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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

CONTENTS

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

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 23rd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, and I would like to move concurrence at this time.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to provide a petition to the House signed by a number of Canadians, including from my riding of Mississauga South.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that police officers and firefighters are required to place their lives at risk on a daily basis as they execute their duties and that when one of them loses their life in the line of duty, the employment benefits often do not provide sufficient compensation to their families.

• (1005)

The public also mourns that loss when one of them loses their life in the line of duty and wishes to support, in a tangible way, the surviving families in their time of need.

The petitioners therefore ask Parliament to establish a public safety officers compensation fund for the benefit of families of public safety officers killed in the line of duty.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Questions Nos. 1, 2 and 4.

[Text]

Question No. 1—Ms. Pierrette Venne:

Can the Privy Council itemize for the current fiscal year 1997-98, (a) whom it has mandated to carry out research studies, (b) what subjects have been covered by these studies, and (c) what the cost was of carrying out each of the research contracts awarded?

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, Lib.): An itemized list of research contracts awarded by the Privy Council Office for the current fiscal year 1997-98, April 1, 1997 inclusive to September 30, 1997, is provided as follows:

Consulting and Professional Services Contracts April 1, 1997 to September 30, 1997

Contractor & Contract No.	Description of work	Amount	Duration
Canadian Policy Research Network IN5021NF7	Research and analysis	\$25,000	28.04.97– 01.12.97
C.E.S. Franks PS5150NF6	Research and analysis	\$4,600	14.02.97– 06.05.97
Fraser, John PS5008NF60Y	Provide advice to analyst	\$72,109	24.08.96– 31.03.98
Hamlin, Andrew L.B. PS5168NF60Y	Research and analysis	\$14,700	11.03.97– 15.09.97
Hannigan, John PS5009CF60Y	Provide analysis on global issues	\$64,060	01.07.96– 31.03.98

*Routine Proceedings*Consulting and Professional Services Contracts
April 1, 1997 to September 30, 1997

Homel, David PS5038NF7	Research and analysis	\$2,675	22.05.97– 30.05.97
Institute of Intergovernmental Relations PS5008NF7	Research and analysis	\$8,300	10.04.97– 30.06.97
Julaux Consultants PS5123NF60Y	Research and analysis	\$15,608	02.01.97– 25.04.97
Lonergan, Steve PS5192NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,000	27.03.97– 29.03.97
Moore, Greg PS5161NF60Y	Research and analysis	\$16,300	17.02.97– 10.08.97
Paltiel, Jeremy PS5047NF7	Research and analysis	\$2,000	01.05.97– 15.05.97
Quiggan, T.A. PS5009CF60Y	Provide written and verbal analysis	\$61,440	01.08.96– 30.08.97
Salée, Daniel PS5151NF6	Research and analysis	\$3,200	14.02.97– 06.05.97
Taras, David PS5169NF60Y	Research services	\$5,500	12.03.97– 30.05.97
Van Buren, Lisa M. PS5160NF60Y	Research and analysis	\$14,700	14.02.97– 02.07.97
Wark, Wesley K. PS5012NF7	Historical research	\$16,420	24.03.97– 31.05.97
Flannagan, Ann PS5071NF7	Research and analysis	\$6,000	08.06.97– 15.09.97
Garbers, Raquel PS5090NF7	Research and analysis	\$2,500	18.08.97– 30.09.97
Garbers, Raquel PS5093NF7	Research and analysis	\$14,700	10.09.97– 21.01.98
Institute of Central East European & Russian Studies PS5070NF7	Research and analysis	\$4,375	15.07.97– 03.10.97
Morrison and Associates IN5106NF7	Research and analysis	\$53,150	29.09.97– 31.03.98
Institute on Governance PS5078NF7	Report on best practices in citizen engagement and consultation	\$6,420	28.07.97– 31.10.97
Ottawa-Carleton Research Institute PS5068NF7	Research and analysis	\$7,500	14.07.97– 14.08.98
Simpson, Kurtis H. PS5072NF7	Research and analysis	\$10,200	22.07.97– 03.10.97

Question No. 2—**Ms. Pierrette Venne:**

Can the Privy Council itemize for the fiscal year 1996-97, (a) whom it has mandated to carry out research studies, (b) what subjects have been covered by these studies, and (c) what the cost was of carrying out each of the research contracts awarded?

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, Lib.): An itemized list of research contracts awarded by the Privy Council Office for the fiscal year 1996-97, April 1, 1996 inclusive to March 31, 1997, is provided as follows:

Consulting and Professional Services Contracts
April 1, 1996 to March 31, 1997

Contractor & Contract No.	Description of work	Amount	Duration
Adele Furrie Consulting Inc. PS5156NF50Y	Analysis and advice	\$11,859	21.03.96– 31.03.97
Byers Casgrain PS5132NF50Y	Examination of the mandate and the role of the quasi-judicial orga- nization	\$46,010	30.01.96– 31.05.96
Corriveau, Paul PS5007NF6	Advice and analysis	\$19,260	13.05.96– 31.08.96
Ernst & Young IN5153NF50Y	Policy analysis	\$26,750	04.03.96– 26.04.96
Gertz Communication PS5092NF50Y	Research and analysis	\$23,823	01.12.95– 31.03.97
Haglund, David PS5037NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,400	31.05.96– 12.07.96
Halstead, John PS5026NF6	Research and analysis	\$2,996	10.06.96– 15.07.96
Hannigan, John PS3607F400Y	Research and analysis	\$69,160	13.03.95– 30.06.96
Mendelson Assoc. Inc. PS5021NF6	Research and analysis	\$34,828	15.05.96– 03.09.96
Parliamentary Centre PS5004NF50Y	Governing an informa- tion society project	\$23,540	01.04.95– 31.03.97
Quiggan, T.A. PS5042NF50Y	Provide assessments	\$73,847	09.08.95– 31.07.96
Angus Reid Group IN5017NF6	Public opinion research services	\$28,890	17.05.96– 31.12.96
Carruthers, Jeff IN5051NF6	Research and analysis	\$2,675	16.07.96– 19.07.96
Crop Inc. IN5078NF60X	Research on public opinion	\$21,560	01.05.96– 30.05.96
Dunning, Steven IN5067NF6	Research and analysis	\$2,000	12.09.96– 31.12.96
Institute of Intergovernmental Relations PS5120NF50Y	Research and analysis	\$24,750	27.01.96– 20.08.96

Consulting and Professional Services Contracts
April 1, 1996 to March 31, 1997

Mainland, Lynn IN5061NF6	Research and analysis writing services	\$17,122	03.09.96– 31.12.96
Pauly, Louis PS5031NF6	Research and analysis	\$13,116	27.06.96– 31.03.97
RTC Services PS5048NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,070	09.07.96– 15.07.96
Vernon, Gary PS3610F400Y	Research services and analysis	\$33,160	15.03.95– 31.03.97
Beaulac, Stéphane IN5121NF6	Research and analysis	\$2,500	06.12.96– 31.03.97
Créatec IN5103NF6	Public opinion research	\$12,358	30.09.96– 01.10.96
Crop Inc. IN5084CF6	Public opinion research	\$32,635	16.10.96– 25.10.96
Crop Inc. IN5064CF6	Report on the evolu- tion of socio-cultural tendencies	\$14,980	23.10.96– 30.11.96
Fourney, Stephen J. PS5096NF6	Research and analysis	\$15,708	18.11.96– 21.03.97
Foskett, Catherine PS5074NF6	Research and monitor- ing specific sectoral is- sues	\$2,506	23.09.96– 17.12.96
Henderson, Robert IN5118NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,605	03.10.96– 31.10.96
Insight Canada Research IN5085CF6	Public opinion research	\$52,296	15.10.96– 25.10.96
Jefremovas, Villia IN5114NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,605	28.11.96– 14.12.96
Opinion Consult IN5104NF6	Public opinion research	\$15,811	02.10.96– 03.10.96
Saunders, Katherine PS5111NF6	Research and analysis	\$1,800	21.11.96– 20.12.96
Blockley, Dean Roger PS5135NF6	Research on historical or current events	\$2,500	08.01.97– 28.02.97
Boyd, Rhoda PS5131NF6	Research and writing services	\$1,605	12.12.96– 14.12.96
D'Ombraïn Inc. PS5149NF6	Research and analysis	\$10,700	10.02.97– 15.03.97
Hamlin, Andrew PS5162NF6	Research services	\$2,500	18.02.97– 31.03.97
Moore, Greg PS5147NF6	Research and analysis	\$2,500	27.01.97– 31.03.97

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 4—**Ms. Pierrette Venne:**

Can the Privy Council itemize for the fiscal year 1994-95 (a) who it has mandated to carry out research studies, (b) what subjects have been covered by these studies, and (c) what the cost was of carrying out each of the research contracts awarded?

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, Lib.): Please see the answer to question Q-3 tabled this day.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 3 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that Question No. 3 be made an order for return?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 3—**Ms. Pierrette Venne:**

Can the Privy Council itemize for the fiscal year 1995-96, (a) whom it has mandated to carry out research studies, (b) what subjects have been covered by these studies, and (c) what the cost was of carrying out each of the research contracts awarded?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 1997, I placed Question No. 57 on the Order Paper asking if the Deputy Prime Minister's public statement supporting a global movement to spur the development of an instrument to ban firearms worldwide was the policy of the government. In accordance with Standing Order 39, I asked for an oral answer to be given in the House within 45 days.

My constituents have been waiting over 100 days. When can I expect an answer to this question of whether the Deputy Prime Minister supports a worldwide firearms ban and is this government policy or not?

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, I took note of the member's points and I will do the best I can to provide the answers in the House.

I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Supply

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FLAG

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.) moved:

That this House should recognize the Canadian flag as an acceptable symbol that may be displayed at any time on the desks of Members of Parliament in the House of Commons, provided that only one flag be displayed on a Member's desk at any given time, and that the said flag remain stationary for the purposes of decorum and be no larger than the standard recognized desk flag.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending March 26, 1998, the House will proceed as usual to the consideration and disposal of supply bills.

[English]

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bills be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I just want to let you know that Reform Party members today will be dividing their time during the allotted speeches.

Mr. Preston Manning: Mr. Speaker, a week ago in the House I traced the series of events which led to this controversy over displaying the flag in the Chamber. It is not my intent to rehearse those events again today.

I argued, however, that the fundamental issue at stake was one of freedom of expression, including the right to display the flag, the right to sing the anthem and the right to freedom of speech by members of this Parliament. The challenge to the Chair and to the House was to find the right balance between all three.

The Speaker's ruling yesterday focused on what was required to maintain decorum in the House, which is fine. The Speaker implied that the rules of the House did not give him the authority to recognize the displaying of the Canadian flag on the desks of members.

The motion before the House is designed to change the rules and simply give that authority.

Like you, Mr. Speaker, we have taken into account rules, practices and precedents affecting this House, but our position on this issue also takes into account what we believe to be the wishes of the Canadian people to whom this House ultimately belongs.

Since the government spin doctors have been hard at work putting their interpretation on this matter, let me first say what this motion is not. It is not a motion of censure of the Speaker or the way in which the Speaker handled this issue.

• (1010)

This caucus is composed of blunt plain speaking westerners who tend to say what we mean and mean what we say. We prefer to argue and to agree and disagree out in the open and not behind closed doors. But this penchant for plain speaking should not be interpreted as any disrespect for the House or for the Chair.

Second, this motion is not intended as a putdown of any members of this House, including members of the Bloc Québécois. It is a simple positive affirmation of Canadian nationalism.

The members of the Bloc never tire of exhibiting their feelings of nationalism in words, symbols and actions and their efforts to separate Quebec from Canada.

We, however, simply want to remind the Bloc that there is also such a thing as Canadian nationalism. Some people wear their nationalism on their sleeves and its slogans are always on their lips. Other people are less vocal and carry their feelings for their country deep in their hearts. It would be a huge miscalculation on the part of the Bloc to believe that those feelings do not exist in the hearts of Canadians or that they can be ignored or insulted with impunity.

I am reminded of Burke's famous quotation that just because a few grasshoppers under a leaf make the field ring with their importunate chirping whilst thousands of great cattle repose beneath the trees, chew the cud, and are silent, pray do not believe that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field.

My third point is that one member of this House chose to see in our simple request to put a Canadian flag on our desks an example of extreme nationalism like that which led to World War II. How anyone could characterize our simple request in that fashion is beyond comprehension. I choose to believe the member misspoke himself or was perhaps misquoted.

I address the remainder of my remarks to government members. One of the disturbing characteristics of this government is that it seems unable or unwilling to finish what it starts, a sign of a government and a party in decline. For example, the government started to get the federal fiscal house in order but after eliminating the deficit, which is only the first step, it appears to be giving up on the other steps of reducing the debt, reducing the taxes and controlling the spending. It cannot finish the job it started.

