



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 137 • NUMBER 081 • 1st SESSION • 37th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, September 19, 2001**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

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

All parliamentary publications are available on the  
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 19, 2001

The House met at 2 p.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

• (1400)

[English]

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

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

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### MR. DRESSUP

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, residents of Pickering and all Canadians mourn the passing of a truly exceptional children's entertainer with the death yesterday of Mr. Ernie Coombs.

Known by generations of Canadians as Mr. Dressup, Ernie thrilled countless children with his beloved television program from 1967 until 1996, a program still seen in reruns today.

Ernie was a gifted entertainer who encouraged his audiences to use their imaginations. In 1994 he was awarded a Gemini for lifetime work and an ACTRA Earle Grey Award for excellence in Canadian television.

Ernie was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1996 for his lifelong achievement in providing quality children's programming. In 1997 he was awarded a Special Save the Children Canada Award for his work on behalf of that organization.

Especially during these difficult days, Canadians are blessed to have had a person like Ernie Coombs provide them with a better view of our society. While Ernie's warm personality and love for children will be missed, Canadians will fondly remember the time they spent growing up with Mr. Dressup.

I know all members of the House will join me in extending sincere condolences to Ernie's family and friends throughout this great nation. God bless Ernie.

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago President Roosevelt called Canada the aerodrome of democracy for its efforts in wartime air training. On September 11 Canada was destined to receive many hundreds of airliners within mere hours as American airports were closed by terrorism.

Thirty-five thousand America-bound air travellers landed safely on Canadian airfields. Over six thousand went to Newfoundland's Gander alone, doubling the community's population. It was "like two large conventions arriving with only two hours' notice", were the words of the mayor of St. John's.

Once more in a time of great need, Canadian workers, volunteers, the Salvation Army and the Red Cross all met the challenge and renewed Canada's status as the aerodrome of democracy.

\* \* \*

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Fanshawe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like many Canadians I have American relatives, some living in New York City. The vicious terrorist attack on the United States is being felt personally and deeply in Canada. Canada will support the U.S.A. and our NATO allies in the important campaign to bring these criminals to justice.

In my city of London, Ontario, the leaders of our Muslim community have repeatedly and forcefully condemned the attack on the United States. I join them in that condemnation. I also stand with them in denouncing the misguided actions of a few of our citizens who wrongly accuse, threaten or attack our Muslim friends and neighbours in London or anywhere else.

This is exactly the kind of hatred and twisted logic which, taken to the extreme, produces the insane violence that victimized so many innocent Americans last week.

May those who were killed rest in peace. May those who mourn their loved ones be assured of the prayers and support of peace loving people everywhere.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the acts of terrorism that took place in the United States on September 11 have shaken the entire world.

*S. O. 31*

We have a duty to support our neighbours and to react in a decisive and reasoned way, in conjunction with the rest of the world community.

[*English*]

However we must not tolerate reactions of bigotry by anyone in our midst. I for one find it appalling that a group of teenagers in Orleans decided last Saturday to beat a Muslim teenager unconscious because of his race. Such acts of violence have no place in our country.

Multiculturalism is a source of pride for all Canadians. It should remain that way.

\* \* \*

**NATO**

**Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 52 years ago this week the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson represented Canada at the first NATO meeting in Washington. This is the same man who was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize for his unwavering commitment to global peace.

I submit that former Prime Minister Pearson would not have endorsed a body such as NATO unless he believed it could be an instrument of peace. With this in mind, and in light of the horrific events that took place in New York and Washington last Tuesday, I applaud the government for its support of article 5 of the NATO charter.

Deliberate acts of terror directed against innocent civilians cannot be permitted to go unchallenged. That being said, let us heed the intentions of our former prime minister and use global organizations such as NATO to support peace and not to wage war.

In the coming weeks we will begin to see the changes that the western world faces, the stark realities brought about by the actions of madmen. I pray that we will keep our focus on the re-establishment of confidence and not on sponsoring vengeance. We must remember that our actions today will set the foundation for the world we will pass to our children.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

**MR. DRESSUP**

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday Ernie Coombs, a much loved Canadian entertainer, passed away. Today I express my sympathies to his family on behalf of all Canadian families.

We look back fondly on mornings spent around the television waiting to see what new and exciting adventures would be in store for Mr. Dressup, Casey and Finnegan. There was anticipation as we wondered which characters would spring from his tickle trunk. There were fun and positive stories, great sketches, drawings and much, much laughter.

Mr. Dressup was often visited by friends. Those friends represented many different cultures, races and religions. In a world of intolerance Ernie Coombs and Mr. Dressup sought to teach us tolerance.

Young and old alike were delighted by his antics. The positive influence of the show on the lives of those who watched will be remembered for all time. Mr. Dressup's fun and educational program was a relief to parents and a delight to children. We will remember him fondly. He will be greatly missed.

\* \* \*

**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Joe Fontana (London North Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I express my most sincere condolences to the families and friends of those killed as a result of the unspeakable tragedy on September 11, 2001. I also thank the people from every community across Canada, and specifically my constituency of London North Centre, who have taken the time to support our American friends by giving blood and helping in the rescue efforts.

In the coming weeks and months, and indeed years, we will be called upon in this place to make many difficult decisions. Perhaps the most difficult task facing us will be that of balancing the new concern for our collective safety with the longstanding Canadian values of acceptance and compassion.

We cannot allow ourselves to dictate something as fundamental as our immigration policies based on the terrible acts of a cowardly few. We cannot let fear change our way of life and the way we treat others. To do so would send a message to those who advance their own agendas with the murder of innocent civilians that they could win this new war.

It would also diminish Canada as a nation. We are a country built on the backs of immigrants. The diverse cultures represented here have made us aware of what we are.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**3RD BATTALION OF THE ROYAL 22ND REGIMENT**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday today and for the next few days, the battle group of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment will be setting off for Bosnia, as part of rotation 9 of Operation Palladium.

The mission of this group consists in continuing to maintain the present safe and secure environment of the zone to which the battle group is assigned, in order to continue the operation of consolidating the peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

I had the honour and privilege to train with them at Valcartier this past summer. I must admit it is very tough training and provides the troops with an excellent preparation for dealing with any and all situations.

This coming November, I will be spending a week with them in Bosnia, along with other colleagues from the House of Commons.

To the men and women of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment, I say "Good luck, take care, see you soon".

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week's events in the United States elicited much compassion, solidarity and sympathy in Canada for the families of the victims of this inhumane tragedy.

The voice of our Prime Minister was heard clearly, not only by Canadians, but by Americans and also around the world: a voice tempered by moderation and caution, but also a voice resolute with conviction to fight terrorism throughout the world.

Last week, Canadians demonstrated great wisdom about the reality of the world, as well as a profound understanding of the injustices and social inequalities caused by fanaticism and violence.

Canada's Islamic community is thankful to the Prime Minister and all of the members of the House for their reassuring words. I am certain that Radio Canada International will once again be able to share Canada's message of hope with people around the world.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

[English]

### TERRORISM

**Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Nanaimo—Alberni we have been dealing with a crisis caused by the lapsed softwood lumber agreement. Hundreds of idle mill workers are looking for a speedy resolution.

However the events of the past week have caused all Canadians to take a sober look at the realities of national security in the face of international terrorism.

Canadians want assurance that known terrorist organizations will not ride into Canada on a red carpet. They want a complete ban on terrorist fundraising activities within our borders. They want to know that persons with known terrorist links will be prosecuted or extradited. They want to know that our national security services, the RCMP, CSIS and the armed forces, have sufficient funding to provide the protection Canadians require to live in peace.

We call on the government to commit immediately to comprehensive anti-terrorist legislation for the protection and security of Canadians and our neighbours.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of the United States are coping with a tragedy. Following the terrorist attacks against the United States, more than 5,000 people have disappeared. These people, people like us, were going about their daily business when the unexpected occurred.

My thoughts are with these people, those who will be found and those who will remain in our memories. My thoughts are with the families and friends of these victims. I bid them the strength required to get through this tragedy. It has changed our lives forever.

S. O. 31

[English]

Last Friday's national day of mourning allowed all Canadians to express their most profound sympathies for the victims' families. I was deeply moved by the compassion and solidarity that Canadians showed toward our American friends. I am convinced that our prayers will be heard and that we will be able to bring some comfort to all those affected by this great tragedy.

On behalf of myself, my family and my constituents, I extend our greatest sympathies to the American people. May God be their guidance in this very difficult period. Our hearts are with them.

\* \* \*

### MR. DRESSUP

**Ms. Wendy Lill (Dartmouth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the last eight days we have seen the chilling impact and grief that TV images can have on our children. Today I would like to express a gentler sadness and remember kinder images.

I am referring to the passing of Ernie Coombs, better known to generations of Canadians as *Mr. Dressup*.

Millions of Canadians grew up with the whimsy, charm and innocent imagination as expressed in the art of Ernie Coombs. His tickle trunk, his drawings, his whacky constructions, his real and imagined companions both inspired and comforted his eager audience.

Kids laughed, they learned and they felt safe and parents knew their children were safe with Ernie on the screen.

The days of *Mr. Dressup*, *Chez Hélène* and the *Friendly Giant* on CBC were a more innocent time, a time before gameboys and playstations, before Howard Stern, before we worried about seeing too much violence on TV, either as entertainment or on the news.

During this terrible time I remember the world of *Mr. Dressup* and I can smile again.

I thank Mr. Coombs for bringing such magic to our lives.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### TERRORISM

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the tragic events in the United States on September 11 are causing all countries of the world to reassess their security measures and to join the fight against terrorism.

In all of this, democracy and freedom must be preserved as security measures are beefed up at airports, at the borders and on airplanes, and certain regulations must be reviewed.

We must certainly support the Americans, but we must also exercise caution in order to prevent these initiatives from being used to satisfy a need for vengeance.

*Oral Questions*

In the longer term, governments will have to resolve situations that generate terrorism, such as war, poverty and despair.

\* \* \*

**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since this is the first opportunity I have had to speak since the resumption of the session, I would like to add the voices of everyone in Ottawa—Vanier, who wish to offer their condolences to the families of those who perished and who disappeared in last week's terrorist attacks in the United States.

[*English*]

Some of us will remember Bush Sr. talking about a thousand points of light. As darkness threatened last Tuesday, there were some points of light that emerged and I would like to pay tribute to one of them today.

I had tried to imagine what went through the minds of the people who were aboard United Airlines flight 93 when they decided to cause the plane to crash as it did in Pennsylvania in the fields therefore avoiding an incredible augmentation of the threats that the terrorist attacks represented to democracy and freedom in our countries.

I pay tribute to the incredible courage that these people showed. I think we owe them a great deal of thanks.

\* \* \*

•(1415)

**AIRLINE SAFETY**

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, in view of last week's tragic events in New York and Washington, it is incumbent on the Minister of Transport to take measures to ensure the safety of Canada's airline system.

Canada has pledged to support the U.S. and our NATO allies in rooting out terrorism. That means we need to be in a state of heightened awareness with regard to possible terrorist attacks. Security at our airports needs to be strengthened now and in the foreseeable future. We should also consider having security personnel on randomly selected flights.

Terrorism knows no national boundaries. The countries of the civilized world are all in this crusade together and the Government of Canada would do well to implement security procedures that allow Canadians to travel with the same confidence to which we have grown accustomed.

---

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the king of Jordan revealed on CNN that Jordan had informed European, American and Canadian security agencies of terrorist threats during the millennium celebrations.

When exactly was the government informed about these threats and exactly what steps did the government take to protect the security of Canadians? We would like to hear from the Prime Minister on that.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the statement made by the king of Jordan yesterday. Of course everyone knows that there were some threats at that time. Action was taken at that time. That action led to the arrest at the United States border of someone coming from Canada, which prevented any kind of activity from occurring.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the government action had nothing to do with why that person was arrested. It has been public knowledge for some time that bin Laden operative Ahmed Ressam operated freely in Canada for six years, including activities such as bomb building. He did this despite being under a deportation order and after having broken Canadian laws.

The Government of Canada had been warned by Jordan of a bin Laden terror threat. If it had not been for United States customs officers arresting him, Ressam may have brought death and destruction to our American friends.

How is it that U.S. officials were able to arrest Ressam and Canadian officials could not?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that these organizations operate all over the world. It is an example of the collaboration that exists between the different levels of governments. At that time there were some threats and we had been warned about them. Everyone worked together and eventually the individual was arrested. What is the hon. member complaining about?

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there was no working together and that man was not arrested because of anything that the government did.

[*Translation*]

Ahmed Ressam, an associate of Osama bin Laden, lived in Montreal for years, despite the fact that he had been charged with theft and had received a deportation order. Yet, the king of Jordan had warned the Canadian government of the risks of bin Laden's terror.

How is it that the government lost track of an associate of bin Laden just as he tried to cross the American border?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague is well aware, our intelligence organizations work with all intelligence organizations around the world. This man was arrested at the border. The attorney general of the United States thanked us for assisting in the prosecution. He was arrested, convicted and is in prison.

•(1420)

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in this case it is thank God for the Americans because they had nothing to do with this on the Canadian side.

*Oral Questions*

Yesterday the U.S. ambassador for Canada, Mr. Paul Cellucci, said that military support will be looked for and discussed when the Prime Minister visits President Bush next week. He said that Canada has the military capability that has helped the United States, that has helped the world and that he hoped it would help them now. It is a cry for help.

The Prime Minister has spoken only in broad terms about supporting this effort. He has avoided making a specific commitment.

Will the Prime Minister simply tell Canadians that our ally and friend, the United States, can count on Canadian military—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I heard about the excellent speech of the ambassador yesterday. He was very keen to praise the Canadian government. He was very keen to praise the ministers. He told everyone that I was on the telephone with his office minutes after the tragedy. That is the spirit in which we are working with the Americans.

There is no action that has been determined at this moment concerning military activities. When there is, there will be consultations and we will see what Canada can do. We have had absolutely no request at this time by the administration of the United States.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Either yes or no, these are two fairly simple words that Canadians understand, Mr. Speaker.

The ambassador also said that one of the things Canada must consider to ensure our safety and security is harmonizing our refugee screening standards. As the Ressayre case shows, Canadian refugee standards and laws have been abused by terrorists here in Canada.

Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians, just a yes or a no, if the U. S. can count on us by knowing that we will insist on better standards for screening, detaining and deporting dangerous refugee claimants?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard on these extremely difficult problems. We are talking and working with the Americans.

I know the hon. member would like us to just make flamboyant, desperate speeches but we do not do things that way. We look at the facts. We look at what we can do and we will work with the United States.

The one thing I do want to say is that the laws of Canada will be passed by the Parliament of Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister refused to commit to having parliament vote on any major military, diplomatic or financial decision that will be made in connection with the attacks in the United States. This is unfortunate, because his refusal could have the effect of weakening Canada's voice within the international coalition that is being set up.

Does the Prime Minister not realize that, in the democratic fight against terrorism now taking shape, Canada would have a much

stronger voice internationally if the House of Commons had voted in favour of such measures?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, people observing the situation in Canada are well aware that there was a debate in the House of Commons Monday, during which all members had an opportunity to express their point of view, and that there was a unanimous vote of the entire House of Commons on this subject.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am talking about a commitment, when a decision of a military, diplomatic or whatever nature is taken.

I have trouble understanding the Prime Minister's refusal, when I recall that the current Deputy Prime Minister, then leader of the official opposition, said during the gulf war that, before involving Canadians in any offensive, the Liberals wanted the matter debated in parliament and put to a vote.

How is it that when the Liberals were in opposition, a vote was required on an issue such as military involvement in the gulf war, but that now all that is required are exploratory debates?

I would like to understand the Prime Minister's logic.

• (1425)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the course of the past eight years, we have sent a number of missions to the former Yugoslavia and each time the House of Commons was consulted.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the coalition to combat international terrorism is taking shape.

A number of heads of state have already visited the president of the United States, and others are preparing to do so. Yesterday, the Prime Minister announced that he too will be going to Washington.

During that visit, does the Prime Minister intend to suggest that the American president involve the UN in his efforts to expand the very significant coalition against terrorism that is taking shape?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it would be very worthwhile to get the UN involved in this debate, because it does involve more than just NATO. Many other countries are involved. Moreover, a number of countries are being consulted.

I personally have spoken with some heads of government and find there is a feeling of solidarity throughout the world that I have not seen for a very long time. I hope it will be even more present within the United Nations.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Prime Minister for his reply.

In the same vein, would the Prime Minister not find it appropriate to also meet United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in order to discuss with him the role the International Criminal Court could play, and in particular the inclusion of acts of terrorism in the definition of crimes against humanity?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as has been said in several oral question periods now, in our foreign policy we strongly support the International Criminal Court, but for the moment it does not exist.

*Oral Questions*

This is not a matter that could be directed to the International Criminal Court. We will certainly continue to support ratification of the International Criminal Court by countries all around the world.

[English]

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister goes to Washington next week and I know that he will convey the heartfelt condolences of all Canadians. I want to urge the Prime Minister to also convey Canadians' concern that there will be no end to the violence if the American president is intent upon pursuing wanted dead or alive, wild west justice.

Will the Prime Minister assure Canadians that he will call for some sort of international tribunal to swiftly consider all the evidence so that we can defeat the real enemy which is terrorism?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are all in agreement that we have to confront terrorism head on. It is what the Americans, the Canadians, the British, the French and everybody wants to do. It is a problem that affects all the nations of the world.

For example, this morning I had a discussion about this with the president of Egypt. On many occasions, he has had to face this terrible problem of radicals within his country trying to change the government.

We all want to fight with what is available to stop terrorism but it will not be an easy task. There are many options that need to be discussed and that is exactly what I will do on Monday with President Bush.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are desperate to get the assurance from the Prime Minister that he is not going to Washington just to get marching orders. The whole world needs Canada at this time to be a true friend of the American people.

We need our Prime Minister to use the meeting with President Bush to propose concrete international measures that can defeat international terrorism which will bring global justice and security to the people of the world. Will the Prime Minister pledge to do that?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be a Liberal in the House today. We have the Leader of the Opposition who wants to send soldiers when there is no request at this time. We have the leader of the NDP who wants to do nothing at all to fight terrorism. The Liberal Party is taking a balanced approach to it. We have to fight terrorism. We have to be responsible all the time.

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Canadians who are being asked to fight terrorism need to know the facts.

Was the King of Jordan correct when he told CNN last night that his authorities had uncovered operations in Canada by Osama bin Laden and drew that information to Canada's attention? Was the Prime Minister informed personally about this information before he told the House on Monday that he was "not aware of a cell operating in Canada with the intention of—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand why the leader of the fifth party did not stay very long as prime minister of the land because he should know that no responsible leader of the government would discuss in detail in the House of Commons a question on this situation in Canadian society.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the King of Jordan on television last night uncovered this series of operations. He admitted that they were taking place in Europe, the U.S. and Canada. He immediately co-ordinated with those countries' agencies. However, this Prime Minister continues to claim that he knows nothing about terrorist cells in this country.

Canadians deserve to know what is going on in parliament without finding out about things on *Larry King Live*.

Will the Prime Minister tell parliament, before he tells President Bush, what he plans to do?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is well aware that our security intelligence agency in this country works in collaboration with security intelligence agencies around the world. As the Prime Minister has indicated, anything that took place at that time would have been investigated, but there were no planned attacks against Canada.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last night on CNN, as has already been brought out, the King of Jordan revealed that his country, not our country, uncovered a series of operations in Europe, in the United States and here in Canada to be carried out by the Osama bin Laden group during the millennium celebrations.

According to King Abdullah, efforts to thwart these attempts were co-ordinated with agencies of this country.

I ask the solicitor general, why was something not done at that time to apprehend those individuals, not by Jordan but by the agencies of Canada?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** As I just indicated, Mr. Speaker, I am aware of what the King of Jordan had to say last night. He spoke about incidents leading up to the millennium.

I can assure that any links that were made to Canada were investigated. I am advised that there were no planned attacks against Canada, and that is what he was talking about.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we are not just talking about attacks against Canada. The attacks were to be carried out against the Americans by Ressam who was coming from Canada.

