area is in Manitoba. However the fringe area is an area where the habitat has never been particularly good for these birds or animals. The government can tell us that there was a particular endangered species there 500 years or 100 years ago and that it wants to reintroduce it. Now the habitat has to be saved. Some common sense and reason has been used in the legislation.

• (1245)

When it comes to the costs, I have a real concern. Material has been given to me by my chief critic, the member for Red Deer. I note that on the whole socioeconomic interest area, the environment minister was questioned about the costs. It really makes me worry a little about who will incur the costs and pay the bill. Right now, with no explicit compensation in the act for farmers, ranchers, land users, it looks like those very people could end up carrying the majority of costs as opposed to society as a whole. Obviously that is dead wrong. I cannot believe that the government is not putting in full compensation for economic loss due to protection of endangered species.

Here is what the minister had to say in October, 2001, and it may have changed by now. He said that Environment Canada was aware that compensation for restriction on the use of land was a complex issue. He went on to say "We then got deeper and deeper into this and it became more and more of a proverbial swamp". With that comment, the government is demonstrating once again that it is only capable of developing the proverbial swamp.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I begin my comments today on Group No. 3 by referring to a letter I received from a constituent as the SARA legislation was brought forth to the House.

My constituent is a teacher. He was recognized and received an award as being one of the best teachers in the country in 2001. That is a rare award. He was rewarded primarily, if not exclusively, for all the work he has done in the classroom, the school and the

community on environmental issues. He has taken a whole generation, if not a generation and a half now, of students through their education process and imbued in each one of them in a very enthusiastic way a love for the natural environment and a sense of responsibility of protecting, as each one of us have, in a stewardship fashion that natural environment. He writes:

Amendments made by the environment committee would have strengthened mandatory habitat protection in areas of federal jurisdiction, and would have provided—

And this is relevant to Group No. 3:

—an independent scientific panel the opportunity to determine which species in Canada are endangered.

I am deeply troubled that the bill being brought forward for third reading rejects the work of Canada's parliamentarians, and chooses to do next to nothing to protect Canada's endangered plants and animals.

That commentary is a reflection of how a great deal of the people who have worked on the legislation from all walks of life feel. We constantly hear that it is just environmentalists complaining about the nature of the gutting of the bill by the government. That is not true. It is people from all walks of life.

The comment I read from his letter is reflective of the attitude. Some 60,000 to 65,000 people have signed petitions asking the government to not proceed with the amendments that it is proposing, but to allow the amendments that the committee prepared and put into place at committee stage. He goes on to say in his letter:

Failure to reconsider these proposed amendments will result in international embarrassment for Canada when it attends the Rio plus 10 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa in the spring of 2002.

There is an error there. The conference will actually take place in the fall of 2002. He goes on to say:

Canada proudly signed the international biodiversity protocol at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, becoming the first country in the world to endorse this convention. With our failure to pass a strong, effective endangered species act, we also will fail in our commitment to protect the web of life internationally.

He is very accurate in that last statement. We will be embarrassed with the legislation because it does not go far enough. It does not deal with real protection for the environment.

In Group No. 3 there is a glaring inconsistency in the government's position that shows up in some of the proposed amendments. I am referring specifically to Motion No. 136. We heard from the parliamentary secretary today that this was a good development on the part of the government.

Motion No. 136 would provide that the existing list of species developed by COSEWIC, the scientific body that has been responsible for this for more than two decades now, would be incorporated holus-bolus into the act in one fell swoop.

• (1250)

That was a change on the part of the government because originally it was not even going to do that. The Minister of the Environment came to the committee before it got to the end of clause by clause and announced that he would do this as his one concession to the committee. As a committee we had been pushing for a holus-bolus acceptance of the list. It only made good sense because of all of the good work that COSEWIC had done over the years on that list.

*Government Orders*

The inconsistency arose when the minister accepted the list from this independent and qualified body. What did he then do? This goes back to some of the amendments in Group No. 2. He said that he did not trust them to do it on an ongoing basis. All the work done over the last 20 years, which the government recognized and incorporated into the bill in an amendment we fully support, was good enough but it was not good enough on an ongoing basis.

Nothing has changed. The way scientists are appointed to the board has remained the same. If anything it may be a little better as more aboriginal and first nations people are brought into the group, using some of their traditional knowledge. This is a positive development by COSEWIC and it should be praised for showing more progressive thinking in that regard than the government.

There is a glaring inconsistency. We urge the government to withdraw the amendments in Group No. 2 with regard to that and follow the pattern established in Group No. 3.

I want to recognize one thing that does appear in one of these amendments. It is in Motion No. 134. A bill was passed in the House last year, I do not believe it has become law yet, that would create marine conservation areas in the country, something again the government has been slow about doing. That bill is also wanting in a number of ways.

The positive part is that the government recognized that its federal jurisdiction should be extended into these marine conservation areas as we develop them. There are four or five, perhaps as many as ten, that are close to being developed, both on our shores in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans as well as in the Great Lakes area.

The amendment, which we support, would extend the SARA legislation to those marine conservation areas. That is a good development and I applaud the government for it.

I want to go back to some other concerns we have with this group of amendments. There are a number of amendments in Group No. 3 that would allow the government to do nothing, if I can put it that way. The environment and sustainability committee recognized it in the original draft of the bill. In a number of ways it tightened up the bill significantly by putting limitations on the government, imposing in some cases time limits and using in many cases specific wording as opposed to general wording.

There are a series of amendments that would gut all that work and gut the bill. Taking out that type of specific language and replacing it with generalities would allow the government, as it has in so many other areas of environmental legislation and action, to do nothing.

•(1255)

**Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I speak to the amendments in Group No. 3 I would like to dispel a couple of myths about the committee's work on the bill.

First, is the myth that the standing committee's changes would make Bill C-5 more coercive. This word is being applied to any change to the bill agreed to by the committee that is contrary to the government's position.

As I noted the last time I spoke the committee fully supported the co-operation first principle. It was foremost in virtually every discussion we had in the many months of our study. The committee

sought to inject clarity and predictability into the bill. Most Canadians would believe this is a good thing but we are being told such things are coercive.

Even the committee's version of Bill C-5 is heavily laden with discretion. Every consultation mechanism and opportunity for private stewardship would remain in the bill. They were in fact strengthened by the committee and are available in black and white for anyone to read. I challenge those who claim that the reported version of the bill would be coercive to stand in the House and point to those sections of the amended bill that would support this thesis.

Second, is the myth that 80% of the committee's amendments have been accepted. I do not know what system of accounting produced this figure, but I suggest that the parties involved in this calculation have a brilliant future ahead of them with Enron. A precursory examination of the government's motions clearly indicates that little of the substantive work of the committee has been accepted, including virtually every amendment the committee made to the core issues of the bill.

Furthermore, there are numerous government motions entitled technical motions that are in fact reversing motions. In case after case they change every committee amendment to a particular clause, save for one minor syntactical change. Yet these are described as supporting the intent of the committee and called technical amendments.

As someone who sat on the committee for the duration of the study I am well placed to tell the House what its intent was. The intent of the committee was to improve the bill to reflect the input of the witnesses we heard, to reflect the diversity of views around the committee table, and to improve the biological basis of the legislation. Many of the government motions in no way support this intent.

I will speak to the motions at hand. Government Motion No. 9 and Motion No. 10 would delete the words geographically or genetically distinct from the definition of wildlife species. The committee inserted the language to make the definition consistent with COSEWIC's practice. The original version of Bill C-65, the precursor to Bill C-5, defined species to include geographically distinct populations. This was the government's language. The government changed its mind in Bill C-5. It deleted the reference to geographically distinct populations and replaced it with biologically distinct, which is self-evident, narrower and certainly far more confusing.

Dr. Geoffrey Scudder, former president of the Canadian Society of Zoologists and fellow of the royal society testified before the committee as follows:

### *Government Orders*

The term "biologically distinct population" is vague. It does not make any sense at all to me as a biologist.

There are good reasons for protecting geographically distinct populations. Geographically distinct populations are typically genetically distinct as well and preserving genetic diversity is a key objective of the convention on biological diversity, a convention to which Canada is a signatory.

On the current reassessed COSEWIC list a number of species, as we heard last night are geographically or genetically distinct populations. They are identified as such on the list. With the rollover of the list we have a contradiction between these subspecies on the COSEWIC list and what the government wants to do to the definition of species.

• (1300)

The government's definition is inconsistent with COSEWIC's definition and its longstanding practice which has been to list geographically distinct populations of a species, for example, the St. Lawrence beluga whale, the eastern cougar, et cetera. One might ask, is this just the committee's opinion? No. COSEWIC itself disagrees with the government on this definition and wrote in its brief to the committee:

The geographic, as well as biological, distinction of populations is a key criterion in the recognition by COSEWIC of an evolutionarily significant unit.

It is not just the standing committee and the broader scientific community the government is ignoring, but it is ignoring COSEWIC itself, as it has on numerous key issues in Bill C-5, including the listing process. This is the same COSEWIC that the government tells us it will listen to with great attention.

I turn now to government Motion No. 66. This motion guts the committee changes to clause 37 which pertains to recovery strategies. The committee agreed to insert language granting the minister discretionary authority, and I stress discretionary authority, to take interim habitat conservation measures for a species between the time it is listed and the time the decision is made whether or not to protect its habitat, a period that could last for a year or more.

The government has said that this power already exists in the bill in the form of emergency orders. Yet this is available only if there is an emergency that threatens a species' survival, a very rare situation and one requiring cabinet approval.

There will likely be many situations of threats to a species or its habitat that are serious but that do not necessarily threaten the survival or recovery of the whole species. For this reason, the government's arguments ring hollow. It clearly does not understand its own bill.

Without interim conservation authority, Bill C-5 will create a perverse incentive. If a logging company, for example, knows that a species has been listed and its habitat may, and that is only may, eventually be protected, it will have an economic motivation to accelerate logging of that habitat in order to avoid legal restrictions if the bill's habitat protection measures kick in. To avoid this, authority to create effective interim measures is required.

The committee agreed, yet the government has decided to gut this. It argues that this contradicts the bill's principles of transparency and accountability. In numerous other clauses of the bill, the government

is gutting committee amendments that insert criteria, that insert public consultation, that insert reporting mechanisms. Yet in this case, it claims that the committee is blurring these lines.

Government Motion No. 120 removes permitting from the penalties section. I remind the House that there is no mandatory habitat protection of any kind in the bill, either within areas of federal jurisdiction or without. It is all discretionary. It is perfectly possible that a species could go from the beginning to the end of the process that the bill lays out and never have its habitat protected. This is a critical failure of Bill C-5 and the reason it cannot be said to have a biological foundation.

The committee agreed that the government should be required to protect habitat in federal jurisdiction. One way to do this would be via the permitting section.

In the original Bill C-5, the competent minister has the authority to enter into an agreement or issue a permit to people authorizing them to affect a listed species, its residence or its critical habitat. If the terms of such an agreement or permit are not met, or if the permit or agreement is never obtained, what are the repercussions under the original Bill C-5 vis-à-vis habitat protection? There is little or none.

The committee agreed that this should not be the case. In the context of changes to clause 74, which will be debated in Group No. 5, the committee agreed that there should be repercussions. For this reason it amended the list of penalties in clause 97 to include the failure to obtain or comply with an agreement or permit under amended clause 74(1). Government Motion No. 120 eliminates this as a penalty.

• (1305)

It disproves the suggestion that Bill C-5 is heavy on volunteer initiatives at the front end backed up with solid legal protection in the event that those initiatives fail. There is nothing solid about this motion and its intent. There is no penalty if a person does not get a permit and if a person does get a permit, there is no penalty if it is not complied with.

I call on all members of the House to defeat these motions.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to speak to the Group No. 3 amendments to a bill that needs to be defeated, the species at risk act.

I am sure the government would like us to relent and allow the bill a quick passage through the House but the government does not realize, appreciate or respect how adamant we are about protecting the interests of our constituents. We will not stand by and allow the government to criminalize the hard working and law-abiding farmers and ranchers. We will not stand by and allow the government to trample on the property rights of landowners, nor will we stand by and watch the government run roughshod as it intrudes into provincial jurisdiction.

*Government Orders*

The official opposition will do whatever it takes to prevent the bill from passing in its present form. Members need to look at the amendments that are being brought forward and ask how they can make the bill better. Then we can ensure that we will move forward with the bill because we want to protect endangered species.

As the legislation is now, it will not protect endangered species. It will not protect species at risk. It will not work because the approach is not one of balance. Balance has not been struck between the rights of property owners on one hand and the endangered species that are inhabiting their land on the other hand.

We need legislation that is based on fostering co-operation and mutual respect. We need legislation that minimizes the socio-economic impact of those who work and earn a living off the land.

The government does not yet know the cost. What is the cost to this bill? What is the cost to implement and maintain these new laws? The government does not know, despite saying that governments should not pass legislation which is open ended in terms of funding. The government would say we need to be sure that legislation is not open ended but then it tries to implement a bill that is.

The Minister of the Environment has estimated that the cost of the bill could be \$45 million a year. In the past however, when governments have estimated the costs of bills, such as Bill C-68, a cost of \$60 million to \$80 million has ended up being close to \$700 million. The government also does not understand the socio-economic implications of the species at risk act. It is totally irresponsible for the government not to know what the exact cost or the socioeconomic implications are, yet it decides to forge ahead.

We are proposing a technical amendment to have cabinet, before developing the legal list, consider and explain the socio-economic implications. It has to consider what the costs will be to the farmers, ranchers and landowners.

We have spent numerous hours already debating the bill and the derogatory effect it will have on landowners. I do not recall any mention in this place, although it may have been mentioned at committee, about presentations that were made to the standing committee by some organizations, specifically the snowmobile organization.

I have received many cards, letters and e-mails from snowmobilers in my riding stating their concerns regarding Bill C-5. Last Friday I received an e-mail message from Mr. Herb Whitten of Stettler in which he wrote:

I and thousands of other snowmobilers like me, are very passionate about our sport. We are also concerned about both our environment and any potential loss of trails or riding areas. As a member of a primary winter recreation group, I request your active support in ensuring that snowmobiling and its social, recreational and economic benefits receive consideration—

I have assured Mr. Whitten that we are attempting to protect the interests of this particular organization while also protecting the endangered species and their habitat. It is balance.

As stated earlier, we think it is extremely important that that same balance be struck. The interests of all those who are concerned or impacted by this legislation must be given equal and thoughtful consideration.

● (1310)

Most important however, very careful consideration must be given to the landowners who earn a living off the land producing the high quality of food we have come to take for granted in this country. So many challenges face our food producers these days. We keep hearing back home to please not increase the challenges by Ottawa made challenges.

As I stated in the House this week, Canadian farmers already face extremely adverse conditions. Some are so insurmountable that our food producers and suppliers are barely surviving and our food supply is being jeopardized.

Last month the *Western Producer* stated that the minister of agriculture was downplaying the significance of his department's projections that net farm income will fall sharply in 2002 largely because of lower program payments. When the minister of agriculture downplays farmers' net incomes falling off sharply, it has to be of great concern. Canadian Federation of Agriculture president Bob Friesen has said "Just looking at projections and the reality out there, there will be some thinning of farm numbers this year".

When individuals talk about the thinning of farm numbers, they are talking about farmers going broke, farmers selling out, communities being hurt. Not only are they first and second generation farmers, but many times they are third and fourth generation farmers. Mr. Friesen also stated that 2002 will be a much worse year for farmers due to a number of contributing factors and that farmers will need more help this year than programs will provide.

Last year livestock producers were forced to sell cattle because of the lack of affordable feed and the lack of water. That still occurs now. According to the *Western Producer*, this year cattle producers are being negatively affected by the devaluation of the Canadian dollar. We watch our cattle go across the border. Sometimes we say that because of the low dollar they are taking our cattle. However, the fact is that the dollar has been devalued and we are receiving less value for our cattle than we were receiving a number of years ago.

Despite the hardships many rural Canadians are facing, hope remains that communities can band together to look for tools and ideas to revitalize their towns. We have seen it with marketing clubs in local communities and in other ways to help the farm situation.

Farmers across the country are also counting on each other to improve and preserve rural life, including the preservation of some species whose populations are dwindling.

I appreciated that the member for Selkirk—Interlake talked about the piping plover. Farmers gathered together through volunteering to see that this particular species made it on to the list as an endangered species.

*Government Orders*

A project to transfer ring-necked pheasants to Ontario from Saskatchewan is also talked about in the *Western Producer*. Not only is this saving the wild pheasant whose population has dwindled to a remnant of what it once was, but it is also building friendships between rural residents of Saskatchewan and farmers and like-minded people from Ontario.

According to the article, ring-necked pheasants are not native to North America. They were introduced from Europe in the early 1900s or late 1800s. Some quickly adapted to their new environment but in Ontario only a small remnant of the early wild population remains. It is hoped that the 200 birds from Saskatchewan will increase the numbers in Ontario.

Shelter areas were created by farmers and those who were working to save these naturalized species. Food was distributed before these pheasants were released into several hundred acres of former pastures in Ontario. Why were they doing this? They were doing this because they had concerns about that particular bird and that it be preserved. They were volunteering and making sure that it was looked after.

That is a prime example of farmers across the country who are working together with wildlife federations to create habitat, encourage breeding and protect disappearing species.

The government should attempt to work with and not against farmers and ranchers. This means implementing legislation that encourages co-operation and voluntary compliance.

• (1315)

I therefore encourage all members on all sides of the House to vote in favour of these amendments, and if these amendments do not satisfy the legitimate concerns of all members in the House, I say that we vote against Bill C-5 and bring forward a piece of legislation that will have a positive impact on the preserving of these species at risk.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is good to be able to again speak to the bill. We have spoken to the previous two sets of amendments and this Group No. 3 deals with the social and economic interests and the public consultation process.

Before I get into some of that I want to refer to, the member for Davenport and also the member for York North, both members from the government side of the House, spoke up and brought to the attention of Canadians the fact that a lot of the amendments that the government has brought forward at report stage are to reverse agreement on amendments brought forward at committee. There was the committee doing its work and bringing forward witnesses to explain the detail of the bill and give their opinions. The committee members worked together to formulate some amendments to improve the bill. Then when it came back to the House at report stage, the government introduced amendments to reverse all that. If that is considered democracy in this day and age, there is something definitely wrong with the process.

We cannot support the bill if it does not address fully the issue of compensation for affected landowners. If this is not in the bill we will not support it. It is critical to the protection of endangered species. If we do not do this, we will be endangering endangered

species more than we will be helping them. There was also the mens rea issue that we dealt with in Group No. 2 about how a person is guilty until proven innocent in that a person who unknowingly alters the habitat of an endangered species is guilty. Some means in the bill has to absolutely reverse that so that a person found guilty must be shown to have had some intent in mind when he went out to destroy an endangered species or the habitat. Those two issues are vitally important to our party and to the people we have been talking to.

Quite early this morning when I was in my office I got a phone call from a rancher from back home. It was two hours earlier for him. He had just come in from feeding his cattle and phoned me to see how the bill was progressing. He has had an interest in this issue since it was first talked about many years ago. This gentleman was raised and educated in the United States and he knows what has happened in the United States with the heavy-handed type of legislation there. He knows that it has not worked. He has kept on top of this issue and he is so fearful that if this happens in Canada we indeed will be putting species at risk instead of helping them. All Canadians are supportive, as our party is, of species at risk legislation that truly works and will truly protect species and their habitat.

I want to address some points about the social and economic interests. We have put forward Motion No. 3, which would require the socioeconomic interest to be considered in the legal listing of the species. The bill already provides that, to be considered in developing recovery methods. We think it is important that these issues all be balanced off. As we always see in legislation that comes before the House, it is a balance of social issues, economic issues, protection of the environment and the concerns of Canadians. We must bring in all of that and make a bill which brings in a balance that can work.

The Canadian Alliance also proposed in Motion No. 15 that:

The purposes of this Act...shall be...accomplished in a matter consistent with the goals of sustainable development.

• (1320)

That is absolutely critical. Where else but in an environment bill should we have legislation that deals with sustainable development? If a bill does not promote that then it is not doing its job. This is closely related to socioeconomic interests because it requires that this balance be struck between the environment and the needs of Canadians. As we know, it would be easy for all of us to move back into caves and not carry on the kind of lifestyle we have developed, but we have to do things another way. We have to be able to live the lifestyle we have developed and deal with environmental issues, together. If we do not do that then we are going in the wrong direction.

Often when I am speaking to high school and grade school classes I feel that my generation and the generation before us have done a very poor job on the environment and I encourage them as young people to pick up that issue, bring it forward and try to maintain something that perhaps we can start here. I encourage them to realize that we cannot go on affecting the environment the way we have in the past. We have to come to terms with living with the environment.

*Government Orders*

I refer again to the rancher who phoned me this morning. I do not believe there are any better environmentalists in the country or the world than the people who make their living from the land. Farmers, ranchers, fishermen and resource people know more about what needs to be done and how to do it than anyone else does, more, I would suggest, than people who live in the concrete jungles.

It is essential that the costs to industry and property users and the costs to the government in terms of enforcement resources be known before the government introduces legislation with such vast implications. This has been alluded to many times in other presentations, but we need to know these issues up front. We need to know the costs. Canadians have to be clear on the costs this legislation would bring into effect before they and we can honestly and with a clear conscience support the measures. In particular, we must know what the bill will cost the farmers, fishermen, loggers, ranchers and even the cottage owners and people who live in the country. Many people now choose a rural lifestyle and have a few acres. They have to know how this bill would affect them and what the government compensation provisions would be if it is implemented.

Here I come back to the whole issue of compensation if one's lifestyle and means of income change. I believe that all of society supports protecting species at risk and that all of society should be responsible for the costs of doing so. However, at this time the government has no idea of the total socioeconomic costs of the bill, so those avenues need to be explored and clarified in a lot more detail.

Then we get into COSEWIC, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, and I think everyone knows about it now. It is a panel of scientific experts appointed by the minister whose chief function is to classify species at risk and to recommend to determine the scientific list of endangered species. Quite frankly, that is who should decide what the endangered species are: people who are experts in the field. They should bring forward that list.

I want to go further with this. This is where the main controversy erupts. Environmentalists want the scientific list determined by COSEWIC to automatically become the list that would be enforced by law. The government wants cabinet to have the final decision as to which scientific recommendations are accepted and which are not and the government wants to have political control over which species are protected.

In committee, the Canadian Alliance proposed a balanced compromise which was accepted by the committee and has now been reversed at report stage by the government through an amendment. We argued that the scientific COSEWIC list should become the legal list within 60 days if the cabinet did not act to prevent it. That is a bit of a reverse onus, but under this approach cabinet would have the final say and would have to act to overthrow a scientific recommendation. That would mean that cabinet would have to say that the scientists have given it the list but cabinet does not believe it. As it exists now, by not acting, the list goes astray. We felt that was a really good method of putting in place the whole issue of government and cabinet responsibility. We felt it would force them to act, but if they were to act they would be acting against the scientific listing.

Then there is the whole issue of public consultation. When we started with this process many years ago compensation and consultation were two things that were very key to us. We feel that the Canadian public must be engaged at all times in this process if we indeed are to come up with a bill that will be acceptable to Canadians and that will work to protect endangered species.

• (1325)

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, a few years ago as I was travelling from Maple Creek to my home in Frontier, I crossed the top of the Cypress Hills just as a blizzard hit. The wind was blowing from the west, snow was drifting and visibility eventually became absolutely zero. The only way we could see was to put our heads out of the window and watch the yellow dots on the highway go by. When the dot looked faded, because in Saskatchewan the highways are not that great and a lot of times there is no paint in places, we wandered all over the highway. We actually hit the ditch a couple of times, but because we had four wheel drive we were able to back out of the ditch and keep on down the highway. It took us about 2 hours to go 15 miles that night.

It strikes me that the government is every bit as confused and lost as we were that night, particularly in dealing with this legislation. I guess it is no wonder that the government comes up with legislation like this. I would like to suggest today that—

**An hon. member:** It's in a heavy fog.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Absolutely. It is in a heavy fog for a number of reasons.

I would suggest that first it is partially because it is wallowing in corruption. We see that the Prime Minister does his legal work on a table napkin. We understand that ministers regularly look for jobs for their friends—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. I have not referred to the relevance of the debate, but in the past each of the Chair occupants has referred to relevance. I do believe you will get to your point on the amendments in Group No. 3.