Now we see the same thing on this flag issue. On February 26 it was a Liberal member, the member for Oshawa, who provided the Canadian flags for MPs' desks with a little note requesting us to wave them when a certain Bloc MP rose in question period. It was

Liberal members, not Reformers, who brought the large flag into that part of the House and draped it over their desks, the same one they displayed during the budget speech without rebuke from the Speaker.

It was the government House leader responding to the Bloc's point of order who said: "For someone like myself who believes strongly in the unity of this country, flag waving is not a provocation but an act of pride". The unbiased observer sitting in the gallery on that day would have been convinced it was the Liberal MPs who were foremost in promoting the displaying of the flag and the singing of the anthem subject only to certain limits perhaps yet to be determined.

Since that date what have we seen? We have seen a weak-kneed government beating an unseemly retreat. By this last weekend the government House leader, so bold on February 26, had resorted to proposing the whole issue be sent for burial in a committee. Only in a Liberal government of Canada would it be suggested that the simple issue of whether a Canadian flag could be flown on the desks of Canadian members of Parliament should be shunted off to endless review and discussion by experts in committee.

The government has been backpedalling on its affirmation of the right to display the flag and sing the anthem since the day this issue was raised. If government members now fail to back this simple motion, their retreat will be complete. It reminds me of the New Testament parable about the foolish builder of a tower who neglected to count the cost before he began and became the laughing stock of his community because he began to build and was unable to finish.

• (1015)

Likewise the public, observing this unseemly retreat of government members, is left shaking its head and saying "these Liberals began something on February 26 but were not able to finish".

The government's behaviour on this issue raises a more fundamental question. That is how can the government be trusted to stand up for Canada on the big things if it will not stand up for Canada on the little things? How can the government be trusted to stand up for Canada in its larger dealings with the separatists if it will not even stand up for the Canadian flag in the Canadian House of Commons?

The government is supposed to be the watchdog of the Canadian national interest, particularly in its dealings with those who would lower the Canadian flag from every flagpole in Quebec. This flag incident, small in one sense but ominous and large in what it portends, is revealing that watchdog for what many fear it has become: a tired and toothless old watchdog which would prefer to

Supply

lie in the sun scratching itself rather than defending the interests of its masters, the people of Canada.

I therefore challenge the government members opposite and the members of the NDP and Progressive Conservatives. If such members really stand on guard for Canada, support the motion. If such members join with the separatists in opposing the motion, they should explain to the House and to their constituents how they can possibly be trusted to stand on guard for the Canadian national interest in larger and more substantive matters.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the hon. member's remarks. The hon. member for Calgary Southwest labelled the Liberal Party of Canada a party in decline.

I ask the hon. member to have a look at the most recent polls carried out in his end of the country, in Ontario, in Quebec, on the east coast, in northern Canada. Pick any poll he wants to and he will soon see that the only party in decline is the party of Reform.

"Buried in a committee," said the member for Calgary Southwest. Only a member of the Reform Party would draw a parallel between taking any kind of an issue brought forward by any member of this place to put it into a committee, a place where Canadians are represented by their member of Parliament at committee, a committee that is the master of its own destiny—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Stan Keyes: The Reform Party can laugh all they want but it does not intimidate me. I have been around a while.

Take any issue brought forward by a member of Parliament, put it to a committee for reasonable discussion and debate by all members who want to attend, because a committee is not restricted to membership so any member of Parliament can attend any committee of this place, include public debate, and only the Reform Party draws a parallel between that kind of important debate and burial.

Mr. Art Hanger: Which way are you going to vote on this, Stan?

Mr. Stan Keyes: The member for Calgary Southwest said that the government opposite does not stand up for Canada on the little things.

Mr. Peter Adams: Who did not come to Montreal?

Mr. Stan Keyes: They are very selective in the circumstances that have led up to this particular debate. I remind my constituents in Hamilton West that it is the party opposite that decided not to go to Montreal and fight with the rest of Canadians when the country was in danger of separation. The country pulled together. Canadians came from my riding, from the riding of everyone on this side of the House, but not from the Reform Party members' ridings.

Supply

They talk about the flag, the importance of the flag and the need for it on this table.

• (1020)

It is by the same party opposite for which the critic for finance took the flag out of its spot on his desk and threw it in the direction of the Speaker's chair. The member for Medicine Hat took this flag and threw it in the direction of the Speaker. He was asked afterward, "Why did you do such a thing?" He said "Oh, it's no big deal".

It is questions and comments. I have made my comments. I am quite disgusted by the hon. member's motion today.

Mr. Preston Manning: Mr. Speaker, I have three points. The member mentioned polls, he mentioned committee and then he rambled on.

On polls, we would just suggest that if the hon. member has this great faith in polls, he should put this issue to a poll. He can ask Canadians whether the Canadian members of Parliament should be entitled to have a small flag on their desks in the Canadian House of Commons. They can obtain the results of that poll and table them in this Chamber. That poll will show that the position of Reform on this issue is far closer to the thinking of the Canadian people than anything that is presently—

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Preston Manning: The member raised our skepticism with respect to committees. The member will perhaps remember that it was this party that raised the simple business of singing "O Canada" in the Chamber. When we came here, it was not sung.

Of course, we were denied unanimous consent by the now government House leader. Eventually, it was sent to committee and it never came back. It came back later at our insistence. We brought it back on referendum day. It went to committee to be buried and not to be advanced.

My last point is why does the member avoid the main issue? The main issue is what could possibly be wrong with Canadian members of Parliament simply displaying a small Canadian flag on their desks? Has the hon. member consulted his own constituents on this issue? I find it inconceivable that they would deny that simple request.

The Deputy Speaker: There is some confusion about the wording of the motion. Unfortunately, the wording of the motion that was handed in by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday was incorrectly transcribed in the Order Paper for today, which is the document in effect that I read from when I put the motion to the House earlier.

I will re-read the motion, corrected to correspond with the way it was handed in yesterday, as it should have been. I apologize to the hon. Leader of the Opposition for this oversight.

The motion before the House then, is as follows:

That this House should recognize the Canadian flag as an acceptable symbol that may be displayed at any time on the desks of Members of Parliament in the House of Commons provided that only one flag be displayed on a member's desk at any given time, and that the said flag remain stationary for the purposes of decorum and be no larger than the standard recognized desk flag.

Resuming debate.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, you have just re-read the motion, therefore I will not do that. In essence, this motion today by the official opposition is a necessary motion and I will explain why.

First of all, I will explain why we need to debate it. I will argue that Canadians support this motion. I will argue that allowing members to put flags on their desks is a positive, beneficial change in this House of Commons. Then I will argue that it is the members of this House who must give direction to the House and to the Speaker, which we will do during today's debate.

I will also argue that this is, first of all, the very best way to put this issue to rest once and for all. I know other members think we should send it to committee, that that is the best way to look at it and so on.

We all know what happens in committee. Our victims' bill of rights was sent to committee two years ago. Where is it? No one knows. It is in committee. It reminds me of a little poem that talks about this a little bit. It says:

Oh give me your pity!
I'm on a committee
Which means that from morning 'till night,
We attend and amend, and contend and defend,
Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur,
We defer and demur, and reiterate all of our thoughts.
We revise an agenda with frequent addenda,
And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose,
We suppose and oppose,
And the points of procedure are fun.
But though various notions are brought up as motions,
There is terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve,
But we never dissolve
Since it's out of the question for us,
To bring our committee to an end like this ditty
Which stops with a period—thus.

• (1025)

Committees are not the answer. I think if we asked most Canadians how complex is this issue that we are debating today, is it going to need indepth analysis from experts from around the world? Is it a royal commission that needs to be struck for this? Or is it, which it is, a simple straightforward motion that we have before us today.

The motion is, if we would like to, and I do not want to force anyone in the House, but if we would like to, should we have the

right to display a small desk flag during our speeches, during an important occasion? Should we have that right? Yes or no?

There are not going to be any maybe votes tonight. There are not going to be any qualified votes such as "I sort of support it". It is going to be yes or no. Tonight we will know whether Canadians through their representatives feel we should have that right. I think our position is clear.

We believe that a small flag tastefully displayed is a freedom of expression issue, it is a patriotism issue at times but most of all it is the rights of members of Parliament to express themselves in that way if they so choose. I think Canadians would be fully supportive of this motion. I think it is straightforward. There is nothing unusual about it. It is just a straightforward motion and I think we will see tonight that this is a positive change.

It has been said, to quote Winston Churchill: "To improve is to change. To be perfect is to change often". Do we need changes from time to time in the House of Commons? Yesterday the Speaker said we have never done this before so we cannot do it. As has already been mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, when we came here the singing of the national anthem was considered almost preposterous, outrageous. Imagine singing the national anthem in the House of Commons. We now do that. Some people said, you will know Mr. Speaker because I think you were involved in this, that the prayer had been here for a long time, we could not change the prayer. The prayer was changed. Life went on.

When we came here we could not mention the word Senate in this place. We had to talk about the other place and everybody listening on TV said what is he talking about? It is the other place. Now we routinely talk about the Senate, the problems in the Senate, what we would like to change in the Senate, individual senators, whether they are good or bad, and so on. It is routinely done and it is a good change, a positive change.

We talked about asking questions regarding Orders of the Day. When we came here if something was being debated in the House we could not ask a question about it. The Speaker every day or often jump up and say "I think that relates to the Orders of the Day so I am going to rule that out of order". Everybody said that is what we are talking about, let's ask a question about it. Eventually we got the government to agree that it would be okay to change so we could ask questions about Orders of the Day. Not a big deal, life went on.

When we came here, it was contentious if we had laptop computers on our desks. I do not know if it was a prop or what it was. It was to me confusing sometimes but it is just a laptop computer. If we want to have it on our desk then let us do it.

We not only changed that rule to allow laptops we now have laptops at the clerk's table. It is commonly done, it is a good idea, so let us deal with it and move on.

Supply

When we started in 1993 or 1992, certainly before we came here, there was but one flag beside the Speaker's chair and the Speaker came in and said, all on his own, "I want two flags". He increased the flag population by 100% and he did it because he said he thinks we can change. I do not think it is a bad idea. It looks good on TV to have a flag on either side. It looks good, and I like it, it looks fine. No committee was struck, no debate was entered into. It was just done. The Speaker decided and it was done. Life goes on and I think the Speaker looks great when he stands there on TV with the flags on either side.

Ordinary members of Parliament are not accorded such luxury. When the camera comes around to them there is no sign of the Canadian flag. I have a small pin on my lapel. That is allowed but it cannot be seen on TV.

• (1030)

Over the last couple of weeks we have seen many small flags on the desks. They look just fine. I think they give an idea that we are watching the Canadian Parliament as opposed to the U.S. Congress or something else. They look fine and are tastefully displayed.

Our motion talks about decorum, the proper use of flags. That is what this debate is about, should we have the right to have a flag on our desk if we want. I have already gone through all the changes made over the past few years, most of them on Reform initiatives. They have gone ahead. This is another good initiative. I think if members limit themselves to the motion today, they will in all good faith vote yes tonight. The members must give direction to the House.

Yesterday the Speaker in his ruling said flags are not allowed. However he said if the House would like to give direction on this issue and change that, it could do so. The best way to put this to rest once and for all is to have a vote on it and give that direction to the Speaker. The Speaker asked for it yesterday. He said that if the rules are to be changed it will have to be done that way.

This motion is the way to end the debate on it. After today the decision will be made. The House will give direction to the Speaker. The Speaker as a servant of the House will be expected to follow that wisdom.

As members of this House, the Reform Party strongly believes that we should move ahead with this change. Change is good. As I mentioned earlier in my quote, to change often is even better. If we can have a positive change like this one, let us do it. Let us not send it off to committee to die the slow death of a thousand cuts. Let us just get it over and done with and do it today.

We think this is the way to end a protracted debate. It will be over before we know it. Tonight when the votes are called the decision will be in and it will be over. I only ask that all members think how they are going to respond to their constituents back home, how they are going to argue against it. Again they are not

Supply

compelled to have a flag. It can be there if they would like to have a flag on their desks, and some members would like that privilege.

We think it is a positive, beneficial change which would allow that freedom of expression we cherish in this place and across the country. Someone said earlier such freedoms could exist in the chamber of commerce but not in the House of Commons.

To strengthen our proposal, I would like to move an amendment that would make it just a little stronger. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting the word "should".

That way the House can speak unequivocally on this issue and tonight it will give that unequivocal direction to the Speaker. We look forward to that later.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair takes the view that the amendment proposed by the hon. member affects the English version only and on that assumption I will put the motion to the House. The debate will be on the amendment.

• (1035)

Mr. Lee Morrison: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member from Hamilton has already spoken. You will recall that the two members were dividing their time. The hon. member has already addressed the question.

The Deputy Speaker: For questions and comments there is a new slate for every speaker. The hon. chief opposition whip has made another speech. While it may be splitting time, obviously if the parliamentary secretary rises, I am going to recognize him. The parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this motion is so full of holes that I will probably comment on every speech if you will recognize me.