The question that came from CSIS yesterday was that personnel has been diminished by 40% over the last seven years. Forty per cent of our intelligence agency deals with the safety and security of our nation.

Is our solicitor general confident that, in light of what happened in the United States, in light of the 40% reduction, we have the personnel to effectively maintain the safety and security of this country now?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, simply, the answer is yes, and the director of CSIS has indicated that quite clearly.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as is the case with organized crime, terrorists need money to function. Today the British government has called on the international community to undertake joint action to cut funding to terrorists.

Does the Government of Canada intend to respond to this appeal by the British government and cut funds the terrorists could access on Canadian soil or in Canadian banks or businesses?

• (1435)

[*English*]

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me reassure the hon. member that the government not only will take steps but has taken steps.

My colleague, the Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions, has already ensured that regulations are in place to seize and restrain any assets that are directly or indirectly involved with bin Laden and any of his associates.

We have criminal code provisions expanded by Bill C-24 that deal with seizure and forfeiture of assets in certain circumstances. We will be working with our allies to ensure that we have all the laws in place necessary to strip terrorist organizations of their lifeblood, which is their money.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the number one suspect in the September 11 attack, Osama bin Laden, has a fortune of several hundreds of millions of dollars spread around in hundreds of businesses.

Could the solicitor general tell us what specific steps have been taken in Canada to locate, freeze and confiscate any funds bin Laden might have?

[*English*]

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I just indicated, the Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions has acted upon a security council resolution of December last year.

In February he ensured that regulations were enacted to permit us to seize and restrain any property owned or controlled by Osama bin Laden or his associates.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's efforts in respect of laws, but last February justice department lawyers expressed their concern to the supreme court that its decisions could create a safe haven for foreign terrorists in Canada.

In light of recent events, will the minister make the appropriate application to reopen arguments before the court and close the door to terrorists?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated in the House before, the hon. member refers to the case of Burns and Rafay.

The supreme court was clear that, in relation to matters surrounding extradition, I do not have to seek assurances where the death penalty may be involved in exceptional circumstances. I will decide on a case by case basis as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that would not require me to seek assurances.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear the minister does not even know what case she is talking about because it is not the Burns case. It is a subsequent case where her lawyers made that compelling argument.

In light of new compelling evidence, the court may reopen legal arguments in the case of Suresh. No more compelling evidence could exist than the events of September 11.

Will the minister make an immediate application to the court in the case of Suresh to protect Canadians or will she continue to risk an open door policy for terrorists?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me reassure the hon. member that there is no open door policy nor is there any safe haven in this country for terrorists.

Let me reassure the hon. member that if he is in fact referring to the case of Suresh, this matter is before the court. We are awaiting judgment in this court. We will consider all our options in terms of any future arguments regarding the issues involved in Suresh.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### CANADIAN CUSTOMS

**Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill S-23, which aims to facilitate international trade, will require, among other things, freer circulation of persons and goods.

Does the Minister of Revenue agree that the bill should be amended in light of the situation created by the September 11 attack?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are no simple answers to the question of terrorism. I think a number of organizations and agencies will work together to fight and beat terrorism.

One thing is sure and that is that customs is one of a number of important elements. When we analyze them today in our trading context, with globalization and the trade relations we have with the United States among others, we realize they must be balanced.

I still think that Bill S-23 represents good modern reform in the current context, and I invite all MPs to intervene to give—

• (1440)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister describes his bill as a canvas on which he will outline his plan to modernize customs. This is worrisome.

Would it not be wise for the minister, before going any further, to define and make public the safety regulations that he has in mind for Canada customs, in order to allow parliamentarians the opportunity to debate them?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill S-23, now before parliament, which will receive second reading tomorrow and which will hopefully be referred to committee as soon as possible, is a good bill that will meet all modern needs for customs and customs management.

This bill will allow us, as a society, to undertake improved risk assessment and offer Canadians increased protection, which is what we want.

Penalties will in fact be established, penalties which will come into effect gradually, as we assess them and as we implement them with the business community and Canadian society in general.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that last year the Prime Minister struck a special committee to deal with national security, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. I found out today that it had not met for more than a year. This is not dealing with national security. This is just going through the motions.

How can the Prime Minister seriously say that he is dealing with national security when his own special committee has not met for more than a year?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all my ministers are doing their jobs extremely diligently. I know that the opposition does not believe it, but we had the testimony yesterday of the ambassador of the United States.

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, diligence to the Liberal government is not meeting for more than a year.

A close adviser to the Prime Minister admitted this national security committee was merely a tradition. In fact he said “the committee is not significant”.

Faced with our increasing international security problems, why has the Prime Minister allowed this committee to do nothing for a year and why does he think his national security committee is not significant?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when there is a need for a meeting of either the main security committee or the subcommittee either myself or the Deputy Prime Minister will preside over these meetings.

**ENERGY**

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

We have an extensive energy infrastructure in Canada, including oil and gas as well as, in the case of myself and other members, particularly the member for Huron—Bruce, nuclear power plants. In light of the recent terrorist attacks on the United States, I would like to ask the minister what measures the government has taken to ensure the security of these energy systems.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. We take nothing for granted with respect to Canada's energy systems and infrastructure. In the tragic circumstances of last week our established regulatory authorities worked very well to safeguard Canadian interests. I think here of the National Energy Board, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the explosives administration within my department.

We have excellent co-operation from the provinces and the private sector and with the United States. We have applied all of the valuable expertise that was gained through the Y2K exercise. Enhanced surveillance and security remain in place, but I will not discuss the details.

\* \* \*

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Air Canada is pleading for financial help in the wake of last week's tragic terrorist attacks. The airline industry will not be the only industry affected by this tragedy.

There is no question that there is a great risk of job loss for airline workers. Can the government assure the House that if it decides to proceed with any financial assistance to airlines it would be tied to an assurance of maximum job protection for airline workers?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is getting ahead of herself a little bit. We are currently assessing the financial situation not just of Air Canada but of all the companies. I have been in touch with the chief executive officers of the major Canadian airline companies. We are concerned about the viability. We are concerned about the integrity. We are concerned about service to communities and we are concerned about all the people that work for the airlines.

Once this evaluation is complete then we will be in a position to decide what, if anything, should be done.

\* \* \*

●(1445)

**DISCRIMINATION**

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a few days ago in Ottawa a young Canadian Arab was beaten unconscious when biking home. This is only one of a number of alarming incidents across Canada in the wake of the attack on the U.S.

The Government of Canada has a clear responsibility under the criminal code and multiculturalism policies to both prevent and act on hate crimes. I would like to ask the Prime Minister what action the government is taking to, first, prevent further incidents, and second, given the situation we are in now, to protect Canadians from further incidents taking place.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I could not have been clearer on this issue than I have been in my speeches on this issue in the last week. It is completely unacceptable that while we are fighting terrorism we would try to make somebody responsible because of the religion that person professes. If somebody is doing these things, as the hon. member reported, the criminal code is there for that. The authorities should arrest the people who do these violent acts and make sure they face the penalty they deserve.

\* \* \*

#### AIRLINE INDUSTRY

**Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, in the wake of last week's terrorist attacks on the United States, the airline industry around the world has been devastated. Any new security arrangements are going to carry a cost. Is the government considering compensating the airline industry for its direct losses and costs as a result of last Tuesday's events?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do believe I answered this question a few minutes ago. I would like to say that there has been no decision taken in the United States, either by the congress or the administration, on specific measures to help the airline industry. It is under review.

We have to make sure that if any assistance is forthcoming such assistance is properly identifiable to the needs of the companies and will deal not only with the problem at hand, but will deal with fairness not just to the airline industries but to all those other industries that have been affected.

\* \* \*

#### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the government that the airline industry is not the only sector of the economy that suffered direct losses as a result of last week's terrorist attacks. Canada's trucking industry, for one, manufacturers and all of our exporters incurred significant losses resulting from this crackdown on terrorism.

If the government is prepared to compensate the airlines, what measures is it taking to deal with real losses in these other sectors of the economy?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, at the moment, as I said to the hon. member for Churchill, we are getting a little ahead of ourselves. We have to assess the degree of the dislocation and the damage and there is no doubt that there has been a lot of it. Once we have that assessment we will deal with the facts and decide what if anything should be done. That is just one aspect of the transportation industry.

The member rightly identifies the trucking industry. There are others. The shipping industry was also affected, plus manufacturers, as he said. Let us get the facts before we act.

#### Oral Questions

#### TERRORISM

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the defence minister says we are at war with terrorists, the foreign affairs minister says we are at war with terrorists and the Prime Minister says we are at war with terrorists. Very soon they will have the opportunity to show whether the war is anything more than a war of rhetoric and words.

The United Nations will vote very soon on whether or not to make Syria, a state with a long record of sponsoring terrorist groups, a member of the United Nations security council. Will the government oppose terrorism by opposing Syria?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all the hon. member will know that we do not generally announce who we are voting for or against before security council elections, but in this case he will also know that to this point in time the group within which that country belongs has not nominated any other countries to the security council.

More important, he should bear in mind that the efforts of the United States to build a broader coalition have resulted in a clear denunciation by Syria of the acts that occurred last week and I am sure that he would not want to encourage steps that would make it more difficult to build up a coalition.

• (1450)

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough. The United Nations charter states that non-permanent members of the security council are to be elected with due regard to their contributions to international peace and security. Syria is known for its contributions to Hamas, to Hezbollah and to many other terrorist groups.

Why will the government not oppose those who support terrorism?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Let us make one thing very clear, Mr. Speaker. I know it is enticing to use strong rhetoric because the events of last week were events that evoke very strong reactions, but it is utter nonsense to suggest that the government is not going to reject and oppose those who support or promote terrorism or carry out terrorist acts or give succour or comfort to terrorists.

That is why we have made it clear from the beginning of this crisis that we stand with the United States in the war against terrorism and that we will do what we can in order to ensure that events like those of last Tuesday do not happen again.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### THE ECONOMY

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is concealing his budget surplus and his entire financial margin of manoeuvrability is going to paying down the debt.

For the last budget year, the minister also allocated \$17 billion to pay down the debt, with no debate whatsoever.

*Oral Questions*

Since the events of September 11, the economic situation has changed radically. Will the Minister of Finance at last announce some credible budget forecasts with sufficient margin of manoeuvrability to respond to the present situation?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is in fact what I did in the statements of last October and this May. I made forecasts using the reserves for contingencies and prudence that have allowed us sufficient leeway in the past. Is this going to be sufficient? We shall see.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, several billion dollars worth of goods in transit are blocked at our borders; hundreds of conventions are cancelled, in Montreal in particular; carriers are in trouble; and there will be an inevitable increase in the costs of security.

Does the Minister of Finance not admit that the only way he can provide any serious responses to these very real problems is to promptly bring down a budget in the House?

**Hon. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the response to this question is not a budget, but rather that all countries of the world join together, as they are now doing, to fight terrorism and that we put in place measures to ensure free trade across our borders.

\* \* \*

[English]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. The biggest security hole for the country is her ministry.

American authorities complain Canadian immigration documents are easy to forge. People smugglers use these forgeries because they are so easy to reproduce. When will the minister simply close this gap?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the member knows the protection of Canadian documents and security protection for Canadians is a priority for the government. In Bill C-11 we referred to a new permanent resident card which will replace the IMM 1000. That has policy approval and we are hoping it will move forward as quickly as possible. It is under development.

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, so we have a commitment that those cards are coming, but of course the minister always tries to tell us that all is well with her ministry. She often projects blame at us, claiming everything is okay, but her own officials tell her quite a different story.

The minister knows full well we desperately need more trained people on the front lines. It is an intensive people business.

She has the money and she has the mandate. Will she take action?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear with the member opposite. The department received \$139 million in additional resources from the finance department. We have deployed those

resources to achieve both mandates of our department, to enforce our laws and see that people are removed as quickly as possible. We have a new bill which will streamline those procedures.

However the country was built by immigrants so we have also deployed resources to ensure that we are able to bring to Canada those people who have legitimate businesses and also those we need to help to continue to build the country so we can continue to grow and prosper.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister for International Cooperation.

The headline on the front page of the Ottawa *Citizen* today claims that "1 million flee Afghanistan" and that officials are predicting a major disaster. What is Canada doing to avert a human catastrophe in Pakistan and Iran?

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. I am pleased to inform the House that just today the Minister for International Cooperation announced \$1 million in humanitarian assistance to aid the millions of Afghani refugees who have fled to Pakistan and Iran. Our assistance will provide basic health care needs, shelter and water to these displaced people in Pakistan and Iran and it will be done through the UN agencies and their staff on the ground.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the defence minister has said that Canadian troops will be on the frontlines of any NATO attack against terrorists, but last month he sent 200 troops from one NATO commitment in Bosnia to another NATO commitment in Macedonia. That is like paying off one credit card account with another credit card.

Where is the minister going to get the frontline troops that he is promising?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we took the troops out of Bosnia simply because they were close to the scene and they were needed there immediately. It was the handiest thing to do and it was something that the United States and the other countries that are involved in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia wanted us to do. We have responded.

We responded at the time of the Kosovo air campaign and we have responded on numerous other occasions, including the present crisis, and we will continue to respond. We will continue to work with our allies, including the United States, in this campaign against terrorism.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, one way the minister says we certainly can respond is with our F-18s. He has pointed out that often as an example.

We have some of the best people in our forces, but because of government cuts to our military we no longer have the experienced pilots, the logistical support people, the smart bombs or the air to air refuelling that we need. We cannot now meet even the small commitment that we made in Macedonia if we are asked to do it.

The minister knows full well that we have lost more than half of our experienced pilots from the Kosovo campaign. What I want to know is where we are going to get the pilots to fly our F-18s when it comes time to meet that commitment of our allies.

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all countries in the NATO alliance are experiencing a shortage of pilots. It is not just Canada. I will say that while we are trying to get more pilots and keep the pilots we have, we were able to respond to a request from the United States last week that asked us to put more of our CF-18s into the NORAD system to help in the protection of North America. We said yes. We did it.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AIRLINES INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as the result of the recent terrorist attacks, airlines have suffered significant losses, and the Bush administration intends to give them financial support.

Air Canada has also asked the Government of Canada for compensation to cover the revenues lost as the result of increased security measures, which the Minister of Transport is preparing to analyze.

Will the minister promise before the House that any compensation paid to Air Canada will not be used to cover the airline's lack of administrative ability as may be seen in the poor quality of services offered in French and its deplorable lack of service to the regions?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have explained, I discussed the problem with the heads of all the airlines across the country. We are very concerned about maintaining the viability of the airlines.

However, we must have all the facts before a decision is made. Up to now, we have reached no decision on financial assistance, but we are studying the matter in its entirety.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CHINA**

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 17 negotiators agreed to terms allowing the People's Republic of China to join the World Trade Organization.

I call on the Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific to explain the significance of China's WTO accession.

• (1500)

**Hon. Rey Pagtakhan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada welcomes this historic event. As the agreement is fully ratified, China, our fourth largest trading partner, becomes a member of the rules based international trading system and therefore is bound by the provisions on transparency and the rule of law.

As the Minister for International Trade earlier indicated in another avenue, it means more enhanced business between Canada and China and also more opportunities, and therefore economic and social benefits for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AID**

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the war against terrorism must also be fought on a non-military front. If we want the developing countries as allies to join us in this war, we also need non-military assistance. It is amazing that the government is overlooking this crucial area. What is the government doing to provide real assistance beyond its usual token contributions?

**Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I assume that the hon. member on the other side was not listening. I announced in the House today that the Minister for International Cooperation just made an announcement of \$1 million in humanitarian assistance to the millions of Afghani refugees who have fled to Pakistan and Iran.

We have a tradition in Canada of providing humanitarian assistance to displaced persons and we will continue to do so.

\* \* \*

**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I want to ask the minister whether the Prime Minister in his conversation with President Bush next week will not only reiterate the profound concern of Canadians that those who are responsible for terrorist acts will be brought to justice, but also that it be done fully in accordance with international law. Specifically, will the Prime Minister urge the President that the evaluation and assessment of the evidence of responsibility for these appalling acts be made by an international tribunal and not solely by the United States or NATO?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I want to restate the fact that support for the creation of the international criminal court is a key part of Canada's foreign policy.

Unfortunately we do not have the signatures of 60 countries on the treaty of Rome at this point. The court does not exist. It would not have retroactive authority if it did come into existence. The hon. member can be assured that we expect that any action taken will be in conformity with international law, particularly article 51 of the UN charter.

*Points of Order***POINTS OF ORDER**

## PC/DR COALITION

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

During the summer adjournment, certain reconfigurations occurred on this side of the House. On September 12, I wrote you advising that 20 members had united to establish—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I know the House has looked forward to this moment with some anticipation. However, it is very important the Chair be able to hear all the arguments advanced on every side. The Chair is very keen to hear the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough who has the floor at the moment.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, maybe those less interested in reconfiguration can reconfigure outside.

Mr. Speaker, on September 12, I wrote to you advising that 20 members had united to establish the PC/DR coalition to function within the machinery of the House of Commons. I sent a full list of members of the House who are members of the PC/DR coalition. Earlier today we held our fourth caucus.

I also advised you in that letter that the officers of the coalition are the right hon. member for Calgary Centre as leader, the member for Fraser Valley as deputy leader, the member for Edmonton North as caucus chair, the member for Prince George—Peace River as whip, and myself as House leader.

Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank you for your assistance in getting us seated in the House for the very important business that confronted us on Monday. My colleagues have been able to discharge their essential parliamentary functions thanks to the efforts of the Chair.

I now need to raise several issues that so far have not been capable of resolution with the whips of other parties. I do so with considerable regret because as you recognize Mr. Speaker, it is always better for the harmonious workings of the House that these matters be settled through parliamentary machinery.

The first is the matter of the location of our seats in the House. Second is the allocation and precedence of questions in question period. Third is the allocation and precedence of speaking times during debate. Fourth is the allocation of supply days.

Mr. Speaker, the PC/DR coalition asks that you grant changes. These changes would recognize us as the fourth largest political entity in the House. The PC/DR coalition is comprised of 20 members of the House. All 20 members recognize the right hon. member for Calgary Centre as our leader and we sit in opposition to the government. As such, our leader assigns critic roles, names House leaders and provides leadership to the caucus as a whole. My colleague, the whip and member for Prince George—Peace River similarly acts for the 20 members in facilitating the working of our caucus.

As House leader, I speak for 20 members of the House. In my capacity as such I perform many functions on their behalf, including

the presentation of this argument today. We are a single unit of 20 and we have collectively taken the decision to present ourselves in this fashion, but at present we are being treated as a group of 12.

In contrast, the Canadian Alliance has parliamentary resources, speaking time, access to supply days and financial resources based on a membership of 66. In fact its membership has now been diminished to 58 seats. Nearly a million Canadians represented by members who now sit in the PC/DR coalition are having their access to parliamentary representation compromised by the practices that no longer conform to the proportionate parliamentary realities. Certain decisions taken at the beginning of this parliament are no longer applicable. We suggest that they should now be revised.

I would add this imbalance is not fair to all other parties in the House. The Alliance enjoys a disproportionate allocation in relationship to all other entities in the House of Commons, not just the coalition. The changes I am requesting have no serious impact on any other party in the House. The resources and allocation of the numbers of questions and opportunities for participation in debate for Liberal members will not change, nor will they change for the Bloc or the NDP.

The Bloc and the NDP will not have their allotted days, questions or debate time reduced. Let me say that again for emphasis. The Liberals, Bloc and NDP will not have their allotted days, questions or debate time reduced.

We are however now the fourth largest political entity in the House and claim all of the privileges and rights associated with that position. The Alliance currently has resources to which they are not entitled and these resources should therefore be reassigned on a per capita, proportionate basis.