• (1330)

**Mr. David Anderson:** Absolutely, Madam Speaker. I will talk about the socioeconomic impacts of the legislation in a minute, as soon as I have finished talking about some of the reasons why the government comes up with such poor legislation and why the Alliance and the other parties have to hold it accountable.

The second reason we have legislation like this, I would suggest, is incompetence. We see ministers who apparently cannot tell Monday from Friday when they are discussing their portfolios. We see a billion dollars at a time disappearing through different divisions such as HRDC. We have ministers who can only imagine things happening in Canadian communities. We also have ministers who are so unsure of where they live and do their work that they do not even know where to vote.

*Government Orders*

The third reason we see legislation like this is, I would suggest, arrogance. We see it in the \$2 billion infrastructure slush fund to be set up and administered.

As a person who is interested in agriculture, I found it interesting yesterday that the Prime Minister would let us know—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. The hon. member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

**Mr. David Anderson:** Madam Speaker, I would think the member, who seems to be concerned about rural development, would be interested in hearing about this but perhaps he is not.

Yesterday the Prime Minister actually had the arrogance to suggest that United States senators were afraid of our agriculture minister and that was why he was sending him down instead of going himself. We will see from the results exactly how terrified they are of us.

One of the main concerns I have about the government is that I see so many Liberal members who have lost their spirit and are whipped on legislation like this. We have seen a lot work go into the legislation over the last few months. It came to the House, the government gutted it and the minister presented what he wants as his membership. We have heard from very few government members who have the guts to stand up and say what they actually think about the legislation. We know there are dozens of them who are concerned about it. I would call upon them to step forward, take their places at the plate and call this legislation what it is, which is bad legislation.

As always, we know that the government's reason for being is to expand wherever it possibly can. It certainly is doing so through this legislation. In the past, bureaucracies have used issues like multiculturalism and national issues to stir people up and expand the bureaucracy. We have seen that through the CRTC over the years in many of the broadcasting regulations and fiascos there.

Normally what the government does is it takes the flavour of the day, mixes in a slug of bureaucracy, stirs it with some regulations and it usually ends up with a bad odour that permeates all of Canadian society. We see that once again here using environmentalism. It is taking environmental issues, wrapping them up in urgency, and then wrestling control from the local people who understand the issues and are the ones who could solve the problems, and giving it to people 2,000 miles away. It takes control away from people who need to have it.

Not only is the government without direction but Bill C-5 is definitely without direction as well. As the member for Yellowhead so accurately pointed out yesterday, rarely do we get legislation that is lose-lose. It is a loss for those who are affected by the legislation and it is also a loss for those who will be trying to administer it.

I want to give some suggestions this afternoon as to why the legislation is such a failure.

First, no one has faith in it. How many times have we seen this legislation come forward in the last seven years? We have seen it three or four times and it has failed completely. When it was brought in this time it went to committee. I understand 127 witnesses

addressed the committee and 300-plus amendments were presented. The committee worked its way through the whole bill only to have it come back to the House where the minister took it apart and presented what he wanted in the first place.

Why do we bother? Why make such a mockery of the process? Why not just introduce it that way in the beginning and ram it through, as the government seems so set on doing? Who can treat the bill seriously with the minister treating it the way he has chosen to?

I would suggest that one of the other reasons the bill will fail is that there are no fundamentals to it that would make it a success. First, we deal with the assumption that the government knows best. I know it is not very popular in the House but there are some of us who believe that government is probably more of the problem than it is the solution to many of these issues. I would suggest that in this issue it is true.

The second assumption that the legislation makes, which is appalling, is that rural people are either a negative or an evil influence on the environment in which they live. I find that an insult. It is hard to comprehend. Many of us live in areas where our families have lived for a hundred years. The areas are no worse off. In fact they are far better off now than they were years ago.

The bill also makes the assumption that local people should not have a say. This puzzled me the most when I looked through the legislation. What is the government afraid of from the local people who are affected by the legislation?

Strangely, the cost to local people is not considered at all in the legislation. This is the area I want to address. The basis of legislation we make is usually to know how it will affect the people it is intended to affect. It is reasonable to expect that we would address the socioeconomic aspect and impact in the legislation. Surprisingly, the bill does not do that until right at the final process of looking at recovery plans.

• (1335)

The CA introduced an amendment to ensure that would take place and the committee, in its wisdom, agreed to the amendment. However, the government has now taken it out.

Why did the government do such a thing? I will read quotes from the minister that will explain why it chose to do this. The main reason is that it has absolutely no idea what the socioeconomic implications of the legislation will be. I will read from the minister's information supplement of October 2001:

Environment Canada is aware that compensation for restrictions on the use of land is a complex issue that requires careful consideration and innovative thinking. We will need several years of practical experience in implementing the stewardship and recovery provisions of the Species at Risk Act...before we can be precise in prescribing eligibility and thresholds for compensation

What are the people who are affected supposed to do for those several years?

At the standing committee on October 3 he was quoted as saying:

We then got deeper and deeper into this and it became more and more the proverbial swamp, more and more difficult to do, partly because governments... should not pass legislation that is open-ended in terms of funding. We have fiscal responsibilities that, as you can well imagine, are fairly strict on us—\$45 million a year is what we've been given to run the process. That's what we can expect, and that's it.

*Government Orders*

My question is: Does that include the administration of the act, as well as dealing with the compensation issues for which people will have to be compensated?

The legislation will also be very expensive.

I would like to point out that the legislation could have had a positive socioeconomic impact, although the government has not considered that. Many other places, such as the United States, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, all have private conservation programs. We have a tremendous opportunity for co-operation and for private conservation programs that we have not taken.

In conclusion I suggest that the bill has no future. It is based on coercion. We already have one example of a bill that was based on coercion, Bill C-68, which is now costing us nearly a billion dollars and has not accomplished anything that it was set out to do.

I ask once again why the bill targets rural Canadians. The blizzard in Cypress Hills eventually ended and we were able to travel, but I would suggest that if the government does not withdraw this legislation the storm is only beginning.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, we are involved in one of those debates in the House of Commons that is important to a large section of our society in Canada.

This is not a new debate. The legislation was introduced several years ago and it has kind of stumbled along under the directorship of the Liberal government. From time to time we see a few bright spots in it but then it kind of regresses again. The government has a good objective in mind, protection of endangered species, but, like so much of its legislation, its plan to get there is totally misdirected. It is no different with Bill C-5, the bill to protect endangered species.

When I spoke in the House the other day I asked who in Canada would go against that basic principle. We all want to see the endangered species protected. The only endangered species I see are those on the other side of the House, and we even have some sympathy for them.

All Canadians I know want to see endangered species protected. They do not want to see species become at risk but the method of protecting them is the matter in question.

I made the comment before about the socioeconomic impact of the legislation, meaning that it would fall to the user groups, the people who live and make their livings in rural Canada, to protect these species by themselves.

I also made the case, in terms of agriculture, which represents a large portion of the land base, that there are something like 250,000 landowners in western Canada who will be expected to bear the cost for all Canadians of protecting endangered species. I do not think that is a reasonable approach.

Some 30 million Canadians benefit from having flora and fauna, and birds and animals protected so they do not become extinct. Why should 250,000 landowners in western Canada, a few forestry companies and oil companies, have to bear the total cost of that? It does not make any sense.

Rural Canada is still an important part of the equation. Rural Canada is where these endangered species largely exist, even in their limited numbers. We do not see them in downtown Toronto. Why is that? It is pretty hard for a burrowing owl to dig a hole in the pavement on Yonge Street.

The people who live in the concrete jungles and who have these high objectives, great on them, but they have wrecked their own environment and now they want to put the burden of protecting endangered species on all people in rural Canada. It simply will not work. It will not work from a practical point of view of policing. It will not work from a practical point of co-operation.

We have seen what happened in jurisdictions in other countries. Many of us spoke about what happened in the United States when it had the silly legislation that said that it would use heavy fines and jail terms to beat up on people who do not protect endangered species.

We do know there are better solutions, even in Canada. Ducks Unlimited has had a very creative program for protecting waterfowl in the country and has been very effectual in building up the numbers of ducks and geese in Canada by asking landowners for co-operation, the very people who live their lives in tune with nature and who want to see these species protected. It is not that they do not want to protect these species. It is just that they cannot be expected to bear the full brunt of the cost. They will pay their share but they simply cannot afford to pay it all.

We saw a recent survey showing the number of landowners, in terms of western agriculture, that have disappeared in the last five years alone. It is down by about 25%. There is a huge problem in terms of people being able to make their living off the land. There is a huge social disruption just in people, let alone the number of endangered species that are talked about in terms of birds and wildlife.

I suggest that we need to look for a more creative approach. Britain has a lot of private trusts. Ducks Unlimited is one model. The model in the United States, which goes back 20 years, was the heavy-handed approach but that did not work. Why does the Liberal government not learn from examples of the past? Surely that is what this is all about. Society has a series of building blocks from which we learn and if we do not learn I think we would have to be classified as pretty stupid.

● (1340)

I will talk for a moment about what has worked in the past. When I was growing up in the Grande Prairie area of Alberta we were starting to lose an important species of waterfowl. The trumpeter swan was down to very low numbers. There were less than 50 in the entire world at the time.

A local conservationist named Dr. Bernard Hamm single-handedly undertook to restore the numbers. How did he do it? He did not ask the government to put in heavy handed legislation that would impose severe fines on people for restricting habitat. He went to the people involved. He went to the farmers and ranchers. He went to community groups. He spoke in the schools about the need to build up the numbers of this important species.

*Government Orders*

Those of us who have had the opportunity to watch trumpeter swans, even the few that existed at the time, know what a magnificent species they are. They fly. They teach their young to fly. They fly with an adult in front, an adult at the back and four young ones in between. They make their circuits, build up their wings and get ready for the big flight they take to Florida and south Texas. They fly 100 feet high. We can hear their trumpet. They are called trumpeter swans. It is a very true sound. All of us have benefited from Dr. Bernard Hamm's approach.

The approach the government is suggesting is much like the approach taken by the United States a few years ago. It would backfire. In the United States landowners were forced to protect habitat and endangered species with no compensation. Many of them got rid of endangered species so they would not have to deal with them or pay the fines. The government of the day was trying to protect species but its legislation had the opposite effect.

Which would be the better approach, that of Bernard Hamm or the current Liberal government? Bernard Hamm single-handedly convinced others to get involved in a co-operative approach to build up the trumpeter swan species so that today there are literally tens of thousands of them and we can all enjoy them.

The Liberal government seems intent on pushing through a heavy handed approach in the House after six years of knowing it would not work. Why does the government not listen to the people? Why does it not take a co-operative approach with landowners, farmers, ranchers, oil companies and lumber people?

The member for Sault Ste. Marie must understand this. He lives in Kenora—Rainy River or one of those ridings. Why does he not convince his counterpart he is bent on a path that would hurt endangered species instead of helping them? It does not make any sense. We need a co-operative approach.

Ducks Unlimited is a perfect model. It pays landowners to keep their fields in stubble and not put them in crop during the year. Baby ducks are hatched there. The numbers have been built up under this successful program. Surely we must learn something from the processes others have used. Otherwise what is society coming to?

I implore the Liberal government not to take the heavy-handed approach of fines and jail terms for landowners who enjoy endangered species and are intent on protecting them the best they can with their limited resources. If we asked landowners for a co-operative approach they would say yes, we would be happy to put our land into habitat to allow endangered species to grow. I have done it myself as a landowner. My family has 2,000 acres in Alberta. We have used the Ducks Unlimited approach. It has asked us to keep stubble in place and not seed certain fields. We have seen a tremendous buildup in waterfowl as a result.

Let us use that model. I implore the government not to use the heavy handed approach. It would not work. The government should learn something from what has happened in the United States. Farmers cannot afford to do it themselves. We need all Canadians to be involved. We need the government to pay compensation to help save the endangered species we all value.

●(1345)

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I come from Saskatchewan. In the history of Saskatchewan we have dealt with a lot of problems by using co-operation and respect for one another's rights. We have solved a lot using that approach.

Very seldom does government compulsion work. Governments, particularly the Liberal government, pay little or no attention to the consequences of their policies. The Liberal government demands that other people do expensive studies on the most minor of things to determine the impacts of its policies but does not do it itself.

A conference sponsored by 12 nations was held in Stockholm recently. It was called the Stockholm Progressive Summit. Members of the conference tried to figure out strategies to counter the dangerous trend developing in the world whereby people have been choosing right of centre and free market solutions to their problems. Conference members tried to plot a strategy to deal with the problems. It was quite a list. Thirty years ago they were called socialists. Twenty years ago they were called social democrats. Today they are called progressives.

The conference was called the Stockholm Progressive Summit. Can members guess who one of the 12 sponsors of the convention was? Canada was one of the sponsors. Can members guess who one of the chief speakers at the conference was? It was our Prime Minister. Now I know why the government that rules our country chose the colour of its party. It is clear to me today.

This type of conference leads to this sort of legislation. It is the same mentality. If anything is clear from history it is that socialism is a failed experiment, not an instrument of innovation. The government talks about an innovation agenda. When has the government ever innovated on anything? Some people say the only thing government ever created that was innovative was welfare.

I am not sure what long list of innovation governments have, especially this government. I know one thing. Socialism has created declining economies. It has created poverty. It has destroyed and undermined individual freedoms and property rights. It has undermined the rule of law. Where it has taken root and has strength we see declining countries.

The market system works well when governments create the proper environment. That environment consists of the rule of law, certainty, predictability, simplicity in the law so everyone understands the rules, stable monetary policy, national and personal security at home and abroad, and respect for the rights of the individual including liberty and property rights. This is very important.

There are a number of difficulties with the bill. Chief among them is that there has been no meaningful dialogue with the stakeholders involved, especially at the front end. The government is trying to carry on a dialogue after the decision is made. To me that is a public relations exercise. If we want good policy built on a solid foundation we need to have a dialogue at the front end. That has not been done with this legislation.

Another criticism I have of the government and its environmental policies is that they ignore the human element. We are part of the planet as well. Too many of the government's policies ignore the human element and the economy that must function in our society. If we want first class social services and a strong environment we need a first class economy.

An individual died in 1993 who was known as the equivalent to management circles that Einstein was to physics. His name was Dr. Deming. He was a critic of the way government policy is created. He said governments dictated results and created regulations and laws in a vacuum. He said such laws were totally unworkable and based on a lack of understanding of their impact on the economy.

• (1350)

Dr. Deming was preoccupied with creating quality services and goods and having an economy that produced these things. Any world class organization today that is well managed knows who Dr. Deming was. The Liberal government failed to involve stakeholders in developing its species at risk policy. It went back to its socialistic roots of trying to dictate results using government compulsion.

The government does not have a clue about the economic impact the species at risk legislation would have. The minister does not. He threw out a figure of \$45 million at one point but was not sure about it. It sounds like the Kyoto accord. He does not have a clue what the economic impact would be. Before the government shoves compulsory legislation like this down our throats it is high time we had a meaningful economic impact study.

President Reagan once described the Liberal approach to economic problems. He said if the thing is alive, moving and healthy, tax it. If that does not slow it down, regulate it into the ground. When the thing is almost dead, start subsidizing. That is Liberal policy.

Do members know what is missing for rural Canada? It is the third part. The government has been good regarding the first part. It has taxed and regulated rural Canada into the ground. It has been weak regarding the subsidizing part. Rural Canada is dying because of the government's policies.

Using President Reagan's model we must ask what Bill C-5 would do. Landowners would become slave labour to the state. They would have to be the state's stewards and carry out the responsibilities of the act. They would have to give up property rights without proper compensation and due process. It is a typical Liberal approach. I am sure the government learned it at the Stockholm conference. That is the way it does things.

Confiscating a citizen's property is a dangerous concept. Turning people into slave labour without compensation is another problem. What takes the cake about Bill C-5 is that if the slave labourers accidentally did something to an endangered species the government

would turn them into criminals. One of the principles of the rule of law is that we do not make our citizens criminals without a guilty mind. The government probably learned its approach at the Stockholm conference. It is the sort of thing they teach at those conferences. It is the socialistic or progressive way of doing things.

Maybe people in rural Canada should turn their land over to one of the companies in central Canada the government likes to support. The regulation thing would be resolved. The taxation thing would be resolved. The people would get money from the government. It would not be taxing them. The subsidies would pour in and they would be healthy. Maybe that is what they should do. They should voluntarily turn over their land.

I can name a whole slew of companies that seem to have a direct pipeline to our enlightened leader and dictatorship in Ottawa. Forestry, agriculture and rural industries are not part of that family compact arrangement. They are shut out. The government has a hostile agenda toward them.

In summary, we in my party cannot support Bill C-5 for a whole host of reasons. The bill has little or no regard for the impact it would have on the rural economy and people's livelihoods. It reveals an arrogance and contempt for citizens and property rights. It undermines a simple principle of the rule of law in a democratic society: we do not make criminals out of citizens without a guilty mind.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1355)

[*English*]

### 2002 WINTER OLYMPICS

**Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Canada's outstanding performance at the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

Much has already been said about the success of Canada's men's and women's hockey teams, our speed skaters, figure skaters, aerial freestylers, the fact that so many of our team finished in the top 10 of their sport and that such a large number of our athletes received medals.

I also pay tribute to the United States for its capacity to produce the Olympics with such success in the aftermath of September 11, and to the International Olympic Committee for reminding us what the world was like prior to the tragic events of last September.

In particular and most importantly I commend Canada's Olympic chef de mission, our own Sally Rehorick of Fredericton, New Brunswick who handled the early controversy and considerable expectations of our team with class and great competence and made Canada and Fredericton very proud.

[*Translation*]

To Sally, congratulations and bravo.

*S. O. 31*

[English]

**LORNE HENDERSON**

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is with regret that I rise to recognize the passing of former provincial Ontario cabinet minister Lorne Henderson.

Lorne had a long and distinguished career of public service in his community and in his province that spanned 56 years. Though he held a number of cabinet posts in the provincial cabinet of Bill Davis, he is best known for his role as minister of agriculture.

Tribute was recently paid at our local Renfrew county federation of agriculture meeting to Lorne as someone who will be remembered as having the ability to set aside partisan political differences to work in the best interests of all farmers.

At Queen's Park he chaired an unofficial agriculture caucus made up of all rural members with farm concerns. Farmers knew they had a man who would listen and who could understand their business. A farmer by trade and inclination Lorne Henderson loved people and he loved his province. He was the consummate grassroots politician.

A more fitting tribute cannot be made except to recognize Lorne Henderson as the farmer's champion.

\* \* \*

• (1400)

**2002 WINTER OLYMPICS**

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I take this occasion to congratulate CBC television for its coverage of the Salt Lake City Olympics which concluded Sunday evening.

During the past two weeks millions of people watched, listened to and logged on to CBC's Olympic coverage. Millions of Canadians were connected to CBC last Sunday afternoon alone. Once again CBC brought us together from coast to coast and created a spirit of shared joy and pride at watching our athletes compete with great sportsmanship and skill.

CBC provided insightful commentary for each sport and excellent coverage of all events, in both official languages. This is precisely the role of our public broadcaster which is to bring a uniquely Canadian perspective to the events in our lives.

Please join me in congratulating the CBC for its outstanding coverage of the Salt Lake City Olympics.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**VICTOR HUGO**

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to remark to the members of the House of Commons that on February 26, 1802, one of the greatest writers ever was born. Today we celebrate the bicentennial of Victor Hugo's birth.

He was a poet, novelist, journalist, polemicist, historian and politician. His life was richer for all the battles he waged, particularly those in defence of freedom and against the death penalty.

His works are all the more important because they encompass every level of language and every genre. Who has not heard of *Les Misérables*, *Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné* or even *Notre Dame de Paris*? He set his novels at the time of the struggle for freedom and dignity during the middle ages, or during the July revolution in France, but his accounts remain relevant for the youth of today.

I would like to highlight this special day by reading this quote from Victor Hugo: "Memories constitute our strength... Let us never forget noteworthy anniversaries".

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**DRINKING WATER**

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Abitibi has the best tasting water in Canada.

In an international water tasting competition that brought together participants from six countries and 18 U.S. states in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, from February 20 to 24, the Canadian municipalities of Barraute and Senneterre came in first and second place, respectively, in the category for municipalities with the best tasting water.

In Saint-Mathieu d'Harricana, Parmalat is currently building an ultramodern water export plant for Eaux Vives, which represents an investment of \$52 million.

\* \* \*

**ARMOTEC**

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to talk about the successes of Quebec businesses, especially those in my riding.

Recently, Armotec, a Drummondville company, was named Quebec's top exporting SMB by the National Bank.

Armotec manufactures hardware for kitchen cabinets and office furniture. It offers 3,089 permutations of the Lazy Susan. Founded in 1980, it employs a staff of 60. Over 60% of its total sales are made outside Canada.

Last year, shareholders François Beaudoin and Guy Rousseau doubled the company's floor area, the eighth expansion in Armotec's history.

Thanks to research and development of new products and top-notch personnel, this SMB has tripled its sales since 1996. This is another example of Quebec's strong entrepreneurship.

Congratulations to Armotec on 22 years of success.

[English]

### EDUCATION

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the GST the Liberal government's greed knows no limits. I did not think the GST could get any worse but trust the Liberal government to find a way.

Its latest cash grab is targeted at, of all places, schools. School boards took the finance minister to court to make him pay 100% of the GST rebates for busing. The court ruled against the finance minister so he has decided to change the GST act retroactively so he does not have to hand over the rebates he owes the school boards.

How can the government say it cares about education when it is taking millions away from our school boards? That money could go toward more teachers and textbooks, but the finance minister is acting like a schoolyard bully, shaking down our schools for every cent he can get. What is next, the lunch money?

Trust the Liberals. They once promised to kill the GST. They have not just broken that promise, they have broken it, stomped on it and run over it with a bus.

Changing the law to squeeze an extra \$70 million out of the school boards? The Liberal government has gotten way too arrogant and it is time to replace it with New Democrats committed to cutting the GST and improving, not taxing education.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

### BREAST CANCER

**Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in the House today to congratulate the diverse group of energetic citizens from Stratford in the ready for a cure 2002 breast cancer dragon boat paddle.

This fundraising campaign began February 14 and will end July 26. It is the first time ever that a 40 foot dragon boat will make its way through the Rideau Canal. The ready for a cure campaign will be the longest dragon boat paddle in Canadian history. The journey will be physically enduring and the participants will paddle approximately 17 kilometres a day from Kingston to Ottawa in the summer. The group's goal is to raise \$100,000 in support of breast cancer education, research and treatment.

We congratulate the cure fundraising campaign for taking the initiative to increase public awareness of the impact of breast cancer on the lives of Canadians. We offer best wishes to all participants in this historic event.

\* \* \*

### TAXATION

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, the government is now tightening up the rules on who qualifies for a disability tax credit. This tax credit allows the disabled to compensate for the extra costs they incur because they are disabled.

MPs' offices are being flooded with complaints from constituents with genuine disabilities who have qualified for disability tax credit for years. They are suddenly being told they no longer qualify.

*S. O. 31*

Since coming to office in 1993 the government has balanced the nation's books by drastically reducing transfers to the provinces, effectively gutting Canada's health care system. The government has also cut back on the EI system to the point where only a third of the unemployed now qualify for benefits while the EI fund has a multi-billion dollar surplus.

First it was the sick and the unemployed and now it is the disabled. Has the government no conscience?

\* \* \*

### CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the priorities of the Liberal government are so backward that we have yet another report that Correctional Service Canada will make life a little bit better for those long-suffering inmates. Driving ranges, horse stables, fly-fishing and big screen TVs were not enough for these misunderstood criminals. We now have to spend \$500 million to upgrade the cottage style lodging these inmates have grown accustomed to.

The solicitor general challenged critics to look inside our prison system and stated it was not a great place to be. I visited these facilities and they are better than the barracks our troops live in. These convicted criminals are enjoying a better lifestyle than many of our seniors and fixed income citizens are enduring.

This philosophy began with the past commissioner Ole Ingstrup. Unfortunately this philosophy appears to be alive and well with the new commissioner. When will the solicitor general acknowledge this philosophy does not work?

If the government has a half a billion dollars to spend, the priority should not be Correctional Service Canada and its whiny inmates.