The whip of the opposition party is suggesting that we on this side of the House have not consulted with our constituents on this matter. In my hometown of Hamilton, radio station CHML's *Talk Line* with Roy Green had an open line show for two or three days on this issue. He asked three questions: Do you want them to have a flag on their desks? Should they sing *O Canada* in the House of Commons? If they do not, should they be thrown out of the House of Commons? After a couple of days and about 36 calls he said the response was unanimous for all three.

He asked me if I had received any calls. My constituency office in Hamilton received 62 calls before the radio show ended. My constituents told me to just get on with the job I was elected to do. That job is to put legislation through the House. It is not to get in line behind this opposition party which needs to bring forward

these arguments about the flag because its members are not being heard much by the press. They are the opposition. Their kissing cousins in the Tory party are getting all the press because its leader is thinking of becoming a Liberal. They need all this attention. That is why they have to create all this malarkey.

Miss Deborah Grey: Does the flag mean anything to you in your gut?

Mr. Stan Keyes: Yes, I say to the hon. member opposite.

We did consult with my constituents. After that radio show we received another 40 or 50 calls in the constituency office within about an hour and a half. Again 70% told me to get on with the job which I was elected to do in the House and not to carry on with the nonsense in the motion which the Reform Party has put before the House today.

I am forced to speak to it because that is the only business we can do today. The only business we are allowed to do in the House today is the ridiculous motion which has been put forward by the official opposition.

There is one last thing I want to address with the whip. I heard him on television this morning and I heard him in the House of Commons today. He talked about freedom of expression and its importance. Freedom of expression is a necessity for the democracy of this country and the House of Commons.

Would the hon. member opposite not admit that freedom of expression has borders? It has to have borders. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression mean that we can do such things as stand up in a crowded movie theatre and yell fire but that is against the law. Freedom of expression means that we have to do it in a responsible fashion.

The hon. member opposite must understand that when we are talking about flags, and when we are talking about a decision made by the Speaker yesterday in the House, there are borders. Order has to be maintained and not the disorder which brought about this motion.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the parliamentary secretary has taken such a calm, rational approach to this debate.

He may be the main man for the Liberals today, I do not know. He may have been asked to pose these insightful questions, I do not know. But I hope he will not continue down this road of equating a small standard desk flag attached to the desk for decorum and tastefully displayed with crying fire in a crowded theatre. It is such a ridiculous thing to say. I cannot believe he is trying to bring that kind of an argument into this debate.

Supply

• (1040)

He went on to suggest that the radio program asked whether we should have to display the flag; whether we should have to sing *O Canada* or get kicked out of the House of Commons. What kind of nonsense is this? No one is suggesting that. No one suggests that we have to have a flag on your desk. No one suggests that we have to sing *O Canada*. Every Wednesday those who like to sing it do so.

This motion is not going to force someone to do anything. It permits a freedom. It is that balance between decorum which is why it is tastefully displayed on the desk and the freedom of expression. That balance is what this motion talks to and it handles that balance very well.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this debate today.

Yesterday we had the Speaker's ruling. Today we have an opposition motion which among other things serves, in a way which is not totally wholesome, as a mechanism to appeal the Speaker's ruling. This is something that has been disallowed for the last 30 years in this Parliament.

Our flag is an important national symbol. As I pronounce these words there are two flags beside Mr. Speaker. There are two flags outside the door of the House of Commons. Every MP can have one beside his or her desk; I do in my office just a few feet away from the door. I usually wear one as a lapel pin. There is one on a flagpole in my yard at home. As well I have one in my office in my residence.

The question before us today is not whether or not Canadian members of Parliament are in favour of the Canadian flag. I do not believe any of us on this side of the House need lectures from the official opposition on the Canadian flag and its value. It was a Liberal government that gave us the maple leaf flag in 1965. It was just three years ago that we introduced flag day, our national celebration of the maple leaf.

It was this government that encouraged Canadians to show their patriotism by distributing a million flags from coast to coast to coast. Which party objected to that? Which party told us not to fly the Canadian flag from coast to coast to coast the way the Minister of Canadian Heritage asked us to do? It was the Reform Party.

In 1995 on that day in October many of us went to Montreal when our country was calling. Our country was asking us to show our patriotism, real patriotism, not the kind of phoney stuff I have been hearing over recent days. All federalist MPs except one group went to Montreal. Two thousand of my constituents went with me to Montreal. Canadians from all over the country went to Montreal. We all stood there beside that great big flag of the Jaycees of Windsor to support the Canadian flag and Canadian unity. Who was missing? The Reform Party. The Reform Party boycotted Canada

when Canada came calling. That is the reality. Everyone in this House knows it.

Of course the separatists have a different point of view. They want to separate from Canada. I disagree with their point of view but at the very least they did not do as those people across the way and pretend that they were in favour of Canada today while making gestures that were the opposite only yesterday.

• (1045)

We are talking about respect for the rules and respect for the House. What have we seen over recent days? Challenges of this great institution, challenges of the Chair, challenges of everything we stand for. Taking a Canadian flag, wrapping it around oneself and driving around Parliament Hill in an old jalopy in the name of patriotism is the kind of thing we have seen from hon. members opposite. Is that patriotism? No. That is making a mockery of our institution. We all know that is what it is. We know what it stands for.

We are talking about respect for the rules. We had grown up people, so-called adults, wearing Mexican hats and dancing in front of the Chamber of this parliament. In 1993 the then leader of the third party, today the Leader of the Opposition, snubbed the governor general on the opening of parliament. That is what we had in the name of respect, in the name of democracy and in the name of our rules? No, that is not patriotism.

[*Translation*]

I have often quoted in this House and elsewhere the words of a great Canadian, a person who did not have the word "reform" as part of his title but as part of his ideology, and this great Canadian was none other than Mr. Diefenbaker. He once told us there is no greater honour for a Canadian than that of serving the people of his or her country in the highest court of the land, the Parliament of Canada.

This is the honour that rests on our shoulders. We must show respect for this institution by respecting its rules. We must not let parliamentarians throw flags at other members, as has been done in this House.

A few days ago, I saw with my own eyes a member of this House take a flag off his desk, which, in itself, is against the rules, and throw it in the direction of the Chair.

Was this done out of respect for the flag, for democracy and for Parliament? No, that is not patriotism either.

[*English*]

Hon. members across the way say today that they are sincere in their motion. They produced a motion yesterday, added a word by hand to it and then produced an amendment today to remove the word they had pencilled in by hand to stop the House from amending the motion, if the House so wished.

Supply

An hon. member: It is a game for them.

Hon. Don Boudria: It is a game. It is a cheap political trick from members opposite. Canadians will know that is all it is.

The Leader of the Opposition, with a straight face, told us a few minutes ago that the matter could not be referred to committee because nothing would ever come of it, so he said. His seatmate brought a motion to a committee concerning the singing of the national anthem and it is thanks to that motion we are actually doing it.

How could the Leader of the Opposition have so little confidence in his own colleagues sitting on that committee, including the member who got a motion through committee in the last parliament concerning the singing of the national anthem? Or, was it that deep down the Leader of the Opposition knew the truth was a little different? I say this respectfully.

Miss Deborah Grey: Get this in *Hansard*. I had to ask to get him to come as a witness.

Hon. Don Boudria: In the few minutes I have left, let me say that I believe all Canadians should know that on February 15, 1995 we had the official ceremony on Parliament Hill to honour the Canadian flag. It was the first Flag Day. Members from all parties came. The leaders of the federalist parties were there. One leader of a federalist political party was not there.

• (1050)

Some hon. members: Which one?

Hon. Don Boudria: The present Leader of the Opposition did not even care enough to show up to honour the Canadian flag in front of the building. This is duplicity at its best. This is not sincerity but the opposite.

The Leader of the Opposition quoted Sir Winston Churchill a little earlier today. He talked about how Sir Winston Churchill wanted change. To this day in the British House of Commons there is no flag.

I remind hon. members across the way that if Sir Winston Churchill were here today he would look upon the Leader of the Opposition and say to himself what he once said in the British House, that the opposite to the truth had never been stated with greater accuracy. He would no doubt want to say that about the speech of the Leader of the Opposition earlier today.

We cannot support the motion. It is wrong and it will always be wrong. We must uphold the Speaker's ruling. We must continue to express our confidence in the occupant of the chair. We will do so because it is the right thing to do, notwithstanding the cheap tricks across the way.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, at the outset of my brief comments I would like to ask a question of the people of Canada who are watching this debate today. The

governing party, the Liberal Party of Canada, would like this issue to go away because it feels it is frivolous and unnecessary. I ask the people who are watching to be the judge and decide who is calmly putting forward the motion, who is trying to speak to it in a calm and collective manner, and who is putting forward some ridiculous arguments.

The hon. member remarked that even the British parliament did not allow members of Parliament in the mother of parliaments to have small flags on their desks. That is the best excuse he can come up with. I remind the hon. member, in case he has missed the point, that to my knowledge the British parliament is not in an ongoing crisis mode about national unity, which we seem to be in this Chamber. People are getting sick of it.

The member said that this was a procedural game. The father of all procedural games is condemning the official opposition for what he views as a procedural game. He then has the audacity to call this a cheap political trick. Is it a cheap political trick to want to display, at our own discretion, a small Canadian flag to show our patriotism when our country is in its hour of need? Is that a cheap political trick to the hon. member across the way?

The hon. member who spoke earlier talked about a radio station in Hamilton. He said there were 36 calls, 50 calls, 60 calls. Surely the hon. House leader of the government knows how many faxes, phone calls, letters and e-mails came in to the government, the ministers, members of Parliament or the Speaker's office over the last couple of weeks. I would ask him to reveal today just how much feedback is necessary from the Canadian people before we decide to change things.

The member says that we have to uphold the Speaker's ruling. The Speaker invited us yesterday to bring forward change if we desired reform. If not us then who when it comes to making changes in here? If not now then when?

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the hon. member. He has just challenged me and I will offer him a challenge in a minute in response.

Let me first quote a distinguished member of the House who said on February 15, 1996 about the Canadian flag celebrations:

I just wish there were some substance to go along with the symbolism. Setting aside a day for waving the flag, jumping up and down and singing stirring songs is a nice gesture. It's also a good way to keep warm in mid-February, but Canadians would rather see some substance from this government, a national unity plan, real job creation, a balanced budget and much needed tax relief.

• (1055)

The member for Edmonton North put that in writing in a news release on February 15, 1996. Now the true colours are coming out across the way.

I have a challenge for hon. members across the way. I will propose a motion and I will seek unanimous consent from all

members of the House, and in particular members of the Reform Party members. If it is change they want there will be no games. I will ask for unanimous consent, for us all to agree, and I will make it very clear. If they really want change and if they want the issue to be studied, I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting immediately before the words "this House" the words "the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs" to prepare a report by June 15.

I tell hon. members across the way that the test is on them. We will see right now whether sincerity rules or whether phoniness rules. Let us see.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. government House leader have unanimous consent of the House to propose the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I am afraid there is no consent. The time for questions and comments has expired.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, instead of talking about employment insurance, instead of talking about the problems being experienced by the unemployed who are going to miss out on benefits, instead of talking about economic development, instead of talking about the battle against AIDS, instead of talking about the major social problems confronting this country, what are we talking about? The flag.

We are questioning whether the Chair's ruling about whether or not we can stick little flags on our desks ought not to be overturned. Most edifying, this 1998 Reform version of the Canadian vision of development.

Who was it who broke the rules of the House? Who was it who stood up at an inopportune moment to sing the national anthem and wave flags around? Not the Bloc Quebecois members, but the Liberals and the Reform members. Who was it who created a totally artificial crisis about the flag? Not the Bloc Quebecois, not the NDP, not the Conservatives, not the Liberals, but the Reform Party.

Who was it who refused to respect the House of Commons and its procedures? Not the Bloc, not the NDP, not the Conservatives, not the Liberals, but the Reform Party. Since the beginning of this story, Reformers not only caused the initial problem, but they exacerbated it. They let the rest of Canada think the Canadian flag was being challenged here in this House, which was never the case.

Mr. Yvan Loubier: No, never. They are liars.

Mr. Michel Gauthier: No fear, this is reassuring for the sovereignists. When there is no crisis in this country, Reformers cook one up.

Supply

But what is going on here? Do the people Reform represents have such a serious identity problem? Is there such a serious identity problem over there that it is necessary to wrap oneself in the flag daily, to stick them all over the place, wave them about, put them in our pockets, or paint cars to match the Canadian flag?

But what is going on with this political party? Is there no grasp whatsoever of what the rules of Parliament are?

• (1100)

Do they not understand that, in a Parliament, regardless of one's political opinion, one must respect the foundation, that is the Chair, its rulings and the rules under which debates must take place?

Why should we suddenly change the rules of this House following a show of enthusiasm by Reformers and Liberals? Why should we start waving flags at every opportunity? What is going on in this country? Do Reformers have a problem of perception, a problem of identity?

