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Friday, June 6, 2008

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 6, 2008

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2008

The House resumed from June 4 consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we know the immigration system is broken and that it needs to be fixed. We also know we have a serious problem when 925,000 applicants are in the backlog. Unfortunately, the direction in which the government is heading is the wrong direction.

I first want to tell the House why there is a problem. During the immigration committee hearings, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business came before us and said that there was a complete mismatch of the people coming into the country and the kind of skills that we need. It said that at least 42% of our immigrants needed to be skilled in the technical category. However, when we look at the number of immigrants coming to Canada with skills in that category we see that only 19% of them were in that category.

If we look at professional and managerial occupations, it accounts for only 8% of the labour shortage and yet 74% of the immigrants coming into this country have that skill set. We are bringing in a lot of people whose skills are mismatched with what we need.

Instead of doing what the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is doing, we need to set up a system where we bring in the skills that Canada needs, rather than what is happening now.

Recently, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration said:

We said publicly it isn't our intention for the bill to negatively impact on family reunification but I can't categorically say it won't. What I can say is that I won't.

The minister is saying that if she remains the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration she will not do anything to harm family reunification. However, the bill in front of us would allow any

minister to change the category so much that a lot of families will not be united in Canada.

We understand that we need to find people who come to Canada with the skills we need. We can look at the kind of system Australia has and the number of immigrants entering that country. Its work rate is 81%, which means that unemployment for immigrants has dropped. For the families entering the country, 69% of them have decent jobs.

In Canada, however, only 60% of our immigrants have the kind of jobs for which they have the skills and only 60% of them are employed. For families, it is only 39%, which means that we have a lot of unemployed immigrants in this country because they do not have the kind of skills this country needs.

How did Australia manage to increase the employability of its immigrants? It transferred the onshore processing of most of the applications and it changed its point system. It frequently updates tracking for occupations in demand and it gives points for immigrants who have families in Australia, which is divided into four main categories: skilled labour, family, business and humanitarian.

As a general rule, it only takes 6 to 18 months maximum for immigrants and their families to get into Australia. It has a processing centre called Adelaide Skilled Processing Centre that looks at the skills Australia needs and then it gives points accordingly.

In Canada, we have a human capital model that was brought in by the previous government in 2002. It points to immigrants according to the kind of education level they have, not necessarily the kind of skills that we need in Canada.

Australia has a very centralized processing system that looks at best practices around the world. It also has electronic filing. Last night I went on its website and looked at its immigration section. Its e-filing is incredible. If people want a visa, whether they are a visitor or skilled labour, they can file online. They can also check online what is happening with their applications, how long they must wait and what kind of documents they need.

We have no e-filing in Canada. Half the time, a lot of people who have been waiting to come into this country go to the office of a member of Parliament, so we all become immigration officers. We send faxes and e-mails to visa offices asking for status updates. It is like a make work situation, whereas Australia has an e-file system where people can go online and find out what is happening with their applications.

Government Orders

One can just imagine the resources, the efficiency and how effective it would be to have that kind of system. The former Liberal government, five or six years ago, agreed that we needed to move immigration filing online and wanted to contract a company to do so. However, that did not work.

The Conservative government, instead of investing in technology, best practices and in a skills centre to update skills, it has put it all in the hands of one person, the minister. The minister will make decisions, based on what criteria we do not know. How will it speed up the situation if the department does not have the infrastructure?

To make this worse, the immigration section of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration has had a reduction of 32% in its budget between 2008 and the coming year. How will everything be fast-tracked if we do not have the electronic capacity, a decent website and a skills centre to test what kind of skills we need in this country? We do not even have cost effective quality control in terms of caseloads.

On top of that, if a visitor's visa is being denied, there is no appeal process. People would need to go to their member of Parliament who would then need to go to the minister and ask the minister to please allow the person into the country to attend, let us say, a funeral. In Australia, within 28 days people can have an appeal tribunal so that all the decisions are based on law and fact rather than sometimes inconsistent applications of the law.

We have so much that is wrong in our immigration system. We can do a lot in terms of changing our point system, having the electronic capacity to streamline, work with the visa offices, train the staff better, give the right resources and give the right targets.

• (1010)

However, what the government is doing is it is centralizing the sweeping powers in one person's hands, making the minister above the law. Parliament would not have any say over how to reform our immigration department. That is really a shame because we can study the situation and improve on it. Instead, we are going in the wrong direction.

• (1015)

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Trinity—Spadina for speaking for all of us in this room about the difficulties we have in trying to service the thousands of immigration cases that come to our office out of sheer desperation. People do not know where else to go. They are desperate by the time they come to an MP's office because they have tried and failed to get basic information from a system that is so clogged up, so bottlenecked and so dysfunctional that they feel they have no avenue of recourse.

People watching at home might be wondering why, in the context of a budget implementation bill, we are talking about the Canadian immigration system and its foibles. They should be made aware that this budget implementation bill has a key element to it to reform, in a radical way, not improve, but change the immigration system.

The basic unfairness, as my colleague points out, is that we, as representatives of Canadians, will not get an adequate chance to debate properly the immigration changes while we are debating the

budget implementation bill because it does not properly belong here at this time.

However, if the bill passes, and I have a hunch it will pass, immigration law and practice will change for the worse, we argue, in a very dramatic and significant way.

My colleague pointed out that the changes contemplated to the immigration act in Bill C-50 would actually enhance the discretionary powers of the minister. Did I understand her correctly? Will the minister be, more than ever, able to make arbitrary rulings on things that should properly go to a tribunal, a panel or some due process? Is this one of the hazards that she is alerting us to today, the enhancing of the discretionary power of the minister at the expense of due process, as most Canadians would understand it?

Ms. Olivia Chow: Mr. Speaker, an objective system would have points and people who want to immigrate to Canada would be able to go online to look at the criteria and see if they have enough points to qualify. After doing the calculation to determine that they do have enough points to qualify, they could apply and, of course, be approved, which is the objective of the system.

Under the proposed change in Bill C-50, even if applicants have all the points, completely qualify, have submitted an application and have waited for several months or a year, their application can be returned. It would not even be processed or considered. The applicant would just be told to come back another time.

Applicants would have no right to appeal and no rights under any law to argue that they had qualified so why was their application not processed or even considered. That is what is alarming the Canadian Bar Association and various immigrant communities all across Canada, because it is arbitrary. It does not tell people whether they fit the criteria or not. I understand that we need skilled labour but this is not the right way to proceed.

Instead, we in the immigration committee should study the point system again and say that in 2002, Canada made a mistake. We changed the existing point system to a human capital situation and it is not working. We are not giving immigrants a head start in Canada. Many of them come into this country and become unemployed. We need a better system, with better tracking and a better match. The way to do it is to fine-tune the point system and actually look at the skills.

In Australia, for example, people are given extra points if they have relatives in the country. It does not necessarily have to be immediate family members. We should probably do the same. The system used to be like that. Under assisted relative class, people were able to get extra points if someone was willing to sponsor them.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to speak today about Bill C-50, which, in part 6, seeks to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

Government Orders

[English]

The first point I would like to make is this is a bill that actually is hidden in another bill, which is strictly against the kind of Parliament that we have had in the past. The budget implementation bill is a budget bill. Although an immigration bill also has budget implications, the kind of immigration bill that has been presented by the Conservative minister here is of such importance to Canada and Canadians that it should be a stand-alone bill.

The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration should have full powers and as much time as it requires to study the bill and its implications and add whatever amendments it decides are necessary. With the way the Conservative government has presented this legislation, that is not possible.

We are stuck with a bill for which the government has told us that it will not accept any amendments. The immigration legislation has been hidden inside a budget bill, thereby forcing our hand. This is very much against the kind of parliamentary tradition that we have always lived under since Parliament was founded.

The bill also would give the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration unilateral power to decide on preferences in the treatment of applications for immigration and refugee status.

[Translation]

Under the system we have at present, all applications for immigration are examined. Once they have been examined, claimants receive a positive or negative response. However, all applications are examined, which allows a claimant whose application has been denied to appeal, because that person's application is on file.

Under the new system, however, the immigration minister can tell his officials that he is going to change the order of priority of immigration categories. The minister can decide at any time that, for this year, the largest number of immigrants to be accepted will be in the independent category, for example. That would not only lower the priority of the other categories, but also reduce the number of immigrants in those categories who would be accepted, because in a given year Canada accepts a fixed number of immigrants that is approved by the Parliament of Canada.

This decision by the minister will therefore have a significant impact on family reunification, something that concerns me a great deal, and also on not only the number of refugees we accept in Canada, but the number of refugees we seek out in refugee camps around the world.

Perhaps even more important is the fact that the minister can make this decision without consulting with NGOs that work with immigrants, with the business community or with this Parliament. In other words, the minister can make a completely unilateral decision without having to answer to the Parliament of Canada. This is extremely serious. Since 1867, and even earlier, with the Parliaments of Upper and Lower Canada, Parliament has always been accountable. "Accountable" means that cabinet ministers are accountable to Parliament and consequently to the Canadian people.

Now, with this immigration bill, the minister will no longer have to answer to Parliament because he will no longer have to consult

Parliament. He will not be accountable to Canadians. Something very serious is happening here. It is more of what the Conservative government has given us for two years now: a government that acts in secret, does not answer questions in the House, refuses to talk to the media and, now, refuses even to be accountable to Parliament and Canadians.

What is going on right now is a serious matter. I hope Canadians are watching this very closely because having such a secretive government that keeps information to itself is unprecedented in Canada.

The Prime Minister promised Canadians an accountable, honest and scrupulous government. The more time goes on, the more we get to know this government. We are seeing the Conservative government for what it is: a government that does not want to be accountable to anyone, not to Parliament and not to the Canadian public.

This also means that the immigration minister and officials responsible for applying the legislation would have carte blanche with respect to processing applications. Their first decision would be on which applications to examine. A large number of those applications will likely be rejected. Some will be returned to the claimants without even being looked at. That means that the large number of claimants whose immigration applications are returned to them will have absolutely no recourse. They will not be able to come back to see an immigration officer. They will not be able to ask why or how. They will not be entitled to an appeal since, for all intents and purposes, their application no longer exists, as it was not accepted and examined.

• (1025)

Again, this is an attempt to limit judicial review of the decisions made by immigration services. Under the bill, immigration and refugee status officials will have to follow instructions from the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration before examining claims and, when they do examine them, they will have to prioritize them by category of immigration.

This bill eliminates the right to equal opportunity in the processing of claims. Equal opportunity is a fundamental principle of our Canadian society: equal opportunity in employment, housing and in the possibility of immigrating to Canada. A number of us sitting here in Parliament have benefited from this equal opportunity.

I find it especially hard to accept that some members opposite, on the government side of the House, who came to Canada as immigrants through this equal opportunity, are now closing the door behind them in a way by voting with the Conservative Party. They came to Canada and now they are saying too bad for those who want to come behind them. They are closing the door.

Government Orders

This bill could reduce the number of new immigration applications accepted by the federal government and, as I said earlier, notably those applications for family reunification and permanent residency on humanitarian grounds. Giving one category priority will only serve to reduce the number of applications in other categories because there is a limit to the number of immigrants accepted in any one year.

The government would go ahead with a subjective selection of applications without imposing any limits on the minister. It would also focus its attention and resources on economic immigrants, those who are wealthy and more qualified.

Obviously, there must be a focus on qualified immigrants. In fact, before its defeat, the Liberal government organized a number of major projects with the provincial governments as part of bilateral agreements with each province. The federal government would ask each province to submit the number of immigrants they would like in each of the trade categories, for example. That is something very important that my colleague across the way did not mention. Agreements already exist between the federal government and each of the provinces that allow them to make their needs known in terms of qualified immigrants.

On this side of the House, we ask that qualified immigrants be able to continue to enter the country and meet the needs of the provinces. More importantly, we ask that family reunification not be forgotten.

• (1030)

[*English*]

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for an excellent presentation on the bill. I would like to ask her opinion on a couple of issues.

If the bill is so important, as the minister claims, why is the minister trying to hide this bill under a budget implementation bill? Why is this bill not going to its respective committee? Standing committees have been established under the democratic process of this Parliament so they can review bills thoroughly. Why is the minister trying to hide this under a budget bill and force an election if the bill does not go through?

Why does the minister want the power to choose? What is the minister's hidden agenda? If she wants to choose the people and instruct the people, why is she bypassing those bureaucrats who make the decision to choose and review because they have been given the tools to do so? Why is the minister trying to take on that power?

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Mr. Speaker, obviously I do not know the reasons why the minister has done this, but the way that we interpret it and the way that I interpret it is that the minister does not wish to have a full debate on this question. As I mentioned in my speech, the question is an important one for Canadians. So many of us have immigrated from other countries, and if we ourselves did not immigrate, our parents or our grandparents did.

What the minister is trying to do is to hide this bill, knowing that the bill goes against what Canadians want. Canadians want more immigration. Canadians have learned their lesson from the terrible immigration of the Chinese in the late 19th and early 20th centuries,

where families of Chinese workers were not allowed to come into this country. These Chinese men, for the most part, stayed in this country alone without their own families and were not able to integrate.

We learned our lesson and after the second world war, we opened our doors to family reunification. The Greek families and the Italian families who came, came as families, and they are now fantastic citizens of Canada. They have changed the economy of Canada. They have changed the face of Canada. This is something that the immigration minister and the Conservative government do not understand or perhaps refuse to understand. Families are important.

The second reason, I think, that the minister and her government are so secretive is that instead of coming forward and saying "This is what we believe, this is what we want, let us discuss it, and let us debate it in Parliament", they are hiding bills under the guise of other bills so that we do not notice what is going on.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the damage that this bill would do is irreversible. I have listened very carefully to the hon. member's speech. She talked about the dark history of what we experienced in the past. However, once we turn an immigrant away, once we turn a group of immigrants away, those immigrants will then be denied the right to come into this country. The damages would be irreversible.

How can it be that 92% of the Liberal members were absent the last time there was a vote in this House, only a few days ago, to delete the immigration portion from this budget implementation bill? If we were able to delete the immigration portion, then we would not have to face this kind of situation. Why is it that the member would not stand up for her principles?

• (1035)

Ms. Raymonde Folco: Mr. Speaker, I think I am standing up. I did not realize that I was sitting down. I am standing up for my principles. Everyone knows exactly what my principles are regarding immigration, in particular, and the rights of people, not just the rights of Canadians, but the rights of human beings, in general, around the world. This is what I have always done, and this is what I will always continue to do.

It is not irreversible. What we are hoping, what I am personally hoping, is that we will have an election soon, that our leader will call an election. We hope to have the support of the NDP across the way, as well as other parties. When we win this election, then we will be able to revert back to a fair law of immigration that accepts people no matter where they come from, no matter their skills, particularly families and refugees.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak here today on behalf of the Bloc Québécois regarding Bill C-50, the 2008 budget implementation bill. I am especially pleased that the Bloc Québécois's judgment has always been impeccable in its analysis of Conservative government budgets.

I will list the reasons why budget 2008 and Bill C-50 should be defeated.

Government Orders

We all know that Quebec and part of Ontario are currently facing an unprecedented crisis in the forestry and manufacturing sectors. Yet this budget offers no direct and immediate assistance to those sectors. The problem will not be solved by announcing a diversification program.

Ultimately, what the Conservatives want to do, despite the fact that the forest continues to grow, is to rid that economic sector of its expertise and try to force workers into doing something else. That is what the government proposed in its budget, which offers no direct assistance, no programs to modernize businesses, no programs for refundable tax credits.

I do not need to remind the House that in order to benefit from tax credits, one must first be able to pay income tax. But businesses in the forestry and manufacturing sectors are declaring deficits and losses. Therefore they cannot take advantage of tax credits, unless they are refundable. The Bloc Québécois has always defended such a measure, proposed by the industry itself, in this House.

Once again, the Conservatives have decided to ignore the appeals from people in the industry. Yet they are the ones best suited to analyze the situation. The Conservatives, however, decided as always, based on their philosophy and ideology, to let free competition run its course and let market forces prevail. That is the Conservative way. Of course, in a market left to its own devices, usually, the big fish swallow the smaller ones, but the Conservatives do not seem to realize that this time the big fish are swallowing each other, and even the big ones cannot survive.

This is yet another example of the right-wing ideology that is still not working. When an entire sector is in crisis and does not receive help, it will disappear. What the Conservatives have proposed in the budget is to change the economy. The economy is being diversified and the fate of the manufacturing and forestry sectors is being decided. They want to create call centres and retrain the employees. For example, they will be asked to learn about computers, regardless of their age. That is unacceptable.

It is unacceptable for the regions. We cannot take all the workers in a region and send them elsewhere. The Minister of Labour even had the gall to say—although he later retracted his statements—that there were jobs to be had in western Canada, in the oil industry. When the oil companies, nuclear power plants and our military need help, the Conservatives are there; there is no problem. But when it comes to helping the manufacturing and forestry sectors or seniors, the Conservatives are nowhere to be found, because those matters are not important to them.

This brings me to the second part of my speech. The budget did not provide for any assistance for workers or for an older worker adjustment program, such as the one abolished by the Liberals, which ensured that workers over the age of 55 would have an income until they retired. This program provided compensation for workers by helping them find a new job and retrain. The program always covered the salary they were earning up to a certain percentage—70% or 75%. The difference was covered until they turned 65. This program cost only \$70 million.