There will be no additional political entities created which would require additional negotiations or resources or consultations with the government. What we are doing is simply working within the system to facilitate the work of the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, while I recognize this is not an issue before you, I want to point out that we will be asking for fair and equitable financial treatment through reallocation of existing resources. That, however, is a matter for the Board of Internal Economy.

Mr. Speaker, we contend that the guiding principle in your decision should be equitable treatment for the rights of individual members to act individually and collectively here in the House of Commons.

●(1505)

As individual members we are free and have a duty to come to the House to consider the business before the House and vote on questions put to the House by the Speaker for decision. In so doing we may seek to participate in the proceedings and debate, and may try to influence decisions.

*Points of Order*

All of us act as individuals and indeed all of us act as part of collective organizations within the House of Commons which exist to help facilitate the organization of the business before the House. Accordingly, when individuals choose to act collectively, the threshold for access to certain parliamentary rights is set out by the Parliament of Canada Act at a minimum of 12 members. We have met and surpassed that threshold. We are 20 members.

Mr. Speaker, we view ourselves as a whole and simply request that you do likewise. We have chosen the name PC/DR coalition because we feel this describes the collective will of the group. It accurately depicts our origins and defines our common purpose. For the purposes of the House of Commons, we participate and vote just as do other political entities, such as a party, an alliance, a bloc, a confederation, or a union. I choose these descriptive words that other political entities have used in parliaments past and present to illustrate that parliamentary entities come in many forms and configurations.

Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, there is no precise definition of a party in the Parliament of Canada Act.

Let us examine for a moment what political parties and bodies do in the House of Commons. Political bodies are an important part of the machinery of this House. They are vehicles to communicate the collective will of the members, but foremost they provide assistance for the Chair and the House in the organization of the business of the House. Individual members have delegated certain authority to other members to act on their behalf, which we have done. The nature of that relationship is defined between those members. The existence of that relationship is signalled to the Chair by various means, some implicit and some specific.

I am not aware of any other instance when members who, having formed a group of 20, have had their collective rights challenged or denied.

Members who have crossed the floor or changed allegiances have never been asked to prove their political affiliation, abandon their past, or produce political membership cards to the Speaker to justify their existence. What we call ourselves outside the House should be of no concern to the Speaker. It may be a delicious tidbit for journalists or others, but within the walls of this Chamber and the precinct of parliament, external political labels should be left outside. Membership cards that may or may not be found in my wallet do not fall within the Speaker's jurisdiction.

All of us arrived here as equals in response to a writ of election. As equals we have rights; as equals we are free to associate as we individually choose. Indeed the right to associate freely is guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I am not suggesting that the Speaker will rule on a constitutional legal question. Rather I want to make the point that members of the House of Commons, as free Canadians, have the right to belong to whatever lawful organizations they choose, both inside and outside the House.

Mr. Speaker, I completely understand you do not rule on questions of law. However, I do suggest that in considering past practices, the Speaker is entitled to take notice of the important charter rights that were given to Canadians in 1981. In fact earlier this week the Prime Minister referred to the importance of the charter, which protects all

Canadians. This certainly extends to all members of the House of Commons and the Parliament of Canada.

On June 1, 1994 my friend, the member for Winnipeg—Transcona, stated in this Chamber, and I quote from *Hansard*:

Parties present themselves to the House as parties and are not created or disposed of by the House itself. Our membership in our respective parties is a matter between ourselves, our fellow caucus colleagues, our extraparliamentary organizations and ultimately our electors. We can leave our parties or be asked to leave our parties. We can create new parties, merge two parties into one, as did the Progressives and the Conservatives, or change the name of our parties as we in the New Democratic Party did.

I will not comment on the fact that they are still calling themselves new after 30 years. My colleague then went on to say:

The tradition of this place has been for the Speaker to accept the party affiliation that the parties and the members report to him or her.

● (1510)

That is what we have done. I agree with my colleague and fellow House leader that it is not for anyone other than the participants to decide how to label the parliamentary group. It has been stated in the past that it is a privilege to be seated anywhere in the House. It follows that having been elected to the House members have the privilege to be affiliated and seated anywhere they choose.

There is no requirement in the Parliament of Canada Act that any member must belong to any political party, as evidenced by the number of independent members we have seen in the Chamber in the past. This concept is also defined on page 186, chapter 4 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, edited by Marleau and Montpetit, which states:

Although most Members are elected with a party affiliation (a very small percentage of Members are elected as independents), Members are not obliged to retain that party label during the whole of their mandate.

What we have decided to do and call ourselves is strictly a matter of choice so long as we are not seeking to duplicate an existing name. The various titles that are used in the House, whether a group styles itself a caucus, an alliance, a bloc, a confederation, a union or coalition, is a matter of internal decision.

That title is used to convey whatever stylistic information the members of the group wish to convey. Even the Liberal caucus has contained members of another party, the Liberal Labour Party. We choose to call ourselves the PC/DR caucus coalition. We do not define other parties. Nor should they define us. We have taken the conscious decision to perform and present in a cohesive manner, and our name reflects that decision.

Some members may argue that this is a matter which should be referred to a committee, as occurred in 1963 in the case of the Social Credit-Ralliement créditiste split. I suggest that it would be dangerous to go down that road. That would mean that government supporters would determine the fate of an opposition party. Government sanctioned parliamentary opposition is unworthy of our contemplation.

*Points of Order*

Given the nature of government domination of committees, we do not want to enter into a world where government licensing of the opposition side of the House is the rule of the day. Our actions will eventually be judged by our party supporters and by the electorate on another day.

Fortunately precedents since 1963 indicate that no group of 12 or more members has ever been denied party status. This is the basis upon which we make our argument today.

Coalitions have been formed in the past under the parliamentary system. It is understood that this is done for the good of the country and to further the cause espoused by the members who believe in that cause. When it has happened in the past it was understood that it was done for the furtherance of the public good and in the best interest of the Parliament of Canada.

My colleagues in the coalition are here to do the important business of the House. I genuinely regret that the Speaker has had to become involved. The House and the speakership would have been better served if this question were not placed before you. However the 20 members of the coalition have been left with no option. We seek equitable treatment for the members of the coalition, for the good of parliament and Canada.

• (1515)

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough said that he talked to other House leaders and whips. As the House leader of the official opposition I have had no official meeting with that group about how they should sit in the House.

I had one phone call last Saturday evening from you, Mr. Speaker, about seating, to which I agreed. I have no disagreement with where they are sitting right now. I checked with my whip and he has had no official meeting. If you put the onus on yourself, it is the onus of that group and not of my party.

If you are at all tempted to grant this status and arrangement that the members of the DRC are seeking, you will be creating a parliamentary enigma in deciding a matter that is the proper decision of the House.

To comply with the member's request for a coalition, this group must be recognized as a separate entity. For official parliamentary purposes a separate entity can only be defined as a party. I will address the party issue first.

The concept of a political party, and particularly the funding of smaller political parties, is a relatively recent phenomenon. For example, in 1944 Prime Minister Mackenzie King argued that in consulting the opposition he was obliged only to deal with the leader of the opposition, not the leaders of other parties. He said, at page 554 of *Hansard* from February 16, 1944, "If the opposition wish to be divided into groups, that of course is their own affair".

The granting of money to the leaders of smaller parties did not begin until 1963. It was also at that time that the so-called 12 member rule was established. It is here where I will begin examining some of the history of these types of requests.

In 1963, 13 members of the Social Credit Party split off and declared themselves a separate party under the name Ralliement créditiste. The matter was referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. In committee the issue was not treated merely as a matter of applying the 12 member rule but rather as one determining the validity of the claim by the Ralliement créditiste to be a political party.

The committee looked at the legal and electoral evidence that would support the Ralliement créditiste claim. The committee refrained from committing itself to a full definition of the requirement that would be needed to be met in order for a group to be recognized as a political party.

In the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* of March 1978 in reference to the 1963 case, John Courtney states "A pragmatic solution was brokered amongst the existing party and groups in the House".

On page 33 of Marleau and Montpetit it states "Speakers have been clear in rulings that it is up to the House itself to decide such matters". This references the 1963 case as well as February 18, 1966, October 11, 1979, November 6, 1979 and June 16, 1994.

On September 30, 1963, at pages 3008 and 3009 of *Hansard*, the Speaker explained it in this way:

I cannot conclude this statement without some reference to the significance of these events for the future of the definition and status of parties in this House. It is not my place to evaluate the significance of these matters for the future of every changing structure and character of political parties; yet it is my duty, I believe, to bring to the attention of the House the novel character of the situation now before it, and more particularly the payment of allowances and the effect on the organization of parliament and parties and of the work of this House that naturally must be reflected by the emergence from time to time of new groups that invite the House to accord them the status of parties. Profound constitutional questions arise; for example, can a group of members which did not exist as a party at the time of the election of a parliament be recognized as a party before it has submitted itself to the electorate?

There are few precise rules regarding the recognition of parties in the House. Much depends on the will of the House.

In 1988, when members of the Conservative and Liberal caucuses quit their parties to form the Bloc Québécois, they were not granted party status even though they went on to register under the elections act and managed to have a representative elected in the 1990 byelection. They were denied party status because the House was guided by the 12 member rule.

On the other hand, in the 1974 general election the Ralliement créditiste were reduced to 11 members. Even though it did not qualify for a research budget it continued to receive funds because its members were elected in a general election and the House made that decision, not the Speaker.

The first step in becoming a registered party under the elections act is the application process. There are a number of items to be included in the application such as the names, addresses and signatures of 100 electors and the names and addresses of party officers and the leader. Once a party has become eligible it becomes registered after it has obtained candidates whose nomination has been confirmed in 50 electoral districts. So far the DRC does not qualify under the elections act as a party.

*Points of Order*

• (1520)

It should also be noted that these requirements under the act are fairly new. They were made with the passage of Bill C-9, which received royal assent on June 14, 2001.

If anyone wants to know how the majority of members in this parliament might feel about the issue of a party status, they need to look no further than to the recent changes to the elections act. The passage of Bill C-9 made it more difficult for small fringe parties to emerge and be recognized under the elections act.

It would be inconsistent for the House to make it more difficult for small fringe parties to be recognized through the elections act and easier through the parliamentary procedure.

Another aspect of the law to consider is the bylaws of the House, specifically bylaw 302. This bylaw defines a recognized party as a party recognized by the House that has 12 or more persons elected to the House as members of that party.

The members of the DRC, by their own admission, are not an official party. According to the elections act they are not a party. The recent decision by the House with the passage of Bill C-9 would suggest there is no appetite to make them a party. Pursuant to the bylaws of the House of Commons they do not qualify as a party.

Without party status, they cannot apply for a coalition arrangement with a recognized party. The reason is that there is nothing official to coalesce with. We cannot expect the Speaker to depart from convention and grant this group special status.

In the September 30, 1963 *Hansard*, at page 3008, in reference to the 1963 party status debate, the Speaker stated:

It is not one where the Speaker ought by himself to take a position where any group of members might feel that their interests as a group or a party have been prejudiced. Nor should the Speaker be put in the position where he must decide, to the advantage or to the disadvantage of any group or party, matters affecting the character or existence of a party, for this surely would signify that the Speaker had taken what was almost a political decision.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the members of the DRC are still card carrying Canadian Alliance members. What political party will they claim to belong to when asked?

If that question were put to the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River, for example, his response would be “I am a card carrying member of the Alliance Party. In parliament I am a member of the democratic representative caucus, and the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has just appointed me whip”. The hon. member is obviously suffering from some multiple parliamentary party disorder.

Most political parties would find it unacceptable for any of its members to be part of another federal party or caucus. It was not that long ago that former Liberal cabinet minister Doug Young bought a membership in the Canadian Alliance. The Liberal Party leadership reacted quickly and revoked Mr. Young's Liberal membership.

If members get ejected from their party, that should be as a result of the decisions of the political players involved. A Speaker's decision should not be the cause for a member's ejection from a party.

It could be argued that either way your decision may bring about a political action. The possible result of your not granting the members the status they desire could be that they quit the Canadian Alliance altogether in order to better qualify for special status. The difference is this: maintaining the status quo is the traditional position taken by Speakers.

I will go back to when the Reform Party was tied with the Bloc Québécois in the House with 50 members each. The Reform Party asked to be the official opposition because it represented provinces right across Canada and the Bloc represented only one province. The Tories of that day, there were two of them, could have joined and made that a better argument. It was not to their advantage at the time so they did not try to do that to make sure that the opposition in Canada was a party that would represent all of Canada.

The same party, with the House leader for the Conservative Party who has just made his argument without any precedents, which I find amazing for a lawyer, lost five Tories in the last parliament. I did not hear them get up once and offer the Canadian Alliance a few more questions in question period, or the Liberals who gained four of the five members. They kept the same number of questions. That was the rule at the start of that parliament and it was the rule at the finish of that parliament. They cannot have it both ways.

You should not feel responsible for what may happen, Mr. Speaker, if you turn down the member's request. If a preacher refused to marry a couple because one was already married, the preacher could not be responsible if a divorce resulted in his decision.

• (1525)

On the other hand, he would feel very responsible for the sequence of events that followed a decision to marry the couple. I will put that aside for now, Mr. Speaker, and ask you to consider another point.

Assuming that all the conditions were met to entertain a request for a coalition, it is up to the Speaker to unilaterally allow a party to form a coalition with another party. I would argue that it would be a departure from convention for the Speaker to make a decision on behalf of the House. It would be a giant departure from convention to allow small group without party status to form a coalition with any party in the House.

The only coalition at the national level in Canada was Sir Robert Borden's 1917 union government. Faced with strong opposition to conscription and with other major difficulties during World War I, Borden brought several conscriptionist liberals into his government. The political party system has come a long way since 1917. The groups in 1917 were not vying for funding and increased resources. It was a matter of a coalition government, the first world war and the issue of conscription. It was not an issue of organizing or re-organizing the opposition. A coalition is necessary to govern but certainly not necessary to oppose.

*Points of Order*

As I said in my argument regarding the party's status, the concept of a political party, and particularly the funding of smaller political parties, is a relatively recent phenomenon. The granting of money to the leaders of small parties did not begin until 1963. Even if the members of the DRC had the so-called magic number of 12, they are not registered under the Canada Elections Act. There must be some cohesion between parliamentary law and the common law with respect to party recognition.

Before I wrap up I want to discuss briefly the issue of other jurisdictions because we are members of the Commonwealth and we have taken our lead all through the centuries from the mothers of all parliaments.

The funding of opposition parties in the U.K. is based upon votes received in the last general election. This is known as Short money, so named after a previous leader of the House. The DRC received zero votes in the last election. According to the practice of the United Kingdom they should receive zero money and zero consideration.

In New Zealand the rules regarding party status and coalitions are spelled out a little clearer in their standing orders. The relevant standing orders of the New Zealand house of representatives are as follows. Standing order 34(1) states that every party in whose interest a member was elected at the preceding general election or at any subsequent byelection is entitled to be recognized as a party for parliamentary purposes. Members who cease to be members of the party for which they were originally elected may be recognized as a party for parliamentary purposes if they apply to the speaker and their new party is registered as a registered party by the electoral commission. Once again, even if the DRC had 12 members they would not qualify.

Standing order 35(2) from New Zealand deals with a coalition. It says that a coalition between two or more parties must be notified to the speaker but each party to the coalition remains a separate party for parliamentary purposes. Again, the DRC does not qualify as a party in the House.

In Australia, coalitions have been an important part of Australian political life since the 1920s. In 1923 a nationalist party coalition government was formed which lasted until 1929. Since that time most non-labour governments have been coalitions between the major conservative party and Australia's rural party. As with the New Zealand example, each party to the coalition remains a separate party for parliamentary purposes. The DRC would not have a chance in the Australian parliament either. The same concept holds true for the U.K.

The other consideration is that coalitions are creatures of governments, not opposition. We can debate these examples from other jurisdictions all we want. The bottom line is that the Speaker has clear Canadian precedence and has no choice but to rule that it is the House that must decide this matter. The House could consider the New Zealand, Australia or U.K. models if it wanted. It could choose not to decide at all and maintain the status quo. That is its prerogative.

Maybe the House should seriously consider the private member's bill sponsored by one of the members from the DRC, the member for Saskatoon—Humboldt. In his February 21 press release that

launched one of his many initiatives, he said that the bill would end official party status in the House of Commons for political parties with less than 30 seats or without representation from at least three provinces or territories.

For several years parliament's time has been wasted on fringe political parties that are not national in their effectiveness or appeal. With 4% of seats in parliament, the NDP and Progressive Conservatives do not deserve the financial resources that go along with official party status. Maybe the member has changed his mind.

● (1530)

In conclusion, I would like to comment briefly on the impact of the minor fluctuations in the size of party issue in the course of a parliament. Since 1963, when funding for parties began, parliamentary resources for parties remained stable, regardless of any change in the numbers of each party. Even when there was significant fluctuation, resources would not be distributed. I use the example that I mentioned earlier, the Conservatives in the last parliament lost five members. They did not ask to have their numbers reduced, their questions reduced.

There were other examples. In 1983 and 1984 the Liberals went from 147 to 135 elected members. In the 34th parliament the Conservatives went from 169 down to 151 elected members. Despite these changes, resources remained stable. In the 35th parliament we had a situation where a tie occurred between the two largest opposition parties. In that situation the Reform Party claimed the title of official opposition. The Speaker ruled that the status quo be maintained, preserving the Bloc Quebecois as the official opposition.

As Speaker MacNaughton said, the Speaker should not be put in the position where he must decide to the advantage or disadvantage of any group or party or that would signify that the Speaker has taken what is almost a political decision.

In the U.K. during the passage of the European Community's finance bill, 1994-95, the Conservatives expelled eight MPs, with a ninth voluntarily resigning. With this change, the government lost its majority. The House debated the composition of standing committees on January 11, 1995. It concluded that the composition of the committees would not have to be altered. There were no further repercussions over this situation.

In conclusion, the present distribution of resources for the opposition parties must be maintained. An official coalition between the PC Party and the DRC cannot be entertained because the DRC has nothing official to bring to the table with which to coalesce. The DRC can only be recognized officially as independent members for parliamentary purposes.

I am not saying that parties, groups and independents cannot co-operate with each other in parliament. It is far from that. They are welcome to co-operate all they wish. In fact, the Alliance co-operated with all opposition parties in the last parliament. The Reform Party co-operated with other parties in the parliament before that. It could be said that technically the opposition is always setting up a coalition of parties for the purposes of opposing the government with the leader of the opposition taking centre stage. Our rules would appear to reflect that.

*Points of Order*

We have two principal leaders in the House: the Prime Minister, who leads the government, and the Leader of the Opposition, who leads the opposition. To boldly recognize the arrangement being sought today would be a departure from our practice. Accordingly, the matter should be left for the House to decide, not the Speaker.

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be much briefer than the member who spoke before me. I simply wish to remind the House that section 62 of the Parliament of Canada Act provides that in order to receive financial benefits, a party must elect at least 12 members in a federal election.

Nowhere else does tradition depart from these provisions of the Parliament of Canada Act. We have checked and, to date, no new political party has been registered with the chief electoral officer. No one in this House may therefore request research funding or operating budgets when these are traditionally given to parties.

I am very sorry for the members sitting as independents, but the only way to be able to request resources is to do what has already been done in the past and to officially become Conservative members. However, to my knowledge, this has not been done so far either.

Since there is no new party called the Alliance PC Coalition, and since no Alliance members have become Conservatives, I therefore do not see the point of prolonging this debate. The Parliament of Canada Act is clear.

[*English*]

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today is a serious one for the Speaker to consider. What we are talking about today is not whether a political party has a right to change names. Obviously, the party across did at some point in the past, but that is not before us today. To claim that PC/DRC is similar to changing the name of another party, I do not think is factually accurate. It is not the same and I will get back to that later.

There has been some attempt to make a parallel between this and the issue of the role of the Speaker regarding the Cr ditistes in the 1960s. That also is very different. The situation that we had at the time, if my memory serves me correct, was that there was only enough members to make one party and a large number of the members of that party had defected to create the new political party. The issue before the House then was which one of the two groups was the real party. The Speaker at the time referred it to a committee where eventually it was decided that the Ralliement des cr ditistes would maintain its status because it met the criteria.