They are spoiling for a fight with the separatists. They are intent on scoring political points. They want to pass themselves off as the only patriots in this country. Just what is the problem with Reformers? What is the problem with the official opposition? What sense of responsibility do these members have? They were so happy to become the official opposition and replace the bad separatists in the House of Commons, so they could make things move forward in Canada, they could make things work in this country. What are they proposing to make things work? They are talking about flags. This is outrageous.

We heard all kinds of falsehoods. First, some tried to tell the rest of Canada that sovereignists wanted to deny the existence of the Canadian flag. This is false. Nothing could be further from the truth. We never said any such thing in this House. It was also said that separatists had objected to the singing of the national anthem in this House. In fact, we were among those who agreed that, on Wednesdays, at the beginning of our proceedings, the national anthem be sung. It is false to say, as Reformers claim, that we object to the singing of the national anthem in this place.

I challenge them, including the Leader of the Official Opposition, to find a single objection to this effect raised by a Bloc Quebecois member. The Reform Party leader did not tell the truth. We did not create a flag crisis. We did not oppose the national anthem. We have always respected the flag, the anthem and the rules. We have complied with the rules.

The motion before us today challenges the Speaker's ruling, which is based on parliamentary law, on tradition and on what is being done in every Parliament. But why do Reformers want the Parliament of Canada to be different from all other parliaments? What is going on in their heads? Do they have such an identity

Supply

problem that they have to wrap themselves in the Canadian flag to remember they are Canadians? Is this their problem?

Earlier, the Reform member said that, by the end of this day, those who are watching us would be able to judge who was more serious, who presented the best arguments, who is right. People made up their minds a long time ago. So did journalists. All parliamentarians on both sides of the House, in all parties except the Reform Party, understood long ago that there was no flag war, that we were being made to waste our time. Instead of addressing real problems, Reformers are having fun adding fuel to a possible debate between sovereigntists and the rest of Canada.

The reality is this. Reform members can rest assured that sovereigntists do not have to invent an artificial flag war to make Quebecers understand that there is a problem in this Parliament. We do not need to invent quarrels with Reformers. They invent them all by themselves. We do not have to come up with things to explain to Quebecers that there is an identity problem. They provide us with evidence on a daily basis. That is what is wrong with the Reform Party.

They do not respect the Chair, the Speaker and other political parties. They were unable to sign an agreement with other parties that was reasonable and that would have made it possible to resolve this supposed flag crisis.

• (1105)

They behaved like Don Quixote. They invented a war. They embarked on a war against something that did not exist because their popularity is slipping, their party is not taking hold. Increasingly, people throughout Canada, real Canadians, want nothing to do with the Reform Party. These people invent wars, they invent causes. They set out like Don Quixote with his horse and his lance and are going to tilt at windmills.

Mr. Yvan Loubier: Must be panzomania.

Mr. Michel Gauthier: In closing, I would point out that, for Bloc Quebecois members, it is much more important to talk about employment insurance, use of the budget surplus, the problems faced by our constituents who no longer qualify for EI. These issues are much more important than painting jalopies in the national colours and parading around Parliament Hill.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have certainly heard a lot of sound and fire, signifying nothing. I do not think this member or his party has anything to teach us about tolerance when we have his government in Quebec which says that even in Chinatown the use of English is incorrect on signs.

We have the Government of Quebec that has invoked the notwithstanding clause. We have the Government of Quebec that has a committee that says they cannot have an organization named

the Montreal English Academy in spite of the fact that they are the language police.

I remind the member that it was his member who went to Nagano at Canadian taxpayers' expense, costing probably in the neighbourhood of \$15,000, to attend the olympics.

She not only brought this whole issue to a boil as a result of her very intemperate comments with respect to the show of patriotism of our Canadian athletes in Nagano, but she also said that one of the reasons why she was there was so that she could make contact with and learn about international affairs.

If and when she and the colleagues in that party are ever to get their wish of being able to smash Canada, she would be able to represent the country of Quebec to the international community. She was doing this at Canadian taxpayers' expense.

I point out that if we had followed the Liberal motion proposed by the House leader rather than as an issue being terminated tonight, this issue at the Liberal request would be dragged out until the middle of June. I cannot imagine anything more destructive. It will be terminated tonight as a result of a vote.

Further, I quote Mr. Speaker yesterday from *Hansard*. He said:

—I have been challenged to show my colours as a patriotic Canadian by allowing the unfettered display of flags in the Chamber. This would constitute an unprecedented unilateral change to the practice of the House of Commons, a change, my colleagues, that no Speaker has the authority to make. So, whatever pressure that I have to do so, I cannot and I will not abrogate such authority to myself. Unless and until the House decides otherwise, no displays will be allowed and the current practice will be upheld.

His words, were “unless and until the House decided otherwise, no displays will be allowed”. The whole purpose of this motion is to get on to the floor exactly that question so that we will be able to see which members of this Chamber choose to support the separatists and not permit the display of flags in this Chamber.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have heard the member's comments, because I can now clarify certain things.

First, he has just talked about what is going on in Quebec. I would like to say in this House and tell the hon. member and anyone else interested that no minority in Canada receives better treatment, has more institutions and enjoys more rights than the anglophones in Quebec.

Supply

Do francophones in Canada, wherever they live in Canada, have their own universities, colleges, CLSCs and hospitals?

The anglophones can manage their own school boards. They can do all that. They have their own press, television and radio, which are very much at home in Quebec. What francophone minorities in certain western provinces have anywhere near the privileges enjoyed by the anglophone minority in Quebec?

Mr. Yvan Loubier: Not a one.

Mr. Michel Gauthier: Let the rest of Canada begin by giving francophones the same room and opportunities for development that Quebec offers anglophones, and we will take notes.

The hon. member has just said "It was the Bloc member who went to Nagano at taxpayers' expense". Are you aware that Quebecers pay more income tax than Manitobans, than Albertans, than British Columbians? Do you realize they pay 23 per cent of Canadian income tax?

Mr. Yvan Loubier: Thirty-one billion dollars.

Mr. Michel Gauthier: When are people going to realize that 25% of every dollar spent here comes from Quebec. They are not shy about spending our money. However, we would prefer to manage it ourselves.

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I very much welcome the opportunity to enter the debate on the official opposition motion which is before us.

I want to say a few words about what the debate may appear to be about, what the Reform Party would like to pretend this debate is about, and then I want to say something about what this flag flap issue is really about.

The Reform Party would try to create the impression that this is a simple, straightforward issue, that it is a simple question of whether members of the House want to display on the corner of their desks a Canadian flag. That is all it is about. That is all there is to it. Let us just vote for it and get on with it.

I want to say that I do not think that is what this issue is really about. I do not think that is why the official opposition has put before the House today a motion which it wants Canadians to interpret as meaning that we either vote for its motion on its terms and show we are for Canada, we are for the flag, or if we vote against the motion on its terms and then we are not for the flag and we are not for Canada.

This debate is about Reformers whose approach to politics is so simplistic that they would have Canadians believe that flags on the corner of the desks of members of Parliament will unite the country.

There is no committed federalist in this House who is not proud of the Canadian flag. There is no committed federalist in Canada who is not proud of the Canadian flag. Let us be clear. What this is about is the Reform Party trying to create division among those who were elected to this House of Commons to stand up for Canada and to fight for a united Canada. We will not be divided by those crass, cheap political tactics.

Let me briefly review the tactics used by the Reform Party in this flag flap.

First, in what our Speaker has properly ruled as inappropriate, Reformers used a proud symbol of Canadian freedom, our flag, to stifle the freedom of speech of one of our colleagues. Then, not having got their way with the Speaker, out of respect for the Canadian flag, a Reform member threw it on the floor of the House of Commons and marched out of this chamber.

• (1115)

Then Reform members, again not in a very proud moment in the history of this Chamber, tried to intimidate the Speaker by suggesting that if he dared to rule that Reform members had used the flag improperly he should fear for his job. Those kinds of intimidation tactics of the Speaker have no place in this Chamber and have no place in parliamentary democracy.

To make matters worse, the leader of the Reform Party suggested that this kind of hooliganism by his members was perfectly acceptable; it was, after all, just a question of freedom of speech. When I last checked the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it did not guarantee the right of people to threaten and to intimidate, particularly in this parliamentary institution. It was a shameful display by the official opposition and its leader. It did no credit to any of us.

[*Translation*]

This is not a debate about the flag. The Reform merely wants to take advantage of any opportunity to create division and confusion. Major issues for Canadians, such as jobs, education and health care, are too important for us to waste the precious time we have here in the House of Commons on other matters. But the Reform members do not seem to find them important.

[*English*]

It is ironic in the extreme that this is the week Reform members wrap themselves in the flag and say they are the true loyalists, the true patriots of Canada. This is the very same week that Canadians across the country are calling on their government and their members of Parliament to stand up for Canada's future, to say no loudly, clearly and without equivocation to the multilateral agreement on investment.

If the adolescent pranksters of the Reform zealots had their way, all that would be left of our country would be the flags in the corner of our desks. They want to see the MAI, an investors bill of rights, approved, an MAI without protection for Canada's culture,

Supply

without protection for our health care, our environment or our employment standards.

The job of running the country would move from Parliament Hill to corporate board rooms in New York, Tokyo and Seoul. We might be able to have flags in the corner of our desks, but in Reform's Canada after the MAI, MPs would not be able to effect most of the issues that directly affect the lives of Canadians.

That is Reform's vision for Canada. That is Reform's vision for the flag, a small flag on the corner of our desks in a toothless, powerless parliament.

[*Translation*]

The Reform members showed no respect to the Canadian flag when they threw it on the floor of the House of Commons. I want Canadians to know what the Reform is up to. They are playing a dangerous game, a divisive game, a childish game, and we must join forces to put an end to it.

[*English*]

The official opposition is behaving like a school yard bully. We all know the way to deal with bullies and that is to stand up to them. Mr. Speaker, in your ruling yesterday you did that. In our dealing with their antics today we also must do that.

The motivations are suspect and transparent. They say they want to reduce the question of whether we are for or against Canada to a simplistic question of whether we are for or against flags in the corner of our desks.

Last week it was Reform members who thought so little of our Canadian flag and who were so disrespectful of the Canadian flag that they flung it on the floor in this Chamber and retreated from the debate. That kind of cheap, crass approach to politics has no place in this parliament. That partisan petty form of politics will not strengthen and unify the country.

• (1120)

New Democrats are proud Canadians. We can match the pride and the patriotism of any federalist party. English Canadians, French Canadians, allophones, immigrant Canadians, aboriginal Canadians, our caucus is made up of people who choose Canada and are proud each and every day to stand up for our Canadian flag.

What is to be done about the motion? What is our responsibility as members of Parliament? Our caucus has carefully reviewed this matter. We have debated this matter. We are absolutely unanimous in our view that Reformers have been irresponsible in their handling of the issue.

They are playing silly games to avoid the reality that they have nothing to say. They do not want to deal with the substantive issues

that are at the real heart of the future of a united Canada. That is why we will not play their silly games. We will not dignify those silly and dangerous games by reducing the future of our great country to whether we can accept on their terms that the future of Canada depends on the display of a flag in the corner of our desks.

That is why the New Democratic Party caucus will vote against this official opposition motion and for a united Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think what the Reform members are suffering from is a lack of discernment.

They have trouble differentiating between a desk in the House of Commons and a podium in a public meeting. They are far from the same. In a public meeting, a partisan meeting, a person can do as he pleases, spout whatever propaganda he pleases. But what is involved here is a desk in the House of Commons. There are rules, this is an existing institution. The Reform Party is therefore suffering from an inability to differentiate.

As I see it, we in the Bloc Québécois, and the other opposition parties, are in a position to see what the real problems are: employment insurance, the budget surplus.

I would ask the hon. member for Halifax if she sees the problems which are facing us, at this time, and which are doing enormous harm to the Canadian and Quebec economy.

[*English*]

Ms. Alexa McDonough: Mr. Speaker, the member raises the issue of whether this is simply a matter of poor judgment on the part of Reform members, whether it is a matter of discernment. The member suggests, as others have already suggested including myself, that it is really about two very serious issues.

It is about Reform members playing games that on the surface may just look silly. They may annoy Canadians, and heavens knows by all the indications we are getting in our offices that people are becoming very impatient. Reform members are wasting the time of the House and trying the patience of Canadians to reduce the issue of Canada's future to one of whether we will display flags on the corner of our desks as the key to Canadian unity.

It goes much deeper than that. It is more serious than that. It is an insult to Canadians. Reformers think they can wrap themselves in the flag and present themselves as the only true patriots because they have chosen this tactic. At the same time they are escaping the real issues. Each and every one of us were elected to the House to represent our constituents, not in a simplistic or petty partisan way but to the best of our ability and to try to grapple with finding a consensus on how to strengthen and improve this great country.