\* \* \*

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Mr. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been exactly 40 years since John Glenn became the first American to orbit Earth on February 20, 1962. Since then the world has seen new horizons open up in space travel. We are proud of the Canadian astronauts who have participated in these innovations as their contributions to space science and research are so vital.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Steve MacLean. Yesterday the industry minister announced that Mr. MacLean will be the next Canadian in space. He will fly aboard the space shuttle *Endeavour* in 2003. Steve MacLean, a physicist from Ottawa, first went into space in 1992. This time he will perform a spacewalk from the international space station. He will make all Canadians proud.

*S. O. 31*

The last 40 years have seen innovations beyond anyone's imagination. With the help of the government's assistance to science and technology we look forward with excitement to what the future will bring.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[Translation]

### 2002 WINTER OLYMPICS

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on February 23, five young men, all of them Quebecers, stood on the top step of the podium after a riveting performance in the 5,000 metre short track speed skating relay. Expectations were high, and our five competitors showed that they were up to the challenge.

Quebec's team consisted of Marc Gagnon, a triple medallist in the Salt Lake City games, Jonathan Guilmette and Mathieu Turcotte, with two medals each, François-Louis Tremblay and Éric Bédard.

This was the first Olympics for François-Louis Tremblay of Boucherville. After having devoted over 17 years to speed skating, he is going home with an Olympic medal around his neck, and a gold one at that! We are proud that he has realized his dream. As the member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes, I pay tribute to François-Louis' courage and determination.

Let us celebrate the magnificent performance of the short track speed skating team, and of all the athletes who took part in the 19th Winter Olympics.

Congratulations, François-Louis, and thank you!

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[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House of three recent environmental initiatives that will positively impact my riding of Erie—Lincoln.

Under the Great Lakes sustainability fund the Niagara River will benefit from two restoration projects totalling \$80,000. The first program is the Niagara River area of concern fish barrier project which will improve fish habitat by eliminating physical barriers to fish migration within the Niagara River watershed.

Under the agricultural diffuse source control strategy implementation landowners will work with conservation authorities to reduce water pollution and soil erosion from rural properties.

Efforts are also being made to save the eastern Massasauga rattlesnake under the habitat stewardship program for species at risk.

I welcome municipal and citizen project partnerships with the government. Protecting our environment is vital to the goal of healthy and sustainable communities. We are all stewards of the environment.

### CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government and the minister of agriculture have spent plenty of time congratulating themselves for the recent victory over the United States concerning the Canadian Wheat Board.

However, celebrating this result is nothing short of delusional. The investigation did conclude that the wheat board is an unfair trader because of its special monopoly rights. Now the U.S. administration will certainly launch countervailing duty and anti-dumping complaints against Canadian farm families because of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Canadian farmers will have to continue this fight at the World Trade Organization and through the U.S. commerce department's anti-dumping complaint process. Significant costs will be borne directly by the western Canadian wheat and barley producers who are forced to market their grain through the Canadian Wheat Board. This is despite the fact that many farmers want the monopoly removed. Farmers should not be forced to pay to defend a system that they do not want.

If the Liberals would finally listen to farmers and the Canadian Alliance and make participation in the Canadian Wheat Board voluntary the basis of these complaints would be removed and millions of dollars saved.

\* \* \*

### SPORTS

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, everybody loves a winner, especially governments. To hear the Prime Minister talk yesterday one would think that Canadian athletes won 17 medals at Salt Lake City simply because of the few paltry dollars governments put into amateur sport.

The extra funding this year represented \$4,500 per team member attending the Olympics. This equates approximately to the price of a ticket to see the hockey game between Canada and the United States. Wayne Gretzky did more for Canadian sport and Canadian patriotism in nine minutes than the Prime Minister has done in nine years.

What our athletes need from all of us, and yes, especially the press, is our support, encouragement and financial assistance throughout their careers, not just when they win.

It is not who wins or loses, it is how one plays the game. Our athletes of whom we are so proud could play even better if we supported them properly.

\* \* \*

### HEALTH

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over 45,000 Canadians die every year as a result of illness caused by tobacco. It is the most pressing public health issue in this country.

My constituency of Kitchener Centre and all the communities within the regional municipality of Waterloo require all restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, billiard and bingo halls to be 100% smoke free.

*Oral Questions*

I am proud of the co-operation from businesses and individuals in enabling all regional residents to enjoy our community in a completely smoke free environment. I ask the House to join me in congratulating Waterloo region for achieving a gold standard from the Ontario tobacco free network.

Every year 80,000 Canadians die from heart attacks and strokes. At least 20,000 of these deaths are due to smoking. That is 55 people each and every day.

February is heart month and provides an opportunity for Canadians to increase their awareness of the risks of heart disease and stroke. It is a good time to think about lifestyle changes, such as becoming smoke free to prevent future health problems.

\* \* \*

•(1415)

**REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES**

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, recent developments underscore the urgent need for reproductive technologies legislation.

Two weeks ago a Kentucky fertility specialist pledged to clone a human being. His team was to begin this work last week outside the United States, in an undisclosed country. He says he has 10 couples willing to participate. If he were to bring this experiment to Canada, there would be no law to stop him.

In January we learned that Industry Canada has been issuing patents on human genes for years. The health committee was under the impression this was not happening and recommended against gene patenting.

Last week in the health committee the minister pledged to introduce legislation by May 10. We hope that she will keep her word. We hope that such legislation will not be introduced only to die with the prorogation of this House. We have seen that game before, with Bill C-47.

Canadians are waiting.

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**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we understand that the government has abandoned its disastrous plan to ratify the Kyoto treaty before the G-8 summit in Kananaskis in June.

Alberta's environment minister says that the deal will cost the Canadian economy \$25 billion to \$40 billion per year and that Alberta will pay a disproportionate share. What a gift to Albertans this would be on the eve of the G-8 summit.

Will the Prime Minister confirm that the government will not mar the Alberta summit by ratifying a treaty that would be a death warrant for the Alberta economy?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has been saying for a long time that climate change is a very serious problem around the globe. The position of the government is that it would like to sign the Kyoto agreement.

We have made some progress in the negotiations, for example, the recognition of sinks, which would help Canadians because we have a lot of land that could be used for that. We want to have recognition for the clean energy we are exporting to the United States. We are still negotiating that. There was a meeting between the provincial ministers and the federal minister yesterday and they have reported progress.

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government is going to flush the economy down the sink.

[Translation]

For months now the Canadian Alliance has been calling for this government to explain to us how the Kyoto accord will be implemented and how much it will cost.

Yesterday the Minister of the Environment defended his lack of a plan by saying that it would be inappropriate at this time because the work has not yet been done.

My question is therefore a simple one. How can this government commit to ratifying the Kyoto protocol when it has no plan and does not even know what the costs will be?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is why we hold meetings between the federal and provincial ministers, in order to have all the facts on the table. The objective of this government, however, is to ratify the Kyoto protocol when we have obtained satisfaction.

[English]

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, dissension does not only exist here in this caucus, but Liberal premier Roger Grimes says that Kyoto will put us at a competitive disadvantage with our American counterparts, while Nancy Hughes Anthony of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce warns that we will be extremely uncompetitive if we go forward. Businesses and the provinces know that Kyoto will be a disaster for the economy, and not just in the west, and there is no evidence that it will do anything to reduce global warming.

How can the government blindly rush into a deal that will cause nothing but economic pain and no environmental gain?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very important that all countries of the world be preoccupied with the issue of climate change because it can cause problems not only today but in the generations to come. A good government thinks about the future. It is possible in Canada to remain competitive and make sure that our air is not polluted.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government signed the Kyoto protocol in 1997. Five years later, it says it is just beginning to develop a plan to implement it.

*Oral Questions*

Why on earth did it sign this protocol if it did not have a plan at that time? Why should Canadians trust the government to come up with a fair and efficient plan when it still will not look at the real costs of signing the treaty?

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the proudest moments I have had as a member of the government and a parliamentary secretary was travelling to Bonn and being part of the Kyoto negotiations.

It is important to realize we had an aboriginal leader as part of our delegation. We had industry and we had non-government people. The government knows consultation needs to be meaningful. We will not stoop to crass regionalism using worst case scenarios. We have put \$1.5 billion into this and we will continue to be committed.

• (1420)

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I travelled to Trieste and heard what the other countries were talking about in Europe. I also saw how little Canada had done in terms of planning for the Kyoto protocol.

The environment minister claims it will cost maybe around \$500 million. Yesterday the former assistant deputy minister of finance said no studies support that claim. Today an economist says that the government's own studies say that Kyoto will cost many times more than the minister claims. The fact is Kyoto will kill jobs and economic growth.

Why will the government not fess up to what it—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment.

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again we are hearing hyperbole and fearmongering.

Much has been made about the disadvantages that ratifying Kyoto could possibly cost the government. More important is that Canada pays \$1 billion a month in extreme climate changes and how to combat that within Canada.

I would also point out that the government has continued to invite the United States to the table. We are very cognizant this is a global issue. It is something that has to be dealt with on the international stage.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is now talking about hope regarding highway construction in Quebec, but during the election campaign the Liberals made all sorts of firm commitments totalling billions of dollars.

What was a certainty has become a hope. If the government is less categorical today, it is simply because it is not prepared to invest all money that it promised.

Instead of talking about hope, could the Prime Minister confirm, as he suggested in the House, that the \$2 billion promised for

strategic infrastructure will be entirely available as soon as the act is passed?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, we said that we would work to achieve that goal.

In the case of highway 30, the hon. member clearly indicated that it would be a toll road.

We have a responsibility regarding highways. Therefore, we said that we would work within infrastructure programs. Under such programs, the provincial government must also pay its share. So far, they only want the federal government to pay, while they would get all the credit.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this really does not make sense.

If the money is to become available as soon as the act is passed, as the Prime Minister is suggesting, how does he explain the fact that the Minister of Finance and his Secretary of State for Financial Institutions are continuing to say that only the savings on the service of the debt will be invested in infrastructure? At that rate, it would take seven years to achieve the objective of \$2 billion mentioned in the budget.

Could the Prime Minister now explain this to us?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if tomorrow we decided to build a highway, it would take a few weeks before we would actually be spending money. It takes time to build a highway.

This is why the Minister of Finance, like any reasonable person, is anticipating that these amounts will have to be spent over a period of several years.

The Minister of Finance is not like the Bloc Québécois. He is well aware that bridges are not built in a week.

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government is being very careful to avoid answering our questions regarding the amount of money available to fulfill its commitments with respect to highways.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister confirm that the portion of the \$2 billion infrastructure fund allocated for highways may reach 40%—or \$800 million—for all of Canada, and that Quebec can realistically count on one quarter of this amount, or \$200 million?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, we know that other infrastructure funds already exist for highways. We know that there is a \$2 billion fund for strategic infrastructure.

With the participation of our partners, we may also choose highways. However, there is no question today of determining the exact amounts that will be go to each area in Canada.

*Oral Questions*

● (1425)

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, by adding the \$200 million that may be granted to Quebec for highway infrastructure to the \$108 million set aside for roads, we come up with an envelope of \$308 million.

Will the Minister of Transport admit that the total of these two amounts is still insufficient to cover the official commitments made by the federal government for highway 30, which total \$357 million, not including the commitments made with respect to highways 175, 185 and 50?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems as though the Bloc Québécois is getting into the habit of inflating figures. But when it comes to highways, we can say that we need the participation of partners, including if possible, partners from the private sector.

\* \* \*

[English]

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last year the CIBC racked up \$1.7 billion in profits yet paid only \$92 million in income tax, an effective tax rate of only 5%. For CIBC bank tellers, the situation was quite different. On a \$24,000 salary there was a 20% tax rate. Even Bay Street analysts cannot figure out how the CIBC did it.

Perhaps the finance minister could explain how the CIBC did it, because ordinary Canadians would just love the same treatment.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in 2000 Canadian banks and their subsidiaries paid about \$3.5 billion in income taxes and capital taxes to the federal government. In fact they paid close to \$6 billion to all levels of government.

The hon. member talked about the CIBC. The numbers I have in front of me show that 35% of CIBC's net income came from Canadian operations and that the banks paid substantial income tax. In fact their tax rate is close to 47%.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, even the finance minister must be able to see that something does not add up here.

The CIBC claims that most of its money was made in the Caribbean. Come on. The CIBC has 42 Caribbean branches and 1,170 Canadian branches. With 2% of its branches, the CIBC racked up 70% of its profits? I do not think so.

The finance minister has a choice, either close this gaping tax loophole or look the other way while all the other banks escape paying their fair share of taxes next year.

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have just given the hon. member the numbers for the CIBC. Those are published numbers. She can check them. In fact, probably something does not add up and I think Tony Blair pointed that out to her in this House.

**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I understand the Prime Minister has now talked to President Bush about softwood lumber. I wonder, in that conversation this morning did the Prime Minister ask the president to intervene directly with the U.S. commerce department? Did he ask the president to intervene directly with the U.S. lumber coalition? Did he receive a specific assurance of any initiatives by the president and if so, what initiatives will President Bush be taking?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think that when I talk with the president about these problems he takes them very seriously. I do not have to give him a list of the people he has to talk to. He knows what to do. He is the president and he has the authority. He wants to make sure that trade relations between Canada and the United States are good. He is looking into the problems that we discussed this morning.

As I said yesterday, I am hopeful that we will find a solution that will be acceptable both to Canadians and the American interests.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister said yesterday was that he was confident that there will be a solution before March 21. He cannot change the record now. U.S. ambassador Paul Cellucci is quoted as saying that he would doubt that.

The ambassador is also quoted as suggesting the United States would consider suspending duties against Canadian softwood to allow more time for negotiations. Is that a conditional offer from the Americans? Specifically, would suspension of duties be conditional on Canada dropping our case against the United States at the World Trade Organization?

● (1430)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the president did not mention any of the proposals of the leader of the fifth party.

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**MONEY LAUNDERING**

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's largest securities regulator has revealed that Canadian firms are holding some 13,000 offshore accounts in jurisdictions blacklisted by the OECD. Things are worse than even the provincial securities regulator knows about because we obtained government documents showing that Fintrac will not even be up and running until at least June.

Why the delay in closing these money laundering loopholes? Why does the government not act now to stop this money laundering?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. member did not get all the documents. The fact is that Fintrac is up and running. It was up and running as of November last year. It is already reporting on suspicious operations. Obviously it is adding to its files as time goes on. That is the reason for new regulations.

*Oral Questions*

Fintrac is alive and well and has been operating since November.

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the briefing note we have from the minister, which was published after November, said "Implementation of a cross-border currency reporting regime is not expected until at least June 2002".

The director of enforcement at the OSE said "Canada has to accept some responsibility for its reputation as a haven for dubious activity".

Why does the government not end its reputation for being a haven for money laundering by acting now and enforcing the regulations that it has brought in?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, internationally this is a file which is evolving. Canada is one of the leaders in dealing with IOSCO, the international organization of securities regulators. Canada is a leader with the financial action task force. Obviously the whole question of customer identification and how this is working is evolving from country to country.

We also understand that this cannot be done in only one nation which is why the Canadian leadership in this area, exhibited through the G-20 and the IMF at the meetings in Ottawa, has become so important. The fact is that Canada is a leader in this area.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister informed the House that, if the Government of Quebec made highway 185 a priority, the federal government would agree to invest in it, as promised before the elections.

Since there are five memoranda of agreement already prepared, one of them for highway 185, which are just waiting for signature by the Minister of Transport, can the Prime Minister tell us what is keeping the Minister of Transport from signing and committing the federal government to keeping its promises?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are not the only ones that have to sign the agreement; the government of Quebec does as well. I met with Mr. Ménard last week and it was a good meeting. We hope there will be an agreement soon.

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is our belief is that, if the Minister of Transport is delaying signature of the agreements submitted by Quebec, it is because the money is not available.

Will the Minister of Transport confirm that, if he is delaying signature of the protocols, it is because the Liberal promises made before and during the election campaign far exceed the funds available? In other words, the money promised is not available.

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government has the firm intention to build highways in the country, including the province of Quebec, and to negotiate with the province of Quebec. I am sure that, after the agreement, we will be able to start on the infrastructure and highways.

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has placed two preconditions on Canadian support for military action against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.

The first condition is that there must be a coalition. Yesterday British Prime Minister Tony Blair made that coalition a reality by announcing that the United Kingdom would play a full part in actions to stop Iraq from developing weapons of mass destruction.

Will the government now support Canada's allies in countering the very real global threat of the Iraqi weapons program?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has been in the forefront with its allies in seeking a stop to development of nuclear arms by Iraq. We have acted through the United Nations. We continue to do so. We continue to back our allies in this very important matter. We will continue to operate within the confines of international law and international relations in a way that is in the best interests of Canada, and not necessarily following the lead of anybody else.

• (1435)

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, they are not even following the lead of each other. The minister should talk to the Prime Minister. The minister himself said on Thursday, February 14, that he was waiting for evidence of Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program. Now he has it. A CSIS report released yesterday confirms Hussein is "determined to develop nuclear weapons capability at the earliest opportunity".

Canadian intelligence agents have already advised the government of that fact. The minister is running out of excuses. He has a coalition. He has evidence. Now he has a decision to make. Will he support our allies or will he make more excuses? Which will it be?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously the member opposite knows a lot more about the coalition than anybody on this side of the House. So far our colleagues seem to be better at coalition dividing than coalition building.

In any event, the importance is that the United States has taken no decision in the matter. No country has taken any decision in the matter. We remain firm in working within the United Nations context. There is nothing new in the CSIS report that we are not aware of and has not been forming government policy for many years.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]***GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT**

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Human Resources Development has admitted her responsibility for the injustice that the amended application form did to seniors who qualify for the guaranteed income supplement

Does the minister intend to take her responsibility all the way and give back to Quebec's and Canada's seniors the \$3.2 billion she owes them?

*[English]*

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times in the House, the government's primary objective is to ensure that those who are eligible for the guaranteed income supplement actually receive it. As the hon. member points out in that regard, we are sending seniors a simplified application form to make it easier for them to apply. This will touch about 100,000 seniors.

We are also extending our communication and outreach efforts to reach vulnerable groups. In this regard, the role of members of parliament is tremendously important and I would like to congratulate the member for Frontenac—Mégantic for his particular style of outreach in his community. He knows his cities well and is ensuring that seniors get their benefits.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when a citizen owes the government money, or when the government wants to save rich families money on trusts right before Christmas, it is amazing how creative this government can be.

Does the Prime Minister, who is the member for Saint-Maurice, the riding next door to mine, plan on demonstrating as much creativity to ensure that seniors receive the money owing them as he did in coming to the assistance of billionaire family trusts?

*[English]*

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that as part of the guaranteed income supplement program there is already retroactivity built into the structure. He might also be interested to know that, particularly with regard to Quebec, we have contacted directly over 600,000 clients to explain both the old age security and the guaranteed income supplement. We have contacted 2,000 service providers and seniors groups to help us with our endeavours here.

\* \* \*

**CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in response to questions regarding the expenditure of \$500 million to add more condo quarters to existing prisons, the solicitor general repeatedly said:

We have offenders in this country. They have to be in prison. They have to pay the price for their crimes.

I ask the solicitor general one simple question. Does he believe that housing killers and sex offenders in these cozy, open concept, cottage style prisons is adequately paying the price for the crimes they have committed?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, a decision was made about two years ago that we had to provide maximum security facilities for women offenders. That has been done and it is only appropriate that it has been done. When women offenders commit a crime, they must pay for the crime and they must have rehabilitation.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last summer Darlene Glidden, who was incarcerated for manslaughter, walked away from the Edmonton Institution for Women. Glidden was the eighth prisoner to exit this minimum-medium facility. Denise Fayette, housed also in the Edmonton institution's cottage-like quarters, was murdered by one of her roommates.

I ask the solicitor general again. Why does he support the use of these types of facilities?

• (1440)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, on his question of why we have maximum security facilities, we have maximum security facilities to ensure these individuals are kept in a very secure environment. Any escape that does take place from a minimum security institution is investigated by Correctional Service Canada and by the police.

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**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Tony Ianno (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the vital importance of immigrants to this country is known in Canada and around the world. Could the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration tell the House and the country what the minister intends to do to ensure that the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, when implemented, will continue to enrich Canada?

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I confirm today in the House the government's decision to have the new immigration act and regulations take effect on June 28 of this year.

*[English]*

Regarding the skilled workers who apply before December 17, there are three decisions. First, they will be evaluated with the old grid until January 1, 2003. Second, after that date their passage mark will remain at 70 points. Third, those who withdraw their application before paper screening qualify for a refund.

For the future grid and passage mark, I will wait for the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a week ago the Prime Minister was humiliated in Moscow on Kyoto. In response he said he wanted Canada to ratify it by the G-8 summit in June. Now the Minister of the Environment says there is no deadline for ratification. The Prime Minister has been humiliated once on Kyoto and it looks as though he will be again at the G-8 summit without ratification.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. Will Canada ratify Kyoto by June? Yes or no.

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while I reject the premise of the hon. member's question, I can respond that the premise of timing on the ratification decision will depend on the progress of our discussions internationally on clean energy exports and our domestic consultations. The government wants to present a detailed plan to know what the costs are and who will pay.

The decision to ratify the protocol can be made only once we are satisfied we have a workable plan for meeting the target and the necessary analysis and consultation.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing about this consultation and cost analysis by the government. In fact, we have been hearing about it all the way back to the 1997 Liberal red book when they said "The costs of climate change are too high for us not to take action now".

Will the Prime Minister keep that commitment in the red book and assure the House that a full and comprehensive analysis will be completed before the G-8 meeting in June, including the cost of not ratifying Kyoto?

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would remind my hon. colleague that the NDP government of Saskatchewan is asking for exactly the type of consultation the government is undertaking.

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister said in Russia that Canadians will have to have some modifications to the Kyoto protocol. I would assume that he shares the view that Canada must receive credit for the export of clean energy, specifically clean natural gas and hydroelectric power to the U.S.

Is this one of the modifications the Prime Minister referred to in Russia and, if so, what concrete steps is he now taking to ensure Canada receives credit for clean energy exports?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. It is exactly for what we are asking. While the negotiations on Kyoto were going on in Germany last summer, I discussed Canada's request for credit for clean energy in Genoa. When the Deputy Prime Minister was negotiating in Germany, he raised the same issue. It was also debated at other meetings. We are still insisting that if we provide clean energy for the American market we should have credit for it because we are using Canadian resources to achieve clean energy.

• (1445)

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, on November 2, 1999, the Minister of Natural Resources stated "Canada has engaged the active assistance of provinces, environ-

mental organizations and the private sector in developing a Kyoto implementation plan". Three years later we still have no rules for industry's early action and no provincial consensus.

How is it possible that a plan cobbled together in two months can make up for five years of inaction and still have the elements of an analysis sector by sector, province by province with regulations to have credibility with industry, the provinces and the environmental community?

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has delineated the exact people who we are going to in order to continue this consultation. It is interesting that on one hand we hear we are rushing into it and on the other hand we hear from members opposite that we are dragging our feet. For consultation to be meaningful, it has to be productive.

We will continue to do everything we can to have people recognize the value of substituting cleaner energy sources such as natural gas and hydroelectricity. More important, we will make it a plan that will work in Canada and it will be Canadian made.

\* \* \*

**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Pakistani and American authorities are continuing to probe whether there was a Canadian al-Qaeda link to the Daniel Pearl kidnapping and murder.

We already know that Ahmad Said al-Kadr, a Canadian citizen arrested in connection with the bombing of the Egyptian embassy, was released by Pakistan in 1996 after our Prime Minister intervened on his behalf. Al-Kadr returned to Canada and then disappeared into Afghanistan or Pakistan. In December he was listed by the U.S. as the ninth most wanted al-Qaeda member.

What assurance can the government give us that it will be more vigilant about the Canadian connection to the Daniel Pearl case than it has been with the other al-Qaeda operatives in Canada?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague is well aware, CSIS and the RCMP deal with every allegation of wrongdoing. As far as this case is concerned, it is not confirmed or denied whether there is an investigation. It is up to the RCMP to decide whether it will investigate or not. Security intelligence is handled by CSIS. It is a very efficient organization and supplies the proper information to all departments of government.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the group suspected of killing Daniel Pearl, Jaish-e-Mohammed, has ties to Canada. One of the suspects in the attack on the Indian parliament last December was arrested when trying to board a flight to Toronto.