That was the issue then. Again, I do not think that is the same as what we have in front of us today. It is of little consequence to me, as a partisan, what goes on in this regard because it does not change the status of the government in any way. However, it goes beyond that.

The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the House referred to Short money and the role in the British House. The parallel of my position as leader of the government in the House is referred to in the British House as leader of the House. In a way, without being presumptuous, I consider my role to be analogous to

that in the sense that if colleagues across the way ask me why the government or a minister has failed to respond to a question or anything like that I take it upon myself to ensure that I can do what I can because I feel that I have that responsibility to members individually and collectively in the mandate that has been given to me. It is in that regard that I make the comments that are before us today, not for any particular advantage because obviously there is not one either way.

The debate before the House today concerns whether a significant material change in membership affects the benefits that members would have. In other words, if a political party across lost a grand sum of members and that sum was added to another political party, there could be a debate. I do not know what the outcome would be, it is not before us, but there could be a debate as to whether or not that changes the resources between one political party and another one. Again, that is not the issue that is before us at the present time. It goes beyond that. This is also not a case of whether or not there is or has been a coalition government in this country. There has been. We know that. It has been referred to in previous contributions.

The issue before us is whether or not a political party and some independent members can be collectively identified as an opposition coalition, not an opposition coalition party. If that was the name of their party—I do not happen to think it would be a particularly attractive name but that is a personal view—anyone could use whatever name they think is attractive to the electors to who they are appealing. That is certainly none of my business but it is something that members might want to consider at another time.

The issue before us in whether or not independents can be grouped with a political party in order for the sum of the two to change the status of other parties in the House, because that is the effect. That is really the issue before us. This is my interpretation of it and I would ask the Speaker to consider it.

Mr. Speaker, the standing orders that we have at the present time, along with the board bylaws, Beausnes's and Marleau and Montpetit can perhaps guide us and indicate what structure in the House has official recognition.

• (1540)

Standing Order No. 5 states:

No Minister of the Crown, nor party leader, shall be eligible for the election to the Office of Speaker.

The office of Speaker is the highest office in this room. Does that mean a leader of a coalition could be a candidate for Speaker? I do not know, but we must realize the implication it would have were we to make a decision in the House.

Does it mean that an officer of the House who is not a member of a party could be eligible for some of these offices? Again there are repercussions to consider.

I will draw Beausnes's to the attention of the House. Beausnes's sixth edition refers to the role of party whips. This is particularly important today because one of the debates before us is whether someone who is not a member of a political party can be a whip for an entity, whether we call that entity a party or something else.

*Points of Order*

Beauchesne's sixth edition, citation 201(1) states:

Each party has as one of its supporters a Member known as the Chief Whip.

It does not say each coalition or anything else. It says each party. It makes no reference to anything that is not a party.

Citation 201(2) states:

The duties of the Whips are to keep their Members supplied with information concerning the business of the House—

The citation describes the role of party whips, not other individuals.

I will also draw to the attention of the Speaker references from Marleau and Montpetit which I believe are helpful. Of course I will recognize and respect how the Speaker adjudicates in the matter. However the Speaker will know of the reference to the Parliament of Canada Act on page 30 of Marleau and Montpetit. It refers to financial benefits, which is presumably an issue of interest here today. It states:

With regard to financial benefits, the *Parliament of Canada Act* provides additional allowances to the Leader, the Whip and the House Leader of a party that has a recognized membership—

On page 31 it goes on to talk about financial support to the caucus research units of recognized parties. It further states:

However, in recent practice, a procedural interpretation of the definition "recognized party" has come to mean any party with 12 or more Members in the House.

Once again the reference is to parties.

On the conduct of question period, page 423 of Marleau and Montpetit refers to:

Members of a political party not officially recognized in the House—

It describes what these members would be if they belonged to something other than an officially recognized political party.

It is my interpretation that if there was a definition of a group of people who are something other than a political party one would find it on page 423 of Marleau and Montpetit. It is not there. Page 492 of Marleau and Montpetit states the following:

The Whips of the other parties and Members without party affiliation usually rise to indicate their agreement.

That means of course that the whips of the parties speak for the group and those who are not members of the party must make their identification individually because they are not members of the party. It states on the same page:

—Members without party affiliation indicate how they wish to be recorded.

This is in the case of recorded divisions. Again there is no mechanism for someone to speak on behalf of those who are not members of a recognized political party. That is made quite clear here.

On the pairing of members it is very interesting. There is a well established procedure of the clerk having on his table a book describing the duty of the whips of political parties with regard to pairing.

● (1545)

The reference to party whips is at the bottom of page 492. It says whips can pair for their members. However there is no provision that

says a whip can speak in this form for someone who is not a member of their party, coalition or other group by which they wish to be recognized collectively. It refers only to parties. Anything else is deemed not to fit the bill.

I will draw to the attention of the House Bill C-28 which we recently passed in the House of Commons. It is a bill members will recognize because it had to do with our salaries as MPs and senators. Page 4 of the bill refers to party leaders with respect to salaries. It refers to the:

—leader of a party that has a recognized membership of twelve or more—

Again the reference is uniquely to a political party and no other structure.

I drew to the House's attention references to Marleau and Montpetit. The only item that remains, at least in my contribution, is the issue of the bylaws of the Board of Internal Economy. The Board of Internal Economy is free to change its bylaws just as the House is free to change its laws. However until it has done so it is bound to interpret the laws under which we currently operate and nothing else.

Bylaw 302 defines a party as one which has been recognized by the House and has a membership of 12 or more persons elected to the House. Bylaw 302(6) refers to House officers of a recognized party and describes some of their functions and so on. Again the reference is to a political party.

In conclusion, it is not for me to say whether independent members should belong to one political party versus another in the House. That is none of my business. We all recognize that. It is a decision which members will make in their consciences and which we will respect.

In a partisan way I could say it would be wrong either way because I do not agree with it politically. However that is immaterial for the purpose of what we have here. If members decide to join another party and indicate they have done so, I for one would accept it, as I am sure would all my colleagues. What other choice would we have? It would not be our business beyond that.

However that has not even been advocated or brought to the attention of the Speaker. No one today so far has suggested or asked that independent members be recognized as members of their party. Unless that is sought, asked for or presented, it is difficult for the Speaker and/or the House to claim the proposition was brought forward because it was not.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you consider these arguments along with several others you have heard. We will fully respect what you have to say in this regard.

● (1550)

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a number of analogies and metaphors have been employed today so I might best begin with a marital analogy as one who has performed the odd wedding ceremony in my time. There is a question that is customarily asked, and it is in fact required by law: If either of you know of any reason why you should not be joined together in holy matrimony, you should say so now or forever hold your peace. I am paraphrasing.

*Points of Order*

If that question were asked of the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough and the member whom he still illegitimately calls his whip, and I will not get into that, I do not think it would be greeted with the silence with which it is normally greeted in any of the ceremonies at which I have presided. The fact remains that members of the so-called DRC already and still have another relationship, with the Alliance Party.

They may not have a relationship with the Alliance caucus, and I am sure this is a source of great weeping and gnashing of teeth among members of the Alliance caucus, but the members of the DRC still have a relationship with the Alliance Party.

I do not think the House of Commons can be completely isolated from what takes place outside it and from the status people enjoy outside the House. The House of Commons is not a motel where we can check in and pretend to be someone we are not or where we can have a relationship that does not exist.

Without wanting to put too fine a point on it, Mr. Speaker, I think it is obligatory on your part to consider not only that members of the so-called DRC still belong to another party but that this fact must be taken into account when judging whether or not the DRC, which is presenting itself as a parliamentary group and demanding the rights and privileges of a party, should be treated as a party.

We might argue that even if members of the DRC were fully divorced from their former family the so-called group would still not qualify as a party unless and until its members made up their minds and joined the Progressive Conservative Party. In that case we would have an entirely different set of circumstances on which I am not prepared to comment at the moment.

However that is not what we have before us. We have before us the illegitimate proceeds of a rolling political orgy that took place over the summer in which people made all kinds of relationships with each other. It does not do parliament any good to have to figure this out on the floor of the House of Commons.

I am glad the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough is immune from libel suits in the House of Commons because he slandered me when he quoted my intervention of 1994 having to do with the recognition of parties.

• (1555)

What I was talking about at that time was parties, political parties like the New Democratic Party that was elected in the election of 1993, nine of us, as New Democrats. We sat in the House as New Democrats. We did not pretend to be someone else. We did not decide to be sort of half this and half that. All we wanted at the time was procedural recognition of ourselves as a party in this House, not a group, not a coalition, not something else, but as the political party that we presented ourselves as to the Canadian people and we wanted that recognized here. That is fundamentally different than what is being requested by the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough this day. It is not fair or accurate to compare my argument at that time with the argument that is being made today.

Earlier on the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, like his leader on television last night, suggested that in some way or another they had already been working as a coalition and had been

recognized to some degree as a coalition in this House; in question period and in voting. That is not true.

We had a discussion yesterday and you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that the reason that they are able to pretend they are a group is because we had a precedent in this House wherein a previous parliament the Reform Party granted certain of its questions to members of parliament who were not members of its caucus, particularly the member for York South—Weston, if I remember correctly.

This is the precedent which has permitted the impression, but not the reality, of this group to my left, acting as a group and claiming that some kind of precedent has been set. It is the same thing with respect to the votes yesterday. If I am not mistaken, they voted separately, one group after the other; first, the Progressive Conservative Party and then the independents who call themselves the DRC.

For this claim to be made that somehow what we are debating today is whether or not to extend some sort of recognition that has already been extended, is completely false. Even the fact that they are sitting together is a form of parliamentary geographical coincidence. It is where independents would sit.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly urge upon you to in no way accept that somehow what we are doing today here is debating whether or not to expand a recognition that already exists. There is no recognition that already exists.

What we are debating is whether or not this particular self-defined group should in fact make history, and make bad history I would suggest, by being recognized as a coalition that has the rights and privileges of a party, because it is certainly not a party. Even if they were to claim successfully the rights and privileges of a party they would still not be a political party.

We would have done something entirely new which I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, holds a great deal of negative potential for the House of Commons. I urge you to think about that.

I also urge you, Mr. Speaker, to think about, and this is something that I know you will be thinking about in any event, whether or not this is actually in the purview of the Speaker to decide. Having to do with the question of whether or not they are a party and all the precedents and all the argumentation cited by the government House leader, I would certainly want to associate myself with them. The standing orders, Beauchesne's, the Board of Internal Economy, wherever you want to look, Mr. Speaker, talk about parties, not coalitions.

The member referred to a variety of names that people have called themselves over the years, political configurations, a union, a government, et cetera. They ran on those names. They did not make them up after they got here. That is different.

Finally, the Bloc members left their respective political parties. Individual members of the Bloc did not maintain memberships in the Liberal and Conservative parties.

*Points of Order*

•(1600)

The fact is there is no such thing as a political entity in any of the documentation or jurisprudence that we have before us today.

However, back to the point of whether or not this is within your purview to decide, Mr. Speaker, I want to be consistent here because I argued in 1994 that it was within the purview of the Speaker to make certain decisions to protect minority parties from the herd, so to speak. Having been a victim of that herd mentality, I fully appreciate and reaffirm the role of the Speaker to protect minority parties from that kind of situation.

I do not regard this situation as analogous or similar. We have an entirely different situation here. We do not have a minority party here. We have a configuration whose legitimacy as a party is in dispute and which therefore would make it the very political decision that Speaker MacNaughton warned against in 1963. It would be a political decision or have the nature of a political decision in a way that had the Chair decided in favour of my point of order in June 1994, it would not have been, for example, a political decision in that way.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge caution on your part, as to whether or not you want to consider that this is a matter for you or a matter for the House to decide.

The House has not decided this because there has not been any meetings. Contrary to the impression left that somehow some attempt was made to resolve this matter among the parties, there was no attempt made. Of course it is very difficult to make that attempt when the very act of meeting itself could in fact set precedents. However, we could have had a discussion in the status quo context about what might be in a new context. That was not even sought.

Therefore, this new group has thrown themselves upon the mercy of the Chair. I ask the Chair to consider whether or not in fact it is the role of the Chair. However, Mr. Speaker, if you consider it to be the role of the Chair, then I ask you to consider all of the arguments that have been made here today, including mine, as to the lack of wisdom that would attend any decision to recognize the so-called PC/DRC in the way that they have asked.

**Mr. Randy White:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Would it be within the purview of the House to seek consent to extend the hours tonight in view of this group asking for resources for themselves? We have such immediate and important national issues to consider in the House, and I would ask that we at least extend the hours past this sort of thing to cover the issues that are more important to the nation.

**The Speaker:** I think it is an inappropriate question at this particular moment. I hope that we will wrap this up soon. If, once we get on to other business, there is an extension of an hour sought, that is fine. However, given the imprecision of the hon. member's proposition at this point, might I suggest we try to deal with this.

I think we are close to the end of the argument here. I do not expect to hear much more. However, I think the hon. member for Fraser Valley might want to say something in light of the fact that he is part of the group that may have something to contribute to the discussion.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I can hardly wait to get on to the business of the day, the modernization of parliament, which is of course gripping the nation.

Some of the arguments I have heard, particularly from the House leader of the New Democratic Party, seem to be based on when there is no good argument, resort to humour and ribald humour is even better. Perhaps someone will notice and maybe the media will put a member's funny clip on the news, and we will all be better off for it.

The other parties too seem to think this is light-hearted humour and, again, perhaps some ribald humour is even better. However, there are big issues here today.

I remind the House that when people quote from Marleau and Montpetit, Marleau and Montpetit is a collection of the record of precedents in the House. It is not an instruction book on what will happen, especially when there is no precedent.

We recognize that today is a precedent setting day and we are not pretending it is not. To quote Marleau and Montpetit and say they have not dealt with it in the past, is simply not understanding the purpose of that book. The book is a collection of precedents. Today will be another one either way, whatever the ruling is, it will be again another ruling of precedence.

Those who would argue that the Speaker should not make decisions on behalf of the House, every day Mr. Speaker, you are called to make decisions on behalf of the House. It is precisely because the Speaker has a duty to rise above the interests of political entities in the House and address these parliamentary activities that we have come to appeal to you today.

The House leader of the government side said that we have not even been asked to have been recognized as a group as a coalition. You know of course that that is not true, Mr. Speaker. You know that there is a letter in your possession with 20 signatures on it stating precisely that, that we do wish to be recognized as a coalition, as one entity. We have chosen one parliamentary leader, one House leader, a whip and so on. The members of the House should know that this has taken place.

It is interesting too how much time has been spent today in the presentations trying to mix apples and oranges. There was all kinds of talk about the Elections Act and a bit of talk about the Parliament of Canada Act. However, they are mixing the two.

When we talk about resources in the House, we have not talked today about monetary resources. That will be something that will be negotiated, if ever, with the Board of Internal Economy. It is not something that is done here in the House. It is always referred to the House leaders for negotiations.

To follow the logic of the House leader for the Canadian Alliance who said that in the British practice if a member was not elected under a certain standard he or she should not get any resources under a certain name, then when the Reform Party changed its name to the Alliance, the members would not have had any resources. Of course that is absurd. It did not happen that way.

*Points of Order*

It is also interesting that, whether it is legislation or standing orders, when we refer to all the quotes today about parties, they are all in lower case; a party, an entity. We call ourselves a coalition. Others might call themselves an alliance, which is perfectly fine. I remember asking for that change. I did not want it to be called a party but rather an alliance because the first principle of the Canadian Alliance was to form coalitions. It was in the constitution of the party.

It was also interesting that a recent mail out from the Canadian Alliance to all its members asked if it should consider a merger with the Tories or should it consider forming a coalition in the House of Commons. To argue against it today, when the Canadian Alliance was asking its own members if they wanted to form a coalition, does not seem consistent.

Someone has tried to point out that a coalition is for governments and not for opposition parties. Says who, Mr. Speaker? Coalitions are put together in order to make democracies work better.

•(1605)

When coalitions function well, do not take resources away from others and just allocate the current time in the House, allocate the number of questions and allocate supply days, nobody loses. It is allocated based on the number of people.

I am not asking for funds, but it was interesting when I was negotiating assets such as House of Commons questions, supply days and monetary issues this spring as House leader. Every single time I insisted it be done on a per capita basis and other House leaders agreed. That is the proper way to do it because of course it reflects in the best way the will of the Canadian people who have sent their representatives to the House of Commons.

I will also point out that although much fuss has been made about memberships in political parties, I would like to point out the example of the member for Portage—Lisgar who holds memberships in both the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and the Canadian Alliance. I assume he holds two memberships because he says he does. Not only does he hold two memberships, but on his website and in his public speeches he encourages all of us to buy memberships in two political parties. He has chosen to sit with the Canadian Alliance and I accept that. That is his decision. However he has two memberships in two different political parties and encourages others to do the same. Again, I have no problem with that. He chooses to sit there and that is fine. We choose to sit here and put together a coalition to advance common themes.

We have been expelled from the Canadian Alliance caucus which is obviously a different status than being suspended. The whip sent a letter to many of us saying that he no longer represents us. We are gonzo. We are out of the whole frame of reference there.

There happen to be 8 members involved in this matter, but what if there were 18 or 28 members? At what stage does it become significant to the House? We could argue that maybe one person does not make any difference in the House but once we start getting significant numbers of people, it starts to affect the status. If we push it to the extreme, the Leader of the Opposition could expel everybody from his caucus and sit there with 16 questions a day and

hundreds of thousands of dollars in assets, saying “It is all mine”. That is simply untrue.

It is different, and not because it takes away from the New Democratic Party. No one is suggesting that a single question be taken away from the New Democratic Party. It does not affect the Bloc Quebecois, not a single question, not a single supply day, not a single difference in the order of speaking in the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, what you have before you today is a group of 20 people who say it is only right. We were elected to the House of Commons to represent our constituents. By the way, I was elected under policies that put my constituents above even the party. The best way to do that is to form a coalition with 20 like-minded people who say it is time to get on with the business of the House and hold the government accountable in the best way possible, in our opinion. To deny that coalition access, not to money because nobody is talking about that today—others are but none of us are—but to deny us access to questions, to membership on committees, to a certain number of debating spots, is to say to several million people who supported these 20 members of parliament that we just do not rank, that we not get the same ranking as any other member of parliament. That is unacceptable.

To just finish off with the language issue, the government House leader said that the standing orders are silent on the word coalition. When the House is saying party in those standing orders, it is talking about a political entity in the House.

I was first elected in 1993 and came to the House in 1994. The first thing we said was that we did not want to have a whip. We wanted to have a caucus co-ordinator. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that you will remember that. This was an attempt to try to describe the role given to that position, which is to co-ordinate the activities of the group.

•(1610)

The standing orders are completely silent on the term caucus co-ordinator. It does not exist in the Parliament of Canada Act as far as the extra salary to a caucus co-ordinator. It does not exist that the caucus co-ordinator meets with other caucus co-ordinators. It talks about whips because it is the tradition of the House to call them whips.

Mr. Speaker, you can call them whatever you want. In 1994 we called them caucus co-ordinators. We then changed it back after a few years to whip but no one cared. The whip got the salary. The whip budget was intact. The whip did the job whether called a caucus co-ordinator or a whip.

When we call ourselves a coalition it is because we are like-minded people intent upon advancing like-minded principles in the House of Commons. We want to do that because we think it is in the best interest of democracy. Because it makes no difference to the other political parties that will not get shortchanged, I ask you to consider it favourably and consider these arguments instead of perhaps some of the humour, which I thought was less than ideal but passed as argument earlier, and grant us the status as a coalition of 20 here in the House of Commons.

*Routine Proceedings*

●(1615)

**The Speaker:** I want to bring this discussion to an end. Is the hon. member for Langley—Abbotsford rising on the same point of order?

**Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Since 3 p.m. eight independent members of the House have been occupying the nation's time for themselves at the cost of the whole House, while at the same time the nation faces serious issues.