Supply

• (1125)

On their official opposition day Reformers could have dealt with some of the issues of substance. They could have put forward recommendations for good substantive debate that might actually help to improve the unemployment problem in Canada. They could have come to the House and said that they understood it weakens and divides Canada to continue down the path of Americanizing our health care system so that it is two tier. They could have come to the House and said that they have reconsidered their position on universal access to education and would no longer advocate two tier education so those with personal wealth could gain the education they need to get into the new economy and enjoy prosperity in the future. They could have said they realize that if we do not deal with the issue of access, only those who could afford to gain education would get it and the others would fall further behind. The very kind of growing gap between the super rich and everyone else which the Reform Party has been fuelling with its policies would grow even wider.

We were really hoping these were the kinds of issues that would be debated on an official opposition day from a variety of perspectives. We have five different parties in the House with different views on how to deal with substantive issues. However Reform Party's contribution to official opposition day and to solving these problems is to push them aside, push them under the rug, and to wave the flag on their terms and the heck with whether or not the concerns of Canadians get dealt with.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, this is probably the saddest day I have spent in the Chamber since being elected. As a young member I hope there will not be many more like it.

This evening in the House of Commons we will be asked to approve billions of dollars in public expenditures. Today is the last day in this supply period on which we would have been able to debate issues that affect the lives of Canadians who are unemployed and looking for work, Canadians who are waiting in medical line-ups and in waiting rooms in hospitals across the country. It was an opportunity to debate the real issues Canadians want to hear about most.

There are substantial issues that are life altering, yet here we are at the bequest of the Reform Party debating whether we can have a little flag on the corner of our desks in the Chamber. I suggest we have entered the theatre of the absurd, not the chamber of the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at you sitting in the chair, you are a symbol of Canadian patriotism. The flags that adorn the chair next to you equally symbolize that. There are flags outside the door of the Chamber, flags that fly from the Peace Tower. Many of the

members in the Chamber are sporting lapel pins to express their patriotism.

I ask a rhetorical question. By putting another little flag on your desk are you somehow elevating your level of patriotism? Are you somehow improving yourself, your country and all the constituents you represent when you sit at this desk in the House of Commons? I would have to say no. The level of debate we are reaching today is again a new low brought about by the Reform Party.

There are lessons to be learned in all this. Let us look carefully at how the Reform Party members have behaved over the last number of days. In all candour I feel that our priorities have been derailed, soiled by the mendacity of the motion. Perhaps it is a good example of what drives the member for Calgary Southwest, the policies of division. Perhaps that is what is driving the Reform Party.

Members of the Reform Party have used the flag in the Chamber as a weapon to assault another member of the House. Members of the Reform Party have used it as a weapon in an attempt to intimidate the Speaker of the House. Members of the Reform Party stood in the Chamber and threw the flag on the floor of the House of Commons, which has been referred to a number of times.

I refer to a letter sent to the Speaker by a gentleman named Thomas Sigurdson from Surrey, British Columbia. He was here in the gallery the day the Reform Party erupted. I quote from his letter sent on March 14, 1998: "I must comment on the shameful behaviour of the official opposition the day that followed your ruling. I have never, ever witnessed this kind of tantrum that exploded from the benches of the Reform Party. From the public gallery I had the sad misfortune to watch some members yell not only verbal abuse at you but also hurl paper, books and flags off their desks in an act of infantile defiance".

• (1130)

He goes on to say that this was the most shameful thing he had ever seen. Most shameful of all was the throwing of the small Canadian flag on to the floor of the House of Commons. His letter ends up with the final comment that flags that surround the dais indicate to all members and visitors of our nation that the identity as well as the national pride is here in the House of Commons signified by those flags.

This is not about pride. I borrow the words of my colleague, the hon. member for Chicoutimi. It is not about pride, it is about provocation, it is about intolerance, it is about partisanship. Pointing to the flag and grunting and making these comments is a way to avoid meaningful debate.

Members of the Reform Party have returned to the in your face style of politics that we have seen in this country. By surrounding or wrapping themselves in the flag they get themselves off the hook.

Up until this week there has never been a suggestion that we should have these flags on our desks. They are prepared to stop

Supply

free speech by anyone who disagrees with them and then wrap themselves in the package of the flag.

If I were to search for words to somehow describe what is going on and to describe the conduct that we have seen in the Chamber, they would be found in Beauchesne's but I could not use them because they are all unparliamentary.

Canadians have seen that those new defenders of patriotism, those who threw the flag on the floor of the House of Commons, are the same patriots who ran advertisements during the federal election campaign that called a leader from Quebec a person not fit to be the prime minister. I share my leader's description of those ads and I also share his description of those who designed and perpetrated those ads.

This past weekend I was in the province of Nova Scotia in my constituency and I spoke with many people about this issue. When it came down to the final analysis as to what was going on I was asked why we are discussing this when there are so many important issues. With the expiration of the TAGS program, with the sorry state of national health care, the high unemployment and the many substantial issues that we do discuss in the House of Commons, why are we wasting our time discussing a tiny flag on the corner of our desks?

My hope is that Canadians will see this attempt by the Reform Party to divide the House for what it is. It is a shameful attempt to derail the national agenda. What people do not want is this debate to go on and on. What they want is trust and respect for members in the House of Commons, but it has to be earned. What they want is a sense of honour and respect for national institutions, which the House surely is. Let us work to bring some decorum back to the House.

The flag is above all to be treated with dignity and respect. It is not a desk decoration or to be hung as a drapery in a window as proof of one's patriotism. We will oppose this motion and we will do so not because we do not love the flag, for we do. The Progressive Conservative Party has been around this country since its inception. We have been around this country carrying the flag for all Canadians since that time.

A ruling was made from by Chair and that ruling has now been brought into question by the Reform motion. Again we are talking about decorum, we are talking about respect, we are talking about order in the House of Commons. It would be improper for anyone to stand up between the second and third period of a hockey game and sing the national anthem. It would be improper to break out into enthusiastic flag waving in the middle of a church sermon or in the middle of a child's recital at school.

I would suggest those are apt examples of what the Reform Party is trying to do here and it is doing so for all the wrong reasons.

• (1135)

I want to emphasize that this is not simply about a flag. It may be the simple common denominator that the Reform Party would have us believe, but this is about decorum, dignity and order. I would say that from the Reform perspective, this is about trying to get its way against the will of everyone else.

What I find most ironic of all is the Bloc, the big bad separatists, as perhaps one of the most respectful parties in this House when it comes to the dignity and decorum that we are supposed to surround ourselves in. There is a great irony in that when my colleagues to the left in the Reform Party engage in this infantile behaviour.

As much as I value the flag, as much as I hold it dear, democracy must hold a higher place. Indeed the flag stands for that principle among many others. When a member of the House, a member who has been democratically elected here, is shouted down and drowned out in the name of patriotism I say that is wrong. Democracy has to be given a higher priority.

As much as I take no great offence to a flag being on a desk, what I take offence to is the manner in which this has been presented and the manner in which this has been brought about by the Reform Party for, again, all the wrong reasons.

Let us put our shoulders to the wheel and do what Canadians expect us to do. Let us come to this House and discuss substantial issues. Let us get on with the nation's business. Let us put this matter to rest and do the right thing. Let us dismiss this motion and get down to the job that our constituents sent us here to do.

Mr. Jim Abbott: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know that it is your intention and always has been your intention to be very fair in questions and comments. I note, however, that this is Reform bash day and I was just wondering if you would give precedence to Reform people to ask questions of people who have been bashing the Reform Party and this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair is aware of the nature of the discussion. However, what your Speaker has tried to do is ensure a relatively fair distribution of questions. The New Democratic Party has not had an opportunity yet to ask a question or make a comment at the end of any member's speech and that is why I recognized the hon. member for Qu'Appelle in this instance. He has been rising consistently in an effort to get the floor. In respect of each of the government speakers, I gave precedence to the Reform members

since they were members of the official opposition and since it was their motion.

I feel it is incumbent on the Chair to ensure that all parties get an opportunity to participate in questions and comments. The Bloc Québécois has had one person rise on questions and comments to be recognized and this is the first time the NDP has had that opportunity.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a comment and preface that with a short question for the House leader of the Conservative Party.

What I resent about this debate is the Reform Party playing politics with a very important national symbol of this country. I think that can be very dangerous in terms of the flag waving and the political games it is playing. Let us really call it what it is. It is the Reform Party wanting to go around the country after this is over and say "We stood up to those terrible separatists. We stood up for the flag and for Canada but those other parties did not". That is exactly what it wants to do.

The Reform members are smirking here this morning because they are going to have the four other parties voting against this motion. This is the most pathetic partisan politics I have ever seen. It is an abuse of the flag and of our national symbols. I really resent that. I have never seen that happen in all my years in this House.

What about games? Who was it in this House who threw the flag on the floor of the House of Commons? Was it a separatist? No. It was the member for Medicine Hat, the Reform Party finance critic, who threw the flag on the floor of the House of Commons. If that is not playing politics with the flag then what the devil is it?

• (1140)

Who was it that took an old convertible and painted it the colours of the Canadian Flag? Was it a member of the Conservative Party, the NDP or the Liberal Party? Who was it? The Reform Party. It is the Reform Party that is using the flag as a gimmick, as a narrow partisan instrument for its narrow partisan political beliefs.

Reformers are trying to divide Canadians, be divisive, pit Canadian against Canadian. I resent that as someone who has been in this House for a number of years. I have never seen this kind of gamemanship in the history of the House of Commons. That comes from a political party that said it wanted to do politics differently, bring decorum to the House of Commons. We are seeing the true Reform Party in this House of Commons here today. When I am out in my riding, as I was last weekend, people are saying to me why do we not talk about the real issues, the real issues confronting all Canadian people.

This Parliament costs over \$1 million a day in terms of sitting days to run. The budget of the House of Commons is over \$200

Supply

million a year. We sit for approximately 140 or 150 days per year, over \$1 million a day. The Reform Party is wasting that kind of money trying to divide Canadians by being partisan with the flag of Canada. I resent that and I want to have a comment from the House leader of the Conservative Party whether he agrees with me that it is narrow partisan politics on the flag and a waste of money. We should be dealing with real issues of this country.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question and I welcome the remarks by my colleague in the NDP who has been in this Chamber a lot longer than I and has a very eloquent way of making his point. I agree very much so with what he has said.

The same comment was made this morning by my colleague from Fundy—Royal that this is indeed a strictly financial argument, removing all the rhetoric and removing all the emotion that has surrounded this debate. I do not know if it is \$1 million or \$500,000 but to think that we are spending that kind of money to discuss this issue certainly raises the hackles on the back of my neck. I am sure it offends Canadians greatly.

As for his comment about the disgraceful display of throwing the flag on the floor of the House of Commons and his comment with of whether it was the separatists who did it, let me raise this point. Maybe it was. Maybe there is something more insidious here that we are not quite aware of.

Reformers have brought a different agenda to this House of Commons, a different agenda from that which they held themselves out to be when they were elected in western Canada. I am hoping and praying that those who supported them in western Canada will look at the display and look at the way they have behaved and performed in the House of Commons when they make their decision the next time.

The Deputy Speaker: I might suggest to the House that if there is considerable interest in questions and comments at the conclusion of members' speeches, we could revert to that good practice of one minute comments and one minute responses, which I am happy to do if the House is agreeable for the rest of the day. That will try to ensure wider distribution of the questions and comments in the limited time we have.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it was mentioned earlier that this was not about the flag. It is mostly about the flag but I would say it certainly goes deeper than it. It is about everything the flag represents. It is about the symbolism, the pride and patriotism of being a Canadian and I want to talk about that for a few minutes in the 10 minutes I have allotted to me.

It was mentioned earlier by the government House leader that I was the one who brought forward the motion to sing O Canada. It was I at the beginning of the 35th Parliament in 1994. I was proud to do that. It had never been done. The members said they were not

Supply

sure we could do that. They denied unanimous consent and of course it went to committee.

The whip across knows that it went to committee and then they said today that we were playing political games because we knew it was in committee.

Mr. Speaker, you were on that committee and I think you will remember the dates and the times. Let me just remind you and get it into *Hansard*. It was almost two years later, at least a year and a half, when I said what happened to this thing. I asked the committee, of which you were the chairman, if I could be a witness in front of that committee and you granted me that opportunity.

It went through committee not by any grand gesture of any government member but because I phoned and asked where is that thing, let us get it going. You granted me that opportunity to come as a witness. It was by no magnanimous gesture of any government member who said we want to get this thing through as fast as we can. I appreciated being allowed to attend the committee as a witness but it was at my request as a result of referendum day 1995.

• (1145)

We are not talking about who is more or less patriotic. That is not the issue. I am not trying to say I am any more patriotic than other members. I am not trying to say I am a better Canadian. That is not the issue. It is about freedom of expression and being able to express patriotism on the particular days when it hits us, when we feel like it. If I want to celebrate Canada, there ain't nobody who can tell me that is not my privilege and experience as a Canadian citizen.