Once again, the Conservatives told us that there were jobs available elsewhere. That is basically what the Minister of Labour

came out and said. Workers are being asked to move and go work in areas where jobs are available. But if workers do that, it will empty out the regions of Quebec, and the Bloc Québécois will never agree to that.

• (1040)

Once again, no measures were proposed to help seniors. There was a vote concerning the guaranteed income supplement program. The member for Repentigny introduced a bill here that was passed by a majority of the members. The bill sought to return to seniors what had been taken from them, but the Conservatives, once again, did not support it. Those entitled to the guaranteed income supplement were granted just 11 months' retroactivity, but we asked for full retroactivity because the government has owed that money to seniors from the time the supplement was first paid out.

It is just like income tax. When people owe money to the Canada Revenue Agency, the agency can go back as far as it wants, any number of years, if money is owing. We wanted justice and equity, and we wanted the government to increase guaranteed income supplement payments by \$100 per month. Seniors certainly deserve it, because everything—drugs, insurance, fuel and groceries—is costing them more and more. The price of everything is going up.

We wanted the guaranteed income supplement to go up by \$100 per month, but once again, there is nothing in this budget for seniors.

Worse still, the government has taken advantage of this bill to sneak in a measure giving more power to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to reject applications without having to provide any justification for doing so, and to prioritize certain classes of immigrants. They want to bring in economic immigrants to develop some parts of the country rather than others.

That is the Conservatives' way of doing things. They like to dispense patronage. They managed to do that with immigration. Now they are planning to engage in even more patronage in the sector. They are governing just like the old Conservatives did. As it turned out, the old guard disappeared from the political landscape because citizens were sick and tired of having masters of patronage in power. That is the truth.

Just as unacceptable is the fact that the Conservative Party includes members from Quebec who, quite simply, have poor judgment. The member for Beauce, the former minister of foreign affairs, who was a rising star in the Quebec wing of the Conservative Party, proved that in spades. Imagine what the others are capable of. He lacked judgment, so what does that say about the other members from Quebec who have seats here? It says that all of those members lack judgment and toe the line without considering Quebecers' values and interests. That is what it means to be a Conservative member from Quebec.

Government Orders

Therefore, this is not of interest to us. Obviously, it is no better being a Liberal member. I was listening to the member for Laval—Les Îles grandstanding earlier about immigration measures being introduced through the back door. Quebec's Liberal MPs simply have no judgment because they simply will not vote. It is fine for them to talk and do what they want, but then they are going to let these measures through. That shows either a clear lack of judgment or that their decision-making is driven by monetary concerns. They do not have the money to head into an election and the leader does not have the money to repay the debt incurred in the leadership race. Thus, they let bills pass that run counter to the interests of Quebecers. We, on the other hand, defend our citizens. The member for Laval—Les Îles said that she would stand up in the House. Well, she will stand up, but she will not vote.

We were elected to exercise the right to vote and to use that right to the fullest as the representatives of the voters in this House. They did not elect us so we would stay seated and wait for our party to have the money and our leader to have repaid his debts to run in an election. That is the reality.

The New Democrats are no better, because they wait before making a decision. They wait to see what the Liberals will do. If the Liberals oppose a measure, they support it. If the Liberals are in favour, they vote against it. That is no better.

All that to say that the only party representing the interests and values of Quebecers is the Bloc Québécois. We are not afraid of elections. We are not afraid of anything at all. We are not even afraid of power because we do not want it. The only power of importance to us is the power entrusted to us by the citizens who elected us. We are proud to rise in this House to vote against Bill C-50, which runs counter to the interests of Quebecers.

• (1045)

[English]

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out some facts about what the Bloc members have done in committees.

New Democrats want both the immigration committee and the finance committee to go across Canada, including Quebec, to talk to workers who are unemployed and are seeing their EI funds being taken away, or immigrant groups that have serious concerns about the legislation in front of us, Bill C-50. We moved those motions, yet the Bloc members, along with the Liberals and the Conservatives, at both committees said no to public hearings.

In the finance committee we said that we have to speak to these issues. When we were about to deal with clause by clause consideration of the bill in the finance committee, the Bloc was silent. Bloc members did not speak out in the finance committee to say why they are opposed to the immigration portion of Bill C-50, and why they are opposed to setting up a crown corporation which will only be provided with \$2 billion, instead of the \$15 billion that is needed, as the Auditor General said. They said nothing. There was no response, complete silence.

If the hon. member's party is so concerned about this bill, and I am glad that unlike the Liberals at least Bloc members are standing up, why is the Bloc afraid to agree to conducting hearings across the

country, especially during the next few months when we have a bit of time? Why rush this bill through? Why was the Bloc silent in the finance committee where this bill was considered only a week and a half ago before it was reported back to the House? Why the silence?

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Speaker, it is simple enough. The Bloc Québécois represents the interests of Quebecers. We have represented the majority of Quebec ridings here in the House since 1993. We are well aware of Quebecers' opinions. We do not need to tour Quebec or Canada to be able to express our views.

If the NDP needs to tour around Canada to decide on its position, then it can go right ahead. I know that there are not many New Democrats in this House, and I have a feeling that that will not change after the next election, given that they do not know their Canada, and they definitely do not know Quebec.

If they want to do a tour, then they should do it, but we will not do it with taxpayers' money. We know the position we want to defend and it is the position of Quebecers. That is why we have been representing them in this House since 1993.

[English]

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to take a deeper look at budget 2008 and Bill C-50, the budget implementation bill.

In the normal course of parliamentary debate a budget discussion would ordinarily reflect a thorough examination of the government's fiscal policies and state of the nation's finances. However, for some strange reason the Conservative government has chosen to depart from this parliamentary tradition and to effectively attempt to sneak through a major shift in immigration policies, literally through the back door. This is a strange course of events.

Our parliamentary tradition calls upon the government to introduce legislation according to departmental responsibility, which is to say, a transportation bill would be proposed by the Minister of Transport, or a defence bill would be proposed by the Minister of National Defence. On what grounds does the government justify lumping an immigration bill with a budget implementation bill? If the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is so convinced that her proposal is of vital importance to the country, why is she so afraid to introduce a separate act and face the scrutiny of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration?

Under normal circumstances a proposed act is debated separately for the simple reason that respective parliamentary committees, for example, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, or the Standing Committee on National Defence, will have an opportunity to review the proposed legislation according to the committee's area of responsibility. This is how a democracy works.

Statements by Members

We are in a democracy. We are not in an autocracy. We are not in a dictatorship. We are in a democracy. Therefore, democratic institutions have to be respected. There are long-standing established processes within Parliament that are available to the minister. Those are what she should be using. It is quite straightforward.

Canadians are not gullible. They are well aware that the Conservatives are attempting in an underhanded way to force an election on the backs of immigrants. The Conservatives have been putting advertisements in the papers trying to justify their stand. They probably think immigrants are gullible. The government has been sending the junior minister out to meet with people. Immigrants are not stupid. People understand where the government is coming from.

Canada is a land of immigrants. Everyone in this House, with the exception of the aboriginal people, is an immigrant, whether one came here three years ago, or one's ancestors came here 300 years ago. It has been through thoughtful debate and discussion that our immigration policies have evolved. Immigrants are here to stay and the government cannot cherry-pick whom it wants.

In previous years immigrants were brought in for specific labour purposes and we have seen the repercussions of that. Canada, having learned lessons from its immigration policies and its stand on immigration since World War I and World War II, has become more thoughtful. As a nation we have become more thoughtful. It has been Liberal prime ministers, such as Prime Minister St. Laurent, who started the formal process of immigration from European countries. As an immigrant myself, I remember well that it was Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau who opened immigration from countries other than European countries.

Canada is a choice for a lot of immigrants. That is because we are a people who have a very good view of what it means to live in a pluralistic society. We have seen societies that cannot comprehend pluralism. Canada has been thoughtful. Canada has been respectful. I think all members in the House should understand that and should behave in that manner toward this bill.

My colleagues in the Liberal caucus are committed to make this Parliament work. We do not want to be constantly in an election. This is not the same as a hamster on a treadmill. This is not how Parliament should function.

● (1050)

Let us take a closer look at the immigration proposal that we now have before us. Bill C-50 proposes a series of amendments to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act which quite frankly is regressive. Under that bill the Conservatives are seeking to abandon all sense of transparency and objectivity in the selection process and simply empower the minister with absolute discretion and the ability to cherry-pick applications at will. Previous ministers had that power but they decided not to utilize it. They decided to give away that power.

The current bill allows the minister to give instructions. What sort of instructions is the minister proposing to give to the immigrant officer abroad or here in Canada? What does the minister think she will be doing? Is she the one that will be reviewing every file? Is she the one that will be reviewing everyone's qualifications? Is she the

one who has the authority to determine who comes in and who does not? Objectivity is being dispensed with so that the minister or the government of the day can be extremely selective.

Under the new legislation the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration would have the discretion to determine not only which applications will be processed quickly and which ones will be held at the visa office until a later date, but also to return some applications without any consideration at all. These are the ones that people are concerned about. The Conservatives are attempting to toss out objectivity and fairness under the guise of expediency.

Yes, there is a backlog in the application process, but any intelligent person knows that the process requires resources, not cherry-picking by the minister. The Conservatives have not made immigration policy their priority. They have been withholding funds. They claim that they have put in money, but they have actually extracted money from the immigration department.

If the government does not put resources in the right area, how can it be determined how the process will work? It is important that resources be allocated to streamline the process.

The bill also represents a major change in the way in which we choose who is to become a Canadian citizen. Yet the Conservatives feel it is okay to tuck this into a budget bill and somehow bamboozle the Canadian public, which is what it is trying to do with money from the government coffers. The Conservatives are putting forward an advertising campaign to bamboozle the immigrant population. It is not going to work because my colleagues and I, as we have stood in the House, have been standing to fight for fairness, for equity and for transparency.

It appears that the Conservative members have a fixation on forcing an election rather than acting as a responsible government. We have seen in the weeks and months that have passed that the government has no agenda, no vision and no direction. It just wants to go on a treadmill like a hamster.

When an election is called, I can assure the House that Canadians will surely remember which party acted responsibly and in the interest of the country.

● (1055)

The Speaker: In light of the time, I believe we will now move to statements by members, but there will be 5 minutes for questions and comments on the hon. member's speech when debate is resumed a little later this day.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

D-DAY

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on June 6, 1944, Canada was involved in the largest amphibious operation in military history, involving Allied forces from land, sea and air. It is remembered as D-Day. It was the opening day of the Allies' efforts to free western Europe from the enemy.

Statements by Members

Fifteen thousand of Canada's finest would battle on D-Day and in the Normandy campaign that followed. Sadly, 359 Canadians lost their lives that day and more than 1,000 were wounded.

Through the summer of 1944, the fighting continued against a relentless enemy. The Allied troops persisted and, by August, Paris was liberated. The Normandy campaign was over.

However, what will never end is our duty to remember all those who fought and served so long ago so that tyranny would be driven away and security and hope would take its place.

Lest we forget.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Mississauga—Erindale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as World Oceans Day and Canadian Rivers Day approach this weekend, Canadians are stuck with a Conservative government whose environmental policies are all wet.

How else can we describe a government that ignores the crisis of climate change, is unconcerned about the amount of water used to extract oil from the Alberta oil sands and does nothing but attack premiers who propose innovative solutions to environmental problems?

In fact, a recent Senate report showed that the federal government does not even have the resources to measure Canada's water supply, let alone protect it.

The federal government is abandoning its duty to protect Canadian waters. In commemoration of World Oceans Day and Canadian Rivers Day, we call on the federal government to take real action to protect Canada's oceans and rivers.

* * *

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

CHÂTEAUGUAY EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mrs. Carole Freeman (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I acknowledge today the heroic efforts of emergency services personnel in Châteauguay, particularly firefighter Patrice Dubuc, policewoman Catherine Laberge and ambulance attendants Marie Pauzé and Pascale Boulé.

On March 21, a 75-year-old man suffered a heart attack in his car. Firefighter Patrice Dubuc witnessed the scene. Realizing the urgency of the situation, he immediately called emergency services and started CPR with the help of constable Catherine Laberge. Once on site, the ambulance attendants got the victim's heart started beating again using a defibrillator, saving him from certain death.

These admirable actions do credit to the firefighters, police officers and ambulance attendants in our community, which can feel safe and proud to count on such people who really care about our safety.

[*English*]

WESTFEST

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, starting on June 11, people in Ottawa Centre will hit the streets for the fifth annual Westfest. In celebration of its fifth anniversary, Westfest has been extended to five days this year, with more time than ever before to take in the music, visual art, theatre, literary readings, dance, and spoken word and performance art.

This year's festivities will celebrate Canadian aboriginal women in music. With headliners such as 1755, Joel Plaskett and Buffy Sainte-Marie, and local artists Lynn Miles and Sue Foley, the fifth Westfest promises five nights of top performances for our communities in Ottawa Centre.

As always, Westfest is 100% accessible, truly inclusive and environmentally friendly, and the best part is that it is still free.

I congratulate Westfest's organizers, its founder Elaina Martin, all the volunteers and the Westboro BIA for continuing to build on the successes of this festival.

Ottawa loves Westfest.

* * *

NATIONAL SCLERODERMA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, even though thousands of people across Canada suffer from scleroderma, few people are familiar with this dreaded disease. Because this disease has just recently become known, we can ask a dozen people at any given time and be hard pressed to get one knowledgeable answer regarding scleroderma.

Tragically, many people suffer from the terrible effects of scleroderma, such as hardening of internal organs, heart, kidney and lung problems, and skin that tightens and becomes like parchment and tears open as a result of even a minor abrasion. These people often suffer in silence because of the lack of funding for research, lack of awareness and the difficulty in diagnosing this terrible disease.

I call on my parliamentary colleagues and all Canadians to assist the Scleroderma Societies of Canada and the provinces by raising awareness in our communities, particularly now in June as this is National Scleroderma Awareness Month.

I call on my colleagues and all Canadians to join me and hundreds of others at the Scleroderma Walk 'n Talks that are raising dollars for research to find a cure for this terrible and ultimately fatal disease and to bring hope to many.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary on its 30th anniversary.

Created in 1978-79, the Coast Guard Auxiliary formalized a long tradition of volunteer maritime search and rescue that existed before Confederation.

[English]

Today the auxiliary is made up of close to 5,000 dedicated volunteers. Since 1978, its members have been credited with participation in 36,000 missions and saving 4,000 lives.

Canadians owe a lot to these good Samaritans of the sea. On behalf of the House, I wish to congratulate them on 30 years of dedicated service to Canadians.

* * *

WORLD OCEANS DAY

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and applaud World Oceans Day, which will be recognized across Canada this Sunday.

Our government and our Minister of Fisheries are dedicated to enhancing the world's ocean environments. Evidence of this could be found just last week when our government proudly supported a motion in this House that calls on Canada to use its position and influence at the United Nations to have June 8 recognized as World Oceans Day.

Our government supports oceans every day. We have invested \$61.5 million in the health of the oceans initiative and we have invested in concrete projects, none of which are more important than our dedication to the establishment of a national network of marine protected areas. In fact, we have already designated 10 areas across the country. At least 10 more will follow in the near future.

We have successfully led an effort to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems outside our national waters in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, as pledged in the United Nations General Assembly.

Sunday will be a day to celebrate our success and to reaffirm our commitment.

* * *

• (1105)

[Translation]

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION WEEK

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, National Transportation Week is being observed from May 29 to June 7.

This week serves as an opportunity to highlight the importance of transportation in the economic and social development of Quebec. From work to play, from travel to the supply of goods, different means of transportation contribute every day to our quality of life.

This week also gives us an opportunity to pay tribute to the thousands of men and women working in road, rail, air and maritime transportation.

This week promotes awareness of the challenges facing our people and our industries, in particular road infrastructure, safety,

Statements by Members

technology, environmental effects and the development of green fuels. This is the time for choices.

That is why the Bloc Québécois is offering a long-term vision of the future of transportation for the well-being of the people of Quebec.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again the Liberal leader is in today's *National Post* calling for a job-killing national tax on the Canadian economy.

Oh sure, he likes to hide his tax in terms such as "revenue neutral" and "green shift", but if it walks like a tax and it talks like a tax, well, members know the rest.

The fact is that if we are going to reduce greenhouse gases, we have to take action against big polluters, like this government is doing, and not hike taxes on middle class and fixed income families, but then again, the Liberals never met a tax they did not like.

This government believes that Canadians, especially low income and middle income Canadians, pay enough tax. The real question is this: why does the Liberal Party of Canada insist upon forcing them to choose between filling their cars, filling their cupboards or filling their prescriptions?

* * *

KHILAFAT JUBILEE

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I join today members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam as they celebrate 100 years of Khilafat.

I have been privileged to know two khalifas of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, the current khalifa, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V, and the fourth khalifa, Mirza Tahir Ahmad. I have been privileged to be called his brother.

Founded in Qadian, India, members of the Ahmadiyya Movement have emigrated to 190 countries, where they have established new lives, built mosques and become respected members of society.

The community delivers a message of peace, tolerance and offering assistance to those in need. Their message reminds us of the kind of society we want for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren, a just society.

I have many friends in the Ahmadiyya community. Over the years, I have worked with them as they have offered humanitarian relief to victims of tsunamis, floods and earthquakes. They are the kind of friends we look for: honest, loyal, dedicated and trustworthy. They are truly a people who live by their community motto: Love for All, Hatred for None.