*Oral Questions*

We know that the Prime Minister intervened, albeit unwittingly, for a Pakistan based al-Qaeda operative. *[English]*

In the U.S., Attorney General John Ashcroft regularly informs the public about wanted terrorist suspects and announces threats.

What is the minister doing beyond blandly assuring everybody that the RCMP is co-operating with other police forces?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we have to do: have an efficient police force in this country. We have to have a security intelligence agency.

This government put its money where its mouth was in the last budget. In the last two years we have put \$10 billion into the public safety envelope to make sure that this country remains one of the safest countries in the world, if not the safest.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the conditions under which the prisoners are being detained at the Guantanamo base are troubling. They are living in a kind of chicken coop with bright lighting day and night, and are subjected to uninterrupted interrogations without the right to a lawyer.

Yet the Geneva convention is clear: prisoners must not be subjected to any degrading treatment, and the rule of law, including the right to legal counsel, continue to apply.

Under the circumstances, how can the Minister of Foreign Affairs still claim that the Geneva convention is being respected at Guantanamo?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have already pointed out in the House that the government of the United States has assured us, and the rest of the world, that it respects the Geneva conventions, that the treatment of the Guantanamo detainees conforms to international standards for humanitarian rights and that the Red Cross is in a position to inform the world if this is not the case. To date, we are satisfied that the American government is keeping its word.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the minister look at the press review for today.

Yesterday, General Michael Lenhert stated that the majority of detainees at Guantanamo were classified as "undetermined", whereas last week a U.S. judge, Judge Matz, found that no American court was empowered to determine whether the prisoners were prisoners of war, because Guantanamo is not located in the United States.

Can the minister tell us who, if not a court, has determined which detainees were prisoners of war and which were not?

•(1450)

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is obviously the American authorities, who have the prisoners on their territory, who determine this.

**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said he was confident there would be a solution to the softwood lumber problem before the date of expiration, whatever that might mean.

No one else seems to know what solution he is talking about. We have seen nothing from either the U.S. government or the U.S. industry that would indicate the structure of a deal. There is nothing on market access and nothing on transition to a free trade world.

If the Prime Minister has a deal in the works, why is he keeping it a secret?

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to share with the House the information that our provinces' international trade negotiators will be in Washington tomorrow and on Friday again precisely to continue the very good work toward a long term, policy based solution. This is exactly what we will be doing in Washington in the course of the week.

I am very grateful that the Prime Minister raised it with President Bush this morning, demonstrating the total commitment of the government to a policy based, long term solution for our softwood lumber export industry.

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that was hardly an answer to my question.

The Prime Minister has to be aware that his incoherent ramblings will be taken to mean something more than they were intended to. Even the Prime Minister declares there is a deal in the works and the whole thing is so poorly conceived that nobody seems to know what he is talking about.

Canada must be careful not to jeopardize its case at the WTO, where it is sure to win. Will the Prime Minister assure Canadians that Canada's lumber case at the WTO will not be dropped as part of any agreement?

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all only the Alliance does not know what is in the deal on which we are working. It is public knowledge that we are changing our forestry management practices in the direction of transparency and getting them closer to market practices.

I would like to say that while we are pursuing this track indeed we are continuing at the WTO. Today I have notice of an intention of going to a NAFTA panel immediately, once the U.S. administration gives a final determination, should we get there. Indeed, we are still working on both tracks.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

The Israeli and Palestinian peoples are locked in an escalating series of violent confrontations marked by increased loss of life and property.

*Oral Questions*

Will the secretary of state tell the House what initiatives the federal government is undertaking to promote an end to the violence and the renewal of the peace process in the Middle East?

**Hon. Gar Knutson (Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are deeply concerned about the escalation of the conflict and we condemn the violence and terrorist acts. We offer condolences to the victims and families on both sides of this tragic conflict.

We call upon Chairman Arafat to take all necessary action to prevent further attacks. We believe that Israel should refrain from actions that result in civilian casualties and destruction of civilian infrastructure and could inflame the situation further.

We remain in touch with the leaders of the region. Canada stands ready to assist the cause of peace in any way it can. To that end we will ensure that the G-8 foreign ministers review the situation in the Middle East when they meet in Canada in June.

\* \* \*

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, today at the finance committee I asked Serge Dupont, who is the general director of tax policy branch of the Department of Finance, “Did this federal government do an impact study on the \$24 air tax this government is going to implement?” He said “Those studies have not been done”. I asked Bill Elliott, who is the assistant deputy director of the Department of Transport, and he said “No such studies were conducted”.

My question is, how can the government be so irresponsible as to levy a massive tax on the air industry without having done one single study on what the impact would be on an already crippled industry?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, number one, the government was facing an unprecedented situation and obviously had to respond. It was deemed necessary to ask those who were utilizing the services to do so.

However, if the hon. member will take a look at the map that was produced by the Department of Transport, he will see as an example that many northern airports are not covered by the tax, are exempted from the tax. In fact, the tax really applies where the security needs are greatest.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

[Translation]

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the Secretary of State responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec informed us of the decision made by Canada Economic Development to end its financial contribution to Technobase's operations, in Saint-Hubert.

Could the secretary of state tell us exactly when this contribution will end and, in the meantime, will Canada Economic Development

continue to pay the former top fundraiser of the Liberal Party of Canada in Quebec, Clément Joly, \$300 an hour for doing nothing?

**Hon. Claude Drouin (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Technobase will finalize the review of its current files. Then, Canada Economic Development will examine requests.

Mr. Joly is not getting the money mentioned by the other side. It is the accounting firm that was hired, as is usually the case, that gets paid at the prevailing market rate.

\* \* \*

[English]

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of agriculture and his deputy have recently mused that perhaps part of the agricultural problem in Canada is that there are too many farmers. The policy of the minister has been successful. In his last six years we have seen an on farm employment loss of 26%. His poor planning and his ill-suited programs have led to this decline.

Is it the policy of the minister to continue to reduce the number of Canadian farmers until the problem just simply goes away?

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was at the standing committee of the House a couple of weeks ago when I made a presentation and talked about the renewal aspect of the agriculture policy framework, which will help to do just exactly the opposite of what he is referring to.

I also point out that he needs to take note of how Statistics Canada does that reporting and tabulating. It asks where a person spent most of their time in a given week. If it were to make those phone calls in seeding time I am sure it would be different.

Also, the acres farmed and the productivity of Canadian farmers last year were the highest they have been in history.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Ovid Jackson (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Recently the Historic Sites and Monuments Board turned down a very important application to have Victoria Cross member Billy Bishop's home in my riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound designated as a place of national historic significance.

Why is it that we Canadians do not respect our heroes and honour them?

I would like to ask the Minister of Canadian Heritage what she is doing to correct that situation.

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am obviously happy to support the member's belief and the belief of all Canadians that Billy Bishop is indeed a hero.

I am happy to report that Billy Bishop is already recognized as an historic person, but as a result of a reconsideration by historic sites and monuments it will be working with the municipality of Owen Sound to ensure that his home is in fact declared a national historic site, because that is good for Owen Sound and it is good for Grey—Bruce, but it is especially good for Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### TAXATION

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs gave us his solution to the crisis in the health care system: tax increases.

Just before the Séguin commission, the minister, as a good Liberal contradicting himself, told Quebecers that they should increase taxes to solve the health care problem, before recognizing the importance of maintaining a low level of taxation.

Is increasing taxes this government's response to the crisis in the health sector?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member spends too much time reading newspapers. What was reported was not a direct quote. I am not asking the provinces to increase taxes. I am not blaming them for lowering their taxes. I am simply saying that the fact that they are lowering their taxes shows that there is no tax imbalance in Canada.

\* \* \*

#### SOFTWOOD LUMBER

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister stated that he was confident about concluding an agreement with the Americans on softwood lumber prior to March 21.

This is not the view of the U.S. ambassador to Canada, who believes that the U.S. administration could, on that date, suspend its decision as a sign of good faith.

The Americans will probably demand that Canada respond in kind.

Will the Prime Minister guarantee us that Canada will not suspend its complaint to the WTO or impose its own export tax on softwood lumber?

• (1500)

**Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I had the opportunity of saying, a moment ago, the option that we prefer is certainly that of identifying a long term policy solution, a solution that will guarantee us access to the U.S. market in exchange for greater transparency and more market-based practices in forest management. This is exactly what we are supporting.

However, at the same time obviously, we are maintaining our request and our complaint to the WTO, and even today I have asked that a NAFTA panel be convened as soon as there is a final American determination, if there is one, in order to—

#### Oral Questions

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to return to the question my leader asked the Minister of Finance. The minister did not seem to get the point, perhaps because CIBC has been taking lessons from the steamship industry.

The point is not what percentage of tax they pay in Canada on income claimed in Canada. The point is, how do they get to claim so much income outside of Canada?

Surely the Minister of Finance should be concerned about that. Why is he not concerned about that?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously every major company, and certainly including the banks, are audited by CCRA.

The fact is that we want to see Canadian institutions operating in Canada, earning profits in Canada, but also operating abroad. The fact is that they do. Those statements are all published.

\* \* \*

#### CROWN CORPORATIONS

**Mr. Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon—Humboldt, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, for years the auditor general has criticized the patronage tainted process that makes crown corporations a dumping ground for Liberal supporters and friends.

Today Liberal MPs helped cover up the scandal by voting against recommendations that would end this abuse.

When the Liberals were in opposition they demanded that a royal commission investigate allegations of government corruption and patronage.

Will the government now take its own advice and order an inquiry into acts of wrongdoing, political interference and breaches of the conflict of interest code by cabinet members?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think really the question ought to be framed around the rules of governance that deal with crown corporations.

The member will know that work has been done on that. In fact, a very useful report was tabled last week by the public accounts committee which has a number of comments that are relevant to previous work that has been done by this government with respect to governance of crown corporations.

I look forward to co-ordinating a reply to that report within the time limits prescribed by the rules of the House.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

● (1505)

[English]

**SPECIES AT RISK ACT**

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-5, an act respecting the protection of wildlife species at risk in Canada, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 3.

**Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise again in the House at the report stage of Bill C-5, the species at risk act, and to speak to my amendment in Group No. 3.

Interestingly, as opposed to some of the other groupings of amendments at report stage of the bill, quite a range of topics have been covered in Group No. 3. Of course the main discussion area in this grouping deals with the need to consider the socioeconomic implications of the legislation or, for that matter, of any action plans or recovery plans as a result of placing a species on the legal list. Some of the amendments also deal with the composition of COSEWIC and its determination of a legal list of species at risk.

Motion No. 79 would amend how the minister deals with national standards, and his counterparts of the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council. Motion No. 120 deals with criminal offences. Several other motions in this grouping deal with public consultation.

Of these five very distinct topics within this one grouping, I will begin by commenting on the need for socioeconomic interests to be taken into account when determining the action plans needed to recover a species and its habitat.

More specifically, I would like to address my amendment, Motion No. 15, which seeks to adjust the purpose of the act to reflect what I believe should be the necessary goal of any endangered species legislation, that is to strike a balance between fostering sustainable development while ensuring the creation of a safe environment for those species at risk.

Specifically my Motion No. 15 states:

That Bill C-5, in Clause 6, be amended by adding after line 12 on page 8 the following:

“(2) The purposes of this Act, outlined in subsection (1), shall be pursued and accomplished in a manner consistent with the goals of sustainable development.”

I believe this is not only an important amendment to the bill, one which I would encourage all my colleagues in the House to support, but I believe it reflects the spirit of the discussions in the House of Commons environmental committee meetings.

In my opinion, Motion No. 15 strives to strike the balance that we all want in the legislation, the balance between the interests of industry and those of the environmentalists. The amendment would require that a balance be struck between the environmental goals of the bill and the needs of taxpayers whose dollars would go to the fund the environmental work mandated by the bill. I believe that without considering sustainable development, environmental laws would quickly kill the goose that lays the golden egg, as they say.

It is my opinion that worrying about endangered species is something only prosperous economies can afford to do because,

quite frankly, someone has to pay for it. Economic depression is no friend to species at risk. One just has to look at some of the environmental problems prevalent in second and third world countries. It is certainly no coincidence.

I believe it is essential that we know the cost on industry and property users, as well as the cost on government in terms of enforcement resources before the government introduces legislation with such vast implications as Bill C-5. In particular, we need to know how the legislation would affect farmers, fishermen, miners, loggers, ranchers, and the list goes on. We need to understand what the socioeconomic costs will be of such legislation before we agree to it. Without this essential information, how can landowners or land users plan?

I believe the reason the government has not made these costs public is that it does not know what the socioeconomic implications of the legislation will be.

I would like to read a quote from the minister's information supplement of October 2001 which explains how little the government and the minister know of the cost of the legislation. In particular, the quote refers to the costs of compensation, which I believe is a necessary part of any legislation that plans to adversely affect the market value of a property. It states:

Environment Canada is aware that compensation for restrictions on the use of land is a complex issue that requires careful consideration and innovative thinking. We will need several years of practical experience in implementing the stewardship and recovery provisions of the Species at Risk Act...before we can be precise in prescribing eligibility and thresholds for compensation.

● (1510)

I would like to read another quote, this time by the Minister of the Environment who was answering questions posed to him by members of the standing committee on environment on October 3, 2001. The committee members wanted the minister to explain why he could not guarantee compensation in Bill C-5.

The quote reads:

We then got deeper and deeper into this and it became more and more the proverbial swamp, more and more difficult to do, partly because governments... should not, pass legislation that is open-ended in terms of funding. We have fiscal responsibilities that, as you can well imagine, are fairly strict on us—\$45 million a year is what we've been given to run the process. That's what we can expect, and that's it.

I know the quote is long but the minister has essentially said that he does not know how much the implication of this bill will cost but he knows that it cannot cost more than \$45 million because that is all he has. This is absolutely ridiculous. By admitting that he does not know the cost, the minister is admitting that he does not know the implications of his own legislation. If a minister does not know the bill's implications, then how can he expect landowners and land users to plan for the future? Has the minister done studies? Can he give any idea of the cost? What about socioeconomic impact assessments for protecting or recovering certain species?

Furthermore, the minister said that he did not want to undertake open-ended spending commitments but that as far as he knew Bill C-5 was open-ended in terms of its implications for Canadian property owners. The minister said that he would not pay for the costs of his legislation but that he had no problem forcing others to absorb those costs.

*Government Orders*

Although the bill was probably well-intentioned, it certainly has some very major flaws. Only if the government decides to fix them will I support the bill. I and my party, the Canadian Alliance, support the need to protect endangered species but we believe that compensation and socioeconomic impact assessments of recovery plans are essential to preserving a species and essential to good endangered species legislation. This is not good legislation.

I would urge members to support the Canadian Alliance motions on compensation and, in particular, my Motion No. 15 from this grouping which would ensure that the purpose of the legislation, which is to protect species at risk, is accomplished in a manner that is consistent with sustainable development.

I truly believe we cannot have one without the other. To illustrate this point, I would like to tell the House about my home of Skeena, B.C., where I have several large national and provincial parks.

One example I can think of is the Tatshenshini UNESCO world heritage site in the northwest corner of Skeena riding. It is a place of towering mountains, wild rivers and strong and vibrant wildlife. This area was a national park and now, through the United Nations world heritage site program, it is a chunk of land that will forever be set aside for wildlife. Does this not sound like a beautiful success story? What I have not mentioned is that within the boundaries of that site was one of the largest mineral deposits ever found in the world. It had enough ore to put British Columbia back on the map with billions of dollars worth of copper, cobalt and gold.

In the late 1990s, I believe during the 35th parliament, a mining company with legal rights to that area was in the planning stage of developing a mine when the then NDP provincial government and the current federal Liberal government did everything in their power to stop all development in the Tatshenshini in its tracks. Gone were the promises of hundreds of long term, well paying jobs. Gone were the taxes that could have been generated in the form of royalties to the government. The government said that we should not despair as the northwest was protected once again, but at what cost?

The picture I am trying to paint here is not one of perpetual naturalistic bliss but a one-sided victory for the environmental lobby groups that make their homes and live their lives in the grey cement and black asphalt of downtown urban cities like Vancouver, Toronto and New York. Yes, the Tatshenshini is now protected forever, but life goes on in unemployment ridden northwestern British Columbia which would have thrived if only the development of the mine had been allowed. Thirty years of employment was lost in that one mine alone, let alone all the spinoff jobs, as was the potential development of numerous other mining properties.

What I am getting at is the need for balance. Yes, we should have parks and we should do what is needed to protect species at risk from being endangered or extirpated, but we need to do so with balance in mind or it just will not work.

Governments get the money they need to put into place recovery plans and to pay for ecologists, biologists and other scientists to help these species recover. Money is needed to rebuild habitats and to monitor success rates.

● (1515)

Without industry paying taxes, without people working and paying taxes, without goods being sold, being bought and being taxed, we just do not have the ability to protect what is in need of protecting.

In closing, this is why of all the topics Group No. 3 covers, I have chosen to bring to the attention of the House the need for sustainable development. As such, I mean that we need to bring balance to this legislation by including mandatory compensation for landowners and by ensuring the overriding goal of this legislation as set out in its purposes section reflects the need to respect sustainable development. Without it, the economic realities are that as a country we will not be able to afford to protect our wildlife and endangered species.

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly have been listening with interest for the past number of days to the rationale and excuses being put forward by members of the government to explain why this flawed legislation has once again come to the House for debate. I find it incredible particularly in light of a cross-Canada media survey released on the weekend to determine who Canadians trust. It is no surprise that nurses and doctors were at the top of the list but it was also no surprise that politicians were right at the very bottom of the list, even below journalists

Now the government comes to the House and the majority of its members' comments boil down to a couple of phrases, those being "trust us, we will do what is right" and "because we say so". Truthfully the whole issue calls to mind another environmental issue that the government is currently trying to address, that being the Kyoto accord. I will address those similarities in a moment.

This group of amendments primarily deals with socioeconomic interests and the need for public consultation. These are two of the key issues within not only this piece of legislation but any piece of legislation. After all, as it has often done, the government can push through any legislation or action the Liberals in their own characteristic style deem necessary in spite of public opinion. We have seen the government do this so many times. Whether the issue is hep C compensation, disposal of nuclear waste or as is becoming apparent, the Kyoto accord, the government just does what it does and if Canadians agree, well that is convenient but it is really not necessary.

*Government Orders*

Before I begin my comments directly pertaining to this set of amendments, I would like to point out as so many of our caucus colleagues have already done, that the Canadian Alliance supports sustainable development and protection of endangered species. In fact, these very principles are embedded within our party foundation stating that we are committed to protecting and preserving Canada's natural environment and endangered species and to sustainable development of our abundant natural resources for the use of current and future generations. However, we also believe that for any endangered species legislation to be effective, it must respect the fundamental rights of property owners.

The truth is this legislation fails on all counts to protect the rights of property owners. When we consider the connection between the rights of property owners and the protection of endangered species, it really does not make much sense to sacrifice one for the other. After all, without the support of private property owners, species simply cannot be protected. It is as simple as that. Yet the government is proceeding in a fashion that seems to pit property owners against environmental causes thereby guaranteeing eventual failure on all counts.

It is not difficult to empathize with the difficulties faced by landowners when they are told that their family farm which has provided the entire income for the family and has been in the family for generations actually shares space with rare listed creatures. Suddenly the farmers find themselves in the situation of losing income, property and family history all in one fell swoop. Unless the transparency of this legislation improves, that same farmer may not even be totally sure of how it happened.

When it comes to such critical subjects such as family income, support and structure, the government has a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure transparency of process and to give people the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process.

I particularly noted the comments of the member for Davenport this morning when he suggested we should put aside economic and social concerns in the case of protection of endangered species because we will never get anything done if we do not. I dare say that the member certainly did not stay in this House for some 34 years by not taking into consideration what impact a piece of legislation would have on the social and economic well-being of his constituents. I think that goes without saying.

Having said that, people must have the chance to make their case before decisions are made. The system must be responsive to their needs. There must be a process the people have access to.

• (1520)

We all know that the government does not traditionally follow the approach of think first and act later. In fact the government prefers to go with the highly complicated approach of act first and hope that no one notices later. For some reason Canadians have allowed their government this latitude for many years. It has had dramatic impacts on all elements of Canadian life.

I have a feeling that when farmers, fishermen, loggers, ranchers and oil and gas developers come to the realization that the right to their old way of doing things has suddenly disappeared, and

disappeared I might add with little or no compensation, discussion or due process, they may be less forgiving of the government's lackadaisical approach to planning.

When it comes to an issue such as the protection of endangered species, we cannot afford simply to hope for the best. When we consider what is at stake here, it is literally the existence and survival of entire species that hang in the balance. Loose legislation and planning simply will not do.

It should be pointed out that the government has a record of loose planning when it comes to critical environmental issues. All we need to do is look at the recent events surrounding Canada's role in the Kyoto accord. All along the government has been committed to signing the accord. While it keeps promising Canadians a plan, we have yet to see anything that actually resembles a thoughtful, methodical, consistent plan.

Again the government seems to think that the philosophy of "just trust us" is good enough. I am here to say that it is not. How can we expect to just trust the government when ministers are contradicting each other, premiers are breaking ranks and refusing to sign on, the industry is voicing extremely strong reservations regarding the economic viability of signing the accord, and to top it all off, we still do not have a real plan of action.

Regardless of its characteristic arrogant ways, the government still plods on. It is amazing really, the connection between these two issues. Perhaps the lessons we have learned so far from the government's approach to Kyoto should serve as a fair warning on Bill C-5.

For example, the Minister of the Environment has admitted that he does not know what the total cost of compensating landowners will be. He is so unsure of the numbers that the government refuses to guarantee compensation. He has indicated that he believes the costs will be more than \$45 million a year but just does not have a firm number to be able to make a real statement or commitment to compensation.

Now let us look at Kyoto. The Minister of the Environment has stated that he believes the total cost of Kyoto to the Canadian economy to be around \$500 million per year. However Canadian industry has done its independent studies which state the cost of Kyoto to be anywhere between \$25 billion and \$40 billion a year. We cannot help but wonder if his estimations of compensation costs for Bill C-5 are equally as skewed. Not that it really matters to the government. After all, since the government refuses to commit to compensation, in the end it will be Canadian property owners who have to face the bill.

Another example of where the government's handling of the legislation parallels that of the Kyoto issue is the area of establishing national standards. In its current form, Bill C-5 would allow the federal government to establish national standards without any consultation required with the provinces. We have already seen how the government is prone to go ahead and act without consulting or considering the provinces. Just look at health care spending.

*Government Orders*

Certainly the division between the provinces and the federal government was never more clear than when many of the premiers declared their opposition to signing the Kyoto accord. Had there been more consultation and awareness, the government would have known the provinces' position and used the information to promote consultations and compromises. Then again, perhaps the government did know and just chose to ignore it as it has done so many times in the past.

The government has a well documented history of being heavy handed and autocratic when it comes to passing legislation. Regardless of how worthwhile the amendment is, if it comes from the opposition side of the House, the government simply will not consider it. It seems to me that legislation that is critical should be beyond political manoeuvring. Many good ideas were suggested at committee yet the government stubbornly refused to make the needed changes.

The truth is that the protection of endangered species is a worthwhile and necessary endeavour and the Canadian Alliance supports the effort. However the key element missing in this legislation is balance, balance between socio-economic concerns and the protection of species, and the balance between private rights and public protection. Clearly the legislation has not become any more balanced in the seven years that have passed while the Liberals have tried to enact endangered species legislation. Should this bill go ahead without any further changes, all Canada will have is an unbalanced act from an unbalanced government.

Those changes must be made to ensure that we have endangered species legislation that will actually protect wildlife and the rights of landowners. I would suggest that a businessman would be foolish to enter into a contract without knowing what the costs of that contract would be. On behalf of my constituents and all Canadians, Canadians are smart enough not to enter into a contract on this endangered species bill without knowing the costs to Canadians and to the Canadian economy.

• (1525)

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, one casualty of a huge dimension accompanied this bill. That casualty will probably do more harm than the government can ever do by passing this legislation. I am talking about the casualty that was brought upon the committee that worked on the bill.

I volunteered to sit on the committee. Many people will say that members of parliament should never volunteer for anything because that always means a lot of work. However I volunteered to be on the committee because this bill will have huge ramifications where I live. I wanted to make sure that I could act in the best interests and seek the best solutions for my constituents.