I want to give a few personal thoughts in this debate. Heaven help me if I would ever use a prop as I know that is not appropriate in the House of Commons, but I have my birth certificate here and I want to read something from it. I promise not to throw it. It reads: Name, Deborah Cleland Grey. Birthday, July 1, 1952. Place of Birth, Vancouver, British Columbia. It can be seen that this flag means a little more to me than just something I want to put on my desk, or something I will wear proudly and passionately, the red and white and you bet I will.

I am the fourth child in my family. I was born three and a half weeks late, which is practically unheard of. My mother said to me, and it still rings it true today "You knew exactly the day you were waiting for, Deb". I had no idea I would ever be a member of Parliament yet the symbolism of that—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Miss Deborah Grey: They can snort and say whatever they like but no one in the House can challenge or dare me and say, "Isn't she cute, doesn't she play stunts, doesn't she play gimmicks".

These people who are sneering say they deserve freedom of speech. I would ask for the same respect.

It is so deep, the symbolism of the flag. It is not just the flag. It is the symbolism of my flag. I am speaking here for myself and that is all. When I say it is important to me, you bet it is. Maybe it is a first, that someone else would sneer and snort, but I am here to say to him and to everybody else, ain't nobody who can tell me that my Canadian flag is not important to me.

It is not just the flag on my desk but deep within myself. I was 13 years old in 1965 when the first flag debate took place. I was proud to see the end of that flag flap. I was a teenager and I loved the maple leaf. I have travelled in Europe. That maple leaf was sewn on my knapsack. I was proud to be a Canadian, not just for the flag but for everything it represented.

One of the highlights of my elected life was on October 1, 1996, right after the Atlanta games when the Speaker of the House invited all the Olympian athletes here on the floor of the Chamber. Mr. Speaker, you were here and I know you shared my excitement.

I want to look for a few moments at *Hansard* from that day because we have heard today that the rules in this place cannot be changed. The Speaker made his ruling yesterday and it cannot be changed, do not mess with it.

Here is what he said in *Hansard* on October 1, 1996: "We are going to do a few things differently in the next few minutes". Then he went on to say: "For the first time in the history of our country, we are going to bring on to the floor our Olympic athletes".

What a day that was. I sat farther down toward the door. Silken Laumann, Donovan Bailey and Curt Harnet, and all the others with the special Olympics, when they wheeled in and walked in, that was a rush. People on all sides of the House had goose bumps because for the first time ever they stood on the floor of the House of Commons. Let me say I was proud. The Speaker said: "We do not usually have guests here on the floor of the House of Commons but this is an extraordinary day and we wanted to bend the rules just a little because we here in this Chamber and we 30 million Canadians want to pay tribute to you and to congratulate you".

• (1150)

That was a wonderful day. We celebrated those Olympian athletes. What a job they did in Atlanta. I was so proud of them. The Speaker unilaterally made new rules to celebrate, allowing those Olympic athletes to come to the floor of the House.

The editor's note reads: "After the singing of the national anthem, Canada's 1996 Paralympic and Olympic athletes left the Chamber". It was a spontaneous, exciting and passionate rendition of *O Canada*. And today we are saying that maybe that will not happen again.

Supply

What about the Olympic athletes in Nagano? What about the athletes who did such a superb job for Canada? They love our flag, as do I. They serve it, as do I. They celebrate it, as do I.

What about Sandra Schmirler? With the time zone change I would love to ask who got up at 3.30 in the morning to watch a live curling draw.

What about those of us who watched Pierre Lueders from Edmonton sailing down the run in the bobsled with the Canadian flag on the front? He won the gold.

What about Catriona Lemay-Doan? I hope she is in this Chamber with that grin from ear to ear celebrating what it is to be a Canadian.

What about Annie Perreault with her speed skating? What a day that was.

Are they going to be coming to the floor of the House of Commons? Knowing the Speaker as I do, I would bet a dollar that he would want them to come. He has opened up this place. I appreciate that. They are going to be here on the floor of the House of Commons. And I bet a dollar they will be in their red and white Roots Canada jackets. I bet they will. But we will not be allowed to, judging from what has happened here today.

They can go into any building, any parking lot, any mall, any radio station anywhere in this country and they are allowed to show the flag. However if they come here to the floor of the House of Commons and if this motion is not supported today, there will be no little Canadian flags to celebrate them. Will we be allowed to have a spontaneous rendition of *O Canada*? I am not sure. Apparently not. It does not sound like it.

This will be the only building in Canada where the Olympic athletes will not be able to be spontaneous. Why in the name of common sense, why in the name of freedom of expression are we not allowed to jump out of our seats, wave the flag and sing *O Canada* at the top of our lungs to celebrate the Olympic athletes? They have come home from Nagano. They love the flag. They serve it and they celebrate it. I want to be there to celebrate with them. I want to show my patriotism in any way I can when they are here in the House of Commons.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the words of the hon. Reform member. She delivered a very passionate message to Canadians. However, I would suggest that it is not an accurate picture of what this debate is about.

I ask her honestly and straightforwardly, how she can make that monumental mental leap to suggest that having a little flag on the desks is somehow going to bar our Canadian athletes from walking in here as they have in the past and having a spontaneous rendition of our national anthem.

That is not the issue at all. That is a blatantly misleading statement.

Miss Deborah Grey: Mr. Speaker, if I want to do something which is spontaneous because my flag means so much to me, I think I should be given the privilege, the right and perhaps even the obligation to stand. If I want to wave my flag as a symbol of what is inside, I figure I ought to be able to do that. If I want to sing *O Canada* in this Chamber, I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I will do it. If they are here I will do it.

• (1155)

The issue is that we be allowed when we choose, not all the time but when we choose, to have that flag which is so much deeper and which represents so much about what it means to me to be a Canadian. It is the symbol and that is why I should be able to use it at my desk, because I love it and because I serve it.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about spontaneity. I certainly do recall the spontaneity when she tore down the back aisle after a member of Parliament, Pierrette Ringuette-Maltais, and threatened her in this Chamber.

I was also reminded of something because of the way she was hurling her papers around that she made a statement in her speech that far be it for her to use props. I wonder if the member recalls an incident whereby she took a platform document of the Liberal Party during question period and hurled it onto the floor of the House. I wonder if the member would think that was a prop.

Given what the member has done compared to what she has said, how is anybody to believe anything the member has said?

Miss Deborah Grey: Mr. Speaker, the member will remember that the case he is talking about, about a defeated member from New Brunswick, had absolutely no merit to it. The Speaker ruled on that once and for all. It is unbelievable that he would bring up some silly thing like that again.

The member talked about the red book. Yes, I must admit on that day I thought that was just where the red book deserved to be, right smack on the floor. I have never thrown a flag. I never will. Is it not ironic that the red book would be allowed in the Chamber of the House Commons, but the red flag would not. What a caution, what a pathetic statement.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Reform Party member. Thank goodness she was not born on December 25, because she would think she is God Almighty.

I was here when the incidents occurred and what concerns me about the attitude of Reformers is that they behaved like a bunch of

Supply

fanatics. People who, individually, are usually sociable, tolerant and understanding behaved like a pack hunting some prey, and this scared me. History tells us—and there is no need to refer specifically to Germany during the second world war—that people wrapped in their flag like that often commit the worst possible crimes.

Could the hon. member tell us whether she is proud of the attitude displayed and the means used here by her colleagues in the Reform Party, including the threats made to the Speaker of the House, such as airing his private life in public? I wonder if she is proud of her fellow party members and if she is proud of herself, considering she was born on July 1.

[English]

Miss Deborah Grey: Mr. Speaker, I did not get the point about December 25. I am not sure what the hon. member was referring to. I must admit I did not have a whole lot to do with the family planning. I was born when I was born.

He will remember that the incident which happened last week had nothing to do with the flag flap. It had everything to do with some comments the Speaker had made elsewhere which he straightened out. He did not recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition. That is why many members were angry.

Something happened that day which was regrettable. My seat-mate, the member for Medicine Hat, tossed a flag up in disgust. He was exasperated, he was frustrated and he said that he is very, very sorry and very ashamed that he did that. I appreciated the honesty in that. I think all of us need to say thanks for being honest.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to stand today in this House of Commons to debate this motion. The motion is a very simple one. In the positive as it is stated it says that members will be permitted to display small flags at their desks if they so choose. That is the essence of it.

For me it was really defined at a time when I was denied that permission. Because I have been quite involved with this story, I appreciate the opportunity to rise today.

• (1200)

I will give a little background. I am a first generation Canadian. I had no choice as the previous member had about when and where I was born. However, I am very glad that I was born in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, in a province of Canada. I grew up in a family which had chosen to make Canada their home.

Along with other people in their immediate group, my grandparents while living in southern Russia during the first world war, suffered from a lot of persecution. The revolution came after the war. Members of our family in that country were killed in that

revolution simply because of their beliefs and not because they committed any crime or anything else. They were not on the right political side.

My grandparents having escaped from the same disasters made the decision to move their family out of that country. They literally fled that country and came to Canada. They came here because this was the country of freedom, opportunity and safety for their family. Though they did not know each other, this happened in parallel to my grandparents on both my mom's and dad's sides.

As a youngster growing up in a farm home, we had central heating which was defined as being a stove in one of the main floor rooms. There was a hole in the ceiling that allowed the heat by convection to go upstairs. There was a grate at the hole and we could hear what the adults were saying downstairs. I remember hearing my grandparents, my uncles, aunts and some of their friends discuss how things were in the old country. Over and over I remember hearing how wonderful that we could come to Canada.

This was not part of my speech but it is tremendously important. I was asked this week a number of times whether I was proud to be a Canadian. I said yes. The word that describes it better is that I am grateful to be a Canadian. I am thankful to be a Canadian. I am so thankful that my grandparents made that decision to leave that country and come to this country. There is deep within me feelings and convictions of the importance of preserving freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of choosing one's faith, all these freedoms in this country which I and my family value so highly.

I will go back to February 26 when the member came back from Nagano. At the suggestion of one of the Liberal members, a member of this House had placed flags on all our desks. It was agreed that when the member who had said things about our Canadian flag came back from Nagano that as loyal Canadians we would wave these flags and show her that we love our country.

At that stage I did not know who had made this suggestion. No one in our party had said they had done it so I did not think it was from our party, and I did not care. I said I agreed with this. Yes, I confess to engaging in a spontaneous demonstration in this House of Commons when the member who had spoken disparagingly of our flag came back from Nagano. I confess I joined in that demonstration.

The question is should I now apologize for it? The answer is no, I should not. If we do not have freedom of expression in this country, in this very House, then really what else matters?

Shortly thereafter we went back to the budget debate. This is the defining moment for me. This is the moment in my entire life where my flag meant more to me than at any other time. That was the same Thursday when, a few minutes later, there was a Liberal member droning on about how wonderful their budget was. I had

heard most of the things before, therefore I will confess again that I was not paying a great deal of attention to what he was saying. I was reading.

• (1205)

After a little demonstration, without thinking instead of putting my flag back into my desk, I placed it into my little water holder. As a result, it just sat there, this little, tiny flag, three inches by six inches, and for those who are metric, seven and a half centimetres by fifteen. There it was. I was reading a paper. A Liberal member was droning on.

Suddenly, there was a point of order. A separatist member of this House got up and said “Madam Speaker”—it was the one of the Acting Speakers who was in the chair—“I see flags and I would like to have them removed”. That is a paraphrase, not a quote.

I basically ignored it. I will admit that. The Acting Speaker did ask for members to remove their flags. I was busy reading and really did not pay too much attention to it. It was also in a language that I do not understand, and I regret that I do not understand it.

He stood up immediately again and said “Madam Speaker, I still see flags” and she did not see them. My flag was very small and very unobtrusive. It certainly was not bothering the Liberal member from speaking.

He pointed right at me and then she looked at me and said “Will the member for Elk Island remove his flag?” I have to say at that moment that flag meant more to me than anything. When I was asked to remove it, I did not.

Am I sorry? No, I am not. See how torn I am. The rules do not permit me in that instance to display a simple, little, Canadian flag and that is wrong. There is not another geographical location in this whole country where we cannot display our flag.

We have it in our offices. That has already been mentioned. I do not think there is a business in this entire country where, if an employee of the company would have a little flag on their desk, anyone would have the audacity, the nerve to say “Take it away”.

For me, it is not the permission to have the flag. It is an assurance that it will not be taken away from me. That is what happened on that day. That was the defining moment.

We have bombasted here today. We did not plan this. We honestly did not. I said that on very many talk shows this week. It was not a planned thing by the Reform Party. I did not know until two seconds before this happened that this is how it would develop.

I will say one thing. If I am asked to stand up for my country and my flag, I will do it and there will not be a member who is trying to tear this country apart who will stop me, nor any other Canadian or non-Canadian.

Supply

If I do not have that kind of fortitude, I do not have the right to stand here. It is a formidable task we have. Judging by the debate so far, everyone is against this motion. They are somehow trying to judge our motives. Because our motives are wrong, they are going to vote for what is wrong instead of for what is right.