I ask my colleagues to join me in offering best wishes to the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam as they celebrate this important milestone of their faith, 100 years of the Khilafat.

*Statements by Members***LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the smear campaign against the Prime Minister regarding Chuck Cadman, the Liberals consistently referred to an audiotape by Tom Zytaruk as total proof of their claims.

The Prime Minister said from the very beginning that nothing inappropriate had happened. The RCMP found no evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the Prime Minister or the Conservative Party. Now, two independent audio forensic experts have determined that the tape is “incomplete”, “doctored” and “edited”.

Canadians deserve to know the truth in this matter. The Liberals need to come clean and explain their involvement in the doctored tape.

The Liberal leader must answer some very important questions. When did the Liberal Party obtain the tape, before or after it was doctored? Was the Liberal Party aware of or perhaps involved in the doctoring of the tape? Why did the Liberal Party not at least make sure the tape was authentic?

It was poorly done. Canadians deserve better.

* * *

• (1110)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, so many times we have pleaded with the government to take seriously the growing number of missing and murdered women and all victims of sexual violence.

Today I will simply refer to the tireless work in Winnipeg of the Sexually Exploited Youth Coalition and Sisters in Spirit. Through their work and through the words of a poem entitled *Unfortunate Soul*, by Chrissy, I hope that this will finally bring results:

Her body is her treasure
That she will give away
To an unfilled stranger
Who will have to pay
With no worries or a conscience
She'll go out on the street
Where she'll perform for her money
And his expectations she'll meet
Little did she realize it'll be her paying the price
When she didn't come back and paid with her life
Slain, smothered, dead
Just another statistic
Not aware of those dangers that were very realistic
With her name in the papers
And a picture as well
She wasn't just another sex trade worker
She had a story to tell
She was once a happy being
And she did have a soul
Turning to drugs and prostitution
Just to fill an empty hole
Now she's buried in the cold ground
No more pain and worry free
And what's even more disturbing
Is that this could have been ME

May these words bring wisdom to this government and finally open its eyes.

D-DAY

Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks the 64th anniversary of D-Day, the beginning of the Allied effort to liberate the European continent from the scourge of Nazi oppression.

I stand in the House keenly aware of the sacrifices that were made by the brave young men of the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force, aware of the lives that were lost, and aware of the valour that was displayed on that day.

Nobody can question the unparalleled success of our soldiers on that fateful day. In fact, Canadians can remember with pride that our boys pushed farther inland than any other nation, achieving many of the ambitious goals that had been set for them as part of Operation Overlord.

Yet we must never forget the terrible losses that our soldiers suffered. Forty-three airmen and 369 soldiers paid the ultimate price for our freedom on D-Day. It is in their honour and in their memory that I invite all members of the House to join with me in recognizing this anniversary of their final victory over the tyranny of evil.

* * *

[*Translation*]

MERCADOR AWARDS

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the 10th edition of the MercadOr awards gala recently took place. The awards recognize the success of exporters in the Laval region.

The leading exporter award went to Pelican International, a pleasure craft manufacturer and the third largest kayak manufacturer in the world.

Alpha Vision won for best foreign ventures, for its ability to set up shop close to its clients, both in the United States and Germany.

Équipement d'emballage MMC and Cirion won in the market diversification category. Équipement d'emballage MMC opened its doors in 1991, penetrated Latin American markets in 2005 and is now targeting Europe. Cirion, which specializes in biotechnology, entered the American market in 2000 and now does 35% of its business in Europe.

Lastly, Bedcolab, a laboratory furniture manufacturer, was honoured as best new exporter. It began exporting to the United States in 2003, and those exports south of the border now represent 40% of its revenues.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I would like to congratulate the award winners and commend their contributions—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Don Valley East.

* * *

[*English*]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a fierce competition taking place on the government benches these days.

Parliamentary secretaries are locked in a battle to determine which one has the least amount of credibility.

The PS for Treasury Board is the leading contender. His ability to fall in line and say outrageous things means he is always near the bottom of the credibility pile.

Not to be outdone, the PS for Public Works made a bold move on Wednesday to demonstrate that he too can be just as ridiculous as his colleague, even if it means breathing new life into an old scandal.

However, when it comes to lack of credibility, no one can hold a candle to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He lacks credibility internationally, which is something that the government excels at.

With such shining performances from his parliamentary secretaries, it is easy to see why the Prime Minister has no confidence in his frontbench and is the minister of everything.

* * *

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, day three and still no answers from the Liberal leader. The deadline for him to pay off all of his leadership race loans was three days ago and he still has not tabled the agreement with Elections Canada, nor how he is going to pay off the loans.

When will he reveal the truth to Canadians? When will he reveal to Canadians just how much he owes and how he is going to pay it off?

The Liberal leader has racked up massive leadership race debts and now he has failed to find the supporters to help him pay it off. The Liberal leader has clearly shown that he cannot be trusted to handle the nation's debts.

When will the Liberal leader table his agreement with Elections Canada and clearly show his debt repayment plan? Canadians are waiting for this. They are waiting for the truth.

ORAL QUESTIONS

•(1115)

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is, in the absence of others, to the government House leader. I would like to ask the minister this question.

It is now clear that Madam Couillard has been a person of interest to the police, not only in Quebec but the RCMP, for over 10 years. Is it still the position of the government and is it still asking us to believe that in fact no one from the police contacted the Prime Minister and provided him with any information with regard to—

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think what we made quite clear here is that the resignation

Oral Questions

of the former minister of foreign affairs was as a consequence not of any relationships he had but, rather, as a consequence of a breach that took place with regard to the rules related to classified documents. When that breach became apparent, the minister offered his resignation and it was accepted immediately by the Prime Minister.

That is the nature of the incident. The government is not in the business of inquiring into the exciting details of people's private lives the way the Liberals are.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact that Ms. Couillard was under police surveillance is not a private matter but a public one. That is now clear. It is ironic that the security system of the Hells Angels and Mom Boucher is better and more professional than that of the Government of Canada. This is ridiculous.

Is the government serious when it says that the police did not speak to the government about Ms. Couillard?

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we have a different view on what the government should do about people's private lives and the extent to which we should meddle in them. I know that when he was the New Democratic premier of Ontario, he demanded the resignation of one of his ministers when he appeared in a newspaper in a good looking photo.

We do not think that people's appearance, whether their pictures are in the newspaper or that kind of stuff, should be an occasion to demand their resignation. We are not into those kinds of probes into people's personal lives, like he was when he was NDP premier.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is true there is no danger of a Conservative minister appearing in a good looking photograph. I agree with that statement. There is no danger of that happening.

But let us get back to the question at hand.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Toronto Centre has the floor.

Hon. Bob Rae: Mr. Speaker, when will the government recognize that this is not a matter of privacy, this is not about someone's private life, this is about the public responsibilities of the Government of Canada?

Surely to goodness, the Prime Minister of Canada must have been informed by the police about Madam Couillard.

Oral Questions

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess the error that Mr. Kormos committed back when he was the NDP premier of Ontario was that he actually appeared in the newspaper fully clothed, unlike that gentleman when he appeared on *Rick Mercer Report* without any clothes. I think the questions that he is asking in the House indicate the same lack of clothes on that would-be emperor.

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it would take a lot of effort to get him on television in the nude.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Safety and the member for Beauce are thumbing their noses at accountability by not testifying in committee. They refuse to address all the unanswered questions concerning this sad affair.

How can this be when a belief in “the supremacy of democratic parliamentary institutions and the rule of law” is part of the founding principles of the Conservative Party? Does that not make their refusal the height of arrogance and hypocrisy?

• (1120)

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the invitation to appear on television in a particular fashion, I can assure her nobody has been trying to get me to do that.

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps it shows good judgment on the part of the television companies.

[Translation]

Their refusal to testify before a parliamentary committee means that the Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Safety and the member for Beauce are hiding something. Why else would they steadfastly refuse to answer questions in this House and in committees when one of the fundamental principles of the Conservative party is, and I quote, “the supremacy of democratic parliamentary institutions and the rule of law”?

Is this not another example of the Conservatives' hypocrisy and arrogance?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we prefer a serious approach to dealing with these matters. That is why the Department of Foreign Affairs is conducting a review to assess the matter and to determine if there are any outstanding concerns.

I know that there has been a practice that has evolved in this minority Parliament of the opposition parties using committees to advance their partisan interests. They now want to have public hearings into people's daily lives. I think that Canadians have a different view about what their parliamentarians should be doing as the summer approaches, but I will leave that to the opposition members if they want to do that.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the *Globe and Mail* reports that court documents show that Julie Couillard was under police surveillance as early as 1998 as part of an RCMP drug investigation.

Given that she had been known to the RCMP at least since 1998, if not earlier, and that the RCMP is also the police force responsible for protecting cabinet ministers, there is no way the Prime Minister could not have been made aware of Ms. Couillard's past by the RCMP.

Will the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons tell us when the Prime Minister was informed by the RCMP of Ms. Couillard's shady past?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the leader of the Bloc Québécois who was mostly interested in any past history of Madam Couillard; something that he spent a lot of time discussing when he was getting his hair done, it appears. Our concerns have to do with public policy.

The Prime Minister, in this regard, became aware of a different matter, which was a security breach regarding classified documents, where cabinet rules were broken and when he became aware of that, the foreign minister at the time tendered his resignation, which was accepted.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is discrediting himself with false pretenses.

The fact is that Ms. Couillard was known to police at least as far back as 1998, and she still had ties to criminal bikers just a few months ago. We know that she had dinner with a shylock very close to Mom Boucher and very well known to police. There is just no way the RCMP did not inform the Prime Minister of Ms. Couillard's shady past.

When will the lies stop and the truth be told that Ms. Couillard's shady past was very well known when she was the spouse of the former foreign affairs minister?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think what happened in this incident is quite clear to everybody. The former minister of foreign affairs, the member for Beauce, left a document in an unsecured location. That was contrary to the rules that applied to a foreign minister, that applied to a cabinet minister. As soon as the Prime Minister became aware of that, the foreign minister offered his resignation and that resignation was accepted.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the accumulation of disturbing facts concerning Julie Couillard proves that there is no way that the RCMP and CSIS did not alert the Prime Minister to his former foreign affairs minister's relationships. Some of the testimonies heard by the Standing Committee on Public Safety might confirm this, thus showing his irresponsible attitude toward state security.

Is that not the real reason behind the Prime Minister's refusal to appear before the committee and all his efforts to sweep the Bernier-Couillard affair under the rug?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government takes security matters very seriously. In this regard, the Department of Foreign Affairs is conducting a review of the incident that took place to review whether processes that related to that are adequate. When that review is completed, if there are any items of importance we will take action on them, as we have in other similar situations where we have had good advice on how processes can be changed.

* * *

• (1125)

*[Translation]***ETHICS**

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last November the Prime Minister committed to holding a public inquiry into the business dealings between Brian Mulroney and Karlheinz Schreiber. Tuesday marked two months since the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics submitted its report, and still no one has been appointed to head this inquiry.

Is the Prime Minister dragging his feet on appointing a commissioner for the same reasons that he refuses to appear before the committee—in order to avoid an inquiry that would discredit him even more?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we plan to start the public inquiry soon. We have asked professor David Johnston to examine and establish the terms for a public inquiry. This public inquiry will begin soon.

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*[English]***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are only four days left before the residential school apology happens in this House and survivors are still waiting for the details.

This is an official apology, but what plans have been made to receive its acceptance? Will we follow the lead of the labour government in Australia and make allowances for people outside the House of Commons lawn to watch, table the apology at least a day prior, include aboriginal representatives in preparing the House for

the apology, and will survivors be provided with the resources needed to come to the ceremony?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important and solemn occasion. The government will be undertaking a solemn and official apology in Parliament in the appropriate context where it should take place. There will be associated with this, of course, a number of residential school survivors coming to Ottawa as part of the program. As well, there will be some additional ceremonies to supplement the government's official apology.

We look forward to this very important day that has been far too long in coming because, of course, previous governments never took this action, and it is time that it happened.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we agree it is an important and solemn occasion and that this apology is for all Canadians to witness and honour. If survivors are allowed to address the House, their words will be broadcast to all Canadians, including the survivors who cannot attend in person and will be watching on television.

Will the minister agree today that the acceptance of the apology is equally important and the government should receive that acceptance right here in this House?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we believe very strongly that this is an important event and that the apology should have the full weight of being a solemn, official, parliamentary function. It is our intention to proceed in that fashion to ensure that it does have that.

I did want to thank the leader of the NDP who up to now has been quite constructive in assisting in the preparations and the encouragement for this day to happen which, as I have said, should have happened some time ago, but is now finally going to take place next Wednesday.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, rarely does a government try to take the spotlight off of one of its scandals by highlighting another. That is exactly what it tried to do this week. It produced a sworn affidavit from Dona Cadman, the Conservative candidate in Surrey North who said, "on May 17, 2005 my husband told me that earlier that day two Conservative Party representatives had offered him a \$1 million insurance policy". This is a sworn affidavit just two weeks ago.

Is it the government's position that Mrs. Cadman has committed perjury?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the government's position that the Liberals, according to two forensic audio experts, have been using a tape that "has been edited and doctored" to misrepresent the event as it actually occurred. That is what we have said.

Oral Questions

If the Liberals are short on memory, they should know the Liberals went to the RCMP and RCMP Chief Superintendent Serge Theriault came back and said, “The investigation disclosed no evidence to support a charge under the Criminal Code or under the Parliament of Canada Act”. There is no evidence of any wrongdoing on the part of the Prime Minister or the Conservative Party.

The Liberals should apologize.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a bad sign when they hold a news conference and all the media laugh at them.

Unlike the parliamentary secretary, Dona Cadman's story has been the same from day one. Her husband was offered a million dollar insurance policy. After fumbling for weeks, the parliamentary secretary finally settled on one story. There was one meeting with Chuck Cadman on May 19. Well, Dona Cadman's affidavit says, “the date that my husband told me that he had received the offer of a \$1 million insurance policy was May 17, 2005 and not May 19, 2005”.

Which should we believe, the PMO puppet or the sworn testimony of Dona Cadman?

• (1130)

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to believe Dona Cadman, Dona Cadman says the Prime Minister is telling the truth and she is right.

We have said from day one that the only offer made to Chuck Cadman was the offer for him to rejoin the Conservative caucus, run for the nomination and get re-elected as a Conservative.

The Liberals have made false and malicious attacks against the Prime Minister of this country and they are going to pay for that in a court of law.

The RCMP have said that nothing inappropriate happened here. Two forensic audio experts have said that the tape was doctored and edited in a way that misrepresents the conversation. The Liberals have falsely smeared the Prime Minister of this country and we will see them in court.

* * *

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the investigation into the NAFTA-gate affair clearly was a whitewash. Key individuals who had access to the diplomatic memo were not interviewed or even contacted.

The Republican farm team over there, the Canadian Conservatives, were obviously trying to help their bush league friends. Why was Frank Sensenbrenner, the Republican operative that the government embedded in the Canadian embassy, not even questioned as part of this so-called investigation?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there was a thorough inquiry into this and involved an outside firm and it was actually criticized by the opposition.

Members of the opposition criticized that it was taking too long. Now that it is out, I am hearing them say that time should have been spent interviewing another 200-plus people who had been recipients of the email, although it was assessed where it had been redistributed, where possible, by those individuals.

The bottom line findings of the inquiry were twofold. First, there was no leak of classified information by the Prime Minister's chief of staff. Second, there was an error in how the document was classified and to whom it was distributed.

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is just another phony investigation by the government.

It is no surprise that the government conveniently finds itself innocent when it investigates itself. What a joke. Canadians are not going to believe that.

Not only is the report a charade, but parliamentary committees are now being stonewalled from looking further into the issue. What is the government trying to hide? It only asks more questions.

How can Canadians trust the government and accept the findings of its report when it is clouded in secrecy and so obviously flawed?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, the problem here was that the document was inappropriately classified. It was not clouded in secrecy, it was public when it should have been a little more confidential.

What we do know from the findings of the inquiry into the matter, and the Liberals keep ignoring this, is that there is no evidence that Mr. Brodie disclosed any classified information.

The Liberals kept getting up in the House time and again saying that Mr. Brodie was the cause of it. Once the inquiry demonstrated that it was not, did they once acknowledge it, let alone apologize? Not once.

That is what is causing a decline in our Parliament, a decline in our confidence in the system, and then they go on to blame it on senior civil servants. It is a terrible—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Drummond.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec, everyone is criticizing the way Economic Development Canada is treating not for profit organizations and the minister's inability to get the necessary budgetary envelope. Furthermore, the minister responsible for EDC justified his fiasco by saying, “the decision that sparked all of this was made by the [Conservative] government cabinet”.

Are we to gather from this alarming confession that the minister has no weight in cabinet, or is he knowingly attacking the economic structure of Quebec?

Oral Questions

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased that the hon. member mentioned Quebec's economy. She probably missed it, but, this morning, statistics show that in the month of May, the Canadian economy created 18,000 new jobs in Quebec. It is odd that the Bloc Québécois has not said a word about that.

And, do they know where those 18,000 jobs were created? In the manufacturing industry. That means that my colleague, the hon. Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, is doing a good job.

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, he failed to mention that 19,000 jobs were lost.

The minister has no respect for the organizations that have built modern day Quebec. Even his counterpart in Quebec City, who described him as an ideologue and Machiavellian, accused him of attacking the very structure of economic development in Quebec. The minister has absolutely no respect for the Quebec model.