The committee was chaired by an outstanding member of parliament. He is a very wise man and a man who has the respect of the entire committee. I also had the honour of working with my party's chief critic, the member for Red Deer. He knows the bill and knows what we are talking about. He has spoken many times in the House.

It was one of the few committees where I saw members on both sides working for the common good. Members worked to make sure

the bill would be accepted by the government and the bill with our amendments would be welcomed and accepted across Canada.

It is true that some 127 very qualified witnesses appeared before the committee. We gave them our undivided attention. In their profession as scientists we listened carefully to their suggestions and drafted many of the amendments based on their attendance. There were some 300 amendments.

The casualty came after the break. There were all these outstanding people, from the chairman to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment. People on both sides of the House just slumped down in their seats when they saw what happened. It was my hope, after all the committees I have sat on, that the valuable work of a committee would finally be realized. I really thought that for the first time I would see something produced in the nature of amendments that would fulfill the dream of Canadians from ocean to ocean to ocean. That did not take place.

It seems very strange that somehow the Minister of the Environment can put his hand in his hat and flick out \$45 million as a cost for the operation of this bill. We have no idea where he got that number. There is no study. We presented no papers. He just said \$45 million. The minister simply cannot do that and make it acceptable to the House.

The government has slashed our amendments and the bill as it is now is a total insult to the scientific community in Canada. The last time the scientific community was completely ignored in Canada was when the scientists told us that we were going too far and that we had better stop the reaping of the cod.

• (1530)

The politicians said they did not have to listen. They did their own business and the fishery on the east coast did its own.

Scientists made it clear that we cannot develop the bill with an open door policy. Having an open door policy on a bill of this magnitude is like having an open door to one's house. The heat and cold can come in. The pets can go out or the kids can come in. Anything can happen with an open door policy.

The government would want all of the power of the bill to remain in cabinet. It would ignore the scientists, witnesses and those who have studied habitat. It wants to take complete control. Scientists want to do science but the government wants to do it its way. These decisions should not be left to cabinet alone. There is too much proof in our history of what happens when cabinet alone makes decisions. We need to listen to scientists.

In committee we heard from various people who would be affected by the legislation, people in industry, people who own private property, aboriginal property, crown land, provincial and federal land. We now find in the bill that there would be some exemptions.

I live very close to the 49th parallel. I watch white tail deer go back and forth. They do not know whether they are in Canada or the United States. Rare species do not know when they arrive at the border. An animal does not know when it is moving from a protected area to a non-protected area.

*Government Orders*

The government has put restrictions based on racial groups within this bill. That simply will not work. Everyone in committee said that would not work so that was thrown out. The government came back with a better decision.

I do not know why the minister wants to have everything left up to him and cabinet, exclusive of the biologists and those who have studied habitat, especially after we have worked so hard on the bill in committee.

If the government had paid attention to the recommendations of the committee that studied this issue Canadians from coast to coast would be relieved of all the apprehension and all the worry they presently have with the bill. With the slashing of amendments people from coast to coast have more apprehension than ever. I know people in my area have more apprehension than ever.

If we put this bill with Bill C-15, the cruelty to animals bill, and the Kyoto agreement, we have more mistrust than we need.

A great bunch of people worked in committee. I say that in all honesty. The people I feel most sorry for are not those of us who sat in the opposition chairs in committee, but the fine chairman and the people on the government side of the House who watched their dreams and aspirations go down the drain. They put in hundreds of hours and listened to hundreds of witnesses. That should never happen in a democratic society.

• (1535)

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this group of amendments that deal with the socioeconomic impact of the species at risk bill. I want to address my remarks specifically to a couple of those proposed amendments that as we well know will not be a part of the law but to indicate something of what we thought should be a part of the law.

We support the idea of protecting the species at risk. We understand that we are stewards of our environment, our nation, our wildlife and resources. We are not against protecting these kinds of things. We believe in the people of the land and how they need to be protected as well.

Motion No. 15 is a Canadian Alliance amendment. It states:

That Bill C-5, in Clause 6, be amended by adding after line 12 on page 8 the following:

“(2) The purposes of this Act, outlined in subsection (1), shall be pursued and accomplished in a manner consistent with the goals of sustainable development.”

That has to do with the economic impact. The endangered species act would give tremendous discretion to the minister to intervene to defend specific species at risk. It does not give any guidance as to what the minister might do to balance that with other considerations, such as, how it would impact the landowners, the land workers and those who are directly involved with that area of the species at risk. We believe that is a tremendous amount of power without proper balance.

The species at risk working group or SARWG had representatives from a broad range of environmental and industrial groups including: the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Sierra Club of Canada, Canadian Nature

Federation, Mining Association of Canada. The group proposed this amendment:

The purposes of this Act shall be pursued to the extent possible while taking into account social and economic interests of Canadians.

That of course is not a part of what we expect in the legislation. We are speaking to that and insisting that we remember the impact. It is one thing to be environmentally friendly, to protect the species at risk, but it is entirely another thing to forget those farmers and landowners who must bear the brunt of this. We feel that we must say these things on behalf of our constituents who are expected to bear the brunt of the cost.

COSEWIC, which is an independent scientific panel called the committee for the status of endangered wildlife in Canada, is responsible for maintaining the list of species at risk. It will take into consideration scientific evidence. This is all well and good and as it should be. We would want those species to be named by those who have knowledge of such matters, that it would be from a scientific point of view and not just simply someone's opinion. We applaud that. However it must be balanced against the real live concerns of property owners, industry and the economic well-being of Canadians.

I will take a few moments to tell a story. Some years ago my wife and I purchased a small farm from her aunt and uncle who were retiring. Not long after we purchased the farm a decision was made by the government of that place to run a four lane highway past the front of the farm. The government issued an order to us that it was going to purchase a strip of land which included the house, garden, parking area, garage and the barn. It wiped out the homestead. Every building on the farm was taken away by the decision to put a road in front of the property.

• (1540)

Let me mention another thing that happened to the same farm later. It was discovered that the land was erodible. It did not stand up to the hard rains. It would wash away and it needed conservation practices.

We found out that the crops being produced on that particular land were being overproduced and there needed to be a way of reducing production of that particular crop. We found out that wildlife in the area needed some way of being protected and conserved, that their habitat was being eroded. We also found out there was natural prairie grass in that area that was disappearing from the landscape and would be gone if not protected.

That piece of property went largely to the highway and to the conservation project. As a landowner am I happy about it? Yes, I am happy. Why? Because there was adequate and fair compensation. That does not sound like Canada does it? That was the program in place that enabled the conservation to take place and that is why we are so adamant about believing that it needs to happen in this case.

The government must do more for property owners, farmers and others who gain their livelihoods from the land and whose prosperity could be affected other than simply saying to trust it. It must stipulate that the commitment to protecting endangered species would be cost effective and respect the economic interests of Canadians.

*Government Orders*

Motion No. 14 is another amendment put forward by the Canadian Alliance. It reads:

That Bill C-5, in Clause 6, be amended by replacing lines 7 to 12 on page 8 with the following:

“becoming extinct as a result of human activity, to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened as a result of human activity and to manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened as a result of human activity.”

The bill would provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened as a result of human activity. That is a laudable goal. However we feel that it also needs to be a part of choosing and deciding what would be protected, that is, is it a result of human activity?

We believe that all categories should be qualified by the phrase “as a result of human activity”, not just the recovery of those species. We would like to identify and minimize harmful human impact and not necessarily interfere with the natural evolutionary trends that work on species independent of human influence.

Species of special concern should, like the extirpated, endangered or threatened species, be mentioned in the clause and be protected against becoming endangered or threatened as a result of human activity that is in our control.

I was always taught to accurately count the cost before undertaking a major project. What is the cost to the real rural economy? What will be the cost to rural families? What will be the cost to the taxpayer? We have no way of knowing. Is it perhaps something like the cost of registering the farmer's duck and gopher guns? Will it forever rise in exponential numbers? Will it too oppress the already depressed farmer? Has the cost really been counted?

• (1545)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to speak to the bill with respect to Motion No. 3 which includes a number of amendments regarding exactly how the program would be paid for, who would pay for it, how much it would cost, what the effects would be, et cetera.

Last week I had the opportunity to go across the prairie province of Alberta to visit a number of farmers in areas such as Grande Prairie in the north and a small town called Vulcan in the south. A number of farmers, landowners and different types of agricultural people were present to speak to the committee about the difficulties they face in their professions.

I heard comments regarding the situation in a number of areas where people are having a difficult time with the price and control of their products. They are often unable to transport them because of the costs. An area that comprises part of my riding of Wild Rose and extends into other parts of southern Alberta is suffering a great deal of drought. Many farmers are quite concerned that as we move into a third year of drought there is a good probability many of them will have to close up shop and discontinue growing crops and providing much needed commodities in the land. They are quite concerned about all these things.

Behind all these major concerns was Bill C-5. One farmer commented that it was as if they did not have enough headaches and problems in their business already. These people live on the land, are

in charge of being good stewards of the land, and use arable land to produce commodities that are needed not only in our own country but in countries around the world. The almighty ivory towers of Ottawa have once again put together a piece of legislation that indicates what the government thinks of these people. They are having shoved down their throats—

• (1550)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment.

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I appreciate the passion with which my hon. colleague is speaking but I wonder when he will bring it all into line with the motions before the House regarding species at risk.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I think the hon. member was on his way to attaching the comments he has made to the bill we are debating at the moment, Bill C-5. We are anxiously awaiting his statements.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the hon. member is so impatient because that was my next comment.

The impatience of the Liberal government is nothing new. The government was impatient to bring in a gun registration program that would only cost \$85 million. The government is impatient to bring in legislation to protect endangered species when it does not even know what it would cost. It cares even less because it would pass the costs on to the landowners and users of the affected areas. These people are doing their best to make a living and provide a commodity the country needs desperately. This in turn provides jobs to many Canadians.

The lack of a complete study of the socio-economic impact Bill C-5 would have on the agricultural industry is a disgraceful way to treat taxpayers and citizens of this land. It is absolutely disgraceful. It ignores the fact that most landowners work hard to produce commodities that are necessary in Canada. The government has never set agriculture as a priority. It never has and never will. It does not believe it is important because there are not enough votes in it.

One day the government will wake up and realize how important the agricultural industry is. In the meantime it hinders it with legislation that does not provide answers in terms of what it would cost and the impact it would have on farmers' lives and livelihood. The reason is that the government does not give a damn.

The minister for gun registration is saying give it to them. I know what he is thinking. He was thinking the same thing when he went to the public and asked whether they believed in gun control. Everyone believed in gun control and we therefore had to have legislation called registration which no one in these areas supported. Some 82% of the population supported gun control but did not support registration.

When the government came to this legislation—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The hon. member for Davenport.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Charles Caccia:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I appreciate the synthetic indignation on the part of the hon. member across the aisle who feels he should expand the scope of his intervention, but we are in report stage. We are dealing with specific motions and we are still anxious to hear him address the specific motions before the House.

The rule of relevance should apply to the hon. member as it applies to all of us in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Yes, a while ago I somewhat sympathized with the hon. member but this time I would ask him to come back to the substance of the bill.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, we do not know what the project would cost any more than we knew what the gun registry would cost. The expert told us it would cost \$85 million. That is hogwash. The expert does not know what he is talking about. Even the Minister of the Environment has said he has no idea what the cost would be. He says it could be this much or that much.

We know one thing. Putting Bill C-5 into place would not necessarily look after the needs of the people expected to administer it and look after endangered species. We would not worry about them. We would see what kinds of punishments the government would bring upon landowners if they failed to meet their commitment to the legislation. It would not even be their commitment. It would be forced down on them from the great mighty towers of Ottawa telling them to do it or else. That is the attitude on that side of the room.

The government says there is no connection between what the legislation would do and the suffering that goes on in the agricultural community. That is false. We would be bringing things down on people who do their utmost not only to produce good products from the land but to protect the very endangered species the government is talking about in the legislation. They have done so for years without any legislation or top down enforcement. They have been doing a good job.

The government should give producers credit for what they have done. It should work out co-operative measures to encourage them to continue to do good work and do it even better without penalizing them. However the Liberal government is incapable of doing so. Bill C-5 absolutely shows that.

Our amendments are coming in loud and clear. The government had better start taking care of the people whom it expects to take care of endangered species. When it cannot recognize the problems they are going through because it does not give a darn, what can it expect?

I am fed up with a government that does not care about the people who pay the bills for this place. They are the ones who foot the bill. I have seen producers raise their machines over areas and let crops grow wild because there are nests of endangered species they want to protect. They do not bother trying to get more crops off the land. They do their job. Why can the government not work in a co-operative manner with these people? Why can it not encourage them to continue doing what they have done in the past rather than order them to do so in such a draconian fashion? I say welcome to Canada, the dictatorship of the world.

•(1555)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-5, an act respecting the protection of wildlife species at risk in Canada.

First of all, this bill reminds me of the early 1980s, when I was the mayor of a small municipality of about 4,000 inhabitants. When plans were made to create a national park in an area containing endangered species, our municipality had to invest considerable money in attaining its objectives, with the help of Parks Canada, of course.

The municipality had to clean up its water, because used water was being discharged into the St. Lawrence River at the proposed site of the park. At the time, I, as the mayor, and the council members were seen almost as cranks, people who were going to squander the taxpayers' money to save threatened bird species.

Twenty or so years ago, the environment was perhaps not the important concern for most people that it has become over the years. The bill before us today, which has a very specific objective—to protect species at risk—has undoubtedly been requested by taxpayers. Unfortunately, we cannot support this bill because, once again, the federal government is interfering extensively in provincial jurisdictions.

However, we should perhaps keep in mind the impact this bill may have on endangered species in our societies. We should perhaps also recall how the planet has evolved, how our environment has evolved since there was first life on earth. In fact, the situation today is the result of 4.5 billion years of evolution.

Man, humankind, is undoubtedly the creature which appeared last, but which has had the greatest impact. Over the years, man, by acting as he has done on this planet, is perhaps the being that has contributed the most to the destruction of his environment. Let us not forget that the evolutionary process has provided the human beings on this planet with a large selection of living organisms and natural environments.

We have only to look around us here. Leaving this House, we can go out to parks, along the Ottawa River, into Gatineau Park, and everywhere are surrounded by natural environments we often neglect to pay any attention to.

A decrease or degradation of biodiversity affects us all, and can have unexpected consequences for all human beings, for our living environments, and for our health in particular.

In Canada, as elsewhere, attempts have been made for some years to control the phenomenon of environmental destruction. Since the 1970s international conventions have been signed in order to control the trade in certain animal and plant species, in order to protect them from extinction.

*Government Orders*

Again this week, television news reports have shown us how certain species are disappearing, in Africa in particular, where people are engaged in trade involving endangered species. At the Rio summit in 1992, a number of countries in the international community, Canada included, signed the Convention on Biodiversity and made the commitment to initiate or maintain the existing legislative and regulatory provisions necessary to protect threatened species and populations.

Not long after, moreover, the government made the promise in its red book to commit to long term protection of the species that populate our planet. In that same vein in 1995, the Minister of Environment of the day introduced a first bill.

●(1600)

This provoked an incredible number of protests and criticisms—from environmental groups in particular, and others—that the environment had not yet really entered into our collective mores.

One of the main criticisms regarding this bill was that it was limited to federal lands. Environmental groups reproached the federal government for only intervening on lands that it owned, when it should have been intervening on all lands that required it. Once again, I repeat, such interventions would have to be done with the agreement of the provincial governments, including Quebec, which already had major legislation in place that protected species at risk to a great extent.

It is important to remember that at the time, only four provinces had laws to protect endangered species. Environmentalists pointed out that it was important for the government to act across the country. Once again, it is important to note that there were only four provinces, including Quebec, that were equipped with legislation to protect endangered species. As usual in the Canadian federation, Quebec was ahead of the others. This is nothing new, this is the case in a host of areas.

In 1996, the federal government proposed a Canada-wide agreement to the provincial and territorial ministers of the environment. This led to the bill now before us. That agreement was the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk.

In October 1996, the ministers responsible for wildlife gave their agreement in principle, which means that they finally accepted the principle of the bill and came to an agreement. At the time, Quebec environment minister David Cliche signed the accord, but he did not agree with, among other things, the federal government's interventions, which did not take into account provincial laws and regulations on the protection of threatened species.

In fact, our position and that of Quebec are the same as the one that the Minister of the Environment, Paul Bégin, stated as soon as his federal counterpart's bill was tabled, namely that this legislation was mere duplication. This is why we will vote against the bill.

Again, we agree in principle with the objectives of the bill, but we cannot accept it, since it creates duplication in provincial jurisdictions. In our opinion, this bill is not very useful to Quebec, considering that we already have regulations and laws protecting threatened species.

When the bill was introduced by the federal government, the Quebec minister indicated that this legislation sought not only to create a safety net for the protection of threatened species and their habitat on federal sites, but also on the whole Quebec territory. And we cannot agree with such a measure. We agree that the federal government must be able to take action to protect threatened species. It must do so, but by agreeing with the provinces, by accepting Quebec's jurisdictions, by accepting that Quebec is already ahead in this area, and by working with provincial governments.

The main criticism that we have regarding this bill is that it creates duplication, in that the federal government is once again duplicating regulations that already exist in Quebec. Instead of co-ordinating its efforts, of investing with the province to protect threatened species, the federal government is duplicating, it is creating a new structure and it is adding a new army of public servants to protect threatened species, while Quebec already has the necessary instruments.

●(1605)

[English]

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the report stage of Bill C-5. Enforcement penalties of the bill are of great concern to me and my Canadian Alliance colleagues. I am speaking about government Motion No. 120, clause 97. The government seems to be continuing a trend of making criminals out of law-abiding citizens and turning its back on Canadian agriculture.

First, we have gun registration. That program has out of control costs and no realistic benefits. A farmer owning a shotgun is now a criminal.

Next, the government's cruelty to animals legislation is another example of turning farmers into criminals. Through the definitions outlined in that legislation, farmers and ranchers are at risk of prosecution over necessary and ordinary farming practices.

Now we have Bill C-5, yet again the ordinary Canadian has the opportunity to become a criminal. Due to the language of the bill, the crown does not need to prove intent or even reckless behaviour. Instead, it is up to the accused to prove that he or she has acted with due diligence.

Bill C-5 makes it a criminal act to kill species at risk or damage their habitats. In theory this is a worthy goal. It is the practising of the theory that has me concerned. There is a definite need for protection of these animals and species.

Species at risk legislation is something with which we agree, however there needs to be a balanced approach in the conviction and sentencing of offenders.

### *Government Orders*

According to the bill as it currently stands, one would be required to be an expert in recognizing all species on the list of those that are at risk. It is not the average Canadian citizen who is aware of every one of these animals, let alone who has the ability to identify them and their habitats. To not be aware of every one of these animals and their particular habitats leaves one open for prosecution. I am not saying that ignorance is a defence. What I am saying is that accidents happen.

The enforcement and penalties within the bill must be based on one's reckless behaviour. To make criminals out of innocent people is not the place to start if we truly desire species and their habitats to be saved and protected. However, we do have the government's assurance that the minister will use his own discretion in laying charges. Again, we are asked to trust the minister. To leave the laying of criminal charges to the minister's discretion is not acceptable.

Being charged with a criminal offence is not something that any one of us would take lightly. The bill must contain reasonable guidelines, enforcement and penalties. It is not reasonable to pass a bill like C-5 that has holes and gaps in it. The government would have Canadians be content with the trust me attitude, that the gaps will be filled in by the minister at some later date. This is not acceptable.

If charges are to be laid fairly, the very least that should be provided is basic education and training for property owners and users. They should be entitled to know what their responsibilities are. A basic education plan for property owners would provide them with additional tools in the protection of species and habitats. This would be a benefit to all involved. To leave them in the dark and then charge them later with a crime they do not know they committed is horrific.

• (1610)

The penalties outlined in the bill are severe. There is a fine of up to \$250,000 or up to five years in jail for an individual. These are very harsh punishments. Let us say, for example, that a farmer is out in the field and in the course of working the land ploughs under nests belonging to birds listed under the legislation. Is this an indictable offence? Is the farmer truly guilty? What were his or her intentions? Were his or her actions reckless? I do not think this farmer intended to destroy this animal's habitat. Is it worthy of criminal charges? I hardly think so. The farmers and ranchers I know are not about to plough up a bird's nest without thinking.

The legislation must be examined with some common sense. Making criminals out of innocent citizens is not the way to enact this legislation. If the government desires the willing participation of property owners in Canada, the threat of hefty fines and jail time is not the way to involve them. Co-operation is the key to this legislation being effective. Co-operation is possible when all parties involved are viewed as equal. Taking a heavy-handed approach will not work, like this bill.

Farmers and ranchers are among some of this country's finest conservationists. Most of these people understand the necessity of saving endangered species. They understand how fragile our ecosystems are. It would be to the benefit of species at risk to keep farmers, ranchers and landowners as partners in the plan for species protection. Enforcement and penalties need to be included in this

legislation, but they need to be applied to those whose behaviour is reckless, whose actions are negligent and whose destruction of species and habitat is intentional.

For example, an individual is driving his or her car through a school zone. The driver is obeying the speed limit and is aware and alert, but suddenly a child darts into the street to retrieve a soccer ball. The driver slams on the brakes but is unable to avoid hitting that child. Is that person viewed as being as guilty as the individual who is driving drunk and at a speed well over the posted limit in that same school zone? Should the punishment for the alert, sober driver be the same as that for the intoxicated speeding driver? A civilized society would say no, that the second driver's behaviour was reckless and showed no concern for the welfare of others.

The bill rejects the thinking of a civilized society. The penalties in the bill must be applied with reason. Assurances of the minister's discretion are not good enough. Penalties must be adequately addressed in Bill C-5 before it is passed.

To have the responsibility of proving one's innocence, and in this case due diligence, lies in the face of western law practices. The onus of proving guilt has always been on the crown. We expect to enter into legal confrontations being innocent until proven guilty. The federal government is now changing those basic practices. A Canadian citizen must now prove due diligence in the face of allegations. This is an awkward approach. The mentality behind it will alienate the participation of the very people needed to help implement this legislation: the property owners.

The enforcement of the bill is also in question. A document released by Environment Canada suggests a need for additional personnel and resources. This request is being made without the bill having been implemented. What will the requests be once it is? As enforcement capabilities by Environment Canada are limited already, what actions will be taken once the bill is passed? This government is notorious for not being able to estimate the costs of its own programs.

• (1615)

The federal gun registry was to have a minimal start-up cost and be self-sustaining afterward. It has now cost the Canadian taxpayers over \$700 million. Will RCMP officers now be committed to enforcing environment legislation? The government has cut resources to the RCMP drastically. How can it be expected to enforce this bill?

*Government Orders*

The majority of property owners in my riding are also farmers. They are good, law-abiding citizens. To think that any one of them could be thrown in jail for inadvertently killing an endangered animal or damaging their habitat frightens me. Farmers and ranchers in the country continue to face hardships. We have seen their determination in the face of challenges such as drought conditions and low commodity prices in recent years. These individuals do not have the financial resources to fight changes that could occur through this present legislation.

The rights of property owners cannot be ignored or overshadowed by the legislation. We must make sure that penalties and fines are applied where necessary. I maintain that there must be the element of reckless behaviour or intent present. Accidents happen and mistakes can be made.

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, today we are debating Group No. 3, with the main theme of socioeconomic interests and public consultation.

The laissez-faire, wide open approach is not the current situation in Canada, as we do have a multi-level system of environmental laws. However, we need to go to the next step in identifying specific endangered species and finding ways to protect and preserve them. We understand that if we are not careful in creating boundary lines that limit property rights and commercial activity we could ruin the economy and still not significantly help species at risk. It is finding those boundary lines, the system of discretion where we shall impact or limit or may even punish, that the whole controversy is all about. Also there must be a range of incentives to protect and preserve. The consequences of the new act, on balance, must result in species preservation, but if that wrong line is chosen, which it looks like the government indeed has done, then species will not be protected at all.

I note that the Species at Risk Working Group, which had representations from a broad range of environmental and industrial groups such as the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the Sierra Club, the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, the Mining Association and so on, recommended as an amendment in its presentation to the standing committee in September, 2000, that:

The purposes of this Act shall be pursued to the extent possible while taking into account social and economic interests of Canadians.

We say that in this section of the bill it is a failure on that count.