I am appealing, I am begging, I am doing everything I can to ask hon. members on all sides of the House to do what is right. What we are asking is for a small incremental change.

Yes, I believe in rules. I believe in law. I believe in order. I believe that we have limits to our freedoms of expression. We are moving. We want to move those limits ever so little in this House so that when a member gets into a situation like I was in, the rules of the House cannot be used to defeat and to destroy my freedom of a very simple expression which I value so highly.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me say, since the previous speaker mentioned that his parents were refugees from another country, that I was a refugee from Hungary and came to Canada in 1957. Let me tell him that there are ways of celebrating flags and there are ways not to celebrate flags.

• (1210)

If members recall communist countries, every May 1 was May Day. The factories emptied. All the workplaces were empty. Those workers were forced to march past the reviewing stand in order to celebrate May Day. I recall when I was five years old going along with my mother because we had to bring family members along. I could not understand why all the adults around me wanted me to carry their flags. It was because they did not want to carry the flag.

Let me further say that October 27, 1995 was one of my proudest moments. I was at the Place du Canada in Montreal with my family and 600 people from my riding where we proudly carried the flag. That was an expression of our love for our country and our flag.

The only question I have for that member is where was he?

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, it is not accurate to say that there were no Reformers there. It just has not been advertised. There were some, and some pretty high profile ones.

Besides that, the member mentioned the old countries. This is what distinguishes this country from other countries and why I am so grateful that my grandparents chose this as their country. In those other countries people are punished if they do not fly the flag. Does that make them patriotic or right? No. I could even ask the question: Does the distribution of free flags around the country, causing people to wave them who otherwise were not doing it, make them patriotic? I think not. The difference is that in this country and in this place we are punished if we do fly the flag.

Supply

My comment would simply be that the sequence is most important. I believe, for myself and probably for most Canadians, that we should fly the flag because we are patriotic rather than thinking that we will become patriotic by flying the flag. There is a huge difference there.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane.

The debate today cannot be separated from the incident in the House on February 26 from which it arose. If we go back to that incident we will find that there was some anger and concern on both sides of the House with remarks attributed to the hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis in far away Japan. As reported, the remarks were deemed offensive by a number of people. I believe this is what produced the incident.

I have since seen an explanation of it by the hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis. As many of us know from her work in committee, she has been a good committee person and has been respectful of House rules in her conduct. I have seen the explanation since, but in the origins I think there was an anger in her remarks that was considered intemperate and offensive to many members.

What happened I think needs to be traced. On February 23 I was told to look in my desk in the House. When I looked in, I found a small flag with a note which read “As a loyal Canadian, please wave this flag the first time Suzanne Tremblay, BQ, stands to speak in question period”.

The Deputy Speaker: I think the hon. member knows that he must refer to members by their constituency and not by name. I urge him to comply with the rules in that regard.

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the hon. member in the context of a document in which her name was mentioned, but I will accept—

The Deputy Speaker: I appreciate the hon. member’s argument but the rules of the House are clear, that one cannot do indirectly what one cannot do directly, even quoting a document. Your Speaker has experience with this from having had made the same mistake.

• (1215)

I have checked the authorities and I am satisfied it is quite correct that you may not refer to the hon. member by name, even when quoting from another document, so I would urge the member to comply with the rule in that regard.

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, I would defer to you because of your charm as well as your learning.

I was really saying that what would have been an understandably spontaneous action lost some of its attraction when there was a

three day interregnum. I think it is correct to say, as an hon. member on this side who was associated with the incident said on March 9 in the House, it may have been ill advised but it never was supposed to go this far. It took intellectual courage and honesty for the hon. member concerned to make that remark and I think he is right. This debate should have been closed then and there.

Since we have a motion on the order paper today, let me simply say that our reaction and attitude to our country and the symbols of our nationhood are changing. The two founding nations, perhaps because they regretted their 19th century history which was rather bloody and rather inconsiderate of other people, tended to develop a certain self-restraint. What was very noticeable in the twenties, thirties, forties, the World War II period and just before, was an absence of the breast beating nationalism in many parts of continental Europe.

I remember the greatest of the Conservative leaders in Canada during the post-war period, Premier John Robarts whom I advised, defending the choice—and it was much in controversy—of the maple leaf flag as the Canadian flag against some very angry Conservatives who said that people fought and died under the Union Jack in the last war. He replied, as somebody who had served in the Mediterranean theatre in small boats, that none of us fought and died under flags in World War II, that you would have given away your cover. Let us be realistic. Symbols of that sort were more relevant in the 19th century. He was representing an attitude of self-restraint which reflected the thinking of people in the two founding nations at that period.

The United States Supreme Court in World War II gave two massive rulings. I remember studying them as a law student. They were key to the evolution of American constitutional democracy. One sometimes thinks in Canada that the Americans are given to excessive breast beating displays of nationalism. In 1942, in the *Gobitis* case, the court ruled by an eight to one majority that school children could be compelled to salute the flag even though it violated their religious beliefs.

There was such a flood of criticism of that decision, including from marines serving in the Pacific theatre, “is it the country we are fighting for”, that the court reversed that decision two years later. It was a defining moment in Americans’ attitude to themselves and to their symbols.

We recognize the change in this country, the influence of immigration, the influence of our passage to a multicultural, plural society in which the views of new cultural communities are as relevant and determining as those of other people.

In 1994 the Speaker of the House introduced what you have on the left and the right of his chair, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian flag. It was not displayed before but he introduced that and it has been a practice supported by all of us. In 1994 he also introduced the

practice—and I think it was first suggested by the hon. member for Edmonton North—of singing the national anthem each Wednesday afternoon. Again it is a practice that all parties in the House have supported.

Each generation of Canadians has the right to redefine its attitudes to the nation including its choice of symbols. It may well be that we have been less demonstrative than we should have been.

I remember visiting India in the post-war period 15 years after independence and being struck by the fact that the main traffic circle in town, which had a huge, monumental plinth, was still dominated by a statue of King George V of Great Britain. One said to the Indians “Does he not represent the past?” The Indians said “yes, but we have no inferiority complex. In time we will remove the statue,” and they did 10 years later. In other words it should not be assumed that the new immigrants will follow the attitudes of colleagues from the other side of the House just referred to.

• (1220)

One remembers the East German regime of Mr. Honecker, which was dramatically in evidence for the gymnastic displays, those three or four hours of sporting exhibitions accompanied by literally thousands of flags. In 1989 the Berlin wall fell and the particular flag Mr. Honecker had supported disappeared into the dustbin of history.

We are looking for a way of reconciling new attitudes, new expectations of what our national symbols should be with the more traditional values which I think have been toward self-restraint.

Perhaps with a certain degree of smugness Canadians have set themselves aside from other people. We do not need to say that we are Canadians. We know. We have confidence in our future. We know that we have a great future. We know that we are a tolerant people. This process is a legitimate one and one that we would all welcome, but I wonder whether, in the aftermath of the incident in the House on February 26, this is the right time and context in which to consider it.

I believe that the House put forward a sensible suggestion that it go to a very powerful and prestigious committee of the House which you once chaired, Mr. Speaker, in one of your earlier periods. You were an erudite, an eloquent and perhaps a loquacious incumbent of the chairmanship of that committee, but you did well by us and we did well by you.

My suggestion to the hon. members opposite, to the hon. member for Edmonton North who was active in the movement to display the flags on either side of the chair and the singing of the anthem, why not recall the motion? Why not let it go to the committee so in a proper context of calmness we can consider

Supply

what redefinition, if any, we want to make of what we have already done?

Mr. Jim Gouk (West Kootenay—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe, in light of arguments that have already been presented, that the Liberal member who just spoke still wants to send such a simple yes or no issue to committee to languish there, as has been already stated, never to see the light of day again.

I would just like to bring forth two other points. I have in my office on my desk in my riding a Canadian flag. I have in my office in Ottawa near my desk a Canadian flag. I have three desks. The third desk is this one that I occupy in the House of Commons on behalf of my constituents and all Canadians, where I try to make valued judgments on legislation brought forward for people in my riding and for all Canadians. Why, on this third desk of mine, should I not be allowed the symbol of what I represent?

I would ask, if I may, why, when his own former deputy prime minister and heritage minister spent millions, nay tens of millions of dollars, promoting the Canadian flag and telling Canadians to be more—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, I think it assumes too much to imagine the committee over which you presided so eloquently will take 19 years to reach a decision. It is the sort of thing that could be decided promptly and we would recommend it.

I also have the flags in my office. I added them recently. I have been a serving member of the armed forces. I think one of the difficulties perhaps with the House is that it has too little acquaintance or contact directly with the last war or military service. I always found that military people are more modest in displaying nationalism than those without it.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this is a question of decorum and practice in the House. When the original flag flap was happening, Progressive Conservative members physically stormed the Speaker. Jim Fulton, a member of the New Democratic Party, intentionally brought a raw fish into the House that he slapped down on the Prime Minister's desk. A former member of the New Democratic Party actually ran after and grabbed the mace, which represents the power of the House.

• (1225)

In the Speaker's ruling yesterday he said “Unless and until the House changes its rules this will not be permitted”. What we are doing, very simply, as my colleague has said, is asking for a simple yes or no. Why can we not have a simple yes or no? Why can we

Supply

not simply change the rules so we can display the flag and get on with business?

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that I made no pejorative remarks about him or any other member of the other side of the House, but I would suggest that there is a feeling on this side of the House that his party should have followed the course the member on this side did in saying that enough time had been given to this issue. Let us put it off. Let us consider it in that context.

I believe that on his side a gaffe was made. I also believe that the art of politics is to retire gracefully from situations such as that.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could comment on the observations I have made. The leader of the Reform Party a couple of years ago could not have been bothered to attend the flag day celebration because it was not very important.

Today members of the Reform Party are cloaked in the flag. Somehow they are the great defenders of the flag. I wonder if he could comment on what I believe to be a very shabby and shallow patriotic venture on the part of Reformers.

Mr. Ted McWhinney: Mr. Speaker, I think that patriotism like religion is a matter of personal choice and personal taste, at least in its display.

I go to flag ceremonies. I do so proudly. I think we should leave it to each member to make that judgment.

Mr. Benoît Serré (Timiskaming—Cochrane, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, contrary to most members who have spoken previously, I am not pleased to participate in the debate today. I do so out of a sense of duty not to my party but to my country.

Today I will probably give the most difficult speech of my political career. I understand fully the predicament we have put the Speaker in with the so-called flag issue. I too feel caught between a rock and a hard place. My heart is torn apart.

On the one hand I would like to support the motion, as I have previously been adamant about my right to place a flag on my desk. On the other hand, because of the manner in which members of the Reform Party have conducted themselves on this issue, I cannot and I will not support the motion. I will try to explain why to the best of my ability.

[*Translation*]

Before getting to the heart of the matter, let me remind the House of the events that led to this dilemma. I feel that after doing so I will have managed to upset both the separatists and the Reformers. In any case, it is important to set the record straight.

The separatist member for Rimouski—Mitis made some comments at the Nagano Games that upset Canadian parliamentarians, and in fact all Canadians. We could not let her get away with this. We had to respond to the member and to proudly defend the use of the Canadian flag, and we did. We did so spontaneously and with pride.

The Chair ruled that the way we did it was against the rules. I respect the decision. However, I am warning separatists that whenever they attack our flag, I will be there to defend it.

I have a suggestion for the member for Rimouski—Mitis and all her separatist colleagues: if they are offended by the Canadian flag, if they cannot loyally represent Canada at international events, then they should stay here and leave that opportunity to other members who will represent our country with pride and dignity.

[*English*]

Let me now address the motion of the Reform Party. Let me say from the outset that I favour having a Canadian flag on my desk. Two weeks ago I would have supported such a motion. I hope that through the Committee on Procedure and House Affairs or through a private members' bill we will one day be able to do so. However, to bring such a motion today in light of the recent events is divisive, disruptive and plain low politicking.

• (1230)

It would be a lot easier for me to grandstand today and be the lone Liberal hero by supporting this motion. But when one is elected to the Canadian Parliament, one must not ask himself what is best for the party, one must not ask himself what is best to be re-elected, one must ask himself what is best for Canada. That is a lot harder to do.

The manner in which the Reform Party conducted itself on this issue, and other facts which I have learned in the past week, has led me to reconsider my position. Here we are in the House of Commons saying that we want to promote the Canadian flag and teach respect for the flag. What does the Reform Party do? It throws the flag on the floor. It took a very serious issue and turned it into a circus. I have too much respect for the Canadian flag to support and witness such disrespectful acts.

Where was the Reform Party when we had the flag rally in Montreal on October 27, 1995? We were there. The Reform Party opposed the fly the flag program brought forward by the Minister of Canadian Heritage. We supported it. Yet, it comes into the House pretending to be holier than thou and somehow making the impression that it is more patriotic than we are.