Will he transfer money to Quebec, where competent people will know very well how to manage it without resorting to favouritism?

• (1135)

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I have to cite the document. In the section entitled, "Employment gains in Quebec" it says: "In Quebec, ... employment rose by 18,000 in May. With an increase in the number of Quebecers in the labour market..." Further on—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Lawrence Cannon: I know the truth hurts.

Further on, it says, "Employment in Quebec's manufacturing industry increased in May". What can I say—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

* * *

400TH ANNIVERSARY OF QUEBEC CITY

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages is also launching a campaign of disinformation about the history of Quebec. The minister responsible for the Quebec City region no longer talks about the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City, but of the founding of the Canadian state.

Does the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages not realize that to say such a thing is as ridiculous as saying that Italy was founded by Romulus and Remus?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Bloc, we on this side of the House are proud to promote the French fact in Quebec City and to publicize Quebec City as a francophone city across Canada and around the world.

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with their plans for July 1, the anniversary of Confederation in 1867, the Conservatives are once again trying to hijack the 400th anniversary

of Quebec City. The slogan for July 1 is "The founding of the Canadian state 400 years ago; from Champlain to today".

Both the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages, two Quebecers, are denying the history of Quebec as a nation for federalist propaganda purposes.

Is it not true that when Quebecers become Conservative ministers, they have to deny their roots and forget their history in order to contribute to Canadian nation building?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are proud to represent Quebec. We are proud to promote Quebec across Canada. The Government of Canada has given \$120 million to the Quebec City region for the 400th anniversary celebrations. That is a significant contribution. The Bloc Québécois will never have a cent to give.

* * *

[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister told business not to invest in Ontario. General Motors listened and closed its Oshawa plant. The Prime Minister has actually dismissed the plant closure saying that times have changed and people do not buy those kinds of vehicles anymore.

Why will the government not partner with General Motors and other manufacturers to help them garner the investment they need to green their operations, to build the kinds of green products that the international community really wants today?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Oshawa, I want everyone in this House to know that our hearts really go out to the families that are affected by this closure. They are my friends. They are my neighbours. I have actually worked in that plant. I know what they are going through right now.

I have been working all week on this. I have been on the phone with General Motors. We are actually working to partner with General Motors to see if we can get a new car mandate, a new investment into Oshawa. One of the things we will not do though is to put on a carbon tax. I would like the member to stand and let us know if he supports his leader's carbon tax which it is said will be the nail in the coffin for the auto industry. Is he supporting his leader's carbon tax, yes or no?

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. We will have some order. The member for Kings—Hants has the floor. We have to be able to hear the question.

Oral Questions

●(1140)

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, the government's reputation as an environmental dinosaur is helping to make Canadian manufacturing jobs extinct. When manufacturers want to go green, the government sends the message that Canada is no place to invest.

The government's lack of leadership on the environment is hurting Canada's brand internationally and is killing Canadian jobs.

Does the government not realize that its bad environmental policy is bad for business?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for that question, because it gives me the opportunity to let him know that it was the CAW leader, Buzz Hargrove, who said that the radical Liberal environmental plan would kill manufacturing and it would be suicidal for the auto industry.

On everything that this government has brought forward, including our automotive innovation fund for new innovative automobiles, the member has not stood up in this House to support any of them. On everything we bring forward for the manufacturing sector, he either sits on his hands or votes against it. It is a shameful display. We are fighting for auto jobs in Oshawa and in Canada and he should stand and let the people know where he stands on the carbon tax.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we would like to give the finance minister a little bit of an economic lesson. Canada just experienced the worst quarter in the G-7. Consumer confidence has plummeted and we are halfway to the first recession we have had in 16 years. The minister keeps patting Canadians on the head pretending everything is okay, but it is not. How on earth can we trust the finance minister with Canada's finances?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, our economic fundamentals remain solid. The financial position of households and businesses is sound. Our budget is balanced. Debt is going down. We are focused on controlling government spending. Our labour market remains strong. More than 130,000 new jobs have been created in the first four months of this year. We are getting the job done.

[Translation]

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, clearly, this government continues to hope that Canadians do not understand. Our first quarter economic performance was the worst of all G-7 countries. Consumer confidence continues to plunge. We are halfway to our first recession in 16 years. Yet the Minister of Finance continues to hope that Canadians do not understand.

Why do the Minister of Finance and this government take Canadians for fools?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, basically, Canada is faced with two different scenarios: the scenario we are proposing and the devastating scenario of economic instability proposed by the

Liberals. The Liberals of course want to raise taxes, as we all know, through a carbon tax. They also want to raise the GST, which was just lowered.

No, anyone who knows what they are talking about when it comes to the Canadian economy and the global economy knows that we are on the right track.

[English]

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the opposition's constant trashing of the Canadian economy continues daily. Liberal MPs are advocating a regressive national carbon tax and want to run massive debts that would certainly disadvantage Canadian businesses.

Despite Liberal negativity in a time of global economic uncertainty, Canadian fundamentals remain strong. Why? It is because this government took aggressive and pre-emptive action: \$200 billion in tax cuts, key investments in Canadians and debt reduction.

Could the Minister of Transport update this House on our government's record of job creation?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, despite the global economic turbulence, Canada's employment picture remains strong. Pre-emptive tax cuts are helping shield Canada from economic turbulence.

In May, 8,400 net new jobs were created with strong gains in the Ontario and Quebec manufacturing sectors. Three-quarters of a million net new jobs were created since we came to office. Unemployment is near a 33 year low. It is time for the Liberal Party to show confidence in our accomplishments.

* * *

●(1145)

[Translation]

SUPREME COURT

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages refuses to take a stand on bilingualism for Supreme Court justices. The Minister of Justice does not mention bilingualism as a condition for the appointment of the next justice. However, there is a growing consensus in this regard. The member for Bourassa introduced a bill that did not solve the problem and I therefore introduced a bill to remedy the situation.

Does the government support the principle of my bill that Supreme Court justices be bilingual?

[English]

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the next month, the Minister of Justice will be seeking the input of attorneys general of the four Atlantic provinces, as well as leading members of the legal community.

Also, empowering parliamentarians early in the selection process will promote greater transparency and confidence in the process for selecting a new Supreme Court of Canada judge. Of course, linguistic ability is an important factor that will be given serious consideration.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, although the government does not wish to listen, anglophone and francophone communities in Canada, the Canadian Bar Association, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the National Assembly of Quebec and the three opposition parties in Ottawa have all said that understanding both official languages must be a condition for the appointment of a justice to the Supreme Court. Translation and interpretation are not the same as comprehension. It is not fair.

Will the Conservatives stop trying to have their own way and appoint bilingual justices to the Supreme court once and for all?

[English]

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of the 165 judicial appointments we have made so far. We made them based on legal excellence and competence. Our next 165 appointments will be guided by those principles.

Our government is committed to ensuring that merit will remain the central and overriding principle for these important appointments.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Agriculture, in a set up question, attempted to mislead Canadians on the results of a Canadian Wheat Board survey that was not officially released until today. In fact, the pollster determined that farmers were evenly split on the marketing options but the minister attempted to portray otherwise.

However, farmers were clear. Seventy-seven per cent said that the elected board of directors, not the government, should determine their future.

How many times do western Canadian farmers need to tell the government that farmers themselves should decide their future?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very surprised that the member would get up today and ask a Wheat Board question because the big news in western Canada is that Canadian Wheat Board producers survey.

Yesterday Mr. Hill, the chair, said that 57% of producers supported barley freedom. He actually meant wheat freedom. The numbers for barley are 70%. Three-quarters of western Canadian farmers are asking for freedom.

That survey was done by David Herle, a friend of the member for Wascana and a former Liberal campaign manager.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the big news in western Canada and the big news in this city is the minister's spin, which is why he came out yesterday with his statements before

the official survey was released. I have it right here and the actual involved farmers are split 50:50.

Why does the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board continue to try and mislead Canadians on where farmers really stand relative to the Canadian Wheat Board? It is time the parliamentary secretary was honest in the House on this survey.

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a reason that the member for Wascana has been so quiet the last few months on this issue. He knows better than the member for Malpeque that western Canadian farmers want freedom.

I will give the House the numbers. On barley, 25% want a completely open market and 45% want choice. That adds up to 70%, does it not? On wheat, 44% want a dual market and another 12% want a completely open market. That adds up to 56%.

We need freedom for western Canadian farmers and we need it now.

* * *

● (1150)

[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec was subjected to some pretty harsh criticism from his provincial counterpart about his decision to stop supporting non-profit organizations, but he chose to wash his hands of the whole matter.

As he put it: "I did not make that decision. Cabinet decided to cut funding to those organizations".

Can the Prime Minister's political lieutenant for Quebec explain to us why the government as a whole made such a bad decision?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I understand my colleague's tendency to resist change. That is typical of opposition parties. We will focus our efforts on providing direct assistance to Quebec businesses.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec does not seem too sure of his response.

Minister Bachand has said that the decision to cut funding to non-profit organizations was based on ideology and that it represents a step back in time to the days of Duplessis.

Oral Questions

The Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec says that it was not his decision, but a decision made by all members of Cabinet.

If the minister is not making his own decisions about how to run his department, then what good is he?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, perhaps my colleague from Lac-Saint-Louis is mistaken this morning. When the opposition was in power, it tried to pick fights with the Government of Quebec. Now the Liberals are trying to hurt the federal government. There is a certain colour typically associated with shame, and that colour is red.

* * *

BILL C-10

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the mayors of Toronto and Montreal, David Miller and Gérald Tremblay, strongly criticized Bill C-10, which would enable the government to deny funding to films or television shows that are deemed contrary to public policy. According to the mayor of Montreal, this bill could kill an industry that employs 35,000 people in Quebec, and that brings in some \$1.3 billion in economic spinoffs.

Will the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages remove the provisions in this bill that promote Conservative censorship?

[English]

Hon. Jim Abbott (Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I made note of the comments by the mayor of Montreal relative to this question and I find it rather curious because the exact same wording that is contained in Bill C-10 is the exact same wording under which the film industry in the province of Quebec works with provincial legislation. I do not really understand why the mayor would have made the comments that he made. Clearly, there must be some other motive for him to be doing that.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, artists, producers and the entire film and television industry have criticized this bill, which goes against the principle of freedom of expression and could make the search for funding very difficult. In response to the parliamentary secretary, no one is fooled; we can all recognize the conservative, right-wing ideology that seeks to censor and control the industry.

Will the minister finally listen to reason and remove the censorship provisions from Bill C-10?

[English]

Hon. Jim Abbott (Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I totally reject the characterization the member has made about the bill. The fact is that the industry that is now making these kinds of comments actually approved the exact same wording under the Liberal government four years ago.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, aboriginal and survivor organizations are frustrated with the government's secrecy around the draft apology statement.

Given the significance of the apology, it is inconceivable the government would expect survivors and aboriginal people just to accept what it dishes out.

Will the minister tell the House why he has not involved Phil Fontaine and the AFN, will he commit to an open discussion about the text of the apology and will he allow survivors to be right here on the floor of the House of Commons with us so they can face the Prime Minister when he tries to deliver this apology?

• (1155)

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is looking forward to next week, June 11, when we are able to deliver this very important apology. It has been a long time coming and I look back to the previous era where there was no apology on this matter.

The member likes to make the point that there was no consultation. Of course, that is not true. In fact, that is absolutely incorrect. We have been consulting with aboriginal leaders across the country and we look forward to next week.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this time I want the Liberals to listen. Farmers in Alberta are continually saying that they need and demand marketing freedom.

Yesterday, the chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board, Larry Hill, admitted that the Canadian Wheat Board's own poll, conducted by a Liberal insider, stated that the barley market question was answered: 57% would prefer an open market.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary for the Canadian Wheat Board confirm these numbers?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Calgary West for his hard work on this file, as so many other Conservative MPs have done.

The Canadian Wheat Board has been unwilling to release this survey even though it was done by David Herle, a prominent Liberal.

However, let me help set the record straight.

Mr. Hill said yesterday that 57% of western barley farmers want freedom. What the survey actually shows is that 57% of farmers want freedom for wheat. The number of farmers asking for marketing choice for barley is nearly 70%, as I said before. This is great news for farmers.

However, what farmers really want to know is when the Liberals will admit they are wrong and start supporting marketing freedom.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are fast-tracking the Kearsarge tar sands project. The government assessment regime will not consider other ongoing or upcoming projects. Imperial Oil is expecting its water permit today and yet there are no measures to address the impact on the health of first nations and northerners, no cap on absolute gas emissions and no protection of threatened wildlife species.

Will the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans refuse to issue this final permit until these conditions are met?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister answered this question yesterday. As he pointed out, every environmental process and every regulation is being followed. The toughest standards are being set. Our environment minister has set some of the toughest standards on this planet and those are going to be met.

I reassure the House that this project is going to meet every one of those standards and our government is committed to protecting the environment as this project goes ahead.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are handing out a blank cheque to the executives at American-owned Exxon for a \$500 billion resource grab.

We all know Exxon has such a clean and unimpeachable record on the environment. Kearsarge will spew the same gas emissions that 800,000 new cars would over 50 years. Giving Yankee companies a break at the expense of Canada's environment will not stop there.

Could the government confirm that it is green lighting new nuclear plants in Alberta to enable energy exports to the United States?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is asking a number of questions there, but I will talk about the Kearsarge project.

There has been no final decision as to whether the Department of Fisheries and Oceans will issue Imperial Oil the authorization under the Fisheries Act for this project. Due process is being followed. It is not appropriate to speculate about that final decision, but the bottom line is that this project, like every other project, is going to have to meet the tough standards for the oil sands projects under our "Turning the corner" plan, which aims to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by an absolute 20% by 2020.

* * *

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was in Oshawa talking to the workers on the picket line at General Motors. They said to me that while they were pleased that I was there to show support, why did a single Conservative member of Parliament not show up to support them?

My question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry. Having just said that his heart goes out to these people, why could he not be bothered to show up and support them in their time of need?

We all know the finance minister has said that Ontario is the last place to invest, so therefore they are extremely angry at every Conservative.

● (1200)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these are my friends. These are my neighbours. I see them every single week.

I am really disappointed in the member for Markham—Unionville for using somebody else's misfortune for political gain. Everything that we have done to keep jobs in Oshawa, our auto innovation fund, our investments in research and development at the local universities, he has voted against. He has voted against and he has not supported the auto industry.

I have been here working hard to make sure that we get a new mandate for Oshawa. That is what we want to do for the people of Oshawa. That is what I am doing to support them, not taking cheap photo ops like the member for Markham—Unionville.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2001 the Liberal government lent Canada's good name to a world conference against racism in Durban, South Africa, that quickly degenerated into an anti-Semitic hatefest, complete with reported displays of Hitler glorification.

Fortunately, our Conservative government has taken a stand and announced that Canada will be boycotting the sequel to Durban. Now we learn that the New Democrats oppose the government's decision.

Would the Secretary of State for Canadian Identity remind Canadians in general, and the NDP in particular, why our government has taken the principled stand that it has taken?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity), CPC): Mr. Speaker, after some initial confusion, the Liberal Party members came out in support of our government's decision to withdraw from the Durban process. I commend them for that.

Initially, the member for Outremont, on behalf of the NDP, also expressed support for this government's principled decision to remove ourselves from this very problematic and historically hateful process, but the NDP members now say that things have changed and they are supporting it. What has changed?

Iran, a country dedicated to the destruction of the only Jewish country in the world, is vice-chair. It recently denied observer status to a Canadian Jewish NGO. The organizers have re-invited all of the NGOs who participated in the most extreme and odious promotion of hatred at the last Durban conference.

I say to the NDP members, shame on them for supporting this terrible disgrace.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE ACT

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-60, An Act to amend the National Defence Act (court martial) and to make a consequential amendment to another Act.

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

* * *

[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-France Inter-Parliamentary Association concerning the standing committee meeting held in Paris, France, from March 6 to 10, 2008.

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[English]

PETITIONS

FILM INDUSTRY

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present two petitions to the House. The first is a petition against Bill C-10, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act, which is signed by a great many people in the industry itself.

ANIMAL CRUELTY LEGISLATION

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is with regard to animal transportation that is also signed by a number of people across Canada. They have asked me to present the petition to the House.

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my first petition comes largely from the Lanark part of my constituency. It is a petition calling for the long gun registry to be repealed, one of many petitions I have tabled on that subject over the years.

● (1205)

MARRIAGE

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is a call for the government

to be respectful of the traditional definition of the institution of marriage.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my third petition calls for the government to deal with the issue of child pornography and, in particular, to protect our children by taking all necessary measures to ensure that materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activity involving children be outlawed.

AGE OF CONSENT

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my fourth petition deals with the age of sexual consent. It is a little out of date, but it is important to remember that most Canadians are very supportive of the change that was made by Parliament to boost the age of consent from 14 to 16 years of age.

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of the residents of Mississauga, Brampton and Hamilton, Ontario. The petitioners call upon Parliament to eliminate the health and safety risks associated with community mailboxes and to reinstate door to door mail delivery to all neighbourhoods across Canada.

[Translation]

BILL C-207

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I am presenting a second series of signatures from Quebec citizens who support Bill C-207. There are several hundred citizens in Quebec regions who support Bill C-207. This bill would give an income tax credit of up to \$8,000 to recent graduates who accept employment in a region that is facing economic difficulties.