There has been a lot of debate around COSEWIC itself. COSEWIC stands for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. It is a panel of scientific experts appointed by the minister whose chief function is to classify species at risk and to recommend to determine the scientific list of endangered species. This is where a main controversy erupts. Environmentalists want the scientific list determined by COSEWIC to automatically become the list that is enforced by law. The Liberals want cabinet to have the final decision as to which scientific recommendations are accepted and which are not.

The Liberal government wants to have political control over which species are protected. Then the consequences can be applied, perhaps according to which area gives to the Liberal Party or sends

Liberals to the House. In other words, regional differences and influences will be played again by the Liberal government.

In committee, the Canadian Alliance proposed a balanced compromise which was accepted by the committee. The Liberals now want to reverse it. We argue that the scientific COSEWIC list should become the legal list within 60 days if the cabinet does not act to prevent it. In other words, under this approach cabinet would have the final say. Indeed, politicians have to make that final decision but they would have to act to perhaps overthrow or overcome a scientific recommendation with convincing justifications to the public and also with the political consequences that would flow from that. Under the Liberals' approach cabinet could defeat scientific recommendations simply by ignoring them.

How dare this Liberal government ignore the work of the House standing committee and run roughshod over its own backbench members and parliamentary democracy? Why should MPs listen to witnesses or bother finding consensus positions between parties when the government ignores it all anyway?

The House standing committee's balanced approach to listing endangered species proposed by the Canadian Alliance is, I believe, the responsible position. The Liberals want all power to remain with cabinet so they can simply ignore the scientists, and environmentalists would make the pronouncements of unelected, unaccountable scientists the law of the land, but it is cabinet's job to consider the socioeconomic consequences of listing and to determine the proper response to scientific recommendations. Scientists should do science. They should not get into the world of politics. The political decisions should be rightly left to cabinet, but cabinet should at least be required to explain and justify itself and should be publicly accountable if it chooses not to follow a scientific recommendation.

● (1620)

Part of that process is public consultation and public notice. That is a very positive thing. Some of the technical amendments in this grouping are heading in that right direction.

However, protecting endangered species absolutely requires the support of property owners. For this reason, it must be as transparent as possible. People must have the opportunity to make their case before decisions are made. The system must be perceived as responsive to their needs to create co-operation rather than an unpredictable law that is to be feared and perhaps even circumvented.

The bill would preserve the minister's discretionary power. He would decide whether the compensation is given or not and how much. He would decide whether provincial laws are effective or not and, therefore, whether the federal government would step in to impose its laws. This discretion is the opposite of transparency, the opposite of incentives to protect and preserve.

*Government Orders*

The government has refused to provide any draft regulations about the process for compensation, who would qualify or for how much. These are essential and should be part of the debate before they are finalized.

Where is the technical amendment which would provide a predictable process for property owners to seek compensation? The committee at least said that the minister must draft regulations, but the government wants to do away with that obligation also.

Where is the technical amendment which would set out the criteria which the minister would use to determine whether a province's law is effective or not? The committee put criteria into the bill, but the government wants to take it out also.

The process for action plans and recovery plans must be transparent.

In summary of this section, it appears that the Liberals want a species bill under such a name so they can say that they have one, regardless if it ever saves anything. They want to take total control. This means only one thing, judging by past Liberal government performance on other files. It wants to selectively apply the law which puts political considerations first. If the consequence affects the likelihood of money delivered to the Liberal party, then that factor will probably have sway.

Under the present form of the bill, it will be the Liberal Party first and species and the environment second or even third.

The bill is a classic example of how good intentions get perverted by Liberals, how an environmental need is secondary to interests of the industrial friends of the Liberal party. It is clear that the Liberals cannot manage and this bill is the clear evidence of it.

It will probably take a Canadian Alliance government to eventually bring into the country a nationally fair and workable law that actually saves some endangered species rather than being designed to save the endangered Liberal Party.

•(1625)

**Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, today in speaking to the endangered species act, Bill C-5, I intend to make the case that the government has not taken into account the socioeconomic impact that the bill would have on Canadians.

It is particularly pertinent to note that the minister refers to this as getting into the proverbial swamp and states that they have been given \$45 million a year to run this process, yet they do not know for sure if \$45 million a year is sufficient to do that or not.

What I contend is that it will cost a whole lot more than \$45 million a year and the rest of the money is to come from the very people whose lands house these endangered species. It is sort of a double jeopardy and a double burden on persons who actually own the land when a law is passed that says they must protect the species on the land, but, if land is taken out of production, they will not be compensated for it. Further it says that they have to do this at their own expense. Basically they are being taxed to provide money to put into these government programs, yet if the government program runs short, then the individual landowner can be expected to pick up the slack.

My contention is that the government needs those taxpayers. It has to be a symbiotic relationship. The taxpayer has to make a living to pay taxes. If the bill is going to be so onerous and so restrictive that they will be hampered to the point where they cannot make a living, the government has to look very closely and earnestly at the possibility that the taxpayers will just throw up their hands and say they cannot make a living. If companies or people cannot use their land for which it was intended, for which they bought or leased it, whether it is for farming, ranching, mining, harvesting forestry products or whatever, then they simply will go out of business and the government will lose more taxpayers.

The government cannot afford to lose taxpayers. When it is paying \$40 billion a year in interest rates to maintain the interest on our national debt, the government needs every dollar it can drag out of its taxpayers.

I do not think that the government has taken into account the socioeconomic impact that the bill will have. That can be stated over and over again. I hope the government is listening and taking these things into consideration, but I am afraid it has not because we have put forth all kinds of amendments. I understand that my colleagues were able to get agreement on several amendments in committee, yet that was all washed out once the hierarchy got ahold of it.

Here again we have a committee process that is a sham. It looks good on the outside but when we actually look at the workings of it we discover that the Prime Minister and cabinet dictate what the outcome of the committee shall be.

While it is absolutely desirable to maintain our species at risk, to have them flourish, propagate and multiply in a friendly environment, it is also extremely important that the economic stability of the country be allowed to do just exactly the same; to prosper, to expand, to put people to work so they can make some profit and pay their shareholders and their taxes. If they cannot do that, all the good intentions in the world will be for naught because we simply will not be able to maintain our endangered species and we will have an even worse problem. We would not be able to maintain our industries.

•(1630)

I have said this before in the House that, as a farmer, I have grave concerns that the intention of the bill, as laudable as it is, will not be realized under the parameters as written today. It simply has to be amended to take into account that the people who are paying the bills have to have an opportunity to grow and to thrive or else they simply will stop paying the bills. Then what will happen to our endangered species? There will be no one left to protect them. It is important for someone to speak up to protect the people who are actually paying the bills.

Some of my colleagues have spoken previously about the punitive aspects of the bill as well. In British common law it is tradition that we will be innocent until we are proven guilty. In this bill it appears that that is not the case. It appears that there will be a provision in it that whether a person has acted maliciously, recklessly or with criminal intent will not be taken into the situation at all if it is discovered damage has been done to environment which would impose hardship on endangered species; in other words to ruin the environment of endangered species.

*Government Orders*

By not having to prove that, the crown should have to prove that people either acted recklessly, maliciously or with criminal intent for those charges to stick. If people cannot defend themselves against that, what possibly could be put up for a defence? Could we say, we did not know that the species was endangered? No, that cannot be said because that is no longer a defence. We cannot say we were not aware that the species was living on our lands because that is no longer a defence.

It could be a total accident. I tried to make this point yesterday. If someone were to hit a whooping crane with a car, which is an unlikely possibility, would that person then be guilty under this act of destroying an endangered species? I do not think there is a person in Canada who would not recognize that a whooping crane is one of the endangered species. It is more or less the poster animal for endangered species. However, if someone were to accidentally bump into it, and more likely run into it with an airplane, would he or she be guilty under this act? From my reading of it, I believe the person would be. That is simply not right.

This is setting a tremendously dangerous precedent. We have to allow people charged with things an opportunity to defend themselves. If they do not have an opportunity to defend themselves, then that shows me that we are headed toward a totalitarian regime. I have been to Castro's Cuba and I have seen that the people there do not have an opportunity to defend themselves. If they are charged with something, they go straight to jail. They have no way of defending themselves.

I would say, as I said yesterday, that the bill will not accomplish the very things that it should and could accomplish if it were written correctly, and it is to the peril of endangered species in Canada.

• (1635)

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on this group of amendments before the House dealing with Bill C-5. I want to take up where the Alliance member left off and that is the question of how much the government has moved toward a totalitarian regime which is so evident in regard to Bill C-5.

I take umbrage with the member's suggestion when he likens what is happening here to Cuba. Cuba is a pinnacle of light and a bastion of democracy when we compare that country's operations with the actions of the government.

What we are seeing today is an unequivocal and unparalleled attack on democracy. No wonder Canadians are cynical about politics today. No wonder they feel that governments do not represent them and politicians are not doing their jobs when this kind of deliberate manipulation of the democratic process takes place.

We are not talking about a few amendments that the committee presented and that the government then vetoed. We are talking about 125 amendments that came from a committee of the House that worked long and hard for weeks and months. We can go back years on this issue of protecting wildlife species at risk in Canada. This was a committee that was actually working. It was doing the job we all expected committees to do when we were first elected.

It is something I cannot imagine because I am used to a committee system where the minister responsible tells the committee what to do

so that we become mere puppets and we are managed and manipulated by the government of the day. I am speaking of the health committee. I do not need to tell members how much that committee has been managed by the former minister of health, I cannot speak for the present one but certainly the former minister of health. We have not been able to contribute to the issues of the day because of that kind of manipulation. My perspective is certainly coloured by the experience I have had for the last five years on the health committee. I hope we can correct that.

It is mind-boggling to think that when we finally have a committee that works, where all parties come together and bring forward a unanimous report to the House, the government of the day can turn around and say forget it. It said to never mind all the hard work, never mind the fact that the committee dealt with some very difficult divisive issues and came together, compromised and made recommendations. We are talking about a committee that looked at 330 amendments. It took a lot of time and effort and then returned with a report with 125 amendments to the present bill that we are dealing with.

That was the result of hard work on the part of the committee members. This was years and years of work by expert groups and concerned citizens across the country who were pressuring, pulling, prodding and pushing the government to finally do something on this vital of area of species at risk, an issue that was long overdue for action.

We can talk about a decade of stalling and dithering by the government of the day on something as fundamental as environmental protection and ensuring that species at risk do not become extinct. We are talking about something very fundamental and basic to our society today and our notion of being a civilized nation. What is more reflective of a civilized nation than what we do in terms of species that are at risk of becoming absolutely extinct?

It is absolutely harmful to the democratic process for this to happen. It is harmful to the whole process involving citizen participation. That is one issue we have to come to grips with in this place.

• (1640)

Let us once and for all deal with this matter in this place. Let us stop the games, the charades, the manipulation of parliamentarians and committees. Let us start to value and treasure the work that we do as parliamentarians, especially at those rare moments when we can come together with one voice and impress upon the government that there are suggestions that can be pursued that were overlooked. There are constructive propositions that are worthwhile and ought to be considered. That is one very important issue.

The other is what this means in terms of the task at hand. The real test of the bill is to protect Canadian indigenous species, subspecies and distinct populations of wildlife from becoming extirpated or extinct. Does Bill C-5 do the job? Does the bill help us as Canadians to ensure that species do not become extirpated or extinct?

*Government Orders*

By all accounts the bill does not because the government has watered down the bill, ignored the recommendations and bypassed the good work of the committee. What we have before us today is a government that has decided to scrap the work of the committee, scrap the good recommendations and go back to a watered down bill that does not do the job. The bill does not do what is required. It does not do the bare minimum to ensure that species at risk are protected and we as a country do not face the extinction of rare and valuable species.

We can look at a number of aspects of this group of amendments as they pertain to the ability of the bill to protect wildlife species. I will focus on one particular amendment that is covered in the group we have before us today. This has to do with the question of extra protection for the preservation of habitat where wildlife is threatened.

It is very interesting to note that the committee recommended an amendment to Bill C-5 which would provide for broad discretionary interim measures so that the government would have the ability to protect species that were in immediate danger. This is a provision that gives the government some wherewithal, a mechanism to take immediate steps should information be made available and some development occur requiring that kind of immediate intervention to protect the species.

My colleague from Windsor—St. Clair has worked long and hard on this whole process, like others around the House from all sides. He tells me that the government chose to come back with Bill C-5 scrapping entirely this amendment. The government is stripping the bill completely of this provision in order to ensure that the minister and a competent minister would be able to take those steps if necessary.

Why in the world would government, any government, do that? Why would the government give up that ability? It is not something that would be used on a random basis or a whim or at will, but it would be there in the event that immediate action was necessary to protect a species on the verge of becoming extinct.

One can only assume that the government is bent and determined on catering to the demands of industry, landowners, or big developers. We do not know who. The government is catering to someone out there who is putting pressure on it to water down and weaken the bill. It is inexplicable and makes no sense.

What is required of us today is to do two things. First, we must stand up for democracy. That means sending a message to the government that it is absolutely unacceptable for it to veto, bypass, scrap or diminish the work of a committee of the House when it has arrived at a decision that is based on unanimous consent and based on months of hard work.

Second, we must stand up for strong legislation and at least force the government to put back in place those amendments recommended by the committee because they toughen Bill C-5 and ensure that we have got some framework to deal with a serious and growing problem.

• (1645)

The only way we can do both is to oppose this group of amendments, to oppose Bill C-5 as amended by the government, and

have returned to us a much tougher, more meaningful bill as recommended by the committee of the House.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to Bill C-5, the species at risk act. This is the third or fourth try by the government to bring the legislation to the floor. It seems to create more controversy than substance in a lot of these situations.

Patrick Moore, one of the founding members of Greenpeace, was speaking at the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association meeting in February. He said:

I made the transition from the politics of confrontation to the politics of building consensus.

That is a tremendous quote. That is exactly what the government should be doing with legislation like this. It needs to build consensus with the provinces, landowners, land users and so on in order to make this type of legislation palatable.

Mr. Moore is a native of Vancouver Island. He went on to say that the federal government's proposed species at risk act should be a positive program that should reward not punish farmers for living near these species. He is absolutely right. That is at the crux of the debate. He stated that costs for such programs should be borne equally by both urban and rural people. We all want to protect these species at risk.

This fellow has the right idea on this legislation. He has seen situations where people on Vancouver Island spent huge amounts of time and energy saving eagles. They did it; it worked out very well. They were able to bring back that population of eagles. It is just tremendous to watch them flying around.

The unintended consequence was that the eagles started feeding en masse on blue heron nests. The blue heron was of course an endangered species. They corrected one problem and the eagles started redirecting their feeding habits on to the blue herons so that now they have another problem on their hands. It looks like mother nature is more than able to take care of a lot of this on her own and when people get involved we have these unintended consequences.

I woke up the other morning to the radio and the announcer was talking about flocks of up to 4,000 crows around the city. Everybody knows that a crow is a bit of a pest. They do not just wake us up early. These birds are predators that feed on songbirds. They feed on the nests and the young. We have saved the crows. We are not allowed to shoot them any more or use poisons. Now we have these huge flocks of crows feeding on songbirds, the very birds we want to entertain and bring into the city. When we start to muddle with things there can be unintended consequences.

SARM, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, is having its annual meeting coming up between March 4 and March 6. There are a number of resolutions that have come forward that speak to these unintended consequences.

I know that my counterpart from Selkirk—Interlake this morning talked about a Ducks Unlimited project that was having an adverse effect on areas of his land. He has less hay land to farm. He has plovers that are now endangered because their habitat is being flooded.

*Government Orders*

We see loons in Saskatchewan being moved off Lake Diefenbaker where the water rises and lowers so much because of the dam at the head of it that there is not a loon population there any more. We have seen adverse effects and unintended consequences.

The RM of Rodgers submitted one resolution. It claimed that some municipalities were concerned about the risk of prairie fires that non-grazed or uncut long grasses presented, and neither the RM Act nor the Prairie Forest Fire Act gave the RM specific authority to direct owners of such land to create or maintain satisfactory fire guards to prevent the spread of fires. They wanted the act to be changed so that the RM would have some intent or some excuse to go in and look after that.

That is directed at some of the areas that are going back to habitat, that species can then carry on in.

There was a resolution submitted by the RM of Three Lakes. It claimed that the best use for arable land in Saskatchewan was for agricultural purposes. Much of the land owned by Ducks Unlimited and the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation had uncontrolled weed growth, and non-arable land was much better suited for the purpose of Ducks Unlimited and the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation. They wanted some laws or some sort of regulatory body to control where Ducks Unlimited and the wildlife federation could expand.

We are having problems with weed growth in some of these untended areas where the seeds are blowing out across the rest of the arable land and creating a problem. The species at risk bill does cover grasses and weeds as well so there are unintended consequences there.

The last resolution came from the RM of Langenburg and the RMs of Spy Hill and Churchbridge. They claimed that the municipal land tax base was gradually being eroded by the conversion of agricultural land to wildlife habitat whereas the North American waterfowl management plan, and that is what the member for Selkirk—Interlake was talking about, identified five million acres of land in western Canada that was to be returned to wildlife habitat. That is not all bad. We do have an excess of crop grown in our country.

• (1650)

A lot of people have talked about taking arable land out of production and putting it back into grasses and so on. Perhaps there is something good there. They are also saying that this North American waterfowl management plan has budgeted \$2.7 billion Canadian for this task. No one can bid against these folks. They have only spent 21% of the money that is allocated to secure 46% of their target. With a 60 cent dollar, that land is very accessible and very easy to buy out. No one can bid against them.

The work is being done by local and international conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited, the largest single landowner in the province of Saskatchewan. Farmers and the provinces are making the changes without threat or punishment from the federal government.

Statistics Canada reports an excess of \$6 billion benefit to the economy from wildlife and related activities. That has been harmed a little with the long gun registry. The hunters are not out there the way they used to be. It is great to create all these habitat and wildlife

areas, but unless there are actual hunters out there, we end up with an excess.

There is a huge problem in Saskatchewan at this time. The chronic wasting disease, CWD, which infiltrated our domestic elk herds has now shown up in wild deer. Hunters and wildlife federation officers are eradicating whole herds of deer. When we start to mess with mother nature, these unintended consequences start to boil over.

We saw that with the government deregulating the use of strychnine to control pocket gophers. There was a huge resurgence of gophers. A family of these little guys will clear off a tonne an acre of forage. We talked about that issue here. We passed a motion to reinstate the use of strychnine to control gophers. I hope the government will follow through on that on the spring seeding. We are looking at another drought in western Canada and gophers are going to be a huge problem again. We will have to have unlimited access to that strychnine in order to get on top of the problem.

There are some unintended consequences when we start to play with poisons. There was a huge hue and cry which actually shut it down the first time. Eagles, hawks, swift foxes and ground owls were feeding on the same poisons. It is very hard to prove that was actually happening.

Studies have been done. A lot of them were done by Senator Herb Sparrow who is a known environmentalist. He has won awards. He has done studies which say that a hawk would have to eat seven to eight gophers at one sitting in order to be harmed by that amount of poison. It is physically impossible. They just cannot digest that great a number. A fox or a coyote would have to eat 35 or 40 gophers. The bulk of them die in the hole so they would not be accessible to begin with.

We have regulated a huge problem in western Canada with respect to the gopher by taking away strychnine because some people said it was poisoning carcasses and that coyotes and the odd eagle were dying. If that is happening, then go after the bad guys. Hit them with every law on the books that can be thrown at them, but please do not throw the baby out with the bath water and regulate us all.

That is what Bill C-5 seeks to do when we do not talk about proper compensation and when we talk about criminal liability and that people are guilty before they have a chance to prove themselves innocent. It is a huge problem.

Years ago I had a lumberyard and I had a truckload of lumber coming from the west coast to my lumberyard. While going through Banff National Park, an elk bull jumped out in front of the truck. The last thing the truck driver wanted at two o'clock in the morning was to have an accident but it happened. Who was at fault? He was on the highway and the elk jumped out of the ditch. It took out the radiator, the front tire and the bumper of my truck. They are expensive repairs when it is a Kenworth truck. The driver spent more time filling out paperwork for the elk that committed suicide than it took for me to get the truck parts from Calgary, bring them out and put the truck back on the road.

The elk is not an endangered species. It just happened to be in the park. That type of thing happens.

*Government Orders*

The criminal intent outlined in the bill is that a person is guilty until the person can prove that he or she is innocent. We see no compensation and the usage of land is being taken out from underneath the farmer, the rancher, the woodlot owner, the miner, the oil patch and so on.

We really have to look at some of the amendments that have come forward and which are rightfully placed. They are non-partisan in nature. Let us get the government back on track with the right purpose here, to protect endangered species, some of which are farmers out in western Canada.

● (1655)

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Bill C-5 with a number of concerns. I do not think there is anyone in the House let alone in Canada who does not have concerns in regard to a species that becomes endangered and how to help rectify that if it is possible. Bill C-5 goes far beyond that. If we are to look at this issue in a reasonable way, surely we have to look at the socioeconomic impact.

I am not that old. I am only 56. I was brought up to believe that there was such a thing as private property rights in Canada. A person could go out and spend their hard-earned money, their life savings, or maybe an inheritance that had been left to them by their mother, father, or grandparents, on a piece of property where they could raise their family or perhaps start a small woodlot. That property was theirs. As the old saying goes, that person was a king in his home. As long as the person did not infringe on his neighbour's well-being, everything seemed to be fine.

Then something like Bill C-5 comes forward which does not seem to take into account at all what the social impact will be. This piece of legislation will allow the government to deem a species on a person's property to be endangered and therefore the landowner will be held responsible for the upkeep and well-being of that species for the rest of his existence on that piece of property. Right away would a landowner in a free society that believes there is such a thing as private property rights not think that the government would help offset the cost or look after it itself? Naturally he would. However not in Canada. Not under this legislation. We have to look at the absolute stupidity of this whole philosophy.

I am very proud to be from British Columbia. Forestry is a major industry not only in British Columbia but right across Canada. Let us say we have a large section of forest in British Columbia, 90 square miles. In that industry in that one section perhaps 3,000 people as a rough average are employed. All of a sudden someone comes along and says that there is a little bug that lives in the forest and the whole forest has to be shut down. All of those people will be out of work which will impact on all their families and there will be no compensation.

Let us take that one step further. If a company had invested in that forest, had made its bid, paid its penalties and fees to the government and then was shut down, what would happen? There is no compensation from the government. It could go bankrupt, whether it was a big company or a small company. There are a lot of small companies in the forest industry. Under this legislation, the way it is written, that is exactly what could happen.

● (1700)

Even when the committee looked at it and put forward well over 140 amendments to the government to address some of these concerns, the government turned a deaf ear. What is happening?

It does not matter where people live. It will impact upon them, even if they live in the city. If there is an endangered species in the city, it will impact upon people in the city too. They will be held responsible. If people have a summer home or cottage on one of the lakes in Ontario, this bill could impact upon them. Their neighbour or somebody could decide that a species should be looked at because it could be endangered and the landowner could be held responsible for it.

Will a young person growing up in Canada invest in this great country when there is this type of hammer over his or her head? I could spend \$500,000 on a piece of property and two days later somebody could decide there is an endangered species on my property. It would drop the value of my property from \$500,000 down to where nobody would want to touch it because they would be responsible for the endangered species.

It becomes a major question with regard to what is going on. We cannot, point blank, pass a piece of legislation like this without looking at the consequences. What will the government do to our farmers, the people who supply our food? What will the government do if it decides there is a species of plant life that has to be saved at all costs? Will it shut down all the farms with no compensation?

I have heard that the government in some countries totally controls everything and no one is allowed to make a living unless the government says they may do so. Is this where we are going? Is this really where the government wants to take us?

Government members can shake their heads all they want. You never addressed one of the amendments put forward by all parties in the House. Not one have you tried to address.

**Ms. Karen Redman:** We addressed 70.

**Mr. Darrel Stinson:** Not one—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. There are some very strongly held views on either side of the House on this issue, but please do not forget the Speaker.

**Mr. Darrel Stinson:** Mr. Speaker, I will not forget the Speaker. I only wish the Speaker had been in on some of the committees. Maybe then we would have legislation put forward here that made some sense.

The government members do not care about the concerns of the people. They do not care about the concerns of the property owners. They do not care at all about anybody other than themselves.