I would ask the Speaker to hasten this debate along, or I ask now for unanimous consent of the House to extend the House for the same amount of time as they are spending.

**The Speaker:** I certainly intend to move the matter along. Is there unanimous consent to extend the sitting hour?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** The Chair has heard information on this point. I am sure there are other hon. members who feel they can make helpful contributions to the discussion. I am sure we could go on at some length, but we have heard from each of the parties and from the group of independent members who are sitting in the House as to what position the Chair ought to take in making a ruling on this point.

The Chair has heard sufficient argument from all hon. members in order to render a decision.

[*Translation*]

I am very grateful for the contributions of all the members who took part in the debate this afternoon. I also note that this has taken quite some time.

[*English*]

However I also feel that this matter is of some importance. Obviously it is a matter that has aroused some considerable interest in the House, and needless to say in the media as well, in the last few weeks and indeed over the last while.

Given that I intend to take the matter under advisement, I will come back to the House as quickly as I can with a ruling on this point.

I also want to say that I appreciate the co-operation that has been shown in making the necessary arrangements to deal with the issue without having heard the argument earlier this week. We could not get to it until today in a reasonable way. I appreciate the fact that it has taken some forbearance on the part of all members to deal with the situation that the House was confronted with on Monday morning at 11 o'clock.

I want to thank hon. members for their co-operation in that regard. I assume that the arrangements currently in place will remain in place until I am able to come back to the House with a decision, which as I indicated I hope will happen very quickly. I thank all hon. members for their interventions.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*English*]

**CITIZENSHIP ACT**

**Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-391, an act to amend the Citizenship Act (Oath or Affirmation of Citizenship).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill has as its purpose to change the current oath of citizenship which simply says that we swear allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, the Queen of Canada, and swear to faithfully fulfil our duties as Canadian citizens.

I have many times tried to change the oath of citizenship because I feel very passionately that it should reflect the values that we hold dear as Canadians. The oath that I am proposing in the bill reflects the charter of rights and liberties.

With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just read the text of the oath that I propose. I will read the affirmation rather than the oath itself. What I am proposing is an affirmation of citizenship that says the following:

In pledging allegiance to Canada, I take my place among Canadians, a people united by their solemn trust to uphold these five principles: equality of opportunity, freedom of speech, democracy, basic human rights and the rule of law.

●(1620)

I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is a very timely occasion on which to introduce a new oath of citizenship.

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

\* \* \*

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC/DR)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-392, an act to amend the Criminal Code (sex offences and violent offences).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my coalition colleague from Prince George—Peace River for seconding the bill.

This private member's bill would bring about an amendment to the criminal code that would preclude persons who have committed and been convicted of committing sexual offences or offences involving violence from receiving the benefit, I would suggest, of an application of conditional sentences under the criminal code. This would preclude judges from applying sentences that they mete out for offences that fall in that category.

I believe that this would be an important amendment, more reflective of the deterrence that is required under the criminal code. Again, I hope all members would support this private member's bill.

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

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Ms. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-393, an act to amend the Criminal Code (witness protection).

She said: Mr. Speaker, with unfailing perseverance, I am pleased to introduce this bill today for the third time.

When first introduced, during the 35th parliament, this bill received majority support on second reading. Because the House was dissolved, however, as a result of the Spring 1997 election call, it died on the order paper.

Subsequently, during the next parliament, I introduced it again, this time to have it eclipsed by another bill introduced by the Minister of Justice.

The purpose of my bill is to amend the Criminal Code in order to give the same protection to any person testifying in proceedings in which the accused is charged with a criminal offence of sexual assault or in which violence against the person is alleged to have been used, threatened or attempted that is currently available under the criminal code to witnesses under the age of eighteen.

I hope my bill will receive the same reception from the members of this House that it did on the occasion of its first introduction.

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

\* \* \*

[English]

### BROADCASTING ACT

**Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.)** moved that Bill S-7, an act to amend the Broadcasting Act, be read a first time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, as you have—

**The Speaker:** Order. On a Senate bill the hon. member does not normally get an opportunity to give a brief explanation of the purpose of the bill. Does the House give consent to hear one at this time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is no agreement.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

\* \* \*

●(1625)

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the first report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs be concurred in.

I draw attention to a number of issues that relate to the government's intentions and requirements in the coming weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time in this debate with my colleague, the member for Saint John.

The report was originally presented to the House on June 14, 2000, during the second session of the 36th Parliament. The report was a major study of the procurement by national defence and it outlined many of the needs of the military.

### Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

The level of preparedness of Canada's armed forces has been deteriorating continually since this government came to office.

The government's only military plan is simply to hope that no crisis occurs, that there is no need for the Canadian Forces.

Now we have a crisis before us. The terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington show that there is no limit to what may be made a target. The target can even be in North America.

The information we have received from our security intelligence services establishes clearly that terrorist cells may be found even here in Canada. This has been confirmed by the leaders of other nations, as it was yesterday by the king of Jordan. Our own Prime Minister did not want to tell Canadians all the facts about terrorists. He did not level with Canadians.

Instead, CNN, the American network, confirms for us what our agencies and services are saying in this regard.

The government was informed in June that terrorists would become more dangerous and more determined. There was an indication that Canada was a target. Canadians want to share in the fight against terrorism. We want to win this battle and we know very well that among those first called on to fight the fight will be the men and women of our armed forces.

We ask them to give up their lives in a time of crisis, but this government starved them when they needed new equipment, better working conditions and more support.

The Prime Minister has been invited to Washington. He follows President Chirac, Prime Minister Blair and other heads of state. Our Prime Minister follows behind the parade, because Canada has failed to maintain the level of its international commitments, which our allies count on.

[English]

When the Prime Minister goes to Washington, we know what he will be asked. He will be asked to stop the movement of terrorists to and from Canada. He will be asked to extradite or to deport people who are wanted for crimes related to terrorism. He will be asked to curtail the flow of money to terrorists or their organizations, and he will be asked to share intelligence and defence capacities.

Insofar as defence is concerned, the embarrassing question for Canada is, what resources do we have to share?

Let me quote from an article by Jeffrey Simpson in the *Globe and Mail* this morning entitled "Canada's help: Who are we kidding?":

The U.S. knows the lamentable state of our military and has periodically complained about it. Canada had one ship in the Persian Gulf, but it has returned home. The navy has frigates, but they remain without helicopters, courtesy of the Chrétien government's cancelling of a contract agreed to by the Mulroney government nine years ago. Ottawa has yet to issue detailed requests for proposals for these helicopters.

The article goes on:

*Routine Proceedings*

The army has a few special units but lacks sufficient equipment and men to be effective in any dangerous operation. The air force has CF-18s but lacks in-air refuelling capabilities and some necessary technology for serious combat. Canada's military forces are so weak that the Chrétien government's support for any military fight against terrorism will necessarily be limited.

That commentary is by an objective journalist and commentator.

We have no long range tanker aircraft to get our fighter aircraft overseas. Our Hercules transport fleet is aging. Without tankers, it will be difficult for Canadian fighter aircraft to get overseas. The 1st Battalion Royal 22nd Regiment in Quebec is ready for deployment, but it is not a special forces unit. It lacks transport for rapid deployment and would have to go without its heavy weapons. Most of our forces are committed already in peacekeeping operations around the world. Our armoured corps is outdated and our tanks do not have the armour or the armament to stand up to handheld weapons, the sort of weapons terrorists use.

The 1994 white paper on defence called for Canada to contribute a brigade size force of about 5,000 men for sustained overseas operations. We are not capable of carrying out that commitment, according to retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie.

The Canadian navy is the best off of our three services but it lacks modern, robust maritime helicopters, key to surface actions. It is understaffed and it lacks financial resources.

We are paying a price today for a lack of preparation in the last nine years. The matter we are calling upon to debate, the committee report we are discussing today, itemizes ways in which Canada can move forward and become a respectable military force in the world again. We cannot simply sit back and engage commitments unless we are prepared to accept them. We are facing a commitment now and we are not in a position to do as well as Canada should be doing.

I am pleased to pass my debate time now to the hon. member for Saint John.

• (1630)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I am a member of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. I have had the opportunity since 1993 to work on defence and veterans affairs issues and to review in the last couple of years in great detail the state of readiness of our armed forces.

Retired generals and retired colonels came to our committee and made presentations. I wish the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister had been there to hear what they had to say about our armed forces and the needs that are not being addressed by the government that should be.

I am confident in my belief that our men and women in uniform are without some of the essential equipment they might well require in this new war against terrorism.

The House will recall that since my election as an MP in 1993 I have repeatedly risen on the replacement of the Sea King helicopters. As everyone in the House knows, there were those who lost their lives because we did not get the EH-101s to replace those Sea Kings. Members of my family have said to me, "Please get out and fight for the replacement of those Sea Kings".

The House knows that I have remained firm in my belief that the government has been more concerned with the political consequences that would follow the replacement of the Sea Kings with the EH-101s and not the military factors that make their replacement so essential.

Many here in the House and indeed many in the other place have questioned the government's lack of action in providing our armed forces personnel with the best equipment possible for the tasks we assign them.

In 1999 a report by CSIS said that there were 50 terrorist groups in Canada and they had 350 people working with them. Instead of the government doing something about it, what did it do? It laid off 750 CSIS employees. Instead of increasing the numbers to look after the safety of Canadians, 750 employees were laid off.

Our concerns are not political in nature. Rather, we recognize that our men and women in uniform are not in a position to come to Parliament Hill with placards when their funding is cut. We know that our men and women in uniform are going to the food banks. We are aware that when they came back from peacekeeping missions they were told on the airplane to take off their boots because they had to pass them to the men and women who were going to replace them. Imagine that here in Canada there is not enough money in the budget to even give uniforms and boots to our armed forces.

A senator who went over to Kosovo said that when he saw our peacekeepers he could not believe it when he looked at their uniforms. He could not believe the lack of resources that they had. Our armed forces have repeatedly shown their selfless desire to complete their duties without hesitation. In return we must insist that the government honour its duty to them by providing the tools they require.

Those of us who have advocated increased spending for our military have in the past been called alarmists. It has been said in the House that we live in a post cold war world that does not require us to be as vigilant as we once had to be. Last week tells us differently now. No one in Canada could have predicted the events of last week, and no one in the U.S.A. However those events have served as a vicious reminder that we can never allow ourselves to lower our guard.

In fiscal year 1993-94 the budget for the Department of National Defence was \$12 billion. That budget was stripped down to a scandalous \$9.4 billion by 1998. We would be wise to bear in mind and consider that it was during the period of these massive cuts that our armed forces operational tempo, the ratio of time spent by our Canadian forces personnel in deployed missions, rose from 6% to 23%.

• (1635)

Today, on the eve of the most important conflict since the second world war, we are witnessing firsthand the price of those deep cuts. The government has as its policy to maintain a regular force of no fewer than 60,000. Yet, as we stand here today, the actual number has dropped below 55,000. Our forces have been called to duty in almost every corner of the globe, to the point where we have made unreasonable demands of our most loyal citizens and their families.

*Routine Proceedings*

Some of our armed forces equipment has been found to be either unsafe or in need of significant repair each and every time it is to be used. As hon. members are aware, we have frigates that were built in Saint John, New Brunswick. We were supposed to have modified helicopters and that was not done because of the cuts.

A unanimous report was brought forth by our defence committee with all party support. It said that we should continue, on an ongoing rotational basis, the building of navy ships right here in Canada, whether by MIL Davie Inc. or Saint John Shipbuilding Limited.

When I was down in the United States just a week before that horrible attack I met with Vice-President Cheney and I raised the Jones act. I want it on the record that he agreed with me it was time to address the Jones act whereby we cannot bid when ships are being built in the United States but they can bid on all our contracts.

We should not be buying used submarines from London, England, that cannot float. We then pay \$800 million to make them float. We should be putting our own people to work. We should be building our ships and giving our navy the tools to do the job.

The House will recall the disturbing reports of rusting and missing parts on helicopters and aircraft like the CF-18. Lives have been lost. We must make sure that no more lives are lost in Canada because our men do not have modern tools to do their job.

The Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs has repeatedly made all party unanimous recommendations to the government in support of more funding and better equipment for our military. Many of us have been encouraged to hear the Minister of Finance indicate that from this day forward no expense would be spared to ensure the safety and security of Canada and our people.

One might ask if we should have been more diligent in the past in maintaining the funding levels at a rate where our operational readiness was not a point of debate. One might also ask if we should have encouraged that state of mind when approaching major equipment purchases like the ongoing process to replace our Sea King helicopters. What the government is proposing as replacements for those Sea King helicopters are not really replacements as they cannot do the job that the Sea Kings could do.

The House will know that the government's instructions are that the procurement process be directed on the basis of the lowest price compliant bid despite the fact that Treasury Board guidelines require such programs to operate under the provisions of a best value principle.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to predict what our military needs will be in the coming months. All we know for certain is that our armed forces and our country as a whole must be prepared for the worst. It is no longer acceptable for us to assume that the United States will protect us just as it is no longer possible for us to take comfort in the fact that the cold war has ended.

The sentiment I rise to express today, one of deep respect for our Canadian armed forces coupled with distress at our government's inaction, is one that is shared by a legion of retired military personnel who have committed their years out of uniform to the protection and promotion of those who remain in uniform today. Let us learn from

those who have firsthand experience in these matters and let us listen to them. Let us put their wise counsel into practice and let us prove to the world that our armed forces are indeed a force to be reckoned with.

● (1640)

There are many in the world today who hate Canada simply because we are a democracy and friends of the U.S. There are groups with arsenals of weaponry who would do us harm solely because we value freedom, liberty and human rights above all else.

The only thing that makes their existence more frightening is that we cannot say for certain where they are. The events of last week have shown us that despite the best intelligence gathering available these terrorist threats can strike whenever and wherever they want. Those who would do our country, our continent and our friends harm should know that the Canadian armed forces will respond. Those who would seek to end our way of life should think twice about doing so, fearful of the protection we have afforded ourselves.

The reality is that the world knows that Canada's military power is not what it used to be. In the time since the House last sat the American ambassador himself issued a friendly but stern reminder to us that we have defence related obligations to our friends and allies that cannot be forgotten. We cannot take comfort in the security our relationship with the U.S. provides us and then not rise to the occasion when it asks for our help.

Last week, in mourning the loss of the 5,000 innocent victims of this tragedy, our nation showed its infinite capacity for compassion. As the nations of the world prepare for a battle between the forces of good and evil let us remind them why we are known for our courage. We will be there to assist.

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I commend my friend from Saint John for her longstanding and passionate advocacy of the need for our country to place much greater emphasis on our capacity to defend ourselves and advance our national sovereignty. She is certainly a very principled advocate of that.

I agreed with her remarks with the exception of her comment on procurement programs such as shipbuilding for national defence. I inferred from her comments that she was suggesting we ought to procure equipment in Canada as a sort of industrial policy.

This is a concern to me because it seems that the objective in providing a strong national defence and maximizing our scarce resources ought to be to seek the best available equipment at the lowest possible price, even if that means tendering defence procurement contracts overseas.

Does she think that if it costs us more to tender a procurement contract for defence equipment to a domestic company that this is in the best interest of advancing our capacity to defend ourselves and maximizing those scarce tax dollars?

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1645)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne:** Madam Speaker, I am saying that our navy should continue to build ships on a rotating basis because when the contract for 10 frigates was received by Saint John, New Brunswick, and MIL Davie Inc., they started to age after 10 years. We are saying one ship a year, whether it be for the coast guard, the navy or whatever.

We are also saying that we should be bidding on the contracts in the United States. The Jones act has blocked us. We were the first ones to go to the U.S. when Ambassador Chrétien was there. I asked him if he was dealing with the Jones act and he replied that he had never been asked. When we went down this time to see the new Canadian ambassador he too said that he had never been asked.

When we went to see Vice-President Cheney he said he was glad we had raised it because it was not right. Canada should have the opportunity to bid down there, build those ships in Canada, and put our people back to work. We have the most modern shipyard anywhere in the world sitting idle right now because we do not have a navy shipbuilding policy, and we can build ships cheaper than anyone else.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I too thank the hon. member for her remarks. One of the things I would like her to address is a policy that is followed by other countries. I am thinking specifically right now of Australia. It does not do what this government does and say "This is the funding for this year", and then slash a billion or so out of it the following year and tell us that we will just have to make do. It provides long range funding. The military budget is not just a line budget that can be cut up or added to. One cannot build an armed forces that way.

I used Australia as an example but many countries in the world provide long term funding because they realize what a military needs. It needs surety in its planning. It needs reliable funding because it does not raise its own funds. It relies upon parliament. It does not do what the government does here, which is to make it a political football where it slashes even below its own targeted number of troops and equipment revitalization and renewal.

Some say the military should be taken out of the political realm and given long range stable funding so it can plan its future. Then when we ask the men and women of the armed forces to go and do the job they have the tools because they were given the long term funding to make it happen.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne:** Madam Speaker, I totally agree with my colleague. As was stated earlier by our leader, there is an article in the *Globe and Mail* which says what the colonels and the generals have been stating. It says "The military's limitations were recently displayed when Canada could only participate in peacekeeping operations in Macedonia by transferring troops from elsewhere in the Balkans".

These are married men and women who have children. They do not even get home to see their families any more. We need long term budgets and not just on a yearly basis. We need a budget that will be there and increased for the next 10 years.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester, Lumber Industry.

● (1650)

[English]

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will not take much time to debate this report. I wish the House had not considered this report today for a number of reasons. First, the report was tabled on June 12. Anyone who has read the modernization committee report would know that moving concurrence in a report where the government has been asked for a response and not had an opportunity to respond yet is like shovelling air. It does not do anything. I am surprised the right hon. member would not know this.

The government—

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Has the government House leader gone to government orders?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Madam Speaker, if the hon. member is asking if I intend to move to orders of the day, it would be pointless because by the time the bells rang there would be no time to do so. If he is asking if I intend to do that so the Speaker could rule on Standing Order 52, unfortunately it cannot happen because the time has been used up with things that are certainly not the ones I would have asked for. I believe that answers the hon. member's question.

It does not take away from the legitimacy of the issue I wanted to raise because it is an important one. No doubt the Speaker in time will respond to it. Meanwhile I only wish to take a moment to indicate my remarks to the House and to let other members respond if they wish. If not, hopefully the debate will collapse and we will move to orders of the day as we should have, in my opinion, half an hour ago.

I just want to indicate that the government's response should come within 150 days or by November 9. It would be even sooner under the new rules that we could be concurring in later this day with everyone's co-operation, given that it was a unanimous report.

The government fully intends to table its response within the time period. It would be inappropriate to concur in a report before we have even responded to it. In other words there is nothing to concur in, if I can put it that way to the House.

Those are all the remarks I wanted to make. Hopefully the House will agree now to move to orders of the day. We probably will not be completing the consideration of the modernization report, but at least we could start it and do the productive work we have been sent here to do by Canadians.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the government House leader. I have a document in my hand that tells me that the procurement of the Sea King helicopters goes back to 1978 when Prime Minister Trudeau was the Prime Minister of Canada. If we were to have started production today, we would have waited almost 30 years.

Could the minister provide a legitimate reason that the replacement of those Sea Kings helicopters has taken so long? Why did the government spend so much money cancelling the Sea Kings that obviously were part of the ongoing election campaign in 1993?

One of the points I want to make is the fact that the government spent \$500 million to simply cancel the helicopter contract. In other words, it was half a billion dollars to simply cancel the contract with not one helicopter being built. How does the government leader justify that kind of expense?

• (1655)

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Madam Speaker, I guess you are ruling that question in order. The questions normally are on the speeches people have made. I do not believe I have discussed the procurement for maritime helicopters. Nevertheless, if it pleases the House to discuss that I am certainly pleased to answer the hon. member's question.

I believe the hon. member had the unfortunate experience of being a member of the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. I really pity him for that. It is a most unfortunate thing. The Conservatives, I believe, wanted to waste an amount of over \$6 billion that we did not even have at the time to buy helicopters that were way beyond our means. The government was broke. It had \$42 billion of deficit on account of its own mismanagement.