I would like to read a few words from the petition: "Considering that Bill C-207 would come to the aid of regions [facing economic difficulties] and that a similar program exists in Quebec and has proved successful. We [,the citizens,] are calling on the House of Commons and all members of Parliament to support Bill C-207."

I present this petition on behalf of these citizens.

[English]

INCOME TRUSTS

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present yet another income trust broken promise petition from constituents in my riding of Mississauga South.

My constituents remember the Prime Minister writing that the greatest fraud is a promise not kept. He promised never to tax income trusts, but he did break that promise by imposing a 31.5% tax on income trusts which permanently wiped out \$25 billion of the hard earned economic retirement savings of over two million Canadians, and they were mostly seniors.

The petitioners are asking the Conservative minority government: first, to admit that the decision to tax income trusts was based on flawed methodology and incorrect assumptions, as was demonstrated in the Finance Committee; second, to apologize to those who were unfairly harmed by the broken promise; and finally, to repeal the punitive 31.5% tax on income trusts.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 254 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 254—**Mr. Dennis Bevington:**

With regard to the government's contracting process: (a) what process was used to award a contract from Health Canada to Richard Bargery (contract number 4500173728) on November 12, 2007; (b) if other bids were received, who were they from and what were the amounts bid; and (c) in detail, what services is Mr. Bargery providing to the government?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in response to a) In the fall of 2007, Health Canada notified the pharmacy associations of NWT and Yukon of our intent to begin negotiations regarding fee arrangements. The government of Nunavut was also informed that separate negotiations with Nunavut and Beaufort Delta area pharmacists would begin in late fall or January.

Both negotiations were considered extremely sensitive as there were concerns that if negotiations failed, pharmacies in either region, could withdraw from Health Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefit Program, leaving First Nations and Inuit clients in those areas unable to obtain their medications in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, the person scheduled to lead these negotiations for Health Canada unexpectedly withdrew the services in October – just weeks prior to the scheduled start of the negotiations. This created an immediate, and urgent, need for Health Canada to find a replacement negotiator.

It was imperative to find someone with excellent negotiating skills and knowledge of health issues, as well as someone with significant experience and understanding of northern issues and realities. In addition, it was essential to find someone with established relationships with stakeholders and a strong understanding of the territorial environments.

Health Canada identified and approached three qualified candidates. Two of the three qualified candidates informed Health Canada that they were unavailable to take on such a contract. The third candidate, Mr. Richard Bargery, was available to begin the work in the required time frame.

He also met all of Health Canada's qualifications. He is a former deputy minister within the government of the Northwest Territories; has worked with officials of the government of Nunavut at the most senior levels; has performed the role of lead negotiator for a wide array of program areas and strategic initiatives; and has strong and

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established relationships within territorial governments and with key First Nations and Inuit partners.

Thus, based on his availability and the fact he met Health Canada's specific criteria for qualifications and experience, a decision was made to offer Mr. Bargery a contract.

In response to b) As a sole source process was undertaken to award this contract, no other bids were received

In response to c) Mr. Bargery is responsible for representing Health Canada at two negotiating tables: one with the NWT and Yukon Pharmacy Association, and one with the Nunavut and Beaufort-Delta pharmacy providers. Since the beginning of his contract, he has participated in more than 10 formal and informal meetings with these two groups. For cost efficiency, the majority of these meetings are conducted by telephone or video-conference, however on three occasions face to face meetings have been held. Each meeting requires significant preparation including consultations with Health Canada and extensive reviews and analysis of data, correspondence and other documentation.

The contractor is also responsible for reviewing and replying to proposals and correspondence developed by these groups. The contractor is required to liaise with first nations and Inuit organizations. While this work is especially important in Nunavut and the Beaufort-Delta region, where organizations have a financial stake in the local pharmacies, first nations and Inuit organizations across the territories are all very interested in the negotiations, as they could have a direct impact on their memberships. This work consists of additional meetings, as well as drafting correspondence to the organizations.

Finally, the contractor is responsible for providing ongoing briefings to senior management teams at Health Canada about the status and directions of the negotiations.

[English]

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2008

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-50, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 26, 2008 and to enact provisions to preserve the fiscal plan set out in that budget, be read the third time and passed, and of the motion that this question be now put.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the input of the hon. member on a budget which has some very significant problems with it.

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One of the issues that has been debated today, specifically, has to do with the irrational burying of an immigration provision in there. It is going to change the way in which matters are going to be dealt with as far as who is getting into our country. The issue I thought we were trying to address was a backlog situation, but it appears from the facts that this particular measure is not going to address that backlog.

I wonder if the member could advise the House on what exactly the implications of this change would be. Additionally, the hon. member may want to comment on why a significant immigration policy shift is incorporated in a financial budget.

• (1210)

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tackle the first question regarding why this is in a budget bill. If the issue of immigration is so critical, and if it needs thoughtful consideration, it should never be part of a budget bill, it should go its standing committee. That is part of the democratic and parliamentary process. The government chose to put it in a budget bill probably to hide it.

There is no transparency in what the government is doing. It claims that the process it has put in Bill C-50 are instructions. There is no process, they are just instructions by the minister to somehow eliminate the backlog.

If one were to look carefully at the bill, the instructions would come into effect February 2008. For the backlog, which has been there before February 2008, any person who is already in the system is not get affected. I think this is a smoke and mirror game that the Conservatives are trying to play.

Why are the Conservatives trying to play this game? I would suggest that they want temporary workers. They do not want permanent residents.

Every one of us in the House is an immigrant, whether one came here three years ago, or one's ancestors came here 300 years ago. To bring in only temporary workers is being regressive and going back to when coolies were brought in to build the railway. This is a very regressive and repugnant bill that has to be overturned by the next government.

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the response of the hon. member with regard to the immigration situation and I think she was very clear.

The other significant concern I heard in the debate has to do with the fiscal health of the nation and the fact that even the budget anticipates that we will become very close to going into deficit in the second year of the projections. I am a little concerned about the fact that the government has not left very much wiggle room to take into account any contingent liabilities.

I wonder if the member can comment on whether or not public confidence in the health of the nation is probably one of the biggest priorities that we have as it relates to jobs and economic security.

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague is such a well versed person in finance, I assure him that my constituents have been very concerned that the government, which inherited a \$17 billion surplus, has brought the country down to the brink of bankruptcy.

The minister was responsible for a \$5.6 billion deficit in Ontario. He and his colleagues were also responsible for the Walkerton crisis, for shutting down hospitals and for eliminating 7,000 nursing jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that is a—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It is with regret that I must interrupt the hon. member.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Laval,

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to speak to Bill C-50, Budget Implementation Act, 2008.

I can say right off the bat that, if this bill were a movie and an uncensored one, its title could be something like “In Search of Promises Kept”, because they are few and far between in this budget.

Take the promise made to seniors for example. Before the election, every member of the Conservative Party in this House rose to vote in favour of giving back to seniors the money owed to them in connection with the guaranteed income supplement. This is money that has been owed to them for several years now. Yesterday's vote showed that the government does not keep its promises to the people it was supposed to represent. The Conservatives were unanimously opposed. Every Conservative member in the House stood in his or her place and voted no. So, where seniors are concerned, promise made, promise broken.

One might also think of the promise made to veterans, their widows and their survivors to provide them with a more extensive support program than the current one, ensuring that all survivors of veterans and their widows would be eligible for help. Again, promise made, promise broken.

Take the promise to respect provincial jurisdictions. It is a promise that was made with great fanfare, but it still has not been kept. Instead of respecting provincial jurisdictions, the government, through this bill, is setting up PPP Canada Inc., a crown corporation that will work with the public and private sectors to support public-private partnerships. There are fears that this crown corporation will have a say in federally funded infrastructure projects in Quebec, whereas Quebec wants full control, including the power to decide on potential PPPs.

Bill C-50 also provides an additional \$110 million for the Mental Health Commission of Canada, even though health and social services are Quebec's responsibilities.

The bill also provides for a \$500 million fund for public transit, whereas we are calling for the block transfer of federal infrastructure funding so that Quebec can make its own choices, which it usually does quite well. All the other provinces look to Quebec, because Quebec's social programs and tax benefits are far superior to their own.

The government is still committed to setting up a common securities regulator, as we saw again last week. There were discussions about this.

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Lastly, Canada would invest \$25 million to help Canadians understand the impact of the environment on our health. This is a public health measure, and Quebec has its own public health agency. The government has therefore broken its promise not to interfere in provincial jurisdictions.

Despite its promise to govern with transparency and integrity, the government decided to sneak an immigration measure into Bill C-50 that would give the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the power to decide who can enter Canada and who cannot. It is disgraceful to include an immigration measure in a budget implementation bill. I have never seen such a thing. It is really underhanded. I think that this is emblematic of this government's overall approach.

They also made a promise to correct the fiscal imbalance. This has not been kept either. Even though part of it was addressed by allocating some money, the idea of correcting the fiscal imbalance involves a lot more than just throwing money at it. We need to talk about tax points and many other very important aspects if we truly want to free the provinces from the federal government. Promise made, promise broken.

• (1215)

Lastly, I will talk about a promise made to women in January 2006. During his election campaign, the current Prime Minister assured women that he would do what is necessary to help them achieve true equality. He said that in January 2006. It is now June 2008 and nothing has yet been done to help women achieve true equality. On the contrary, the government has tried to muzzle women by cutting funding to Status of Women Canada, funding that has not been reinstated.

I even have some excerpts of speeches given by Kathleen Lahey and Armine Yalnizyan to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. After carefully examining the budget, they came to tell us what they thought about it, taking into account the fact that the budget must address both the men and the women who pay taxes. Women make up 52% of the population, whether my colleagues like it or not. This 52% of the population deserves some respect when it comes to measures that are to represent or at least serve the entire population.

There is nothing in this budget for women or even anything that would benefit women, let us be honest. For example, \$20 million has been allocated to Status of Women Canada, but there are 16.6 million women in Canada. That means that Status of Women Canada has to assume all of its responsibilities with a budget of just \$1.21 per woman or girl in Canada. This is an overall budget of \$1.21 per person for the duration of the budget.

In comparison, pork producers—and I am very happy for them—are getting \$50 million to help them adjust to new market realities. With roughly 14 million pigs in Canada, that represents \$3.57 a pig. The 10,000 or so pig producers are getting twice as much as is being allocated to help Canada's 16.6 million women cope with the serious disadvantages they face.

We can see which is more highly valued by the Conservative government: a woman is worth \$1.21 while a pig is worth \$3.57. Let

us not think about it for too long; it is plain to see that this budget does not offer much to women.

Of course they talk about a plan—a vague plan that will not amount to much if it is not actually developed. They can talk about a plan for a very long time. They talk about it in the budget as something to come. However, we still have not seen a single word about this plan. We have not heard the minister say anything about this plan either. It makes us wonder whether the government is really serious about implementing a plan when one has existed since 1995 that was ratified and adopted by all the countries present in Beijing.

In closing, when women are mentioned just six times in the entire budget, and one of those occurrences is to make the distinction between fishermen and fisherwomen, it is because there is not much interest in or respect for them.

I highly doubt that we can support this budget. As hon. members know, the Bloc Québécois will be voting against it. We will all rise in this House with great pride to vote against this budget. We have no need for broken promises. We need the government to keep its promises.

• (1220)

Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague.

First, I would like to congratulate the member on her work and on her support for federalism. As it turns out, the Bloc Québécois has become an excellent federalist party that is helping us with our work.

Second, there is just one thing I would like to ask the member. Her party has never been in power. That is not their fault. They are like the NDP. With that in mind, we would like to know what changes they would suggest be made to Status of Women Canada. What does her party recommend we give to Status of Women Canada?

Third, I do not really like the comparison the Bloc drew between women and pigs. I do not think that is appropriate, and such things should not be said here in the House.

• (1225)

Ms. Nicole Demers: Mr. Speaker, we will never be in power, nor do we want to be. That is of utmost importance to us. The fact that we will never be in power is fundamental, critical even, to our freedom. That is why we can stand up for the rights and interests of the people we represent without fear of reprisals from big corporations trying to tell us how to vote. Most parties who have access to power are sometimes tempted to do as they are told.

It is all too easy for the Conservative government to lean right and do what right-wing lobby groups want. We, however, need answer to no lobby. We answer only to our fellow citizens, those who have given us majority after majority to represent Quebecers. That is all I need to know, and that is all I need to believe. Frankly, having seen what that kind of power does to Quebec members who do nothing at all for Quebecers, who dare not rise when they disagree with something, I want nothing to do with it. If that is what it does to a person, then thanks, but no thanks.

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[English]

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as agriculture critic, it is actually with a great deal of sadness that I speak on this budget implementation bill.

Why would I be disheartened about speaking on this? It is simple. This initially new and now scandal-ridden Conservative government basically has forgotten primary producers in Canada.

Worse, as we saw here during question period today, the parliamentary secretary, the minister and the Conservative propaganda machine go to great lengths to misrepresent what they are really doing and not doing for Canadian farmers in this country.

Agriculture Canada documents show clearly that program spending is down by \$1.2 billion from the last year that the Liberal Party was in power. This program spending reduction is at a time when the hog and beef industry is in the greatest crisis that it has ever faced in this country.

I will say this. On the positive side, thank goodness, prices in the marketplace are up for grains and oilseeds, but there is no question that costs are up very substantially as well. If there were a hailstorm, a flood or a disaster, it would be extremely difficult given the cost structure those farmers face.

However, on the positive side, prices are up in those industries. I say thank goodness, because if prices were not up in those industries, those farmers, just like hog and beef producers and some in the tender fruit industries, would be left to suffer financially and wave in the wind. These are people who are losing their life's work while the government basically sits on its hands and offers virtually nothing to the industry that has fed this country ever since this country was born.

The fact is, as I said, program spending is down. The fact is that the government had a family farm options program that would assist farmers in financial trouble and cancelled the program in midstream. As for those who could remain in the program, who were in the first year, this year it has paid them out at only 50¢ on the dollar.

In fact, the government said during the election that it would cancel the CAIS program and all it did was change the name. The government will not even allow hog and beef producers, after all their financial difficulties, the option of choosing between the CAIS program or the agri-invest program, whichever would suit them better.

That is why I am saddened to a great extent.

In terms of the hog and beef industry, the government talks about the loans it has put out there, and yes, it has put out loans. It has put out loans on the advance payment and general loans and has backed them up. However, officials who were before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food said that will cost the government only an additional \$22 million.

I do not know about you, Mr. Speaker, but I know it is very difficult to borrow yourself out of debt. There those farmers are, trying to survive and trying to feed the world, and the government leaves them in the lurch.

I will outline what I believe could be done for the hog and beef industry yet. Hog and beef producers need the option of having the top 15% of CAIS or the new agri-invest program for at least 2007 and 2008, deferring not only interest payments but also clawbacks of all CAIS overpayments until December 2008.

The government needs to adjust the reference margin for disease, suspend the cap on safety net programs for two years, and realign Canada's inspection fees, cost recovery rates and other regulatory measures in order to be competitive with Canada's major trading partner. That is what needs to be done. It is not in this budget bill. That is very sad.

● (1230)

Let us take a moment and look at what is happening south of the border. The government south of the border seems to care about its primary producers in rural areas, while this government just lets ours wave in the wind.

The \$285 billion United States farm bill places American farmers as a first priority and trade agreements as a distant second, which is the direct opposite of what the Canadian farm policy is under the Conservative government. Yet our producers must compete against United States farmers, both in our domestic market and in the international marketplace. We cannot continue to allow Canadian regulatory policy and agriculture policy to put our own producers at a disadvantage.

Let me give members but one example. There are many, but time is short. One example relates to Canadian agri-retailers. In both the United States and Canada, agri-retailers are asked to provide greater security for fertilizer and chemicals against terrorists. They are both requested by governments to put in security measures, including fences et cetera.

The difference is that in the United States farm bill, the United States government is offering \$100,000 in assistance per unit up to a maximum of \$2 million for multiple units. What is the Canadian government doing in return? It says it is not going to help.

As the headline in one of the papers in Winnipeg said, "Canadian Agri-Retailers at Competitive Disadvantage after U.S. Passes \$290B Farm Bill". The U.S. farm bill will provide U.S. agri-retailers substantial tax credits and grants for security of essential crop nutrients and protection products, while our government does nothing.

It does nothing, and that cost has to be passed on to primary producers. That is what I mean when I say the government is ignoring the reality of what is happening in rural Canada and is not there to provide assistance. This bill shorts the farm community in that regard.

Sadly, the bottom line for the farm community is much like that for the industrial sector. The government has failed to support most agriculture processing, leaving canning plants and others in difficulty due to cheap product coming in from other countries that do not follow the same environmental and labour standards as Canadians do.

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As a result, the tender fruit industry in southern Ontario lost its canning plant. Many producers have now torn out their tender fruit orchards, with a tremendous loss of investment. Investments made five years ago are being torn out today. They would have provided food security for tender fruits in this country and those orchards are being torn out while the government sits on its hands and this bill ignores their concerns.

As well, beef plants and hog plants have gone under. Where capacity was built up by the previous government, the current government sits on its hands while that processing capacity closes. It has failed to act in terms of specified risk materials and the extra costs that government regulations put on those processing plants, therefore making them non-competitive.

I am running out of time, so I will conclude this way. Producers are facing challenging times and the Government of Canada must step up to the plate to be there for producers when required. As program spending shows, the government's words are cheap but its action is basically nil.