The minister himself says that he does not know what the cost will be to implement the legislation. He says it will cost at least \$45 million. I heard this once before on Bill C-68. It is now up to well over \$700 million and there is still nothing happening on Bill C-68. We are going down the same route again.

*Government Orders*

I am afraid that government members have become so arrogant in their attitude to the people of this country. They do not care how much it costs. They do not care how much it hurts. They do not care what the effect will be on the family lives and employment in this country. They really do not care about anything outside of making sure their own paycheques are signed so they can cash them at the bank. That is all they care about.

They have done very little consultation on this bill. They are again stepping on provincial jurisdiction in many areas.

I want to assure members opposite that everybody has concerns with regard to endangered species. The government should consult. It should look at it reasonably and act with the people upon whom it will impact for a change. Please, at least do that with this piece of legislation.

• (1705)

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to participate in the Group No. 3 round of amendments but before I do so it would be completely inappropriate if I did not compliment you on the extraordinary Latin you advanced in the House yesterday evening.

We in my party have a problem with four principal planks of Bill C-5. First, the compensatory regime lacks clarity. If the government had its act together it would simultaneously table the regulations.

Second, the bill would not provide for mandatory protection of critical habitat on federal lands. How does the government have the moral suasion to deal with private and provincial lands when the minister is of the opinion that it should not look after its own backyard?

Third, transboundary species such as migratory birds are not included in the bill. That is a serious mistake.

Fourth, leading to your latin lesson of yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I find it odd that we are debating whether the list of species at risk should be determined by science or politics. Social and economic implications should come into play in the recovery plan but we should not hide behind the list. Is it not ironic that the some 233 species listed yesterday are being accepted automatically by the Government of Canada but it will not have scientific listing in the future? If it was good for 233 species at one pop why would it not be good on an ongoing basis? The government has contradicted itself 233 times in the bill.

I will speak to the motions we have in play in this group. I will start with Motion No. 5, a motion proposed by the Canadian Alliance. It aims to remove the capacity of the federal government to protect aquatic species. That should be maintained under the purview of the federal government, so Motion No. 5 is not worthy of support.

The Progressive Conservative Party and our DR cousins will support Motions Nos. 7 and 8, the government technical amendments. We have no problem in that regard.

We wholeheartedly have a problem with government Motions Nos. 9 and 10. The government is trying to gut a provision the committee made that would have protected a subspecies of the endangered species community. The amendment would have used a more biologically accepted term by adding the words variety or

genetically distinct. This is the language utilized by COSEWIC, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, which thought it was a step in the right direction.

Certain species have evolved over time and through natural selection into different species, whether different communities of wolves or the ponies that live on Sable Island. These animals have developed into genetically distinct species in their own right and their biodiversity should be maintained. The Government of Canada is removing an amendment the New Democrats, the Progressive Conservatives and a myriad of learned Liberal MPs supported. It has chosen to capitulate, gut a good provision and insult the good work of the committee.

Motion No. 14 is an amendment we have a problem with in the same regard. We will therefore not be supporting Motion No. 14.

• (1710)

We will not be supporting Motion No. 15. The hon. member is advocating that the phrase take social and economic implications into account. This speaks to the purpose of the act which is quite clear: to protect endangered species. We should be talking about the bill's socio-economic implications and recovery plans but we should not distract from its primary purpose.

We are on board with the government's technical amendment in Motion No. 19 which would clear up some language.

Motion No. 30 is a technical amendment which we support. We also support Motion No. 32, Motion No. 34 which is a government amendment, and Motion No. 36.

We have a serious problem with Motion No. 35. It would take back one of the principal benchmarks of the Government of Canada with respect to the listing provision that says the government must comment on whether or not species would be added within a six month time frame.

It is quite shameful that the government is gutting this amendment that was passed by members of the committee including New Democrats and Liberals. A compromise amendment was supported by the Canadian Alliance although I may want to check my facts. The government is gutting a provision it could have kept instead of capitulating to backroom bureaucrats who thought for some reason that gutting it was a better way to go. It is an insult to the democratically elected individuals who spent a lot of time at the committee level reviewing those aspects of the bill.

Motion No. 66 is the one we have a major problem with. It would change a clause that deals with enabling legislation to give the competent minister the capacity to make interim measures. It would enable the minister to make interim calls about whether or not a species was at risk. It would give ministers the capacity to protect habitat on an emergency basis. It would enable them to do these things but does not say they would have to. The government has said no, we do not want any responsibility whatsoever so we will take out the provision.

*Government Orders*

There are other amendments in the group but we in my party think Motion No. 66 is the greatest problem. The provision it proposes to change was supported in committee by members on both sides of the Chamber. It is quite sad that the government has decided to gut it.

• (1715)

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak to the Group No. 3 motions concerning Bill C-5, an act to protect endangered species. I had the chance to work quite intimately on the bill when I was environment critic for our caucus.

We in the opposition have serious concerns regarding the last few groups of motions. A number of my colleagues have spoken quite diligently to all the motions in Group No. 3. I commend the last speaker who spoke to all the motions. He knows the issue quite technically and has followed it closely. The government is wise to listen to the things he has to say. I congratulate him for his intervention today.

For the public who loves to tune in and listen to what we do and talk about in this place the technicality of the motions can be somewhat confusing. I wanted to put the motions in a general category so people at home could follow the themes we may be concerned about with respect to the bill on endangered species.

As I have mentioned in the past, it is clear that Canadians across the nation believe we need endangered species legislation. More than 90% of Canadians want effective legislation when it comes to endangered species. However they have concerns as well. They are concerned that property rights should be protected; criminal intent should be clearly defined; and the various interests of landowners, environmentalists and all stakeholders should be brought together. This is a concern many of my colleagues have raised. It not been dealt with by the government.

The prior groups of motions dealt specifically with compensation. This is an issue about which landowners who are the volunteer stewards of the land have a great concern. The question has not yet been answered with a clear equation. It is not clear how compensation would be dealt with if land were confiscated because an endangered species was found on it.

The Group No. 2 motions deal with jurisdictional and criminal intent issues. There are concerns about whether the legislation would affect the jurisdictions of provinces. Would we need a national accord to streamline the environmental policies of provinces in relation to the federal government? Concerning criminal intent, if someone accidentally destroyed habitat on their private land they would be guilty until proven innocent. Even if it was an accident it would be difficult to prove in some cases.

In the Group No. 3 motions some of the main themes concern socio-economic interests. There is also the issue of COSEWIC and how the process of listing species would be determined. Motions Nos. 30, 32, 36, 68, 136, 137 and 138 deal with COSEWIC in some form or another. How we would set national standards ties into the provincial jurisdiction issue. Motion No. 79 deals with the issue. There may be a few others.

We spoke about criminal offences in Group No. 2 but Motion No. 120 makes reference to changes when it comes to punishments and

penalties. Public consultation is an important issue to all members of the House if not all Canadians. They should all be able to have input on the bill. Motions Nos. 4, 7, 19 and 36 all deal with the idea of public consultation.

Instead of speaking to the specific motions I have identified I will address the general themes I spoke about and the concerns we in the opposition have with the bill.

Mr. Speaker, you are no stranger to this place. You know the importance the official opposition puts on fiscal responsibility. It is one of our biggest concerns and we have raised it over and over again.

• (1720)

Some of my colleagues spoke about this earlier today. As I tuned in to some of the riveting debate, I heard some of my colleagues say that they were not concerned about the costs associated with the bill. One of my colleagues talked about the gun registration bill and the fact that the government told us one amount that it would cost for gun registration when in fact the actual cost of administering that bill was outrageously overbudget.

Are we going down the same road with this bill? We do want endangered species to be protected and we do want effective legislation but we need to be honest about the cost. We hear different numbers right across the board from provinces and from the federal government which say that it could be more than \$45 million a year, but we need to know how much it will really cost. When it comes to the socioeconomic interests of all Canadians, this is something that we fundamentally need to address.

There is another area that has caused a number of concerns for environmentalists. I touched on the motions pertaining to COSEWIC, for which environmentalists definitely have a concern, but it does directly affect this place. The concern is about how we will put together the list when it comes to establishing what constitutes an endangered species and what does not.

While dealing with this particular part of the bill, I remember there was much debate on how science should be left to the scientists and it should be removed out of this place completely. Politics should not be involved in the listing process nor in the actual recovery plans associated with deciding what constitutes an endangered species and what does not.

*Government Orders*

If I am not mistaken, one of the motions put forward by the official opposition tried to come up with a balance to this problem. This is exactly what we had proposed when we said that we should leave science to the scientists. They could put together a list of endangered species that this place could look over and evaluate, and especially cabinet because ultimately it should have the final say in evaluating the resources attributed to going through the whole recovery plan when it comes to dealing with protecting endangered species.

It would be great for all of us to list the endangered species but the reality is that we need the resources to have an effective recovery plan to protect those endangered species. Cabinet has a role to review the potential list of endangered species but it should not be a political game.

We see a lot of political games from the other side of the House which may be why some environmentalists get concerned about this process. We need a list that is produced scientifically. We need cabinet to review that list and to put together a recovery plan cost analysis on which endangered species can be covered right away and which need some obvious time.

The long term effect is to protect as many endangered species as possible but we cannot do that with the resources we have. We need to be diligent about it.

I would argue that cabinet does have a final role but it should be strictly a resource based role and not a science role. We should not question that. COSEWIC's job is to put together people for that committee or group who can evaluate endangered species.

In the motions I mentioned, we proposed an amendment to find that balance between protecting endangered species and realizing the costs associated with that.

I get quite passionate about endangered species but we need to make the right decisions. Sometimes it is difficult to make decisions in this place that will achieve the best results.

I want to quickly touch on the national standards issue, one that is so important when it comes to how we in this place can effectively produce legislation that does not duplicate what is currently happening in provinces but instead works together with provincial governments to achieve the goals that all Canadians feel are so important.

I hope the government will be encouraged to heed some of these suggestions today because that is the only way we will bring all stakeholders together on this very important bill, which hopefully will achieve the goal of protecting endangered species and not the divide and conquer mentality that the government has.

• (1725)

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to add some comments to the debate. I appreciate the comments by my hon. colleague, which were deeply heartfelt, as are the comments that all members make in the House about this issue. I think protecting species at risk is a broad based concern shared by all Canadians.

In terms of this particular amendment to the bill and others that have been presented, our concerns are based on the desire to see

legislation that works. We are concerned with results and to achieve those results one has to consider the socioeconomic aspects of the bill.

To suggest that we will achieve the desired goals we have for the legislation without being fair in terms of the socioeconomic impact this will have on our partners in the use of the environment, the resource companies, the individual producer and the agricultural producers, which is a major concern for my riding, is to suggest something that is unachievable.

The reality is that landowners and farmers deal with these issues on a daily basis. They are the frontline people. They run their businesses in an environment in which they are in partnership with nature. They recognize not only the risk that nature presents to the, but the risk it presents to the species with whom they share the land. In my experience it has been people like those in my constituency, farm families and rural inhabitants, who have been the frontline troops in the battle to preserve our species at risk and their natural habitat.

Many of the projects that have taken place in my riding, such as soil conservation projects, grasslands preservation projects, wetlands conservation projects and the like, have been successful only because of the participation of people in that region who believed these projects were fair, reasonable and that they would work. They involved themselves in a sharing manner in making these projects work. The bill fails to do that and because of that it is flawed.

My dad used to say that some people were so smart they were stupid. What I am referring to is the basic fact that all the scientific data in the world will not change the fact that if people on the land, people who depend on the land, perceive this bill as something that punishes them or is unfair to them, all the brains in the world and all the beautiful laws we write here will not succeed in getting the result we want.

I cannot help but contrast the problems in this bill with the problems facing our Minister of National Defence right now. I am glad he is here with us. In his case he was briefed on an issue but has asserted that he did not quite understand that briefing. He said that he came to a fuller realization of the briefing as the week went on. What that speaks to is a failure to communicate and a failure to understand. That is paralleled by this bill.

I know many groups made submissions to the committee in the preparatory stages of the bill. They were asked to make submissions and did so in good faith. The World Wildlife Fund, the mining industry, the pulp and paper industry, even the Sierra Club all agreed that socioeconomic impacts needed to be considered and considered seriously if the bill were to succeed. The problem we have is that the briefing did not take place and the reality is that the information did not seem to stick. It is the same kind of thing—

*Government Orders*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry but I must interrupt the member. He will have approximately six minutes remaining whenever this matter comes before the House again.

\* \* \*

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

**NUCLEAR FUEL WASTE ACT**

The House resumed from February 22 consideration of the motion that Bill C-27, an act respecting the long term management of nuclear fuel waste, be read the third time and passed; of the motion that the question be now put.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the recorded division on the previous question at the third reading stage of Bill C-27.

Call in the members.

• (1800)

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

(*Division No. 234*)

**YEAS**

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anders
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Anderson (Victoria)
Assadourian	Bagnell
Bailey	Barnes
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bennett	Benoit
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Boudria
Breitkreuz	Brown
Bryden	Burton
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Casson	Castonguay
Catterall	Charbonneau
Chatters	Coderre
Collenette	Copps
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dion	Dromisky
Drouin	Duplain
Easter	Eggleton
Epp	Eyking
Farah	Finlay
Fitzpatrick	Folco
Fontana	Forseth
Gallant	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Harb
Harvey	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jaffer	Jennings
Johnston	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Keyes	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte
Lastewka	Lavigne
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marcil
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCallum	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan

McTeague  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Neville  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Pagtakhan  
Peric  
Pettigrew  
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
Price  
Provenzano  
Redman  
Regan  
Ritz  
Rock  
Scott  
Sgro  
Skelton  
Sorenson  
Spencer  
St-Julien  
Steekle  
Stinson  
Telegdi  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Tirabassi  
Tonks  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Wappel  
Wilfert

Merrifield  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Brien (Labrador)  
O'Reilly  
Penson  
Peterson  
Phinney  
Pratt  
Proulx  
Rajotte  
Reed (Halton)  
Richardson  
Robillard  
Scherrer  
Serré  
Shepherd  
Solberg  
Speller  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Stewart  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Toews  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Whelan  
Wood — 156

**NAYS**

## Members

Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bigras
Blaikie	Borotsik
Bourgeois	Brien
Brison	Cardin
Casey	Clark
Comartin	Crête
Dalphondu-Guiral	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Doyle
Duceppe	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gauthier	Girard-Bujold
Godin	Guay
Guimond	Hearn
Herron	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lanctôt
Loubier	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marceau	Mark
McDonough	Ménard
Nystrom	Pallister
Pankiw	Paquette
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Proctor	Roy
Sauvageau	St-Hilaire
Stoffer	Strahl
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Venne
Wasylcia-Leis	Wayne — 54

**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

The question is therefore on the main motion for third reading of Bill C-27.

**Ms. Marlene Catterall:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think you might find if you ask that there is consent that those who voted on the previous motion be recorded as voting on this motion now before the House with Liberal members voting yes.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** Mr. Speaker, Alliance members present will vote in the same manner that they did on the previous motion.

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

*(Division No. 235)*

### YEAS

#### Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anders
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	Anderson (Victoria)
Assadourian	Bagnell
Bailey	Barnes
Bélangier	Bellemare
Bennett	Benoit
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Boudria
Breitkreuz	Brown
Bryden	Burton
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Casson	Castonguay
Catterall	Charbonneau
Chatters	Coderre
Collenette	Copps
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dion	Dromisky
Drouin	Duplain
Easter	Eggleton
Epp	Eyking
Farrah	Finlay
Fitzpatrick	Folco
Fontana	Forseth
Gallant	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Grose	Harb
Harvey	Hubbard
Ianno	Jackson
Jaffer	Jennings
Johnston	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Keys	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte
Lastewka	Lavigne
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marcil
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCallum	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
McTeague	Merrifield
Mills (Red Deer)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
Neville	O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Penson
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)	Pratt
Price	Proulx
Provenzano	Rajotte
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Richardson
Ritz	Robillard
Rock	Scherrer
Scott	Serré
Sgro	Shepherd
Skelton	Solberg
Sorenson	Speller
Spencer	St-Jacques
St-Julien	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart

### Government Orders

Stinson	Szabo
Telegdi	Thibault (West Nova)
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tirabassi	Toews
Tonks	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Volpe
Wappel	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood — 156

### NAYS

#### Members

Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Bellehumeur
Bergeron	Bigras
Blaikie	Borotsik
Bourgeois	Brien
Brison	Cardin
Casey	Clark
Comartin	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Doyle
Duceppe	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gauthier	Girard-Bujold
Godin	Guay
Guimond	Hearn
Herron	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lancôt
Loubier	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marceau	Mark
McDonough	Ménard
Nystrom	Pallister
Pankiw	Paquette
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Proctor	Roy
Sauvageau	St-Hilaire
Stoffer	Strahl
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Venne
Wasylycia-Leis	Wayne — 54

### PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

**The Speaker:** It being 6.01 p.m. the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties and I believe if you sought it you would find unanimous consent for the following motion: That the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights be the committee designated to review the mental disorder provisions of the criminal code, pursuant to section 36.1 of the said act.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons have consent of the House to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

*Private Members' Business***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on another point of order. On another motion, I believe that following discussions among the parties if you seek it you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That the members of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration be authorized to travel to Europe, Indian and Asia from April 13 to 26, 2002 in relation to its Study on "Competing for Immigrants" and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons have the consent to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Does the House give its consent to the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I will try again on the first motion. Perhaps members would agree because there has been discussion by all the parties and I think there is agreement on this.

I would seek unanimous consent for the following motion: That the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights be the committee designated to review the mental disorder provisions of the criminal code, pursuant to section 36.1 of the said act.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the parliamentary secretary have unanimous consent to propose the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

**CENOTAPHS**

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC/DR)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should establish a fund to maintain local cenotaphs now in a state of abandonment or poor maintenance.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I have the opportunity to speak on this private member's motion today and clearly if there is an issue that transcends party lines it is this one. It is a motion for parliamentarians to come together and help ensure that we have the appropriate respect for the veterans of our country and that monuments known on a daily level as cenotaphs are provided the financial resources with which to be maintained so that we can indeed honour the legacy of our veterans.

I would like to share one aspect of the issue before I go into the actual content of my motion and that is that the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and its DR cousins are steadfast supporters of the contributions made by our veterans, whether they be in the first world war, the second world war, the Korean war, through a peacekeeping operation or at any time our troops have been deployed, including, obviously, to Afghanistan. One of the reasons our party has been identified so well is due to the contribution made by the deputy leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the member for Saint John, in keeping veterans' issues at the forefront. It is my privilege today to follow in her footsteps.

I rise today to speak on an issue that touches Canadians from coast to coast and forms a central part of what it means to be Canadian. A large part of what it means to be Canadian lies in our history, in the legacy of our veterans who fought in all the wars and conflicts. That legacy is continuing today as I speak. Canadian men and women are serving around the world, including taking part in a very dangerous mission in Afghanistan. At a time like this it is hard not to think about the millions of Canadian men and women who have served overseas in protecting the freedom and basic human rights of people around the world.

● (1805)

[Translation]

In the wake of September 11, we must more than ever before strengthen our resolve to be Canadians and realize that our liberties must be protected as they have been in the past, thanks to the millions of Canadian men and women who devoted themselves to the cause.

[English]

This was the spirit behind my private member's motion, which states simply:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should establish a fund to maintain local cenotaphs now in a state of abandonment or poor maintenance.

We need to remember and honour our Canadian heroes throughout the year, not only on November 11. Cenotaphs are stark reminders of the horrors of war and the courage and bravery of those who fought in the conflicts.

[Translation]

Several cenotaphs in Canada are in very bad shape and need urgent repair. As Canadians, every year we pledge to never forget what happened. Therefore, it is important to honour our commitment to integrate into our daily lives the legacy left to us by our veterans.

[English]

Cenotaphs are monuments to the untold sacrifices made by those who paid the ultimate price. We need to ensure that cenotaphs in communities across Canada are well maintained.

*Private Members' Business*

Let me tell the House about one cenotaph that is part of my own personal heritage in the community of Anagance, a small village midway between Moncton and Sussex in the riding of Fundy—Royal. Like other communities across Canada, Anagance is home to a cenotaph listing the names of local boys who gave their lives in the world wars. I will paraphrase from a document from a Moncton *Times* transcript. Some research was done on the names on that very cenotaph. Douglas Smith was a wireless operator who perished in Europe on his first flight when his bomber was shot down. Alden Nickerson flew 29 bombing raids before his aircraft was shot down. They are two of the names on this cenotaph that stands behind the United Church in Anagance.

The cenotaph in Anagance is among thousands that shifting populations and time threaten to forget. The Anagance cenotaph, like others across Canada, belongs to the Royal Canadian Legion and the local municipality. With dwindling membership, the local legion finds it difficult to maintain. The maintenance of cenotaphs may not be as difficult in some of our larger urban areas, the cities or larger towns, given that our population has become more suburbanized or urbanized, but I think we need to ensure that the federal government provides another vehicle through which people can lever funds to ensure that we maintain the legacy of these cenotaphs.

I would like to share with hon. members the comments of one of my constituents, Mr. Granville Jennings, the president of the Rothesay Legion. He stated in an e-mail sent to me that the reality is that there is a decline in the number of veterans to whom the government must send veterans allowance cheques. He advocates that these funds be redirected to look after their living memory, those very cenotaphs.

He also let me know that *Legion* magazine, which is published regularly, used to have a page or two of obituaries. However, this publication no longer lists the names of veterans who have passed away. The reason is quite simple, he said. The magazine would be nothing more than a list of veterans who have died. Within a decade there will be hardly any living veterans from World War I, World War II and the Korean war.

He said that the least we could do is have an ongoing maintenance program for cenotaphs so that the smaller legions in municipalities that do not have those funds themselves could tap into those resources and maintain their cenotaphs.

I must make one particular comment and I hope that all members of the House are listening, particularly the government member who will speak to the motion very shortly. I must say that I was completely heartened and very pleased by the language used recently by the Minister of Veterans Affairs when his department was seized with this issue in response to this private member's motion. He made a very non-partisan, very constructive reply and I would like to quote what he said in a recent interview in the New Brunswick *Telegraph-Journal*. He stated:

There is an eagerness on the part of all of us to look into this in a very positive way and see in what way we could participate.

He understands that those 6,000 cenotaphs from coast to coast to coast are living legacies, monuments, shrines to veterans who put the common causes of peace, freedom and human rights above all else and who died in defence of those very values.

It is the minimum that we owe our veterans. I know that many a member of parliament, particularly in rural ridings, has been approached by legions and municipalities and has been told that it is pretty tough to lever the funds to maintain these structures, the stonework in particular.

• (1810)

I believe the motion itself is non-threatening. It calls on the Government of Canada to establish a fund. It does not have to be a comprehensive fund to maintain all of them, but it would provide a place where municipalities or regions could make application to lever funds to maintain these structures, which is something they should do because it is the right thing.

I tip my hat to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. I am very pleased with his early comments in this regard. I have another quote from a recent New Brunswick newspaper article which I will paraphrase with a little liberty. Essentially he said that if it meant he had to go to cabinet to look for new funds he was willing to consider that. I am very pleased that this is one of his interactions on a motion brought forth by the opposition. If this is a testament to how he will handle veterans issues, then I applaud his efforts.

**Mr. Carmen Provenzano (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to rise today to debate the hon. member's motion that the government establish funding to maintain local cenotaphs that are in need of repair and maintenance. I am also pleased that the motion sponsor, the hon. member for Fundy—Royal, is happy to know that our new Minister of Veterans Affairs has publicly stated his interest in the matter of cenotaph maintenance and that he has asked his officials to come up with some options and recommendations.

The member quoted today's edition of the New Brunswick *Telegraph-Journal* and quite correctly the quote attributed to the minister is that there is an eagerness on the part of all of us to look at this in a very positive way to see in what way we can participate. I spoke to the minister about the accuracy of that quote and he confirmed to me that it definitely is his intent.

The minister, like all citizens of the country, is committed to our collective promise to our veterans that we will never forget their service and sacrifices in the cause of peace and freedom on behalf of our country. Our veterans are indeed a part of our national treasure. I agree with the proposition that local cenotaphs need repair and maintenance.

In rising on this motion today, I would like to bring some historical context to the debate. The cenotaphs, found in communities across the country, honour those who gave their lives in the cause of peace and freedom. They are a statement of strong community involvement and deep pride in our history. In fact there are over 6,000 cenotaphs in cities large and small across the nation.