Yesterday we heard the Minister of Finance inform us of the historic developments of repaying this year of \$17 billion of owed debt accumulated by the Mulroney government of which the hon. member was a member. It was a most unfortunate thing and I know the member is trying to forget that.

Speaking of the helicopter procurement, the House will know that we have bought a number of search and rescue helicopters. The other project, the maritime helicopter project, should be completed around 2005, I am informed. That will be done.

Meanwhile, we are maintaining the helicopters that we have, the Sea Kings. We know they meet the safety standards that we have. We do want to replace them with helicopters that will meet our needs but they must be ones that we can afford because we do not buy things for which we cannot pay the way the previous government did.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I would like to run through a few numbers with the government House leader. He said that the Tory-Conservative program for the EH-101s was \$6 billion. He will know that I was not a member of that minority government and I would like to ask him a couple of questions about the math on the Liberal side.

The EH-101 cancellation fees were \$500 million. The Sea King maintenance and upgrades to the year 2008 amounts to \$600 million. Canada's search helicopter program consisting of 15 helicopters is \$790 million. The CSH long term service support over 25 years is \$1.7 billion. These are Liberal numbers. The maritime helicopter

project consisting of 28 helicopters was \$2.9 billion. The MHP long term service support over 25 years was another \$1.7 billion. The administrative cost in splitting that procurement was \$400 million. The total cost of Liberal programs with zero inflation was \$8.6 billion.

There are still zero helicopters in that of course and he is talking about the Conservative program for the 43 EH-101s being \$6 billion. That is an extra \$2 billion plus. That is an amazing amount of money.

What about the lives of the pilots? Of course we could never ever put a dollar figure on that.

Would the government House leader somehow explain and try to justify that since 1978, under the Liberal government of Trudeau, cabinet acknowledged the need to replace the Sea King when in fact those machines had gone into service in 1963. Even after only 15 years of service the Trudeau government said there was a need to replace the Sea King. The Sea Kings have outlasted Trudeau.

Could the government House leader explain that for us, please?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Madam Speaker, I think it is better not to comment on the part about outlasting the late Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau. It would be better for us to pretend we did not hear that, at least it is a little more respectful.

If I recall, getting back to the substance of what she asked, after she was elected I remember her questioning this procurement that she is now defending in the House. I remember that she and her party condemned the outrageous Conservative expenditures and now she is standing in the House defending them.

It is a curious thing. An hour ago we were talking about a coalition. I think things are coalescing at quite a speed in another direction.

• (1700)

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I too would like to ask for a little more explanation on the total lack of preparedness of the government and our military with regard to the Sea Kings.

I was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force in the early 1960s, the time in which the Sea Kings were first purchased. The replacement schedule for the Sea Kings is the year 2010, which means they will have been in service for 50 years.

In light of recent events and not knowing what our deployment requirements will be in this tragic event that has been unfolding, what kind of impact will our Sea King helicopters have on our military? Will the present Sea King helicopters be considered frontline serviceable? If not, what does that do to our frigates, which are designed to carry frontline helicopters?

*Routine Proceedings*

Will both of those units be relegated to home shore use because they are not frontline capable? In other words, would we seriously send into frontline duty 40 year old Sea King helicopters with our frigates? Is that what we intend to do if called upon?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Madam Speaker, we have had a series of questions here from the hon. member across the way. The savings for Canadians from the combined purchase of the maritime and search and rescue helicopters is in the order of \$1.5 billion. That is the savings we will generate by the careful management of taxpayer dollars.

On the issue of the Sea Kings and the fact that we have flown those particular aircraft, it is an aircraft that is used right around the world. The Sea Kings are still a viable aircraft. We are replacing them. The date of replacement has been scheduled I believe for 2005. I believe that target date is still expected to be met. That is still the intention of the government in that regard.

I was not quite sure in the way the hon. member asked his question about the frigate whether he was suggesting that the ship is not an ultra modern vehicle. I happen to believe that it is a worldclass ship. I have been on board. I stayed for days on that ship with members of our armed forces in Esquimalt and in the training areas around Nanoose. I saw myself how that particular ship functions.

It was not a long time ago that there were frigates. The HMCS *Ottawa* is a very modern ship. I am sure the hon. member across the way, who knows a lot about things military, will acknowledge that.

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise in debate in support of this concurrence motion for the report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs at this particularly prescient moment.

As I said in my remarks on the motion before the House regarding the tragedy that struck the United States last week, the whole world has changed dramatically, particularly the world in terms of strategic considerations for free countries such as Canada, for NATO countries in particular. Yet the dramatic new realities we face, particularly on the strategic front, have not in any way been reflected by the government.

Let us start from first principles. The first responsibility of a national and federal government is the maintenance and protection of national sovereignty. It is not one among competing objectives. It is not some nice to do thing that finds its way onto the list of government programs. It is the first principal responsibility of a national government.

There are dozens, probably hundreds of programs administered by the federal government at taxpayers' expense where the federal government has no constitutional responsibility. Yet it has neglected its principal, its first, its primary responsibility year after year, and not just this government but its predecessor governments going back nearly four decades.

When the second world war ended Canada had the third largest navy in the world. The Royal Canadian Air Force was regarded as perhaps the most respected military air force in the world. Our ground troops had punched far beyond their weight in the ground

war in Europe and in military actions in the Pacific theatre in that war. We finished that terrible five year conflict proud as a nation of the tremendous contribution we had made, marshalling our national resources, tragically sacrificing so much Canadian blood but for a noble objective.

For the past 30 years, and particularly under the Liberal government for the past 8 or 9 years, we have seen that proud military tradition and our ability to do our moral duty eroded by indifference, eroded by the wrong priorities, eroded by a federal government that does not recognize the safety and security of its citizens and the protection of its national sovereignty as its primary objective.

Between the years 1994 and 1999 the government exercised a modest expenditure restraint program. Mainly it raised revenues and raised taxes to address the crushing deficit, but it did restrain program spending in certain areas. Again, however, the way in which it cut reflected its complete perversion of priorities because it cut defence spending by over 20% at a time when non-defence department program spending was cut by only 3%.

What this indicates is that the first primary responsibility of the federal government was cut most deeply and the lower priority areas which are not even contemplated in the constitution as federal responsibilities were barely touched at all. This is the world turned upside down in terms of public responsibilities.

Madam Speaker, I neglected to mention that I will be splitting my time.

We are left in the regrettable situation whereby Canada reinvests less than half among the average of NATO countries in defence expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product. Our 19 NATO allies on average spend 2.1% of their gross domestic product in defence of national sovereignty whereas Canada spends only 1.2% of GDP, giving us the second lowest defence expenditure in NATO, ahead of only the tiny duchy of Luxembourg with a military force of 800 people.

We have become, notwithstanding the tremendously hardworking, skilled, dedicated and patriotic people in our military force, a token player at best in the military alliance in which we, as one of the world's largest economies, the most prosperous nations, have a moral responsibility to be a bulwark in.

● (1705)

We have the seventh largest gross domestic product in the world, a great blessing for a small country, and an enormously prosperous standard of living and national wealth. However, while we have the seventh largest gross domestic product, we have the twenty-sixth largest defence investment and we are 18th of out of the 19 NATO countries.

This is a complete betrayal of our national tradition as a country that is willing to invest resources to at least do our share, if not more than our share, to defend democracy and peace here and abroad.

Look at the particulars raised by some of my colleagues earlier in the debate that have been discussed at the defence committee.

*Routine Proceedings*

For instance, according to the 1994 defence white paper, we are supposed to be able to field at least a brigade of 5,500 ground troops abroad at a high state of readiness in a conventional conflict. It is absolutely clear that we do not have the capacity to do so right now, according to every expert in our defence.

Only 83 of our 120-some fighter craft CF-18s are operational and virtually none of those fighter craft have modern, contemporary radar and electronics equipment systems which are critical, indispensable, to engaging in modern air combat.

We have no lift capacity for our ground troops. Even if we had 5,500 troops that we could put on the ground at a high state of readiness, in the words of retired Major-General Lewis MacKenzie we would have to hitch a ride and take a taxi from American aircraft in order to transport our troops to a theatre of conflict.

Our much celebrated frigate fleet cannot even put to sea simultaneously. Often one sees those frigates tied up in Halifax or Esquimalt because they do not even have a budget for fuel to operate for the course of an entire month.

This is an embarrassment and it is a humiliation to the men and women who risk their lives to defend our national sovereignty.

Ten years ago, we had a defence force smaller than our share of 90,000 people in our military, now down to 55,000. We have essentially halved our commitment. We have done this, I believe, because it reflects a philosophical attitude of the Liberal government that investments in national defence and protection of sovereignty are not a priority, that it is a frivolous occupation of would be warmongers and that the second war was the war to end all wars. That was folly between 1918 and 1939. Equally it is folly today, as we have seen from last week's events.

Regrettably, I heard the defence minister virtually dismiss out of hand in question period the other day the notion that there would be a conventional war as a result of the attack on America and the free world last week. When pressed as to why he made this assumption he had no clear answer.

I would like to close by saying that we may very well, as a free nation in NATO, find ourselves in the midst of not just one conventional conflict but potentially serial conventional conflicts over the coming years. We do not know, but it is our moral responsibility to be prepared for that eventuality and to do so means that we must fundamentally reorder the priorities of the federal government to at least do our share.

To do that, even to have the average military expenditure amongst NATO countries would mean a \$9 billion increase in our defence budget. That is a huge line item, but we must begin to think about the magnitude of reordering our priorities, to do our share and to do our military men and women proud as well as preserving our rich tradition as a defender of democracy and freedom.

• (1710)

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to ask my colleague a question. I want him to lend us his knowledge of this issue along with his knowledge of the finances of this country.

This summer I had the opportunity to go on a resupply mission with CANFORCE 85 and 86 air commander Rick Harper on a C-135 Hercules. That airplane was 35 years old, with 40,000 hours on it. It was twice past its life expectancy. That mission on a weekly basis is vital to keeping the people at Alert Bay and our troops in Thule supplied.

To me it seems bizarre that we would do something like that. I could not get over how tremendously skilled the people were and how faithful they were to their purpose.

I would just like to ask my colleague a question. When he talks about priorities, where in this budget of Canada's would he find the money to replace this C-135 Hercules with a C-17 that would take care of that job and give these people equipment they can work with and feel proud to operate?

• (1715)

**Mr. Jason Kenney:** Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the government could find the resources necessary to provide that equipment and so much more equipment that is necessary by reallocating resources as I suggested to reflect what our national priorities ought to be, particularly at this time of crisis.

In the past our party has recommended at least an immediate additional funding commitment of \$1 billion to the Department of National Defence in order to procure the sort of equipment to which my hon. friend refers. We would find those resources for national defence and additional resources on top of that by taking those dollars away from frivolous, low priority programs.

We are unable to provide the kind of equipment my friend is talking about, yet the Minister of Industry is speculating on creating a \$3 billion program to subsidize access to high speed broadband Internet in Canada. That is not a federal responsibility. It is a responsibility of the marketplace.

Or there is the Minister of Multiculturalism, who just spent \$4 million in tax dollars sending professional members of lobby groups and friends of hers to the outrageous Durban conference in South Africa to stay in four star and five star hotels at taxpayers' expense and involve themselves in a disgraceful gabfest surrounded by anti-Semitism in various forms.

Those are the kinds of spending priorities reflected by the government. Those are dollars spent on corporate welfare: economic development programs that do not work and do not create jobs, and handouts to Liberal lobby groups. These are dollars that could be going to our highest national priority, defence.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am entering rather quickly into the debate on military procurement. There is one question that arises due to the circumstances of September 11, and that is with regard to the Shearwater air base in my riding.

*Routine Proceedings*

Very soon a decision will be made by DND to divest itself of the 1,100 acres of land on which Shearwater is located. The problem is not that it is virgin land or land that cannot be used. There is an extremely long runway on that air base. For years I have been trying to protect that base from any kind of downloading or off-loading, because it not only represents 1,200 direct jobs in my riding, it also represents a jewel in the crown of the military infrastructure. It has been there for 83 years.

We never know what may happen down the road and heaven forbid that there may be serious long term consequences as a result of the tragedy on September 11. My question for the hon. member is, due to the circumstances surrounding September 11, would it not be prudent for the Minister of National Defence to hold off on any divestiture of land similar to Shearwater until further decisions can be made? Would he not agree that would be a wise move at this time?

**Mr. Jason Kenney:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. friend for his question. I do not know the particulars surrounding the Shearwater base, but he makes a reasonable point. As we are now clearly having to reassess our military priorities and expenditures, I think it would be reasonable to suggest at least a moratorium on further base closings.

I do think, however, that where we have bases our procurement policies in principle should be based on the operational needs of our forces, to create maximum operational efficiency for the forces. Shearwater may very well meet that criterion. I would support the hon. member in delaying any closures until we can see in this new environment the need for bases of that nature.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the concurrence motion on the government's response to the defence committee's report. I have seen a lot of government responses to committee reports and have seen several reports put out by the defence committee.

I have felt in the past that some of the responses were weak, but frankly I have never seen a weaker response by a government to a report of a committee made up of all parties in the House. I have never seen a weaker response than the one we had to the procurement report. It is completely unacceptable.

It is clear that the government does not hold national defence as a top priority. The Canadian forces are the largest security force we have in the country. Yet we see the kind of weak response we got to the committee's report on procurement. It is completely unacceptable.

When we see this kind of response we know the government does not believe we need a strong national defence. If it did it would give a serious response to a report like this one. It can be well demonstrated that the government does not place national security and defence as a high priority.

We can start with the commitment to the number of personnel in the forces. Since the Liberal government took office the number of personnel in the Canadian armed forces has dropped from 90,000 to 55,000 and is still dropping. According to a report put out a few months ago by the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies the number will reach 42,000 before the government can stop it. It will have gone from 90,000 down to 42,000. The government is more

than halving armed forces personnel. That is completely unacceptable.

I hope and pray the government finds a way to stop this rapid slide. We are losing some of our best people. This kind of drop in personnel shows a lack of commitment to national defence.

The second point is funding. Money is not everything but it could certainly be spent much better. There is a great need for better management and in some cases better leadership in our defence department. We need these things. The money we have could be quite a bit better spent.

Some of the contracting is suspect. Some of it, such as single source contracting and that kind of thing, is completely unacceptable. We are paying more than we should for equipment in some cases. We know what happened with the Sea King replacements. The Liberal government cost the taxpayer money by backing out of the deal put in place by the former government. We cannot afford to lose that kind of money. In spite of all that, the government has cut spending to national defence by 30% in real terms since it took office. That is the kind of commitment the Liberals have to our national security.

What is the top priority of the federal government? What should it be? It should be the security of our nation. It should be the protection of the citizens of Canada. Yet the government has cut military personnel from 90,000 to 55,000 and it is still sliding. The government cut the budget by 30% in real terms.

In his last report the auditor general said the government was \$30 billion short of meeting its procurement commitments. In terms of procurement it will be \$30 billion short by 2012.

Because the government is not planning and does not put a high priority on defence, it will be \$30 billion short by 2012. Does that sound like a government that puts a high priority on the security of the nation and on national defence, the largest security force the country has? It does not. That is a sad commentary.

I do not say this with any glee because the issue should be non-partisan. It is too important to be a partisan issue. I am looking to all members of the defence committee from all parties. I think members will see the importance of this now that we have had this terrible act of terrorism.

● (1720)

I think members will agree to debate the issue in depth and have a good discussion. Hopefully we will get a meaningful response from the government on national defence. We cannot wait any more. It is too late to deal with the situation in terms of immediate reaction.

I asked the minister today what Canada would be able to contribute to a NATO force striking back against terrorism. That was my first question and he gave no answer.

I asked the minister a second question. The minister always refers to the F-18s and what we did in Kosovo. He points to this as our great strength. I asked him how he would find pilots to fly the F-18s when we have lost more than half our experienced pilots who flew in Kosovo.

Our government has allowed it to happen. It has allowed the airlines to steal our best pilots. They did not leave because of money.

I did a survey in *Esprit de Corps* magazine which I have not yet talked about in public. It asked why people have left the forces over the last several years. They said they did not leave because of money or low pay. They left because they felt the government did not believe their role was an important one. They felt the government did not believe national defence to be a high priority when it comes to the security of our nation.

We have wonderful men and women serving in our forces. They want to be recognized as playing an extremely important role. We have among the best in the world. We truly do. All they want is to be recognized as carrying out an important function. If the government recognized that it would give them proper equipment so that when we sent them to the front lines they would have the best. Right now they do not.

If the government respected the work these people do it would treat them well when they came back injured whether their injuries were physical or psychological. Post-traumatic stress disorder has become a terrific problem. We are losing a lot of our good men and women because of it.

A common complaint is that the government does not do enough to help soldiers who come back injured. Whether it is a mental or a physical injury makes no difference. It sends a message to the men and women who serve that we do not care, so of course they leave.

The air force probably has the highest morale of any of our three forces. Yet in spite of that they are leaving. Most of our experienced pilots who could take part in an operation like Kosovo are gone. The men and women who are left are extremely good but do not have the experience to step in and play a meaningful role.

What do members of the government think the answer will be from our NATO allies and friends like the United States? What will the reaction be when they ask for a serious commitment and we say we cannot give them one? What do government members think the reaction will be?

An extremely important conference of NATO parliamentarians will be held in Ottawa in early October. While attending these conferences during the past four years I have consistently heard that Canada is losing respect among our NATO allies because we can no longer meet our commitments. That is a sad commentary.

It is time the government took national security and national defence seriously. It can start by giving a serious response to the procurement report. Everyone from all parties recognizes that the response the government has given is unacceptable.

I call on the government to give a serious response to the procurement report as soon as possible. I believe that is what all members of the House want.

• (1725)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my question is for my colleague on the defence committee. As he well knows, the supply chain will now be under review under what is called alternate service deliveries. The

### *Private Members' Business*

Government of Canada will lose control of supplies going into our military bases throughout the country and overseas in times of crisis.

Does the member not agree that it would be prudent for the government to delay any alternate service deliveries until situations cool off in the near future?

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Madam Speaker, I almost hate to agree with a member of the New Democratic Party when it comes to defence issues but truly this is too serious an issue to make it a partisan issue. I do agree with the member that it is time to take a really good look at our defence issues from one end to the other and really determine what this country needs in terms of national defence.

I think it is time for a new white paper but not one that gives the government an excuse to reduce spending or to lower its commitment. I am talking about a white paper that will redefine what we really need to meet our commitments both at home and abroad to make Canada a more secure country.

Until we do that I think we should hold off on continuing to put certain things into the hands of the private sector. Certain things really are better left in the hands of the military. Let us have a good look at that before we continue with it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** It being 5.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

---

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[English]

### GOPHER CONTROL

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should compensate farmers for damage done to livestock and crops by gophers resulting from the banning of effective concentration of strychnine thereby removing the ability of farmers to control gophers on their lands.

He said: Madam Speaker, at a time like this with the tragedies in New York, Washington and near Philadelphia, I hesitate to even bring forth this motion dealing with control of gophers. It seems in some ways so trivial compared to the extremely serious issue of this terrorist threat. If this had not been scheduled ahead of time, I would be calling on the government to focus strictly on national security over these next weeks and months because we do have a serious problem in that area. We have to focus the efforts of the House of parliament on national security.

However, private member's motions and bills are scheduled well ahead of time, and this motion is important. We will see how important it is when some of my colleagues speak on it. We saw this by the size of some of the public meetings which were held in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

*Private Members' Business*

Back in 1994 the government removed the effective concentration of strychnine which was used in controlling gophers, or Richardson's ground squirrels, from the hands of farmers and others who really needed it to control this pest.

To get an idea of what this problem really entails, gophers cost farmers losses of tens of millions of dollars every year at a time when farmers cannot afford the losses.