Given the discussions about global food shortages, Canada's agriculture policy becomes all the more important in ensuring we can do our part, not only in providing food for the world but also in ensuring that we have food sovereignty and a profitable farming sector at home. Government has a responsibility to do no less.

The Conservative government has absolutely failed to meet the needs of primary producers in rural Canada. It is good at messaging, but it is terrible at providing the kind of action necessary to ensure primary producers in this country have a long term future.

• (1235)

Mr. Brian Storseth (Westlock—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for the time he has put in. It seems as though he is a little confused as usual.

He talked about all these initiatives, but he did not even mention Bill C-50 and what is actually in this budget bill. He did not talk about the \$500 million to help improve public transit. He did not talk about the \$400 million to help recruit new front line police officers. He did not talk about the \$250 million for carbon capture and storage in projects in Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia. And he certainly did not talk about the need to pass this legislation immediately so we have time to put the regulations in place so that the tax-free savings account can take effect on January 1.

I would like to ask the hon. member if he will stand up for rural Canadians. If he wants to talk about something that is going to destroy rural Canada, it is his leader's carbon tax plan. It will destroy areas, farmers and producers in rural Canada. It is worse than any other plan since the national energy program. He talks about it being cost neutral. How can it be cost neutral for farmers who have to put crops in the ground? Is the price of gasoline not high enough already for the member? How can it be cost neutral to those seniors who have to pay for increased heating costs? How can it be cost neutral for rural Canadians?

If the member insists that he stands up for rural Canadians, will he show up and vote on this budget implementation bill and support our government, will he vote against it where apparently his beliefs are, or will he do what he and his Liberal Party colleagues have been

doing for months, which is to sit on their hands and run away from the issues?

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my hon. colleague. I sit on the Standing Committee on Agriculture with him. Sometimes we agree and sometimes we disagree and I guess this is a moment of disagreement. Clearly the member should know why I did not talk about a lot of what is not in Bill C-50, because it is what is not there that concerns me. It is the ignoring of rural Canada, the ignoring of primary producers, the putting farmers last that concerns me. I had to express those concerns.

Earlier we heard the parliamentary secretary try to put a spin on the survey of the Canadian Wheat Board. He tried to put a spin to misrepresent the facts. That is what the hon. member did in terms of the carbon issue. We are talking about a green shift. Let me be clear that on gasoline, there will be no increase. Wait until the plan rolls out. The member will probably be jumping up and down in favour of what the leader of the Liberal Party is trying to do.

Let us look at some of the opportunities in terms of a green shift for the farm community: other alternatives, research and development, carbon sinks. The net benefit at the end of the day will be an environment where our children and our grandchildren can enjoy a future. We on this side of the House will not bury our heads in the sand like that party over there does when it comes to dealing with environmental issues. We will deal with the facts. There are opportunities for farmers and primary producers in terms of a green shift: research and development, new crops, carbon sinks, and a better future environmentally for all Canadians and indeed the world.

• (1240)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry has room for a 30 second comment or question.

Mr. Guy Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I could not resist. I believe I heard the hon. member defend the carbon tax. I would like some clarification. As he mentioned, the hon. member is on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food along with my other hon. colleague. If the hon. member can stand there and hear the carbon tax is going to devastate agriculture and the hon. member is suggesting that he believes in the carbon tax—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member for Malpeque has equal time.

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, that is typical of that party. What I remember most of that member is his saying to hog and beef producers, “money is flowing as we speak” and then we had to pass special legislation to make it flow. The fact of the matter is the Conservatives' plan will cost \$65 a tonne, carbon tax by 2018 and no relief for anyone in terms of their plan—

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have one more chance at trying to convince the Liberals, who have just spoken so passionately against the government's budget, to vote against it. If they believe so strongly—

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: You've got a point.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis: Absolutely. Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues said that I have a point. Of course we have a point. How can Canadians understand and comprehend a party whose members stand day after day and speak so vehemently against the government's budget and then turn around and vote with the Conservatives by sitting it out, ignoring the vote and going off and doing whatever they want, except doing their jobs here in the House? How do they explain that?

We share one thing and that is, the Conservative budget is wrong. It is bad and it must be stopped. We are not going to be hypocrites. We are not going to say one thing and do another. We said from day one that if this budget does not deal with the needs and priorities of Canadians, and does not narrow the prosperity gap between the rich and the rest of us, and does not address the big outstanding issues in terms of health care, education, the environment, housing and aboriginal peoples, then we would vote against it.

Why can the Liberals not put their principles on the line? I guess the question is, what principles, when in fact they say one thing one day and do another thing another day and never mean what they say they are going to do. What kind of message does that send to Canadians who are trying to find some reason to have faith in this place again? Canadians have become so cynical they wonder why they should even vote, because they see nothing but politicians promising one thing and doing another, flip-flopping all over the place, never standing up for their principles with conviction and courage.

That is what this place requires today. It is not too late, I tell the Liberals, to stand up with the courage of their convictions, say no to this budget, bring down the government, and let the people of this country decide how we can deal with the big issues of the day and who should have responsibility for that. Canadians know that politics is all about power. It is the route to power. It is about who has the ability to set priorities for this country. It is about whose interests shall flourish and whose shall perish. We know that under the Conservatives that people who struggle day in and day out with a whole of range of issues and concerns are being ignored and left to perish by the government.

There has never been a more urgent situation in this country requiring a new approach, and here we are, the Conservatives are being given a majority. The Liberals are basically letting the Conservatives rule as if they had a majority, without trying to fashion some compromise, without trying to work out some concessions, just handing it holus-bolus to the Conservatives and telling them to do what they want.

They steamed today again about immigration, a concern we all raised. We are all concerned about the arbitrary powers going to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the way in which the

government intends to cherry-pick who comes into this country without looking at balancing family reunification, economic skills and humanitarian compassionate issues.

We have those concerns. We are not going to stand idly by and give the government the latitude to proceed down this path. We say no, and we will continue to fight this every chance we get. Canadians out there are wondering what happened to a party that supposedly had immigration as part of its heart and soul; what happened to a party that believed in an open-door policy; what happened to a party that supposedly stands for giving everybody a fair shake in this country. They feel disappointed and let down by the Liberals. Mostly they feel anger and pain at the Conservatives, frustration that a party that talked so much about accountability and transparency, about openness and decency, about respect for everyone among us, has chosen in quite a deliberate fashion to completely ignore those concerns. The Conservatives are turning away from human suffering and proceeding with a budget that will take billions of dollars out of Canadians' pockets and put the money into corporate tax breaks, not into the programs that would actually help people get ahead, give them a hand up, help them to help themselves.

• (1245)

Nowhere is that more apparent than when it comes to health care. I get a little tired of hearing the Minister of Health talk about the great things his government has done. The fact of the matter is the government has done zilch. The budget has nothing in it pertaining to health care. There is nothing in it that deals with the burning issues facing Canadians concerning access to quality health care. Every day that passes, the situation gets worse and worse.

Yesterday in the newspaper there was a clear analysis and statement about the lack of technologists and laboratories to decipher the results of tests, make decent prognoses and help patients get the access to the care they need. Two days ago I was at a national summit dealing with diabetes and heard about the deplorable lack of endocrinologists and other specialists in the field to help those with diabetes get the services they need so they do not become costly burdens on our hospital health care system. In the last few weeks we have heard about patients trying to deal with longer and longer wait times, whether it is in emergency wards or access to prognostic tests.

I do not need to go on about what Canadians are concerned about. They expected some answers from the government to take us into the future of health care renewal. Instead, the Health Council came out with a report yesterday saying the glass, at best, in the most optimistic way is half full. That was a very diplomatic way of putting it. It is saying that the government has done nothing to take its responsibilities seriously and move us forward with the health care accord that we all agreed to back in 2004.

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I asked the Minister of Health just the other day where the plan is for home care. That is part of the accord. That has been part of the Conservatives' promises. It has been on the table for years. The Liberals promised it six times over and never delivered. Where is it? What did the Minister of Health say? It is not his priority; it is not his plan; it is something that belongs in the provinces. He told me, in fact, that I should go back to provincial politics.

I moved from provincial politics to federal politics precisely because I knew that unless we had a national health care system which, through innovation, moved forward by ensuring that we had some sort of national drug coverage and some sort of national continuing home care plan and unless we started to deal with the root causes of ill health and sickness in our society, we would be seeing the death of medicare. That is what I am worried about.

While the government sits back and does nothing, privatization forces, the big corporations that want their hands on our \$90 billion golden egg, the health care budget, and want to make profits off of people's ill health and sickness are allowed to get a hold over our system. What we are expecting from the government is some leadership, leadership in terms of enforcing the Canada Health Act, leadership in terms of carrying forward plans and programs that move us away from costly hospital, sickness based care to a community based, holistic health promotion and health prevention driven focus. That is not too much to ask.

We have a crisis with the shortage of doctors, nurses, technologists, endocrinologists and other professionals. We have a shortage of all kinds of workers in the health care system. There is nothing from the government, no plan, not a word, not a dollar, not even an indication of a commitment to address the problem.

I would say that if a budget does not deal with the fundamentals of ensuring our health care system lasts another generation, of helping families send their kids to school, of saving this planet, of dealing with the deplorable situation of housing on first nations communities, of dealing with the missing and murdered women on the highway of tears, then it should not be supported. If the government cannot deal with those fundamental issues, it does not deserve the support of the House, and I urge all members to join with the NDP in defeating this budget bill and bringing down the government.

• (1250)

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about “the evil Conservative government” but she need look no further than three seats to her left, to her leader, the member for Toronto—Danforth, as the guy who enabled “the evil Conservative government” to take its place in the House. We have the member to thank for that.

I see the chairman of the human resources committee in the House today. He is certainly doing a great job on that committee, on which I have the great privilege of serving. Should the House continue to operate through next week, hopefully we will table a report on the establishment of a crown corporation to direct the rate setting mechanisms of the employment insurance program, which is a key component of this legislation.

Over the course of four to five weeks, the committee embarked on this study and brought in a number of witnesses. The minister himself appeared on two separate occasions. Maybe the Minister of

Transport will thank him for that and let him know that we appreciated his input.

The establishment of the crown corporation is of great concern to all Canadians because it is a fairly significant departure.

We put in all that effort and work at the committee and we hear the leader of the NDP, who appeared before the CLC last weekend, commenting that the government was just barging ahead with this with no consultation. He said that the only attention this received at the finance committee was five minutes by the Liberals and five minutes by the Conservatives. As a member of the committee, I was offended by that comment and the NDP member should be offended as well for the effort that was put in.

We know the current leader of the NDP is certainly no Ed Broadbent or Tommy Douglas but does the member not understand that this work was done by the committee and that those comments were a total disregard for the committee, or was it just blatant politics when it comes to this particular issue?

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member opposite may be offended when we on this side of the House stand up for working people but I make no apologies for my leader or my colleagues, especially the member for Acadie—Bathurst who has been leading the charge on trying to get a responsible approach by the government toward employment insurance.

The manoeuvres by the government, supported by the Liberals, to set up a separate corporation around employment insurance and deny workers even more than they have been denied already because of the collaboration of these two parties is wrong. That is why we oppose the budget. We cannot understand how the Liberals can allow this to go on.

The only thing I can tell from the Liberal comments is that three years in opposition has not brought any of them any humility or moved them away from their position of arrogance. They still think that somebody else caused them to lose government. That is the problem and that is why Canadians are so cynical. The Liberal Party was responsible for many of the ills that led to this position today where Conservatives can build a society that has no safety net and has no fundamental values around care and compassion.

The Conservative government is building on a system, whether we are talking about EI, immigration, health care, education or the environment, that was slowly dismantled by the Liberals over 10 years. The Conservatives are now in a perfect position to execute the agenda they have had all along, which is to move any barriers to the profit making abilities of large corporations and to level the playing field, regardless of human consequences.

It is the Liberals who must bear the responsibility for the mess we are in today. If they are so concerned about what “the evil Conservative government” is doing, as the member just said, then why do they not stand up, oppose the budget and defeat the Conservative government?

Government Orders

•(1255)

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Mississauga—Erindale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-50. I will dedicate most of my comments today to addressing the issue of the so-called immigration reforms or changes that the Conservative government is proposing within the bill.

First we need to ask ourselves a question. Why are the Conservatives introducing immigration changes or amendments to the immigration act within a budget? It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that this is not a budgetary matter. This is a policy matter that should have been introduced as a separate bill where the policies could have been discussed extensively, where the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration could have completed its study and examination of those proposals and offered its opinion, and then it could have been voted upon.

However, the Conservatives have chosen, under the cloak of \$20 million, to introduce it within the budget bill. Many Canadians are asking why immigration changes have been introduced through the budget. That is a very good question that needs a real and honest answer.

The fact is that the Conservatives have been misleading Canadians and making things up about these changes because they are unable to explain their purpose. They claim that these changes will help reduce the backlog, which is now around 900,000 applications. However, if we were to actually read the proposed changes we would see that these changes will not take effect until February 2008. These reforms will not address the 900,000 applications that are already in the backlog. They will still need to be dealt with using the existing rules.

The government claims that the minister will not use this power, which the bill would give her, to limit the number of applications the government receives. How can the government draw that circle when it says that it will expedite economic immigrants but that it will not slow down family reunification? It also says that it will cut the backlog, that it will be transparent and that it will do everything by the book, but that it is important to give the minister unchecked discretionary power in order to implement these changes.

The fact is that if the government tries to expedite economic immigrants and keep the target of immigrants the same, this will happen at the expense and on the backs of family reunification, and that is of concern to many Canadians.

Many Canadians are keen that we attract economic immigrants who address our economic needs. Nobody is arguing against that. Also, nobody is arguing that the immigration system needs reform. However, to assume that the only way to fix these issues is to give the minister of immigration these powers, regardless of who the minister is or which party is in power, is a shortsighted solution and it will not help. In fact, it will only introduce powers where a lot of questions can be asked when they are applied.

What we need to do is fix the immigration system in a systematic and comprehensive way. We need to see where the issues are and apply more resources. We need to be wise and thoughtful about how and when we process our immigration applications.

This disingenuous proposal that by giving the minister unchecked discretionary power we can solve the backlog problem, does not

stand up to scrutiny. The reality is that this is an ill-advised, ineffective, short-sighted proposal on which it makes it very tempting to bring down the government. I would like to see the Conservative government go yesterday before today. I do not believe it has the best policies for this country nor do I believe it is able to come up with thoughtful, reasonable, practical and pragmatic policies.

•(1300)

However, this is the choice we have. Let there be no doubt that we disagree and oppose these immigration changes. The question that remains is when should we have an election. I know the Conservatives will not like it, but we will choose that timing.

I am quite disappointed with the NDP. If it had been up to the NDP, we would have had 17 elections by now, even though it is the party that claims it wants Parliament to work. The NDP is the reason that we lost the child care agreement with the provinces and the reason that we do not have a Kelowna accord.

Mr. Pat Martin: Because you are a bunch of crooks and the Canadian people threw you out.

Mr. Omar Alghabra: The NDP is the reason that we had a Christmas election.

We will choose when the election takes place and, when it does take place, the NDP will need to explain to Canadians why, if it is such a progressive party, it did not work with the Liberals on criticizing and holding the Conservatives in check. The NDP appears to spend most of its time criticizing the Liberals because it knows they are—

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am fascinated by what the member has to say but I cannot hear him very well over all the noise coming from the New Democrats. I wonder if they could keep it down.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is the hon. member for Halifax rising on the same point of order?

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Speaker, actually I was going to rise on a point of much greater importance and ask the member a question, but I will wait my turn.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member for Mississauga—Erindale still has three minutes and if we are all patient we can ask questions of him afterward. There will be five minutes of questions and comments and if we keep our questions short we can get more questions in.

Mr. Omar Alghabra: Mr. Speaker, the question the NDP will have to answer for Canadians is why it is spending so much time attacking the Liberals. Instead of doing its job, it expects progressive parties to attack and criticize the Conservatives.

Government Orders

It is very transparent that the NDP is obsessed with its own political gains. We will see what its gains are in the next election because it plays no role when we have a Conservative government. It could have been playing a much more effective role acting as a progressive voice and standing up to the ideological Conservative policies but instead it is obsessed with its own political standing with Canadians, which, by the way, is very transparent and Canadians are not buying it.

I do not agree with the immigration reforms and I do not support the immigration reforms, and when the Liberals gain the government after the next election, we will reverse these changes. The issue now is when we should have an election. The leader of the Liberal Party will choose when to have an election and we will ask Canadians to choose between the bad old Conservatives and the new, reintegrated Liberal Party.

● (1305)

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member asked several questions and deserves answers.

Why is the New Democratic Party attacking the Liberals for what they are doing in this House? Why are we not attacking the Conservative government for its draconian policies?

Let me set the record straight. On 23 or 24 occasions, with the most draconian policies being the subject of votes in this House, the New Democratic Party has voted against them. On those same 23 or 24 votes, the Liberal Party either has failed to vote at all or has had seven or eight members sit in their seats while the rest hid behind the curtain or stayed out in the lobby. To me, the most cynical manoeuvre of all is to put up seven or eight or nine or ten token votes knowing that they are insufficient to have any effect in actually calling the Conservative government to account.

Personally, I would rather know how draconian the Conservatives are. Then I can vote against them, rather than do what that Liberal Party and its Liberal caucus do, which is to pretend they are opposing them but not use the power, responsibility and mandate they were given to come in here and stand up against those policies. The Liberals have hardly done that once since the Conservative government was elected.