*Routine Proceedings*

Some were erected under the auspices of the provincial governments, others by municipalities and still others undoubtedly by veterans organizations, concerned citizens, local philanthropists and non-profit societies. Our challenge is to respect this proud tradition, to sustain the spirit of our citizens and to build on the strength of our communities. However Veterans Affairs Canada does not have the funding capacity to repair and maintain all 6,000 cenotaphs. At the same time we recognize that there is a practical limit to what communities can do to make that financial contribution.

Of course I also realize that the hon. member is not suggesting that the government establish an open-ended fund that would commit to funding the repair and maintenance of all cenotaphs. I think hon. members would agree that this is an area where government cannot do it all. That is why we are exploring options and opportunities. Surely it is so much more meaningful to the concept of remembrance and commemoration when Canadian citizens honour their local heroes and our communities have done so.

How can the government and communities share in the important task of keeping these monuments in a honourable state to sustain the fullest meaning of remembrance and commemoration?

At this juncture let me share with the House some of the ways in which Veterans Affairs Canada keeps alive the memory of men and women who served and sacrificed for their country in times of war and in times peace. This remembrance mandate is achieved in the following ways: overseas commemorative pilgrimages, support for veterans' week and public information and outreach initiatives.

As to the question of maintenance, the department is committed to just such a task for some of our most glorious overseas memorials. As hon. members know, Canada, like many Commonwealth countries, buried her dead of two world wars and Korea near where they fell in battle. They are at rest in Commonwealth or United Nations war cemeteries the world over. It has been said many times that we can trace our war history by following the trail of the cemeteries and monuments that lie scattered around the world.

The government is committed to maintaining these memorials to Canadians who have died in the cause of peace and freedom. Recognition of the significance of Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel already has made them national historic sites.

•(1815)

At the same time, a careful assessment of Canada's 13 first world war battlefield memorial sites in Europe has revealed that they have been deteriorating. At an average of 75 years, time and mother nature have done their damage. The repair work required to rehabilitate these sacred monuments is beyond the scope of routine maintenance.

In May last year the Government of Canada announced that it would be committing \$30 million to that repair, restoration and rehabilitation over the next five years. More recently, veterans affairs established the Canadian battlefield memorials restoration project. The project's main priority is the restoration of the magnificent Vimy Memorial, at a cost of approximately \$20 million. The remaining costs will be dedicated to address issues of health, safety and threats to assets at all sites.

I believe all members support this worthy initiative of preserving this part of our heritage, particularly at these magnificent sites overseas where all the world can see the tremendous contributions our veterans made during those terrible times of war in the early part of the last century.

As for the maintenance of cenotaphs here at home, it has been a long standing policy of the Government of Canada that the National War Memorial in Ottawa, which is dedicated to all veterans, would be the federally funded and maintained war memorial. That commitment continues.

To that end, hon. members will also remember the historic ceremonies in the spring of 2000 that saw the return home and laying to rest of Canada's unknown soldier in the sarcophagus at the national war memorial. It was a commemorative event perhaps matched only by the official opening of the war memorial itself in 1939.

The ceremonies of recovery overseas and the laying to rest and enshrinement of the tomb were seen from coast to coast and once again ignited in Canadians a passion for remembering and honouring their past, and those who continue to protect our shores and liberty, at home and abroad. It was a shining example of how departments of government and veterans organizations can partner for the common goal of remembrance.

Collectively we have been handed a sacred trust to honour and remember those who have given so much to Canada in our country's time of great need. We have accepted this responsibility and we will do our utmost to ensure that the sacrifices and achievements of our veteran population are remembered for generations to come.

Although we may find the wording of the motion a little broad in its sweep and perhaps too open-ended in its implications for funding, I am sure hon. members are pleased with the minister's commitment, as stated earlier, to take a serious look at the principle behind the motion and to look at some practical options.

I thank all hon. members for their continuing commitment to Canada's veterans.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1820)

[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, following discussions among the parties, I think that if you were to seek it you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights be the committee designated to review the Mental disorder provisions of the Criminal Code, pursuant to section 36.1 of the said Act.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the House give its consent to the parliamentary secretary 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)

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### CENOTAPHS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Fundy—Royal for moving the motion.

Perhaps no other province or constituency in Canada needs this motion as much as the province and constituency I represent. The demographics are changing so quickly in my area that legion branches are closing almost every year. With that comes the cenotaphs and with that comes the maintenance.

This issue is very timely and needs to be addressed. I thank the parliamentary secretary and the member for Fundy—Royal for mentioning that.

Perhaps the most touching incident in my work as a member of parliament dealt with a cenotaph and two gravesites. I am referring to the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border town of Moosomin. Immigrants moved from the east to the west and Moosomin is one of the oldest towns in Saskatchewan. I have learned from a veteran of World War II living in Moosomin what that legion branch has done since World War II.

Following World War I, not one but two Victoria Cross soldiers were buried there. It is amazing that two Victoria Cross soldiers would be buried that closely together in the same community. At that time obviously there was no cenotaph. One tombstone was located virtually on a road allowance which was abandoned. To see it, one would have to walk from the highway, especially in the wintertime. The other one was being used as a brace on a fence.

As no relatives were to be found, the members of the Royal Canadian Legion in both Wapella and Moosomin took it upon themselves to move the stones. They were moved to the cenotaph area. One was moved to a graveyard in the neighbouring town.

As a result, someone in provincial government, not federal, brought disdain upon these people for preserving these tombstones. They would have been lost forever and people would never be able to visit them because it was all vacated land. I salute those people for what they have done. I will certainly be on their side if they have any further quarrels with any officials.

One hundred thousand Canadians have spilled their blood in over 40 countries around the world. As my hon. colleagues have mentioned, there are over 6,000 cenotaphs. In my area, where there used to be five legion branches, there is one. That is about the average across the southern part of my constituency.

### *Private Members' Business*

This is a very timely motion. I want to assure members that the motion will get full support from my province. Make no mistake about that.

If we have a will to do something, we will very quickly find a way to do it. We can talk about that later. There is a way we can do it with each one of the sites. With support from the government and support from local communities, we can get the people interested and they will support this. I am very pleased that the member has done just that.

There are so many things that have been left undone which we must do for our veterans. This is a request that has come to me many times.

• (1825)

I am glad that eventually I will be able to answer the people who phone my office asking if there is anything they can do. I hope that before too long I will be able to proudly say that yes there is something that can be done because the Government of Canada is going to set up something, maybe not in totality, for the communities scattered across this great country.

I am extremely proud of the motion that the member for Fundy—Royal has moved. I was proud to hear the parliamentary secretary to the minister make the declaration. With that, let us hope this is a speedy event. Let us hope that we can move quickly so that as summer comes along some of the work which needs to be done will get done across my constituency, across my province and across the country.

[Translation]

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my party, I am pleased to speak to the motion put forward by the Progressive Conservative member with respect to the maintenance of cenotaphs.

Before beginning my speech, I wish to salute the memory of Lorenzo Boisvert, a member of the Sorel-Tracy branch of the Canadian legion who lived in my riding and who died last week. I visited the funeral home to offer my condolences to all members of his family, but I wish to remember him to the House and to thank him for what he did, as a veteran, to defend peace and freedom.

I offer my deepest condolences to Mr. Boisvert's family. As the French author, Alexandre Dumas, so aptly said, "Those we have known and loved are no longer where they once were, but they will always be a part of us". I send my sympathies to all members of Mr. Boisvert's family during this difficult time.

I will now return to the motion. Everyone likely agrees with the principle of the motion that cenotaphs should be properly maintained. In Sorel-Tracy, in my riding, there is a cenotaph which is looked after by the municipality. Of course, the Canadian legion must often remind it of its responsibility, but by and large it does a very good job and the cenotaph is in excellent repair.

*Private Members' Business*

This brings me to another matter. The member's motion has its place, but I would have liked to see it broadened to include the premises occupied by Canadian legions in Quebec and in Canada. It is becoming increasingly difficult for members of the various legions to maintain them. I think that the legions need the support of the federal government.

The Sorel-Tracy branch of the Canadian legion, the only branch in the lovely riding of Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, has terrible trouble making ends meet. It has a magnificent building which is paid for, lovely grounds maintained by the City of Sorel-Tracy, with agreements regarding snow clearing and so forth. But every year it has to struggle to come up with the money it needs. So support from the government would be very much appreciated, more than just for maintenance of the cenotaph, although in certain regions, the cenotaph would need government support, because there is no municipality looking after it.

Last year, for example, the branch of the Canadian Legion in Sorel-Tracy had a surplus; this year, it had a slight deficit. On Saturday, March 9, there will be a fundraising dinner. I would like to take this opportunity to invite those in the lovely region of Sorel-Tracy that are watching to attend this fundraising dinner, at a cost of \$10, on March 9. It will take place in the Legion hall and I will have the honour of hosting a silent auction to raise funds. Our objective is to raise a few thousand dollars to make up part of the deficit. We need to organize three or four activities per year in order to do so.

What is the point of having a magnificent cenotaph in a city if there is no one left to remember its significance? The people at the Legion organize Remembrance Day ceremonies; they remind us constantly, every day even, of the memory of those who fought for peace and freedom.

If there is only a monument that is well maintained, but no hall maintained, where the memory of our veterans is kept alive, I wonder if the monument would not be soon forgotten.

I believe that we must indeed support the member's motion, but also that the maintenance fund be expanded to cover the maintenance of the halls and buildings owned by the different branches of the Canadian Legion, to keep alive and remind us of the memory and sacrifice made by those who gave their lives in the different wars, and also of those who courageously set off to war and returned.

•(1830)

It is not necessarily that there are that many of them, but the sacrifice they made to safeguard freedom and peace in our two beautiful countries, Canada and Quebec, was indeed great.

The Bloc Québécois will therefore support the motion, but with the underlying hope that it will be expanded to cover the maintenance of the different branches of the Canadian Legion, to provide them with financial support to maintain their facilities, pay their electricity and phone bills and have an office in order to maintain a constant presence in every region, and perhaps in every riding of Quebec or of Canada.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my hon. colleague from the

Bloc Québécois that the concerns of the legions about the facilities they maintain throughout the entire country also needs a review. I would like to advise my colleague from the Bloc that we raised the condition of many of the legions throughout the country with the veterans affairs minister a few years ago. We said that the federal government should work with other levels of government to see what could be done to maintain those facilities for the future.

I thank the hon. member for Fundy—Royal for bringing forward this very important motion for debate in the House of Commons. It is a debate we can have in a non-partisan pragmatic way.

Many of the cenotaphs are located in rural parts of Canada. One of the difficulties facing the smaller communities from coast to coast to coast is that a lot of young people have moved to the urban centres. Roughly 80% to 85% of all Canadians now live in large urban centres.

Cenotaphs in rural areas are being neglected through no fault of the people who have stayed behind. They require assistance to maintain those cenotaphs for when people honour the veterans, especially on Remembrance Day but on other days as well. The Battle of the Atlantic is honoured in Nova Scotia. We go to the beautiful cenotaph at Point Pleasant Park every year to honour the Battle of the Atlantic.

Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia has what I consider to be one of the most beautiful cenotaph locations anywhere in North America. The cenotaph was built with over 60 stones. The stones came from over 60 countries. Each one of the stones represents a country where a Canadian soldier was killed and is buried.

I encourage my colleague from Fundy—Royal and everyone in the House to visit Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia. They will see an outstanding memorial and cenotaph to those who made the supreme sacrifice. This remarkable effort was done mainly by volunteers with some minor assistance from various levels of government. This is an outstanding facility which represents a great honour to those who made the supreme sacrifice.

We are encouraging the government to consider this motion. It does not have to give us an answer right away, but it should seriously consider what it can do, perhaps not on its own, but working in conjunction with other levels of government. I am thinking of something similar to an infrastructure fund where people could access the capital. They could make a bid for funding in order to maintain and upkeep their cenotaph.

There is one thing which ties the country together. No matter where people go in Canada, there is a good chance they will find a legion or an army, navy and air force veterans club. There is a good chance there will be a cenotaph.

I do not see how anyone in Ottawa could just walk by the memorial for our fallen which is not far from here. This memorial also includes the tomb of the unknown soldier. Every time I walk by that facility I stop in my tracks and reflect for a few moments before I continue on my way. I have seen other people do that as well.

*Private Members' Business*

I have seen that done not only in Ottawa, but in Middle Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, Tofino, British Columbia and Watson Lake, Yukon. I have seen people pause to reflect at these places, not just on Remembrance Day but on other days as well.

This is why it is imperative that we honour the motion put forward by the member for Fundy—Royal. He has made a valid point. All he is asking is that the government initiate some kind of effort or fund that could kick-start additional funding from other sources. He is not saying that the provincial government or municipal government should not be involved. He wants the federal government to show leadership in the effort to maintain the over 6,000 cenotaphs in Canada.

I also want to mention something that is found in Winnipeg that is found nowhere else in the country. It is the cenotaph memorial for the women who served in our armed forces and who also made the supreme sacrifice.

In most cases throughout the country a cenotaph is either a stone in a triangular formation or it represents the male perspective of what we have in Canada. It is a very honourable thing.

• (1835)

In many cases the female aspect throughout the war effort has been inadvertently omitted and I do not think it was done deliberately. There are many examples throughout the country where we will see figures of male soldiers but none of female soldiers.

A couple of years ago I had a motion that recommended there be a monument, a cenotaph, placed in every capital city in country, territorial and provincial, dedicated to the efforts of women who served in the armed forces and who paid the supreme sacrifice. That included those women who worked in the factories or the fields to help provide food and nourishment for people while the men went off to war. They kept the home fires burning. Their sacrifice was just as great as those who went to war. Without them there would have been no families for those men to return to, no munitions and no armaments for that matter. This is something we should honour as well. I just thought I would throw that little plug in.

Again, what the member for Fundy—Royal is asking for is a very simple request. The government should seriously look at it to ascertain the type of funding to maintain these important structures within our country.

To the member for Fundy—Royal, we in the New Democratic Party from coast to coast to coast support his motion and hope that the government will see to it in a very positive way.

• (1840)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Fundy—Royal for his Motion No. 384, which reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should establish a fund to maintain local cenotaphs now in a state of abandonment or poor maintenance.

I do not think there is anyone in the House who does not agree that all our men and women who went overseas in the first and second world wars need to be honoured by having the cenotaphs and parks maintained.

As our veterans critic, I had the honour and the to go to Vimy and bring back the remains of the unknown soldier. At that time we looked at the Vimy monument. The previous Speaker of the House told me not to give up and to keep fighting because we needed to repair it as well. Canada needs to put some money into ensuring the Vimy monument is maintained. The monument displays all the names of the veterans whose bodies were not found.

When I looked at those names, I found a relative of mine. His name was on that Vimy monument. A lot of the Vimy monument was closed off however because of the need for upgrades. The Canadian government needs to put some money into it to ensure that it remains. Hundreds of thousands of people from our country and from other parts of the world visit that monument. It is like the monuments and cenotaphs about which we are talking. They are for our veterans who put their lives on the line for us all.

I think about the young pages who are in the House and I look at this magnificent structure that we have on the Hill. If it were not for the sacrifices of our veterans, we would not be here tonight. The pages would not be here. You, Mr. Speaker, and I would not be here. My hon. colleague would not be here. Our families would not be here. Think of what it would have been like if those men and women had not put their lives on the line for every one of us. We have over 6,000 cenotaphs across our nation because of the sacrifices made by them.

I had two brothers who went overseas in the second world war. I was five years old when they left and I will never forget it. We prayed every night that they would come home safe and sound. My family was one of those lucky families; my two brothers did come home. My mom, dad and the rest of the family were so proud and pleased.

My brothers were in Holland, Italy and Germany. They went through it all. They knew the sacrifices. They were there when some of their buddies were killed in the trenches. They saw it take place. How could we in this wonderful country of ours even think about not maintaining the cenotaphs for those who did not return.

A very special issue has been brought forward by my colleague from Fundy—Royal. The Americans never seem to have a problem paying tribute to their heroes. In Europe thousands of Canadian war graves have been meticulously maintained by local citizens and government. When I went over to Dieppe, France I could not believe how well the cemeteries were maintained.

There is no question about the money. They do not even talk about money. They talk about the sacrifices made by our people to give them their freedom as well. I have to say that they have never forgotten the supreme sacrifice paid by Canadians. Here at home we have a tendency sometimes to forget.

• (1845)

Our men and women in the military today cannot complain about anything. They do not come to Parliament Hill. They expect us in the House to speak for them. As my party's defence critic, I was very pleased to hear my colleague speak out tonight. I am very proud of what he has done because it was much needed.

*Private Members' Business*

I am not sure everyone knows that the Newfoundland Regiment was all but wiped out on July 1, 1916 during the first day of the Battle of the Somme. That cost them a generation of many young people.

I think you, Mr. Speaker, like myself and everyone else, know how proud we were of our young people in Salt Lake City, and how we all cheered to show our love and respect for them. We need to cheer for our veterans as well. All of those young people at the Olympics would be cheering as well.

I say to the House that it is all about showing respect and pride, respect for the contribution of our forefathers and pride in the contribution being made by our young men and women in today's world. Canadians have for too long been reluctant to wear our heart on our sleeve here.

How I wish Mr. Barclay, the dominion president of the Royal Canadian Legion who passed away recently, was still with us today to see what my colleague has brought forward. He would be very pleased and proud.

I know the new Minister of Veterans Affairs has already stated that he will be looking very positively at how he can put together a fund to maintain those cenotaphs that need that kind of maintenance and upgrading. We are here for all our people. I thank the hon. minister who is not with us tonight, but I pray that he will be successful.

I want to thank my hon. colleague for bringing the motion forward. I hope it will be successful. We would be able to sit here every day, not just on November 11, with a sense of pride and with love and respect for each and every person who put their life on the line for you, Mr. Speaker, for me and for all Canadians, knowing that we will look after their cenotaphs from coast to coast.

**Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, the words we just heard a few minutes ago from the hon. member for Saint John are a testament to the passion she delivers on a federal perspective in defending veterans' rights and ensuring that their needs are addressed. That is why I started my comments referring to the member for Saint John and why I want to conclude in the same manner.

The issue I am addressing is that as parliamentarians we have a federal responsibility within our ridings each November 11 to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies. We recite the words "Lest we forget" and it is in that very spirit that I am concerned particularly about the rural communities that may not have the critical mass of a tax base, or the critical mass within the local legion, to ensure that those cenotaphs are maintained. There is not a more daunting responsibility a member of parliament can have throughout the context of a year than to participate in Remembrance Day ceremonies.

I have not experienced anything more moving in this Chamber, as a member of parliament, and I trust you may recall the very incident yourself, Mr. Speaker, when in 1997 to my left stood one or two dozen World War I veterans in the galleries. I recall the baby was 99

years old and the elder statesman was around 102. They stood proud in the Chamber and I remember it as a very moving experience. As parliamentarians we must do everything we can to ensure that the legacy they put forth of freedom, human rights and peace is maintained. It is in that spirit that the motion I put forward is made.

The hon. parliamentary secretary stated that it is very broad. It is intended to be that way to afford the Government of Canada some flexibility. One of the options before the Government of Canada is a cost sharing mechanism as the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore advocated. It could be a small fund into which the municipalities that are most in need could tap into. It does not have to be that substantial, perhaps just \$1 million. It could be an endowment administered by veterans' organizations throughout the country. I am not putting the Government of Canada in a particular box in terms of what it actually should do.

Normally at this juncture members usually ask for the unanimous consent of the House to make the motion votable. In this circumstance I will not do that because the spirit of the debate was carried out in this regard. The purpose of private members' motions or bills is to help educate the public of the need to change a perspective of public policy, to occasionally embarrass the government for not going in a certain direction, and to keep an issue alive or promote an issue to affect a change.

I will take the parliamentary secretary and the minister at their word that they have been seized with this particular issue. As opposed to making the issue votable I have accomplished what I wanted to do here this evening. I say to the parliamentary secretary when he meets with his minister that the spirit of the Chamber was clearly for the Government of Canada to do something.

We do not care necessarily how large the initial contribution is but it is a direction that we think the government should take. In remembering our veterans from coast to coast to coast, in ensuring that the living legacies and stark reminders of our wars and conflicts are maintained in a proper way and that there is a fund to be levered, we can pay tribute to not only the veterans in our own ridings but to the dozen World War I veterans who were here in 1997.

● (1850)

I am thankful for the opportunity to participate in this debate. I thank the Government of Canada for its initial comments. Let us all collectively do the right thing and get the job done.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. As the motion has not been designated as a votable item, the order is dropped from the order paper.

● (1855)

[Translation]

It being 6.55 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 6.55 p.m.)





# CONTENTS

Tuesday, February 26, 2002

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Regan ..... 9227

### Petitions

#### Justice

Mr. Wappel ..... 9227

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Regan ..... 9227

### Committees of the House

#### Public Accounts

Mr. Pankiw ..... 9227

Motion for concurrence ..... 9227

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) ..... 9229

Mr. Lebel ..... 9230

Mr. Burton ..... 9230

Mr. Regan ..... 9231

Motion ..... 9231

Mr. Williams ..... 9231

Mr. MacKay ..... 9232

Motion agreed to ..... 9233

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Species at Risk Act

Bill C-5. Report Stage ..... 9233

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) ..... 9234

Mrs. Redman ..... 9235

Mr. Williams ..... 9236

Mr. Caccia ..... 9237

Mr. Breitzkreuz ..... 9238

Mr. Bigras ..... 9240

Mr. Hilstrom ..... 9241

Mr. Comartin ..... 9242

Mrs. Kraft Sloan ..... 9243

Mr. Sorenson ..... 9244

Mr. Casson ..... 9246

Mr. Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands) ..... 9247

Mr. Penson ..... 9249

Mr. Fitzpatrick ..... 9250

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### 2002 Winter Olympics

Mr. Scott ..... 9251

### Lorne Henderson

Mrs. Gallant ..... 9252

### 2002 Winter Olympics

Mr. Cuzner ..... 9252

### Victor Hugo

Ms. Folco ..... 9252

### Drinking Water

Mr. St-Julien ..... 9252

### Armotec

Ms. Picard ..... 9252

### Education

Mrs. Desjarlais ..... 9253

### Breast Cancer

Mr. Richardson ..... 9253

### Taxation

Mr. Doyle ..... 9253

### Correctional Service Canada

Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) ..... 9253

### Science and Technology

Mr. Lastewka ..... 9253

### 2002 Winter Olympics

Mr. Bergeron ..... 9254

### The Environment

Mr. Maloney ..... 9254

### Canadian Wheat Board

Mr. Casson ..... 9254

### Sports

Mr. Hearn ..... 9254

### Health

Mrs. Redman ..... 9254

### Reproductive Technologies

Mr. Merrifield ..... 9255

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### The Environment

Mr. Jaffer ..... 9255

Mr. Chrétien ..... 9255

Mr. Jaffer ..... 9255

Mr. Chrétien ..... 9255

Mr. Jaffer ..... 9255

Mr. Chrétien ..... 9255

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) ..... 9255

Mrs. Redman ..... 9256

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) ..... 9256

Mrs. Redman ..... 9256

### Highway Infrastructure

Mr. Duceppe ..... 9256

Mr. Chrétien ..... 9256

Mr. Duceppe ..... 9256

Mr. Chrétien ..... 9256

Ms. Girard-Bujold ..... 9256

Mr. Manley ..... 9256

Ms. Girard-Bujold ..... 9257

Mr. Manley ..... 9257



Mr. Pallister .....	9281
<b>Nuclear Fuel Waste Act</b>	
Bill C-27. Third reading .....	9282
Motion agreed to .....	9282
Motion agreed to .....	9283
(Bill read the third time and passed).....	9283

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**Committees of the House**

**Citizenship and Immigration**

Mr. Regan .....	9284
Motion .....	9284
(Motion agreed to) .....	9284

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Cenotaphs**

Mr. Herron .....	9284
Motion .....	9284

Mr. Provenzano.....	9285
---------------------	------

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**Committees of the House**

**Justice and Human Rights**

Mr. Regan .....	9286
Motion .....	9286
(Motion agreed to) .....	9287

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Cenotaphs**

Motion .....	9287
Mr. Bailey .....	9287
Mr. Plamondon.....	9287
Mr. Stoffer.....	9288
Mrs. Wayne.....	9289
Mr. Herron .....	9290

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