A terrible drought has hit farmers from one end of the country to another. Because of unfair trade practices, prices have been driven down, in grains in particular. Farmers in many of the grain sectors are hanging on by their fingernails. Quite frankly, the government has not taken the removal of these unfair trade practices seriously. As a result, Canadian farmers have been producing at a disadvantage. However, this has also caused many farmers to lose their land in spite of being very good managers and good farmers. We have also lost some of our best farmers, in the grain sector in particular.

Gophers do not only affect farmers in the area of crops, they also affect farmers with livestock. Acres of pastures have been destroyed. Farmers have told me that they have had large pasture areas completely destroyed by gophers to a point where the cows cannot even graze. Furthermore, there has been damage to livestock through broken legs. People riding horses through pastures with gopher holes and the badgers that follow have sustained terrible injuries.

This is an important issue from a dollars and cents point of view. It is an important issue in terms of animal and human safety.

I was first elected in 1993. Since 1994 I have been working on trying to get the government to restore the proper concentration of strychnine and to allow farmers to mix it with their grain so that they can control gophers. I have had bills and motions on this issue before the House on two or three occasions. I have focused and concentrated on this. I believe that was partly the reason we had a temporary registration on strychnine in a controlled way in the province of Alberta this past summer. It was that important that an emergency registration was put in place last summer. However, farmers say that is not good enough. They need it indefinitely into the future.

Unfortunately the province of Saskatchewan did not manage to get this until later and only in a very restricted way. Farmers from Saskatchewan were looking enviously across the border into Alberta, wondering why they could not have an emergency registration like the farmers in Alberta.

None of this is the solution to the problem. The solution is for the government to restore into the hands of farmers and others who have to control pests, like gophers, an acceptable concentration of strychnine which will save farmers tens of millions of dollars.

• (1735)

Through an order paper question back in 1995, I asked for all documentation from government and to government dealing with this issue. I wanted to know what led to the outlawing of this high concentration of strychnine. It was shocking. I was given a one inch thick pile of paper.

One would expect to have found a study which would have led to the conclusion that it is dangerous for farmers to be using strychnine.

There was no such study. Then I thought that I would at least find that the government had seen a lot of cases where pests not targeted had been affected. That was not the case.

This important tool that farmer's desperately needed, the absence of which cost tens of millions of dollars a year, was taken from the market based on complaints from one environmental group. It was a completely unreasonable lobby on the part of a small environmental group, which was not even one of our major environmental groups. I was really shocked to see that. I was also shocked to see that this had gone through the process of the federal government even with some involvement from the provinces.

Farmers are in such need of having this product restored that they are willing to go to the extent of taking a special half day safety course on the use of the product. They are willing to have experts come in and show them how to handle the product to ensure that only the target species would be affected because this is important to them. However, the government has allowed this to fall on deaf ears.

What is shocking to me as well is I have asked to make bills and motions votable on many occasions and not once has that been allowed. It goes beyond any reason why a motion or a bill brought forth by a private member for debate would not be votable. It is long past the time in a modern British style democracy when any private member motion would not be votable. This has to happen.

I know the government will not act on this. What does it mean to the government to have a few more farmers going broke? A few tens of millions of dollars a year in extra costs to farmers due to crop losses does not seem to mean a lot. We have seen the government's response to the agriculture crisis in the past. It does not seem to be that important, so I do not expect that it will be acted on this time, although I am somewhat hopeful because the province of Alberta and other provinces are now stepping in and telling the federal government that we need this back on a permanent basis.

While I have not seen any reaction from the federal government in the past, maybe the pressure from the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in particular will force the government to reconsider this foolish move it made seven years ago and restore to farmers a concentration of strychnine of 2% or higher so they can effectively control Richardson's ground squirrels and gophers. I believe this is important.

Again, I would like to express that I have some concern talking about this issue when the House should be focusing strictly and in a serious way on our national security. With what happened in New York and Washington and finding out that the targets were much broader than publicly known, we have to focus on that.

However, this issue is important to people in my constituency and it is important to the farmers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and parts of Manitoba.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1740)

This is important. It is important to the farmers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and in parts of Manitoba. I hope for once the government will respond to what is really important to farmers. It has taken too many tools away, including the tools for farmers to market freely into other countries, which has cost farmers dearly. Let the government at least restore this one small tool which will save farmers tens of millions of dollars.

I would like to ask for unanimous consent to make this motion votable.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to point out to the hon. member for Lakeland that if he is so intent on what the House should be debating he certainly had the option to withdraw this motion but he has obviously chosen not to do so. However, having said that, I am very happy to respond on behalf of the Government of Canada.

In addressing the motion before the House regarding gopher control measures, I would first point out, not only for the information of the member for Lakeland but all other hon. members in the House, that the government has not banned the effective concentration of strychnine. The concentration of strychnine found in today's ready to use products has been analyzed and found to be the same or actually greater than that found previously in baits prepared by mixing the liquid strychnine concentrate with farm available grain.

What has changed is that since 1992 only the much safer ready to use strychnine product is available. The liquid strychnine concentrate for use in the formulation of strychnine baits on farms has been withdrawn from the market. The use of liquid strychnine concentrate was withdrawn because the number of strychnine poisonings of non-target pets and wildlife associated with its use constituted a very significant risk.

I would also like to explain that the action to limit the availability of liquid strychnine concentrate products undertaken by the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the then pesticide regulatory body, was taken under the Pest Control Products Act or the PCPA as it is known. A pre-market assessment of a pesticide carried out by the PCPA establishes that the product has safety, merit and value, which includes determining that it is effective.

Registration under the PCPA does not however guarantee 100% effectiveness under all conditions. For example, some organisms develop resistance to certain pesticides over time where products could cease to be effective if climate conditions change. Because the action limiting liquid strychnine concentrate availability was authorized under the PCPA and the issue of compensation is not addressed in that act, there is no existing mechanism to compensate farmers for damage done to their livestock and crops as a result of gophers.

However the government does recognize that gopher control has been a very difficult problem for western farmers in recent years and is working actively with the provinces and with producers to find a solution.

When it was suggested that the level of strychnine in ready to use baits did not meet the guarantee of 0.4% concentration, an investigation was launched by Health Canada's pest management regulatory agency. The investigation involved visits to formulating plants and sampling and analyses of the product. The results showed that ready to use baits did meet the registered guarantee.

From 1998-99 strychnine registrants were required to submit quality control results on several batches of their product to the PMRA for review prior to its product being distributed into the marketplace for the upcoming new season.

Since the strychnine present in the ready to use bait has been clearly shown to be of a concentration adequate for the control of gophers, it has been suggested that other factors, such as baiting procedures, environmental conditions affecting the bait itself and lack of palatability, might be responsible for poor performance of the ready to use strychnine bait.

To help address these possibilities the PMRA has taken a number of steps. It upgraded the labels of all registered strychnine products to provide clearer instruction on the need to carefully locate and time bait placements to ensure optimum performance. These use instructions were developed in consultation with the provinces.

The PMRA also provided research permits to Alberta agriculture and the Alberta Cattlemen's Association to research the palatability of bait, the timing for bait placement and the question of whether mixing bait fresh using a liquid concentrate would in fact be more effective.

The results of the trials done in 2000 have just been received by the PMRA as of June 1 and they are now under review. There is not yet significant evidence to suggest or require that registrants change the bait of their ready to use products.

● (1745)

The seriousness of some of the gopher problems in some parts of Alberta this year has reached such proportions that the provincial government has declared an emergency situation. To meet this emergency, the Alberta provincial government has requested an emergency registration to allow it to use the liquid strychnine concentrate for on farm formulation of bait in those areas that have been identified as having a severe infestation of gophers.

The PMRA has granted this registration for this season only. This liquid concentrate will be used under a highly restricted access program with the following conditions.

First, the sale and distribution of the 2% strychnine concentrate by the registrant is restricted to agricultural field men who are authorized by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development for that purpose.

Second, agricultural field men can sell this product only to persons who are commercial agriculturalists.

*Private Members' Business*

Third, each agricultural field man who sells the product must maintain a record of the transaction, including the name, address, and signature of the purchaser, along with the quantity of product purchased.

Finally, any product sold must be mixed by or mixed under the direct supervision of an agricultural field man authorized by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

On behalf of Canadians the government has taken a justifiably cautious approach to bringing back the liquid concentrate of strychnine, given its very hazardous nature. Strychnine has a very high and acute toxicity. It acts quickly on the central nervous system, causing frequent violent convulsions which eventually lead to death through respiratory failures. There is no effective antidote for this poison.

I emphasize that the original decision on strychnine registration and restriction was not taken lightly. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada recognized that these changes would involve some increased cost to users who previously had used their own grain for bait.

Prior to that withdrawal an extensive two year negotiation was carried out with those provinces where strychnine products are largely used. Those provinces are Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This consultation involved the western forum and the then Canadian Association of Pest Control Officials.

At this time I would like to clarify my use of the word gopher. Although it is not scientifically correct I am primarily using this term to describe the Richardson's ground squirrel.

Many farmers consider a gopher by any name to be a pest. A gopher may eat a wide variety of grasses and broad leafed plants and compete with livestock for forage. The mounds of soil they excavate from their burrows can further damage crops, as well as livestock and machinery.

Due to an increase in the gopher population over the last number of years as a result of warm, dry conditions and a mild, dry spring, this year the number of gophers in Alberta and Saskatchewan is very high indeed. In Alberta there are 10 to 15 cases of strychnine poisonings per year, according to the provincial Agri-Food Surveillance Systems Laboratory in Edmonton. This number has been steadily declining over the past seven years.

In Saskatchewan 20 to 25 strychnine dog poisonings and occasional strychnine wildlife poisonings are confirmed each year according to the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. I emphasize that poisoning wildlife and domestic animals using bait laced with strychnine is illegal not only under the Pest Control Products Act but also under the cruelty to animals section of the criminal code.

Canada is not alone in having taken action on strychnine. All above ground uses of strychnine have been prohibited in the United States since 1988. It is illegal to use strychnine for pest control in most European countries and its use is prohibited by the Bern convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats.

The Canadian government has acted prudently in the matter of restricting the availability of liquid strychnine concentrate for use in

the formulation of strychnine baits on farms. With the co-operation of provinces it has moved to protect the health and safety of Canadians along with their environment.

When the effectiveness of the ready to use strychnine bait came into question, the government acted quickly and responsibly and took the actions I have indicated to address the concerns of farmers.

● (1750)

If the field trials now under way demonstrate a clear need in the future for the use of a liquid concentrate strychnine, the PMRA will work with its provincial partners to determine how to make fresh bait products available. That is the position of the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on this motion which, as the previous speaker pointed out, is talking about the need for higher levels of strychnine to control the gopher population.

When I first realized I would be speaking about this matter my heart immediately went out to the most well known gopher in Canada, Gainer the Gopher from Parkbeg, Saskatchewan, and his cousin, Leonard. For those who are not fans of the Canadian Football League, he is probably the most famous mascot in the CFL. I wondered what would happen to poor Gainer under these circumstances but then the way that the Roughriders have been playing for the last month he is probably thinking of taking it directly himself.

The debate is about the level of strychnine and the concern, as has been pointed out by previous speakers, is about a reduction in the potency or percentage of strychnine in the pre-mix, whether or not the 5% has gone to 2% or to 0.4% as is alleged by the member who moved the motion.

We too have some environmental concerns that were indicated by the government spokesperson. We are concerned about what has happened to the population of swift foxes and bald eagles over the last decade as well as burrowing owls which are very important in the Moose Jaw area. There was a story in the local newspaper within the last month about how the number of pairs of burrowing owls had declined rapidly in recent years. Dog poisonings have also been mentioned. In the volume of work in this area a couple of suicides were reported. All of these seem to be impacted by the use of strychnine.

The government has been prudent in reducing the way in which the bait has been used with no above ground bait stations in recent years. Farmers have to put the bait in the ground at least 18 inches. They have to bury the carcasses so that eagles, dogs and other animals will not be contaminated and spread the problem.

I have no intention of minimizing the issue. I note that the member from the North Battleford area is in the House. I know it is a much bigger issue in that area of the province than it is in the Moose Jaw and Regina area that I happen to represent. I know from reading that 100 gophers will eat as much pasture in a day as sheep, and that 370 of them will eat as much as a cow. I also know that predators such as badgers that go after the gophers can cause severe damage to livestock.

*Private Members' Business*

There have been injuries, as the member for Lakeland indicated, because of the lack of controls, but as I have tried to indicate there have been some injuries as a result of overuse of strychnine in the recent past.

The government member indicated that the federal government was working actively with the provinces and farmers to find solutions. He mentioned federal labelling, research permits and made reference to bait. I did not hear, however, what the government was doing about developing less lethal products for the environment at large that would be more effective for the problem that farmers are having with gophers.

The point I am trying to make is that the overpopulation of gophers seems to be a cyclical thing as is the case with a lot of wild animals.

• (1755)

A few years ago we had stories in Saskatchewan newspapers about how gophers had virtually disappeared from our highways and byways. People were not seeing very many of them. Obviously now in some sections of the province and certainly in the province of Alberta they are back and they are back with a vengeance.

I would have appreciated hearing whether the government or the Pest Management Regulatory Agency was doing anything about developing alternatives to strychnine. I note that in Saskatchewan a farmer has developed an anhydrous ammonia vapour that he believes has been very effective in eliminating gophers. Although it is not licensed or registered by the PMRA, farmers know that anhydrous ammonia is a principal ingredient in nitrogen fertilizer and it is certainly registered for use in that vein.

I would be interested to know what the government is doing to develop alternatives to a recognized poison such as strychnine.

It is a serious problem. There are rural municipalities in both Saskatchewan and Alberta that have declared themselves disaster areas as a result of the overpopulation at the moment.

In the final analysis we have to be very cautious. We have to take the precautionary principle on this so that we do no harm until we ensure that we can do no harm. We should be very careful and very leery about the use of this product.

I remind members, in the words of David Suzuki, that the human race is the most predatory animal in the history of the world. We have a phobia about eliminating anything and everything that gets in our way. Some day that is going to come back and cost us in a very large way.

This is a problem and I do not want to minimize it, but I think we need to and should look at alternatives. The issue has been around for 10 years. The government has absolutely failed to develop alternatives that would work as a replacement for liquid strychnine.

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I rise today knowing full well that the private members' business item was brought forward before the events of last Tuesday. I echo the comments of the member for Lakeland that this does unfortunately seem somewhat insignificant in the big picture of things. However business must go on in the House, it does go on in the world and it goes on in the fields and the farms of western

Canada. Therefore I will not be as sanctimonious as some members who suggested that it should have been pulled, because it should not have. It should be brought forward because it was a piece of business that was meant to come forward at that time and I will speak to the issue before us today, Motion No. M-13.

I talked to the member for Lakeland because the motion itself is not specifically to increase the concentration of liquid strychnine from a .4% concentration to a 2% or a 5% concentration. The motion suggests that there should be compensation given to producers who have suffered through a rather large proliferation of the rodent, the Richardson ground squirrel, particularly over the last year. The motion says that because of damage done to livestock and crops, farmers should be compensated. That has not been the tenet of this discussion. It seems that we are going on about the concentration or the use of concentrated liquid strychnine and I will speak to that.

First, I should suggest that I would not support the motion based on a compensatory package. I do not think that is where we should be heading. I do appreciate where the discussion has gone with having other alternatives and certainly perhaps even the reinstatement of the 2% solution so to speak.

Canadian producers and Canadian farmers are not pesticide crazy. They do not simply use pesticides on every animal that is in their jurisdiction. That is not the case.

As a matter of fact, Canadian producers are very cautious when it comes to pest control and certainly using pesticides. We are probably as good as any other jurisdiction in the world. When Canadian producers come forward and suggest that there have to be other solutions, they are doing so simply because they have run completely out of solutions and options and would like to see something put back into place.

It was mentioned earlier that since 1992 the 2% solution has been reduced to .4%. It has been proven and obviously the proof is in the pudding. If we went out to western Canadian farm yards, pastures and fields, we would see that the pest control program is not working. It has been a very dry year in western Canada and across the country and be assured that there are more pests right now than there have ever been. That is why we have to look at some sort of a control.

There are some options, but they are difficult ones. It is obvious to anyone who has ever trapped a gopher that he or she can get a few of them but it is very difficult to get a lot. We talked about gopher hunting. That in itself does not eradicate the problem, so we have to look at other options.

The best option right now is the suggestion that we go back to a special regulation for the PMRA. There was a special call for the use of the 2% solution and it was granted for this year. An extension of that would be the first step as to where we should be going.

I do not think most urban Canadians fully appreciate the concerns that producers have. It was mentioned earlier that gophers can consume quite a substantial amount of product. To a farmer and a producer, that is their livelihood. They put seeds in the ground and they harvest those seeds in the fall. The cash they generate out of the sale of that commodity is what keeps them and their families going. That is an animal that can reduce those yields.

*Private Members' Business*

It has been suggested that up to \$1,000 per quarter section of crop could be consumed. A thousand dollars per quarter section seems to be the number. It has been suggested to me by the author of the motion that it is higher. It may well be. Unfortunately, I do not have those numbers. They have not been forthcoming. It would nice to have the actual numbers.

• (1800)

That is why when it was suggested that there be a compensation package, I would suggest that it is hard to compensate when you do not have a real handle on what the real number is. It can vary between jurisdictions.

Let us assume it is \$1,000, perhaps higher, per quarter section. That is only the financial impact. There is a financial impact as well on cattle producers. I do not know how many people in the House have actually walked through a pasture before but I can say that when cattle do walk or run through a pasture there is a terrible opportunity for them to trip, to fall or to break a leg in a gopher hole. It happens on a regular basis. With the price of cattle today, that poses a substantial financial impact on the producer.

This is going to come as a real shock. Even in the urban sectors there is an impact when there are too many of these rodents in the schoolyards, the soccer fields, and the baseball diamonds. They have to be controlled in these environments as well. This affects the urbanites, who, heaven forbid, seem to be more important at this point in time than a lot of the agricultural producers.

There are other options. There are some interesting innovations out there. I am not going to blame the government specifically, but I do think it is terribly regulatory in its demeanour. The government likes to regulate. Heaven forbid that someone should have the opportunity to put something in place themselves without having to be told to by the government. The government has decided that this should not be done for producers and unless it can tell the producers what to do, then it is obviously not good for them. That is a government ideological philosophy which unfortunately I do not think is going to change. I wish it would in this case, but unfortunately that is the way the government operates.

Other options are being developed. One which I mention tongue in cheek is a thing called the gophinator. It puts anhydrous ammonia in the gopher hole in the ground. It has not been approved yet. I do know whether some of my producers have used it, but they have some concerns about it as well. I do not know if the member for Lakeland has heard about it, but it is a rather interesting innovation. Producers and businesses should be looking at other ways when trying to control the gopher population.

I wish this were a votable motion and that we could go back to a simple solution with a 2% concentration. It seems that solution would suffice for the time being but that is not going to be the case because the government is not going to allow the motion to be votable.

I hope that we do not get involved in a compensation package and it seems that we have gone off of that. I believe that the motion as it reads now will not be supported by my party. Certainly I think we could, if it were changed to incorporate the concentrated strychnine.

In closing, I would just like to say that it seems to be an insignificant issue.

As I said in my opening comments, this is the first time I have had an opportunity to stand in the House since we returned, and since the events of Tuesday past. On behalf of my constituents in Brandon—Souris, I would like to pass on our condolences to the victims, the families, the firefighters, the rescue workers, and all of the people not only in the United States but in the free world who have been affected so severely by the events of last Tuesday. Please accept those comments from the Progressive Conservative/Democratic Representative Coalition.

• (1805)

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to discuss the motion brought forward by my colleague from Lakeland.

A lot of verbiage has gone on about should we compensate, should we not compensate, what the levels should be and so on. The bottom line for producers is that we do not have anything that will do the job properly. There is culpability with the federal government and provincial governments as well. Some of their departments recommended doing away with strychnine in the way it used to be handled and maybe that was not all wrong.