Now I have a quick question. Does that member not understand that it is not only the 30 New Democrat members of Parliament who are offended by what the Liberals are doing in fraudulently posing as the official opposition? Does he not understand that Canadians are aghast at the self-serving cynical politics of convenience the Liberals are demonstrating, when they want these policies stopped? The worst policies of the government are its budgetary policies, with the immigration policies and the EI changes the government is sneaking in as part of the budget, on which Liberal after Liberal has stood up and screamed and yelled—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): If the hon. member for Mississauga—Erindale takes equal time to respond, there will not be enough time for a second question.

The hon. member for Mississauga—Erindale has the floor.

Mr. Omar Alghabra: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member who asked the question for her service to the House of

Commons and to her constituents. She has announced her retirement. I have great respect for the hon. member and I accept her questions.

The hon. member talked about cynicism. I wish she would stand up and answer why her party abstained on the softwood vote when we in the House of Commons voted on it. The NDP abstained on that vote. While the NDP members spoke so much in opposition to that vote, they abstained.

The NDP is irresponsible and irrational, but they are good at pandering, I have to admit. They are extremely good at pandering and extremely good at saying whatever they think they can say, but their policy and their irresponsible behaviour ended up causing us to lose the child care agreements that were signed by the provinces and caused Canada to lose the Kelowna agreement. When the Liberals were in power we were working with the NDP, but its members' irresponsible behaviour and irresponsible politics have put us where we are today.

As the Liberal opposition party, we are much more responsible and much more thoughtful. With our policies and with our leader, we will show Canadians that we are the right choice for Canadians.

● (1310)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Resuming debate. Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Monday, June 9 at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

* * *

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

The House resumed from February 14 consideration of Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans), as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Government Orders

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to speaking on this piece of legislation. Similar legislation has been before the House on previous occasions. This bill has gone to committee and now is back in the House. I am going to talk about some of the committee recommendations throughout my speech.

One thing we have seen recently is that Canadians have been very intrigued by and very involved in following the U.S. Democratic race, with Barack Obama now poised to battle the Republicans and John McCain. I was always taken by the number of Canadians and the number of constituents and friends who were very much interested in that race and in the enormity of the U.S. political leadership race, including the work that goes into it, the money that goes into it and the whole issue of financing around selecting a leader for a particular party, in contrast to what we do here in Canada.

Obama himself was raising in the neighbourhood of \$1.5 million to \$2 million each day. The burn rate was about \$2 million a day, depending on whether there was a caucus or a vote at the end of that month. An enormous amount of financial resources went into the selection of that leader.

That is in contrast to what happens here in Canada. I spoke with my colleague, the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore. Over the course of the recent leadership campaign in the Liberal Party of Canada, he was a candidate and raised in the neighbourhood of \$2 million. Over the entire length of that leadership campaign he raised \$2 million, while the candidates to the south in the American race would do that in a day and burn that in a day.

Looking at our entire field, I think we had nine or ten who started out. The entire cost of our leadership campaign for the candidates was \$14 million. I know that it has been an issue in the House and there have been questions and points made on those debts being repaid, but \$14 million is a significant amount of money in the political landscape of this country, and \$12 million has been paid back so far.

Last Monday was a significant date. Those leadership candidates had to have their repayment schedules tendered with Elections Canada as we go forward. They all complied with that rule. They all complied with those conditions. Those repayment plans have been put forward and approved by Elections Canada. However, we do see a stark contrast between the American system and the Canadian system.

I had the great privilege in 2003 to be appointed parliamentary secretary to the then prime minister, Jean Chrétien. In his last year in office, he brought to Parliament and to the Canadian people a shift in the paradigm with regard to how political parties are funded in this country. It was very significant.

For years, many political parties were funded by big corporations. As for the Liberal Party itself, looking back prior to 2003, major portions of our overall budget were contributed by the banks and major corporations. Whether it was real or not, there was always this perception that any of those large donors could curry favour with the government. We can argue about whether they did or did not. I am not convinced that they did.

•(1315)

The banks were fairly significant contributors. The biggest issue they tried to continue to push with the government was that of being able to merge. They pushed the issue of bank mergers for years and years.

They contributed to the parties, but those mergers were never approved by the Parliament of Canada and never supported by the Liberal Party. Nonetheless, whether or not they did curry favour, it was the perception. In essence, that is really what initiated and then drove the whole process in changing the way we fund political parties.

We made that shift. We certainly reduced the amount that corporations could contribute to national campaigns and to riding associations in the preparation of their campaigns. We also reduced the ability of unions to contribute as well. There were very significant changes through 2003.

Now, with the Federal Accountability Act put forward by the current government, we know that corporate dollars and dollars provided by unions are destined not to be accepted for political contributions. There was also an outright ban on loans from associations or unions.

As I said, this legislation in front of us has come to the House before. It was referred back to committee. Some very significant amendments were proposed through committee. There are three that I want to speak about and then I want to talk about the government motions.

The first amendment was put forward by the government itself. The Conservatives put forth an amendment to allow for loans and sureties that are repaid in the calendar year to not count against donation limits for that year. That was supported by all parties.

To give an example, if person A lends candidate B \$1,000 in February and then repays the loan by April, then person A would be allowed to make another \$1,000 loan guarantee in that same fiscal period. It makes sense and was supported by all the parties within the committee.

A motion put forward by our party and supported by the Bloc would have amended the bill to allow for donations to be made to leadership contestants on an annual basis rather than as the current law has it. That was voted down. It was not supported by the Conservatives or the NDP. The Bloc also brought forward an amendment.

I am running out of time, but let me say that now the Conservatives are looking at gutting those amendments that were made in committee. They are looking at taking them out of the bill. We do not think that is right.

The government is looking at putting forward three of its own motions. When we send a bill back to committee and have the opportunity to draw on the testimony of expert witnesses, I think we are foolhardy not to utilize that testimony. We do not think it is prudent or wise not to use it.

Government Orders

When the committee makes recommendations, we should stand by them. Certainly in this case, with the three recommendations that came from committee on this piece of legislation, it is the position of our party that we would like to see them included in the legislation.

Hopefully as this debate goes forward each of the parties will have an opportunity to speak to these amendments and to the government motions. Should there be support for those three amendments from committee, I think members will see the official opposition supporting this legislation.

• (1320)

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the eloquence of my hon. colleague from Cape Breton—Canso in talking about matters that I think are important to this entire Parliament.

He mentioned that several amendments were brought forward at committee and were subsequently withdrawn. I would ask the member to give us his thoughts on this.

After a committee has deliberated on this, taking valuable input from witnesses and using its own collective wisdom as parliamentarians from all sides of the House, after all of that, why is it that a standing committee of the House of Commons could forward amendments after significant deliberation only to have them thrown out? Could the hon. member comment on what that does to the whole process of crafting better legislation for the protection of the interests of all Canadians?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Mr. Speaker, as committees do their work, I think many committees function well and do so in the best interests of the people of a particular community that they serve. In this instance, where there is political benefit, I see the government seeing that the amendments that were there levelled the playing field. If taken out, there would be a disadvantage to the Liberal Party of Canada.

I think it is well known that we have had struggles adapting to the new reforms, even when we presented them initially. We have had challenges. I think things are starting to turn the corner and improve as far as broadening our base of support. That would be for leaderships plus the funding of the parties, and election funding.

Certainly, when the two right-wing parties merged, the Progressive Conservatives and the Reformers, the Reformers had a broad base of support. They were able to take that and evolve that into where they are now for funding their party. They are fairly comfortable where they are.

We are yet to reach that point, but in striking the amendments that have been presented by the committee, that would further handcuff our party. It would be a greater challenge for us to reach that maturity of a broader donor base and so we would hope that those amendments, as presented in committee, will stand. We would be able to support the legislation should they stand.

• (1325)

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the fact that toward the end of his response to the question, the hon. member got to what I think is the nub of the issue, that he sees the amendments that were proposed as having policy merit. I must admit that I do not really agree with him

on that point, but I am glad he said that because he had been feeling a bit frustrated during his earlier remarks when he was talking about the process, saying that we ought not in this chamber to be revisiting amendments made in committee.

Well, that is why the process is set up this way. Committees make recommendations effectively to the House and the House can either accept them or reject them. That is the purpose of doing things this way. If we wanted to have the committee's word be the final word, we would change the Standing Order's instructions.

I just wanted to get that on the record because I do not think that process or argument was really very legitimate.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: I will take note of that, Mr. Speaker, but I know in no way would he want to diminish or dismiss the good work that committees do. In this particular case, I would hope that the government would abide by the human resources committee. In this particular case, I see that the recommendations that came forward from committee are strong. They held a broad base of support within that committee and I would hope that they would stand here in the House.

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join in the debate on this particular legislation. I will join with my colleague in asking the government to resume a principled position of respecting the will of Parliament, the will of committees, and maintain the substance of the amendments that were put forward by the committee during the course of its deliberations. These, of course, were very well thought out. They received input from Canadians from all over, from all walks of life, but expert opinion as well.

I think it is very important that when we look at new drafts of the Canada Elections Act, we look at all the issues. One of things that I think is missing here is that there are obviously other issues as well that the government has not brought forward for consideration.

For example, just not too long ago, there was an issue where the governing party, the Conservative Party of Canada, was involved in a dispute with Elections Canada over the inclusion or the non-inclusion of convention fees as they relate to a political contribution which is tax receiptable. The dispute went on. There was much dissatisfaction expressed by the government toward Elections Canada on its point of view.

However, I believe, at the end of the day, there was some reconciliation that the Conservative Party of Canada had the matter wrong and Elections Canada had the matter right. We do not really know exactly what the Conservatives did about that, it has not been widely reported, but we understand that they have accepted that because they have offered no amendments or revisions to the Elections Act to provide any further clarity toward their point of view.

The second issue, of course, is related to the supposed in and out scandal. In my own constituency, the Conservative candidate in the last election was named by Elections Canada as participating in that. I understand, and I fully believe, he probably did so completely unwittingly. His official agent was given specific information from the party offices, the headquarters, related to the nature of the transfer.

Private Members' Business

Probably questions should have been asked, but they were not. But, of course, within the Elections Canada Act, if there is a dispute about that, the governing party has offered no amendments to put forward its point of view on that. That I think is very relevant.

In my own constituency of Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, about a year and a half ago, the entire Conservative riding association resigned en masse, I was told this by a former executive of the riding association, over a dispute about the Atlantic accord. It took this position principally on principle, but it did so because it was very dissatisfied with the nature of the political process. It was given a promise and a commitment that it would indeed be honoured. The government's position at the time was that—

• (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Order. It is with regret that I must interrupt the hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte.

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private member's business, as listed on today's order paper.

When we return to the study of Bill C-29, there will be seven minutes left for the hon. member.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed from April 7 consideration of Bill C-207, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (tax credit for new graduates working in designated regions), as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Bloc Québécois about this excellent private member's bill, introduced by my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, a member who does an excellent job. I would also like to say that the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is an example for everyone in the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region, a region that, for various reasons, is not always favoured economically. One of those reasons is the current serious forestry and manufacturing crisis.

Obviously, one way to deal with the forestry and manufacturing crisis is to encourage businesses to hire young people. That is what this wonderful bill, Bill C-207, introduced by my colleague for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, seeks to do.

I will summarize the bill for you. The Bloc Québécois does not reinvent the wheel. Our goal in this House has never been to claim that we are all-knowing. We are able to look at what other parliaments are doing and borrow their positive initiatives. One of those positive initiatives came from the Quebec government, which implemented a similar credit in 2003. Their goal was to curb the exodus of young people—this bill has that same goal—as well as to deal with the shortage of skilled labourers.

This bill would introduce a tax credit for young graduates who accept jobs in a resource region. Under the bill, this credit would be

equal to 40% of the young graduate's salary for the first year, to a maximum of \$8,000.

In 2003, the first year the Government of Quebec instituted a similar credit, 2,500 young workers applied for it. In 2004, the number rose to 9,700. There was a tremendous increase of 7,000 young workers between 2003 and 2004.

This applies to all designated regions, which are regions with a declining population. That is the bill's objective. As I have already said, and will continue to say, my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is being practical. He looked at the situation in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, decided to take the bull by the horns and deal with depopulation.

There is not one member in this House who can afford to ignore such situations. When areas such as Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean experience an exodus of youth we must try to find solutions. The member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord has made a good attempt, in tabling Bill C-207, to do something about the exodus of youth and the shortage of skilled labour.

This tax credit for designated regions will not apply to just the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area. The bill will apply to all Quebec and Canadian regions that may experience depopulation so that we can retain our youth and deal with the shortage of skilled labour.

We will see, in this House, those members who care about the regions. We will see where political parties stand when they vote on Bill C-207. I cannot fathom that there would be a Conservative member who would vote against. The former mayor of Roberval is from the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region and the member for Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean. I met this member when he was mayor of Roberval and he had a backbone. It seems that he has become spineless since becoming a member of the Conservative Party. We will see what he does and how he will react to the vote on Bill C-207.

Once again, the minister responsible for this region, the member for Jonquière—Alma, has already said he opposes this bill. That is not surprising because he was already a spineless Conservative. He only has himself to blame.

• (1335)

There is one thing, however. Once again, this bill, which was introduced by my colleague, the hon. member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, simply duplicates a measure adopted by the National Assembly of Quebec in 2003 that produced positive results. I invite people to listen to the figures once again. I am pleased to repeat them, since some of my colleagues in this House seem to prefer to hold the party line. They will be given documents prepared by their research staff and what I have to say will certainly not appear in their documents.

With respect to the program instituted in Quebec, in 2003, 2,500 people took advantage of it and in 2004, that number rose to 9,700 people. It continues to increase all the time. This therefore allows businesses to hire young people and allows the regions to stop the exodus of young people. It does not apply to all regions of Quebec. Some regions of Quebec are seeing a growth in population, like elsewhere in Canada.

Private Members' Business

The regions that are experiencing growth do not warrant such assistance, but we must do everything we can to keep young people and jobs in the regions with declining populations. We must stop the decline of the regions. That is the major problem created by the current crisis in the forestry and manufacturing sectors. We run the risk of losing our entire work force in the regions, of losing all the expertise and experience of those men and women who were the economic driving force of our regions.

And this is all because the Conservative Party decided not to give businesses direct assistance. They offer tax credits, but those are not refundable. A forestry or manufacturing business that is not turning any profit will not get any tax credits and cannot benefit from the advantages of the budget that was tabled. The Conservatives do not seem to understand that if a business is not paying taxes, tax credits must be refundable.

We also need a plan to help companies modernize. In the case of the forestry sector, trees will continue to grow. It is not a matter of telling people, as the Conservatives are doing, to try to find a new career, when forestry workers have experience in that field. They are being told to go into computer technology or into other economic diversification sectors. Meanwhile, the trees will continue to grow. If we want to compete, we need to modernize our companies and help them purchase state-of-the-art technology so that they can become more competitive and regain their position on the market.

The Conservatives decided to leave it to the free market. They saw that smaller companies had been taken over by larger ones, and that the larger ones will not make it through the crisis. The situation will play out as they want it to. There will be regions living off the forest that will no longer have an economy, and the people will move to larger centres. That is not what the Bloc Québécois wants.

My colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is doing excellent work. I am always surprised by what I read in the news in his region. Even the media, which is often rather tough on the Bloc Québécois, believe that he is doing excellent work. That is to his credit, but not to the credit of the two Conservative members from the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region.

I am anxious to see how the Conservative members will vote on this bill. I thought that the former mayor of Roberval, the member for Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, found it interesting. Then he realized that there is the Conservative Party line to toe when the minister, the member for Jonquière—Alma, said that he opposed the idea. He is probably about to vote against a measure that would help young workers in his region and stop them from leaving the area.

I always find that surprising. I am always amazed to see a Quebecker buckle before the Canadian right and to give in. I have a great deal of difficulty with that. He is repudiating our values, the interests we defend and our citizens for the sake of the future of a political party that no longer has a future and that will see what happens in the next election. Perhaps the time has come for Quebec MPs to rise and defend the regions of Quebec, whether they are Conservatives or Liberals.

• (1340)

They will be in a position to say to Quebec's designated regions experiencing depopulation and the exodus of their youth that, for

once, they will implement a positive measure on their behalf—one that produced results in 2003 when implemented by a similar law by the Quebec government. Quite simply, it would give this opportunity —

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It is with regret that I must interrupt the hon. member.

I now recognize the hon. member for Lévis—Bellechasse.

Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-207.

Unfortunately, I cannot support this bill, because it is flawed and expensive.

However, I supported a bill that created a fund for the manufacturing industry and I supported a budget that creates a package through which manufacturing businesses throughout Quebec can expand and create good, well paying jobs.

As usual, the sponsor of the bill introduces bills to impress the gallery, but unfortunately, he did not act at the right time. He did not stand up for Quebeckers, to support concrete measures for Quebec industry.

I would simply like to remind the sponsor of this bill that the economic outlook is very encouraging at this time. The manufacturing sector in Quebec saw an employment increase in the last quarter. Imagine that. These are encouraging numbers in terms of job creation in the manufacturing sector. There was also an increase in the net number of jobs created in Quebec.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, you can hear them, too. I would like the members to listen to me. I had enough respect to listen to them and I would like them to do the same.

This is yet another in a slew of disappointing and really poorly thought-out economic proposals coming from the Bloc Québécois, proposals that really do not address the priorities of Quebeckers in any meaningful way. It is such poor proposals that have even led the sponsor's Bloc colleague, the member from Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, to admit, and I quote:

The economy is constantly an albatross for us. We are profoundly uncomfortable when it comes to discussing the economy.

The Bloc members had the chance to support budgets that included concrete measures to help Quebec's economy, but they remained seated. Other colleagues, such as the member for Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, rose in this House and stood up for the people of Lac-Saint-Jean by supporting these measures. Colleagues like the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles rose and stood up for Quebeckers. They are working here, proud to be both Quebeckers and Canadians.

Why did the majority of the members of the Standing Committee on Finance vote against this bill? Because of its many serious and glaring flaws and the fact that it does not hold water.

First, the designated regions referenced in the bill are drawn from a list that has not been updated in over 20 years and does not account for the economic changes that have taken place during that time.

Private Members' Business

Second, the tax credit would also introduce inequities in the tax system: inequities between recent graduates and those who graduated earlier, and inequities between new graduates who work in different regions.

Third, the credit would be exceedingly expensive. The money could be invested elsewhere to support our manufacturing sector, which would create jobs and keep our young people in regions such as Bellechasse, Les Etchemins and other regions throughout Quebec.

[English]

Bill C-207 tries to use the tax system to encourage new graduates to work in certain regions of Canada in order to address perceived skills shortages, but attempts to do that in ways which, in the end, would make the tax measure ineffective. It would, for example, only provide tax relief to a new graduate's first 52 weeks of qualified employment. What happens after the initial 52 weeks when there is no longer a credit available? Clearly, this type of measure cannot yield long term benefits to regions, and I am not even sure it would have an incremental impact in the short term beyond reducing taxes for a selected group of workers.

Another concern with the bill is that it does not make any attempt to target skills sets that are in short supply in a designated region or that could benefit its development. As I just mentioned, it has been 20 years since the list of designated regions was updated.

• (1345)

[Translation]

That is not all. There are other flaws in the bill. As I said, it would create severe inequities by discriminating between regions, and between groups of graduates.

Graduates who finish their programs around the same time, but who live and work in different regions, could face entirely different income tax burdens during their first year of employment. That would result in inequities and create two classes of graduates. As well, two graduates working in the same job and region, but whose graduation dates are a year apart, would face an \$8,000 gap in their respective tax burdens. This, too, is patently unfair.

Finally, this bill would be incredibly expensive. Not only would it be ineffective, it would be costly. Estimates suggest that the credit could cost up to \$600 million, money that would be taken away from other areas on a tax measure for which the outcome is uncertain.

This bill is the wrong way to go.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Steven Blaney: The member had opportunities to support real measures for workers and apprentices, but he chose not to stand up for those measures.

While we all believe it is important to provide our young people with the training and education opportunities they need to compete in a knowledge economy, it is important we do that in a responsible and effective manner.

This government has committed, through Advantage Canada, to creating the best educated, most skilled and most flexible workforce in the world. To achieve that goal, this government has taken action

in a number of areas. The people on this side, Conservatives from Quebec, did stand up to support these measures.

For instance, Budget 2007 included a \$2.4 billion transfer for social programs, a 40% increase. These tools will enable Quebec to support all of the measures and programs developed for young people. The government has provided the greatest number of scholarships ever granted to graduate students, and it has eliminated the federal income tax on all income from scholarships, bursaries and fellowships.

I want to remind the sponsor of this bill that the new Canada Student Grant Program is investing \$350 million. We believe in our young people, in our young Quebecers and young Canadians. We want them to be the most successful in the world. In 2012, this allocation will increase to \$430 million. Our new grant program will support low and middle income students in particular who will be able to enrol in school with the security of knowing they will be awarded a grant for each year of study. And the new grant program will provide support to over 100,000 students more than the old, heavily criticized system would have supported. We are taking action, making corrections and getting things done.

What is more, this government is spending more money than any other on youth skills development and training. For instance, we have created a new apprenticeship tax credit of up to \$2,000 per apprentice per year. Unfortunately, the Bloc did not vote in favour of this. The Conservatives, however, stood up to support this bill.

We also have a \$1,000 grant system for the cost of tools so that not only can our young people work in a trade, but they can also have the financial resources to get the tools they need to be prepared for the job market, with tax deductions to boot.

It is no coincidence that with the policies put in place by our government's Minister of Finance, nearly 750,000 jobs have been created in Canada since our election—and of these jobs, 80% are full time. The employment rate is at a 33-year high. Hon. members have had an opportunity to support the budget, but unfortunately they remained seated. Fortunately, we have Conservative members from Quebec to defend the interests of Quebec.

Obviously, I will not be able to support this bill because, again, it was not well prepared. I truly hope that my colleagues will agree with the points I have raised today and join the majority of the members of the Standing Committee on Finance in realizing that this bill is going nowhere. It is nothing but smoke and mirrors.

The Liberals and the Conservatives have also rejected this bill. I hope my colleagues will vote against this proposal and instead support the concrete measures to support our young people in all the regions of Quebec and the country.

• (1350)

[English]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise during private member's business to speak to Bill C-207 put forward by the Bloc member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

As has been covered in the debate, and I do not want to spend too much time describing the bill, it prescribes a tax benefit through a tax credit to allow employees, in areas which have economic challenges, who may have skills needs but may not be able to compete with some of the more attractive centres, an opportunity to work in those centres.

I can only imagine what Canada would be like if some of the smaller, economically challenged regions and communities in our country were to continue to fall behind. The population and businesses would decline, people would move away, jobs would be lost, and companies would shut down.

I believe this bill is important for Canada because it has to do with the shared value of the need for regional economic development. There are areas within our country that need some assistance from time to time to ensure they have some of the tools they need to continue to be economically vibrant.

We can imagine new graduates with the needed skills having opportunities to go to work in Quebec City, Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver. What about a place like Abitibi-Témiscamingue? Is it going to be able to compete with the fancy job in Montreal? Is it going to be able to pay the same money to attract a skills set to that area?

When I look around the country, I feel like saying that Canada is a picture or painting which has many aspects to it. How many of those parts of the picture can be taken away and still retain the integrity of the picture? It is very easy to imagine that Canada could shrink to urban economic centres. Eighty per cent of our population lives within 100 kilometres of the U.S. border.

There is a real threat and it affects not just agricultural communities, not just resource communities but thriving communities that have good fundamental economic bases, and they are at risk. That is why we have regional economic development programs because we need to ensure that there is a continuation of operations and the sustainability of communities.

When I spoke to the hon. member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, I looked at some of the names of the places. I do not know how many members may have been to places like Avalon Peninsula, Newfoundland and Labrador; Cape Breton; the north shore of Nova Scotia; Miramichi or Edmundston in New Brunswick; Gaspésie; Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Quebec; Estrie, Quebec; Laurentides; and Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

Windsor-Sarnia right now is undergoing a tremendous downturn in its economic outlook. Housing has gone down and unemployment has gone up. This was not the case a long time ago. Communities like Windsor were vibrant. The economic spin was going very well. Now, Windsor is becoming a have not area. It is just like a number of other communities across the country, whether it be in eastern or western Canada, northern Ontario or within Quebec. Circumstances change.

In fact, we are experiencing a significant shift in wealth and economic activity in Canada right now. Resource provinces are doing extremely well: Alberta, Saskatchewan and now Newfoundland. But 60% of the economic activity in Canada is in Ontario and Quebec collectively. That is where there is a lot of manufacturing

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going on and that is where there are going to be great pressures in terms of both employment and population dropping.

• (1355)

Populations are shifting where the resources are. I do not know what happens when finite resources start to disappear. I assume that people will migrate back again to the next best opportunity.

In the meantime, what will be the consequences? What areas will have to be sacrificed because we have not taken the initiative to provide certain incentives to allow them to sustain themselves when there are significant economic challenges.

We need our young people to be proud and to continue to be part of the communities in which they were raised. We do not want them all to stay in that community. We need to allow them to be as good as they can be. It may be a matter of graduates being able to go into another community which may be very similar, maybe not an urban centre, but chances are the economic advantages will not be there and will not be attractive enough for them, compared to other opportunities.

This particular bill provides at least initial economic assistance for these individuals to go, to take that job in a community that they know is the best fit for their skills, or is in an area in which they feel most comfortable. It is a win-win situation, not only for these individuals but also for the community and for the country as a whole.

I looked at the evidence presented at the finance committee. Everybody thinks that the committee did a very good job on this. I must say that I was a little concerned because one of the members of the committee, and I will not name the member or his party, but the member did say:

So the goal of your bill is to get young people to stay where they're from; it has nothing to do with making sure that the skill sets are meeting the needs of certain areas.

That tells me that this member did not even read the bill nor even understand the bill. In fact, the objective of the bill is quite the opposite. It is not to ask people to stay where they are, it is to give them the opportunity to go where they have the best opportunity to get that job and to develop those skills.

Then I hear another member over here saying, "You give them a tax benefit for one year, and then what are they going to do?" He has a lot of studies. I did not see any, but I can only assume. He can make that assertion. He asks, "After one year, what will they do?" He would say that they may leave because they are just there for the little tax credit, but once the tax credit ends, they are gone.

I know of members, even in my own caucus, who said, "My kid went to a community. He said he is going there for a year or two years". That was eight years ago and that individual is still there doing that job because when a person gets that first job and develops that skill, his or her career is starting to build. People do not build careers by bopping around, job to job, every year, looking for a tax credit. We have to respect people's intelligence a little bit more than that.

Private Members' Business

I see that my time is up. I have a few more things that I really would like to say about the bill, but let me just say that I have taken enough time to look at it and I believe that the approach of the bill is sound.

There may be some disagreement or some discussion about the mechanics, but Quebec has had such a program since 2006. I understand that about 10,000 graduates were eligible. It is estimated that some 30,000 Canadian students, graduating with good skill sets, ready to serve Canada no matter in what region they choose to, would be eligible for such a program.

How can we be against that? It is the right thing to do. I support it and I will encourage my caucus to support the bill.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand and speak to Bill C-207, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (tax credit for new graduates working in designated regions). The bill would give each graduate who settles in a designated region a credit equal to 40% of the individual's salary, up to \$8,000. This would encourage new graduates to settle in designated regions.

This is an important concept but it only goes so far in the whole context of what is happening in the northern regions of Canada. I also have full sympathy for northern students because almost all of them must travel to institutions in different cities to get a degree in a particular subject. In my own riding in the Northwest Territories, the government invests heavily in community colleges, to the point where students can now stay in the Northwest Territories and get a degree in education or in nursing, but that is about it.

In order for students in a designated region to get the education they want, they need to travel. The expenses are greater for them at the beginning. They also do not have the luxury of living at home when they are going to school. Once again the burden is greater on students from the far reaches of our country in achieving the education they need. These things all add up and make it very difficult for students.

When I went to school, our federal government at that time—

Mr. Daryl Kramp: That was a long time ago.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: That was a long time ago and I am not ashamed of that. I think more than education, one needs wisdom to be in this House.

However, at that time we were fully covered for post-secondary education. People in northern regions falling under the federal government's auspices had complete coverage for education. That has eroded over the years. Right now, even within my territory, there are some opportunities. If graduates return to the Northwest Territories they have the opportunity to be forgiven some of the student loans they may have taken out to achieve their degree.

Quite clearly, I am supportive of giving more opportunities to northern students to achieve an education first, and then second, to return to the north and participate in the economy there. The economy is in difficult shape. Right across northern Canada we are facing extreme increases in our cost of living this year. This has been going on actually for a number of years. We are at a point now in the

Northwest Territories, where our gross domestic product rose 13% last year, we had a 1% decline in our workforce.

People simply cannot afford to live in northern regions any more. Therefore, the concept that we would make it easier for students to move back to the north and live is a good one but it does not go as far as what we need to do within the tax structure of the country to promote living in the north. We saw the Conservatives make a perfunctory gesture toward that with the increase in the northern resident tax deduction by 10%. We were asking for 50% but they did not accomplish that.

However, hopefully, now that the concept has been revitalized in this Parliament and people see what the situation is, the government will come up with a better solution next time and actually get the job done right.

When it comes to the cost of living, we are in a crisis right across northern Canada. Not only do we need to, by our nature, by our geography and by our climate, consume much more in fossil fuels than most other Canadians, we also pay extraordinary prices for it, which really hurts and will hurt even more.

● (1400)

Right now in the Northwest Territories, in order to have all the services, transportation and all the things that are required, it turns out that the average family unit, within the economy, consumes over 10,000 litres a year in fuel. Prices have doubled in the last year. We are going to see an enormous crisis in the ability of people to live and work in the north. We need answers right now. We need answers that can work for people.

As well as being a northern region, as well as having high costs, we are also a driver of the Canadian economy. We are not the laggards. We are not the people who are not contributing to the development of the Canadian economy. On the contrary, our communities are making massive contributions in terms of national resource extraction and in many other areas that are very beneficial to this country.

We need support for northerners. We need support for students. We need to put money into human resources across the north. We need to make it possible for young people to enjoy a decent life in northern communities so that they will return to their homes and take up the responsibility of citizenship within their region, rather than end up in a city where there is not that measure of cultural understanding or that opportunity to build their own future in their own part of the world.

I would love to support this bill, but some of the things in the bill are troublesome. One thing is the designated region definition. In examining the Regional Development Incentives Act, we do not see clearly that this lines up for the whole of northern Canada, or for all the isolated and remote areas across the country. Some of them are not that far north. There are certainly some rural and remote areas in many of the provinces. We need a strong definition of what this rural and remote policy to encourage students is and how it is to be put into place. That would certainly help.

There is no doubt that what is being proposed here is useful, but is it enough? I have trouble seeing that it is enough. Clearly, with what is happening in the northern economies across Canada we need a massive opportunity to promote living in the north.

In a kind of perverse way, with the consumption taxes that are in place, and the taxes on fuels, and everything we are doing in Canada, an extra tax burden is put on northerners across the country. In Paulatuk, Northwest Territories a gallon of bleach costs \$30, but in Ottawa it costs \$2. That means the consumption tax is hitting the consumer in Paulatuk harder than it is hitting the consumer in Ottawa.

In many ways northerners contribute quite a bit to the tax system and they should be recognized for that as well when consumption taxes are put on. The northern mayors in British Columbia were outraged at the idea of a carbon tax because, of course, northerners have to consume more, things cost more and they pay higher taxes. When we offer up some incentives in the tax system, we are really trying to equalize what is going on there.

I will finish my comments there.

• (1405)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Resuming debate.
[Translation]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those in favour of Motion No. 1 will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

Private Members' Business

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The recorded division on Motion No. 1 stands deferred.

• (1410)

The next question is on the amendment to Motion No. 2.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The recorded division on the amendment stands deferred.

Normally at this time the House would proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions at the report stage of the bill. However, pursuant to Standing Order 98, the divisions stand deferred until Wednesday, June 11, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

[Translation]

It being 2:12 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:12 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

HON. BILL BLAIKIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ROYAL GALIPEAU

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

MR. MICHAEL IGNATIEFF

MR. JAMES MOORE

MR. JOE PRESTON

HON. KAREN REDMAN

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Thirty-Ninth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage..	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill.....	Alberta	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga.....	Ontario	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Ontario	Lib.
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Allison, Dean.....	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West.....	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	BQ
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard.....	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior.....	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry.....	Yukon.....	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	CPC
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	Québec	BQ
Barnes, Hon. Sue.....	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Batters, Dave	Palliser.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Beaumier, Colleen.....	Brampton West.....	Ontario	Lib.
Bélangier, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Lib.
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn.....	St. Paul's.....	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon.....	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories....	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake.....	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Black, Dawn.....	New Westminster—Coquitlam ..	British Columbia	NDP
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker.....	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blais, Raynald.....	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine ..	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooog, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	Ind.
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	CPC
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	BQ
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la- Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	Québec	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock— Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge— Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Manitoba	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity)	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	BQ
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloney, John	Welland	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard.....	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre.....	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Ouellet, Christian.....	Brome—Missisquoi.....	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Paquette, Pierre.....	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Pearson, Glen.....	London North Centre.....	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.....	Québec	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North.....	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe.....	Elgin—Middlesex—London ..	Ontario	CPC
Priddy, Penny.....	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Proulx, Marcel.....	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East.....	Ontario	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Hon. Geoff.....	Halifax West	Nova Scotia.....	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shipley, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin— Kapuskasing	Ontario	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	Ind.
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	Ind.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	New Brunswick	Lib.
VACANCY	Saint-Lambert	Québec	
VACANCY	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	
VACANCY	Guelph	Ontario	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Thirty-Ninth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity) ...	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Calgary East	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	Lib.
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	NDP
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	Ind.
MANITOBA (14)		
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Bruinooge, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	Lib.
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	CPC
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	CPC
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Ind.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	CPC
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Lib.
NUNAVUT (1)		
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Lib.
ONTARIO (105)		
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Barnes, Hon. Sue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	CPC
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Lib.
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Lib.
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
VACANCY	Guelph	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.

QUÉBEC (73)

André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	BQ
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Ind.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
VACANCY	Saint-Lambert	

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
VACANCY	Westmount—Ville-Marie	
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Batters, Dave.....	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.....	CPC
Trost, Bradley.....	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	CPC
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of June 6, 2008 — 2nd Session, 39th Parliament)

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Blaine Calkins	Luc Harvey	Larry Miller	Maurice Vellacott
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ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

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