The end result is that the gopher populations have had eight or nine years of absolutely free run. There was some discussion as to the amount of damage that could be caused and a figure of \$1,000 for a quarter section was bandied about. The damage is actually more in the neighbourhood of \$16,000 on a quarter section, or \$100 an acre.

When we talk of forage crops and so on, an average infestation of gophers costs around \$120 per acre. Those 120 hungry little guys can do away with almost a tonne of good forage a year. Right now that forage is worth \$100 a tonne. That puts the damage across that field at \$16,000. No farmer or rancher can afford that type of a hit. No one has that type of infestation on a long term basis to that degree. There are some isolated quarters in my riding that are that bad, but they are not in forage; they are in a pasture type of thing. People are usually able to pasture 50 or 60 cows in that application. This year they could not put any on it. Because of the drought and so on and the gopher problem which compounded that, it was useless ground. The taxes are still due on that.

There is a lot of discussion on the type of bait that was taken away, the strychnine and so on. There were reasons for doing that. The non-target species was a big thing. There are some products that have been mentioned, and I will get into that later, which do not target the non-target species.

A big problem was found with the old strychnine, or the new stuff that was brought out—it was called new but it was reintroduced. It was weaker, but there was a shelf life to it that nobody even considered. A lot of the baits that had been out there in the last little while were five and six years old and the grain product that was mixed with it had gone mouldy. These little guys are persnickety eaters. No animal in the wild that has a choice between lush forage and mouldy grain is going to eat the mouldy grain. They bury it in the dirt regardless of how the bait is placed.

*Private Members' Business*

Farmers and ranchers in my part of the country and across Canada are stewards of the land. They were environmentalists long before the term was even known. They do not hurt their own land. They know they need that productivity year after year. The very conception that they do not know how to mix the bait or do not know how to handle it is ridiculous.

My grandmother mixed bait for years. She died at 96 years of age. The strychnine did not get her; it was a lot of other things, but at 96 I guess she had a pretty full life.

The problem with the baits as we know them is their availability. There is never enough when we need them. There is a very small window of opportunity to place those baits. Gophers hibernate again during the summer. The gophers we see on the surface are the young that come out and roam around and the odd female, but the males tend to hibernate for the summer. There is no opportunity to get them at all. An average female will live to be four years of age and an average male will easily live a year. They are pretty tough on their males.

On an average piece of ground with average growth rates, they will have a litter of five or six young in a season. On good forage with good feed they will double that. There will be twice that many. In a lush situation there will be nine or ten little guys running around. Again that ups their amount of consumption.

It has become a huge problem in the eight or nine years that we have had no proper poisons available to keep the problem down. They have had free run. That is where the government's culpability comes in and we are asking for compensation, and I think rightly so. It should be added to the crop insurance lists that cover wildlife damage, ducks, geese, deer, elk and other types of wildlife that were covered for a time. Some provinces still have it, some do not. In Saskatchewan it has been really short and hard to get but we need this type of coverage added. The crop insurance program is a joint federal-provincial application. Somebody puts in the money, somebody administers it and they are always arguing over who does what and the farmers end up on the short end of the stick.

Some of the counties in Alberta applied for emergency registration. They knew that the only thing they could do quickly in the short term was go back to what had worked before and that is strychnine. They were granted the opportunity to get the 2% strychnine that is fresh, comes in a little bottle and is worth about \$8. When that is mixed up, the amount that each farmer is allowed to use in my area ends up to be about a 20 litre pail.

● (1810)

By the time it is mixed up it has cost the farmer about \$150. If there is a major infestation, the pail of bait that the farmer is allowed to get will do between five and ten acres, depending on the infestation of gophers. It ends up costing roughly \$15 an acre to do that. If a farmer has a problem on 1,000 acres, he or she would be looking at a \$15,000 investment, plus the time to do it. In a lot of instances it is just not feasible to do that along with all the other chores that are required.

It was mentioned earlier that we need to look for other solutions. One solution that has been developed comes from my riding. Maze Innovation from Unity, Saskatchewan has invented what is called the

gophinator. It has all the CSA and ULC stamps and all that good stuff to apply an anhydrous ammonia, which is basically a fertilizer, into the gopher holes and it gases them. There are a lot of pluses to that application. For starters, it is much more humane than strychnine, which should speak well to everyone. It does not target the non-target species. It only goes after the gopher in the hole. There is nothing left on the surface for the hawks, eagles or coyotes to drag away.

When we talk about other animals, we did a short study this summer. We had a meeting sponsored by Senator Herb Sparrow, from North Battleford. Herb is actually a recognized environmental conservationist farmer. He has actually won an award to that end, and good for Herb. He sponsored a meeting that over 300 farmers, ranchers, municipal people and others attended this summer. He had a lot of quick facts that he put together, including the fact that 123 gophers per acre will eat up a tonne of feed, which equates to \$15,000 to \$16,000 a quarter in damage. He talked about the size of the litter, the lifespan and so on. The body weight of a gopher will double over the summer as it gets ready for the winter hibernation. They take in a lot of feed because they are hyper little guys.

When we talk about non-target species, such as foxes, coyotes, eagles, owls, hawks, and so on, he actually did some research on those species. A fox or coyote would have to eat 40 to 50 strychnine poisoned gophers at one sitting in order to have enough poison to do damage to that fox or coyote. Well they are hungry but they will not eat 40 to 50 gophers at one sitting. There is not a hope. They could not wash it down for starters.

When we start talking about hawks, eagles, owls or whatever, depending on the size of the bird, we are talking about five, ten or even fifteen gophers that these birds would have to eat in order to be damaged. That puts into question the whole idea of a non-target species, other than someone deliberately targeting coyotes with a deer carcass or something, which is a criminal offence.

The problem is we have to come up with a different way of doing it. I know the Maze boys have developed the gophinator. It works like a darn. We can target the animal in its lair. It can be done while they are hibernating. It does not have to be done during these small windows of opportunity as with the strychnine targets. It can be done at any time, even in the fall when they are hibernating. We can plug off one end of the hole and put the hose in at the other end, tapping the dirt in and giving them a shot of anhydrous and the job is done. There is no need to come back for carcasses. It is finished and very clean.

The other plus is that this can be used under barns while there are animals in there; pigs, chickens, turkeys, cattle or whatever. Dairy barns and so on tend to get rat infested and anyone with those types of barns will say that it is a problem. They cannot set out bait because the animals in the barn would be attracted to the bait. So this type of application works extremely well.

We are always worried about our kids and contamination from pesticides, insecticides and so on in parks and school yards. Again, it is the ideal answer.

*Private Members' Business*

We have pointed out all these pluses over the years to Health Canada, Agriculture Canada and so on. In fact, the Maze boys finally got off their combines on August 19 of this year and came to Ottawa. They arranged a meeting with Health Canada to find out what the problem was. There were a lot of hoops and hurdles. The pest management control agency wants the testing done on anhydrous ammonia to say that it is okay to put it in the ground and then it will give it a pest control number but the cost of that is \$150,000. What an absolutely ridiculous and horrendous cost for a product that has already been accepted for use in the ground. If I go out and fertilize my pasture with the shanks, rip up the ground and put the anhydrous in that kills the gophers, that is okay, but if I use their machinery, which is CSA, ULC and all that approved, I cannot do it. Can anyone explain the logic in that to me. It does not make any sense to any of us out there.

There are applications and alternatives out there, but it is up to the government to get off its collective duff and make these things available to people. We are saying that there is culpability and that there should be compensation worked into the crop insurance program in the short term, and in the very short term we should look at registering this Maze Innovation gophinator.

● (1815)

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I very much appreciate the intervention of the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster. He brought out a great deal of good information on this subject.

I do appreciate as well the member from Brandon pointing out that the motion is about compensating farmers through the crop insurance program for damage done to crops, including pastures, as a result of them not having available the tools to control the Richardson's ground squirrel, or gopher as it is commonly known by farmers.

That is what the motion actually is. The intent of the motion or obvious solution that I was hoping the government would see is not to have to compensate but rather to restore an effective control product.

I can see the headline in tomorrow's paper: government will discontinue the registration of automobiles. I expect it will be there. The government will justify that by the same logic that has led it to discontinue the registration of an effective concentration of strychnine and by the same logic that led it to forcing people to register their firearms and to taking away many firearms whether or not people were using them properly and safely.

In the information I received in regard to my question on the order paper in about 1995, there was all the correspondence. I asked in that question specifically for all the correspondence to the government during the process that led it to make the decision to ban the effective concentration of strychnine and for the correspondence from government, so it was correspondence both ways. In that correspondence, as I said, there was precious little basis for the discontinuance of this registration.

We have a government in which the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health said in his presentation that non-target species are hit. I think he said there were about 25 dogs in Saskatchewan and maybe 15 in Alberta that were hit.

In the case of the information I received, first of all the numbers are even much lower than that, but what it actually said was that those were intentional poisonings. In the logic of the government, it has removed the effective strength strychnine, a move that costs farmers tens of millions of dollars a year, because of the abuse of a few law breakers who chose to use this strychnine to poison their neighbour's dogs.

That is what the correspondence showed. The parliamentary secretary referred to that. Why not deal with criminals firmly for this kind of illegal activity? It is the same kind of logic the government used in taking firearms away from firearm owners and in registering firearms. Because a few people used these weapons illegally, they were taken away from everybody no matter how much they were needed as a tool, and when it comes to farmers, to control gophers, among other things. The logic was to just take it away from everybody or to force registration, which is extremely expensive and does not help solve the problem.

I would suggest that it is that same logic, if the government wants to extend it, that will lead to that headline tomorrow that will say the government will discontinue the registration of automobiles because some people use them in an illegal fashion.

It is the same logic and I believe it is flawed logic in all cases. I hope it will not get to the extent that we will see that headline in the paper tomorrow. It is a flawed approach and it is unacceptable.

The government has taken away this effective concentration and, on the other hand, has done what the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster said: it has not allowed farmers to use their own innovative solutions that do not include the use of strychnine. I am suggesting that they should have the effective use of strychnine returned and that farmers should be allowed to use their creative devices.

● (1820)

The member of the New Democratic Party suggested that the government should develop an effective alternate poison. That is nonsense. Farmers have developed effective alternate ways of controlling gophers.

Let us have the government quickly deal with the registration of those products. Let us allow this problem to be dealt with effectively and have the appropriate strength of strychnine returned. If the government refuses to do that, by gosh then it should carry through on my motion and compensate farmers for the tens of millions of dollars in losses every year.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired.

[*English*]

As the motion has not been designated as a votable item the order is dropped from the order paper.

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 36 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

### LUMBER INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on a question I raised on April 25 regarding the issue of softwood lumber in which I asked the Minister for International Trade if he would immediately arrange a meeting of all the parties involved in the softwood lumber dispute.

Since that time I am pleased to report that the minister has had several meetings with members of the industry. He brought them all together in a very effective way. The right strategy is in place to bring all parties and all stakeholders together to deal with the American's approach to the softwood lumber issue.

Right now, as we speak, the department is hosting meetings among the province, industry representatives and the federal government with American state and trade officials in Toronto to deal with this issue.

I want to raise another set of meetings that were held in Washington about two weeks ago between the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, some other MPs, several trade officials of the United States and the vice-president of the United States.

At these meetings all individuals said they were totally committed to a long term solution. They did not want any more of these five year deals that were repetitive. Every five years they have to go through the awful process of the court system and the political system. They want a solution.

In the earlier meetings in Washington we pointed out that the new premier of British Columbia, Gordon Campbell, had said in his election policy that they would move toward a more market driven pricing strategy. This was the first time they had heard of it and it seemed to raise their interest. They were attracted to this proposal.

The right hon. member called the premier of British Columbia and had the information faxed to him in Washington. Then he presented the actual documents to the vice-president of the United States. These documents state that British Columbia is proposing to move toward a more market driven approach to lumber pricing.

The vice-president was very pleased to see that and felt it was a very positive move toward a long term resolution to the ongoing softwood lumber problem.

This year alone in British Columbia it is estimated that it will cost industry over \$1 billion. Officials feel that a strategy such as has been proposed by British Columbia will remove the tools that the U. S. industry uses to put its politicians in a corner to force trade actions against the Canadian softwood lumber industry.

### Adjournment Debate

We in Canada know that this is a totally U.S. political football that is kicked around every five years. The industry takes advantage of any argument it can come up with and gets its politicians to raise this question. It pushes them to bring in countervail charges and anti-dumping.

If British Columbia is able to follow through with its proposed policy of moving toward a more market driven pricing schedule for its lumber and if Premier Campbell is able to achieve his goal as stated in his policy papers in the election, would the parliamentary secretary agree with U.S. officials that this would help resolve this problem once and for all?

• (1825)

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I acknowledge the member's persistence in calling for wide consultation. He made that point repeatedly in the House and the minister certainly agreed with him. As he has noted, those consultations took place from coast to coast to coast with industry and all provinces.

My colleague from Cumberland—Colchester speaks about a long term solution that is wanted both in Canada and the United States. That is certainly the case in the House and in our country, as he well knows.

The long term solution is free trade on softwood lumber. That is what both the United States and Canada purport their goals to be in trade. We are simply calling for the same kind of free trade in softwood lumber that we have in many other commodities.

My colleague asked a question about certain statements of the premier of British Columbia. I guess time will tell and we will see what the premier does, but it is of interest to this government what the practices are in the various lumber producing provinces, B.C. being one of the most important of those.

We will have to watch and see what is done, but I want to emphasize very carefully that we feel that once again Canada's case can be proven and will be proven at the WTO. We do not subsidize unfairly in softwood lumber. That case has been tested before several times. We have always won the case and we will win it again this time. I think my colleague has raised some important issues that certainly bear scrutiny.

• (1830)

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.)



# CONTENTS

Wednesday, September 19, 2001

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

<b>Mr. Dressup</b>			
Mr. McTeague .....	5285	Mr. Chrétien .....	5289
<b>Terrorism</b>		Ms. Lalonde .....	5289
Mr. Goldring .....	5285	Mr. Chrétien .....	5289
<b>Terrorism</b>		Ms. Lalonde .....	5289
Mr. O'Brien (London—Fanshawe) .....	5285	Mr. Manley .....	5289
<b>Terrorism</b>		Ms. McDonough .....	5290
Mr. Bellemare .....	5285	Mr. Chrétien .....	5290
<b>NATO</b>		Ms. McDonough .....	5290
Mr. Steckle .....	5286	Mr. Chrétien .....	5290
<b>Mr. Dressup</b>		Mr. Clark .....	5290
Mrs. Skelton .....	5286	Mr. Chrétien .....	5290
<b>Terrorism</b>		Miss Grey .....	5290
Mr. Fontana .....	5286	Mr. MacAulay .....	5290
<b>3rd Battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment</b>		Mr. Sorenson .....	5290
Mr. Bachand (Saint-Jean) .....	5286	Mr. MacAulay .....	5290
<b>Terrorism</b>		Mr. Sorenson .....	5290
Mr. Assad .....	5287	Mr. MacAulay .....	5291
<b>Terrorism</b>		Ms. Venne .....	5291
Mr. Lunney .....	5287	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>United States of America</b>		Ms. Venne .....	5291
Mr. Discepola .....	5287	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>Mr. Dressup</b>		Mr. Toews .....	5291
Ms. Lill .....	5287	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>Terrorism</b>		Mr. Toews .....	5291
Mrs. Picard .....	5287	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>Terrorism</b>		Mr. Toews .....	5291
Mr. Bélanger .....	5288	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>Airline Safety</b>		Mr. Toews .....	5291
Mr. Doyle .....	5288	Ms. McLellan .....	5291
<b>ORAL QUESTION PERIOD</b>		<b>Canadian Customs</b>	
<b>Terrorism</b>		Mr. Perron .....	5291
Mr. Day .....	5288	Mr. Cauchon .....	5291
Mr. Chrétien .....	5288	Mr. Perron .....	5292
Mr. Day .....	5288	Mr. Cauchon .....	5292
Mr. Chrétien .....	5288	<b>National Defence</b>	
Mr. Day .....	5288	Mr. White (Langley—Abbotsford) .....	5292
Mr. MacAulay .....	5288	Mr. Chrétien .....	5292
Mr. Day .....	5288	Mr. White (Langley—Abbotsford) .....	5292
Mr. Chrétien .....	5289	Mr. Chrétien .....	5292
Mr. Day .....	5289	<b>Energy</b>	
Mr. Chrétien .....	5289	Mr. McTeague .....	5292
Mr. Duceppe .....	5289	Mr. Goodale .....	5292
Mr. Chrétien .....	5289	<b>Airline Industry</b>	
Mr. Duceppe .....	5289	Mrs. Desjarlais .....	5292
		Mr. Collenette .....	5292
		<b>Discrimination</b>	
		Ms. Davies .....	5292
		Mr. Chrétien .....	5293
		<b>Airline Industry</b>	
		Ms. Meredith .....	5293
		Mr. Collenette .....	5293
		<b>The Economy</b>	
		Mr. Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest) .....	5293
		Mr. Collenette .....	5293

<b>Terrorism</b>	
Mr. Pallister .....	5293
Mr. Manley .....	5293
Mr. Pallister .....	5293
Mr. Manley .....	5293
<b>The Economy</b>	
Mr. Loubier .....	5293
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	5294
Mr. Loubier .....	5294
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	5294
<b>Immigration</b>	
Mr. Forseth .....	5294
Ms. Caplan .....	5294
Mr. Forseth .....	5294
Ms. Caplan .....	5294
<b>Foreign Affairs</b>	
Mr. Pratt .....	5294
Mrs. Jennings .....	5294
<b>National Defence</b>	
Mr. Benoit .....	5294
Mr. Eggleton .....	5294
Mr. Benoit .....	5295
Mr. Eggleton .....	5295
<b>Airlines Industry</b>	
Mr. Laframboise .....	5295
Mr. Collenette .....	5295
<b>China</b>	
Mr. Wilfert .....	5295
Mr. Pagtakhan .....	5295
<b>Foreign Aid</b>	
Mr. Obhrai .....	5295
Mrs. Jennings .....	5295
<b>Terrorism</b>	
Mr. Robinson .....	5295
Mr. Manley .....	5295
<b>Points of Order</b>	
<b>PC/DR Coalition</b>	
Mr. MacKay .....	5296
Mr. Reynolds .....	5298
Mr. Gauthier .....	5301
Mr. Boudria .....	5301
Mr. Blaikie .....	5302
Mr. Strahl .....	5304
Mr. White (Langley—Abbotsford) .....	5306

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

<b>Citizenship Act</b>	
Mr. Bryden .....	5306
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	5306
<b>Criminal Code</b>	
Mr. MacKay .....	5306
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	5306
<b>Criminal Code</b>	
Ms. Venne .....	5306
Adoption des motions; première lecture et impression du projet de loi .....	5307
<b>Broadcasting Act</b>	
(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time) .....	5307
<b>Committees of the House</b>	
<b>National Defence and Veterans Affairs</b>	
Mr. Clark .....	5307
Mrs. Wayne .....	5308
Mr. Kenney .....	5309
Mr. Strahl .....	5310
Mr. Boudria .....	5310
Mr. Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest) .....	5311
Miss Grey .....	5311
Mr. Goldring .....	5311
Mr. Kenney .....	5312
Mr. Casson .....	5313
Mr. Stoffer .....	5313
Mr. Benoit .....	5314
Mr. Stoffer .....	5315
The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos) .....	5315

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

<b>Gopher Control</b>	
Mr. Benoit .....	5315
Mr. Myers .....	5317
Mr. Proctor .....	5318
Mr. Borotsik .....	5319
Mr. Ritz .....	5320
Mr. Benoit .....	5322

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

<b>Lumber Industry</b>	
Mr. Casey .....	5323
Mr. O'Brien (London—Fanshawe) .....	5323



**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Communication Canada - Publishing  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

*En cas de non-livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*

Communication Canada - Édition  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:**

**Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :**

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Additional copies may be obtained from Communication Canada - Canadian Government Publishing, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**

**On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9**

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9**