We on this side of the House have no lessons to learn from the Reform Party on patriotism. We want the flag to unite Canadians, not divide them. By forcing this issue now, today, they are playing

right into the separatists' hands. They are pouring gasoline on the fire.

I have done some research in the past week. In other legislatures around the world, the use of flags on MPs desks is not permitted in the British Parliament, Australia, the American Congress or the American Senate. Maybe we could set a precedent in this House and become the first parliament to do so, but today is not the time. We must put this issue to rest for now by referring the matter to a committee. We have important matters and bills to debate in this House. It is time for us to move on with the business of governing this country.

I suspect that most Canadians would agree with MPs having a flag on their desks. I also suspect that first and foremost they demand and expect that we conduct ourselves in a civil manner and that we do the job that we were elected to do, which is to help create jobs, improve our social programs and pass legislation for the betterment of all Canadians.

The Reform Party is saying that it wants change. I too want change. I challenge the Reform Party to show that it is not just playing politics with this issue. I challenge the Reform Party to give unanimous consent to the House to an amendment that I am prepared to put forward. The amendment is:

That the motion be amended by inserting immediately before the words "this House" the words "the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to prepare a report by June 15".

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane have the unanimous consent of the House to put the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: There is no consent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the remarks we have just heard were tinged with so much hypocrisy. Let me explain.

• (1235)

The hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane is one of those whose conduct, since the very beginning of this flag business, has been—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane on a point of order.

Mr. Benoît Serré: Mr. Speaker, while members of the Bloc Québécois claim to respect the rules of decorum in this House, the hon. member has just called another member a hypocrite. I think this is unparliamentary. I would ask that he withdraw his remarks.

Supply

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans wish to reply?

Mr. Michel Guimond: I will be happy to, Mr. Speaker. I suggest you check the blues, Mr. Speaker. I know you take your job seriously. I never called the hon. member a hypocrite, that is totally false.

Mr. Ghislain Lebel: Yet he is one.

Mr. Michel Guimond: I must say, however, that he just gave us another example of his conduct, which I described earlier as tinged with hypocrisy.

Since the beginning of this flag business, the hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane has been displaying a small Canadian flag on his desk. I must say on the outset that members of the Bloc Québécois are not allergic to flags or to the national anthem.

The national anthem is played in formal ceremonies in the riding of any one of the 44 Bloc members. Take Remembrance Day, for example. I personally hold Remembrance Day ceremonies in my riding. In fact, no fewer than four ceremonies are held in my riding in which we pay tribute to Quebeckers and Canadians who lost their lives on the battlefield. So, we are not against the flag.

I just want the hon. member for Timiskaming—Cochrane to confirm that he kept a flag on his desk for three days after all his colleagues had taken theirs off. He has never taken his flag off his desk. Has he not been at the centre of the masquerade behind all this? No way that was a spontaneous remark.

Mr. Benoît Serré: Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of my speech I said that I would be making the Bloc members angry. I think I have succeeded in doing so. I must have touched a nerve, because they reacted to the truths I said in my speech.

Yes, I confirm that I had a flag on my desk for a few days. I had it there with pride, and I wore it with pride. I hope to be able to do so again some day. But the way to accomplish that is not to add fuel to the fire, but to refer the ruling to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

I am extremely disappointed that Reform, which claims to be prepared to co-operate and to desire change, is refusing to use the same process as for the singing of the national anthem in this House.

[*English*]

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I respect the hon. member and his views. I also respect that he has now decided, apparently from his speech, to not support this motion which rather comes as a surprise to me since I thought he was in favour of this freedom of expression to display a small flag on our desks.

Supply

To my understanding he has tabled a private member's bill to permit this. Can he now clarify this. Is he going to withdraw the bill or will he stand by it?

Mr. Benoît Serré: Mr. Speaker, I am in the process of preparing a private member's bill with the legal department but it is not done yet. It will come in the future.

I want to emphasize that this private member's bill will need to have some kind of provision to prevent the Reform Party from throwing the flag on the floor. Their motion does not say much about their party because of what happened with the member for Medicine Hat. They have to put a provision in their motion that it will be stationary or glued to the desk because they cannot trust the conduct of their own members.

I would hope if and when a private member's bill is introduced it will have provisions to prevent that.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleague to comment on the recent intervenor's behaviour in the last few days, traipsing around this city with a beat-up old Oldsmobile, painted with a Canadian flag. Is that respect for our institutions?

• (1240)

Mr. Benoît Serré: Mr. Speaker, yes, I will gladly comment on this.

If the Reform Party had conducted this issue with decorum, I would probably be standing here today in support of that motion. I agree with the idea per se, but the Reform Party took an issue that is dear to my heart and made a circus out of it. There is no way I will attach my name to this type of conduct.

[Translation]

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, several years ago, there was a vigorous debate in the House of Commons about a new flag for Canada.

What we are seeing here is the result of that debate. A few members displayed their favourite flag. The Speaker of the House then declared such demonstrations out of order.

After the new Canadian flag was approved by the Parliament of Canada, this tradition continued. The flag has a symbolic role for all countries of the world and for Canada. It is an expression of pride, of nationality and of authority. It is an important expression for many Canadians.

The Speaker said clearly that a unilateral change in the rules governing how this House operates. I accept this, but members themselves can reform those rules is unacceptable. That is the reason for today's debate. The motion before us clearly says:

That this House should recognize the Canadian flag as an acceptable symbol that may be displayed at any time on the desks of Members of Parliament in the House of

Commons provided that only one flag be displayed on a Member's desk at any given time, and that the said flag remain stationary for the purposes of decorum and be no larger than the standard recognized flag.

For whom does this statement represent a problem? For journalists? Why? For the Liberals? Why? For the other parties in the House of Commons? Why?

This is a constructive debate for Canada. The vote is simple and clear: a vote for the flag of Canada here in the House of Commons, if a member wishes. A flag on each member's desk, if a member wishes. A stationary flag, if a member wishes.

I have consulted my constituents in Macleod, Alberta, on this issue; 89 of them gave a very clear yes to the flag in the House of Commons. I listened carefully to what other Canadians had to say. They said yes to the flag in the House of Commons. And for those who say this is not an important problem, I say that Canada's emblem is very important.

• (1245)

My father defended the flag during World War II. If the flag is not important in the House of Commons, then where is it important? This evening, we have an opportunity for a free vote on an important issue.

I ask each member: why not Canada's flag here in Canada's House of Commons? Why not?

[English]

Mr. Stan Keyes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the debate since it began at 10 o'clock this morning and especially in the last hour and a half, in my almost decade of service for my constituents in this House of Commons, quite frankly I have never heard so much bombast and so many half truths.

Earlier today the hon. member for Edmonton North made reference to the appearance on the floor of the House of Commons in 1996 of the Canadian Olympic and Paralympic athletes. She seemed to imply that the Speaker cast a blind eye at the rules to permit what proved to be a very exciting experience.

With one glance at the official record any member of this place would see that the rules were not ignored at all. In fact the *Journals* of the House of Commons for October 1, 1996 read: "By unanimous consent of the House, the House resolved itself into committee of the whole to recognize Canada's 1996 Summer Olympic Games and Paraplegic Games medalists".

This clearly shows that the reception of the athletes in 1996 was done with the unanimous consent of the House. There was no breaking of any rules by Mr. Speaker. The Speaker permitted the athletes on the floor only with the unanimous consent and agreement of the House to waive the normal rules.

Supply

I have one quick, simple question for the member opposite. My question for the hon. member of the official opposition is would he think any less of me and my patriotism toward the country I love if I do not put a Canadian flag on the corner of my desk?

Mr. Grant Hill: Mr. Speaker, I think the member makes a point very eloquently. Of course I would not. The opportunity though to be able to do that is something which I think members would both value and accept with the responsibility we have here. It would be completely voluntary. It would have nothing to do with force. It is patriotism by desire, rather than patriotism by design.

In answer to the member, the choice would be his. My choice would be to display a flag at times when I felt most patriotic. I guess I would go back to the question of what would his constituents say to him when he had the opportunity to simply display the flag here, yes or no?

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the member. Was the member at Place du Canada in Montreal on October 27, 1995? Does he feel that members of the Reform Party who threw the flag on the floor should be disciplined, and if not why not?

Mr. Grant Hill: Mr. Speaker, although I was born in Montreal, I was not at that demonstration in Montreal. Having considered that question very carefully however it is interesting that when I made the representation to those who in fact guided me on this issue—and they were not members of my party—I was advised not to go. That may or may not have been good advice, but it was the advice I received.

On the issue of what should happen to an individual who deals with the flag inappropriately, I would turn that question back to the member himself.

• (1250)

The inappropriate restriction of the flag in this House as I said in my speech came about when the debate was on a brand new flag for Canada. It was being used inappropriately. I do not think that should take place in the Chamber any more than the hon. member does, but to be able to demonstrate a small flag, what would the hon. member's constituents say?

I listened to another member say that this could have been done another way. I will grant that there are different ways to bring an issue forward. I will grant that making a circus of an issue is not appropriate. But this is important. We are not talking about the process here. We are talking about a simple declaration, should the flag of Canada be allowed in the national House of Parliament. What would the member's constituents say about him having—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The time for response has expired.

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether it is really a pleasure to be speaking in the House on this particular motion. This is not what I thought I would be debating. I was preparing for a debate on the budget.

The ruling of the Speaker yesterday put it very clearly that he was not in a position to decide, and that Parliament, this House of Commons, had to make the decision itself. I think it is very appropriate that this motion be on the floor today so that this House of Commons deals with the issue and we put the issue to bed.

This debate about flags in the House of Commons did not start three weeks ago. Half of all Canadians are too young to remember the first great flag debate 34 years ago when the red maple leaf replaced the red ensign. It was one of the most emotional debates both inside this House of Commons and outside by all Canadians.

As a teenager I recall the debate taking place around the dining room table. I can remember vividly the emotions in that debate. My father, like many men of his generation, had a particular attachment to the red ensign. As a naval officer and a medical doctor serving in the North Atlantic during the second world war, my father saw too many men die fighting for Canada and for the red ensign. He was very emotional about the defence of the red ensign.

Many others objected to the adoption of the maple leaf as our flag because the broad leaf maple is native only to the eastern part of the country and not to the western part. Still others thought it was a Liberal plot. In spite of these objections, today most Canadians have a very emotional attachment to the flag. Most Canadians felt a very deep sense of pride when they saw the maple leaf rise up the flagpole at the Olympics.

It was at the recent winter Olympics that the member for Rimouski—Mitis announced to the Canadian public that there were too many Canadian flags on display at the athletes village. In response to this pronouncement when the hon. member returned to this House, members on both sides of the House demonstrated their objections to those comments. I was one of them. I was one of the many members on both sides who were out of order in that demonstration.

The member for Rimouski—Mitis was never denied her opportunity to speak. She was just delayed. Many of us have been delayed in posing questions in this House because other members were out of order and causing distractions.

The flag waving and singing of the national anthem should have been the end of it. However, because of the overreaction of certain members in this House and the joy of continuing this debate in the media, we have found ourselves in the middle of the second great flag debate. What should have been a one day story is now reaching its third week. Efforts to reach a compromise by the various House

Supply

leaders were unsuccessful because people and parties refused to budge in their positions.

• (1255)

Yesterday the Speaker ruled that he did not have the power to change the rules of the House. Therefore today we are having this debate to see if members of Parliament are willing to change the rules to allow a small Canadian flag to sit on a member's desk in an unobtrusive manner. But make no mistake about it. The debate will not end here with this vote because we still have the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs examining another aspect of this story.

Why are we having all these debates at all? When people have asked me why we have reached this position, the only answer I can give is that this entire debate is due to an excess of testosterone in this House. People have become so intransigent in their positions that reason and logic have left the debate and it is now based on pure emotion.

This brings us to today's motion. I do not believe that anyone who does not have a Canadian flag on their desk is any less a Canadian than someone who does. I spent my first four years in this House without a Canadian flag on my desk and I feel no less a Canadian for it.

The question in today's motion is should the Canadian flag be allowed to sit on a member's desk in the Chamber. The only argument I have heard against having desk flags is that they can be used as props to cause a disruption in this House. We do not need flags to cause a disruption in this House. We are a clever group of people and to get our point across we find many other means of causing distractions and disruptions in this House.

I wonder what would have happened if some members started to disrupt the proceedings by banging their shoes on their desks like Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev did at the United Nations in the early 1960s. Would we then have motions to outlaw shoes from this Chamber? Of course we would not because everyone would realize that it was not the shoe that was the problem but the way it was being used.

It is the same point with the flag. Today's motion makes it clear that the flag is to remain stationary and is not to be used as a distraction to the debate. How can this be objectionable?

If a member decides to use the flag to create a disturbance, he or she would be clearly out of order and subject to the authority of the Speaker. If a member cannot bring a small Canadian flag into this Chamber, then where can we bring a flag?

As I conclude my comments on this subject, I would like to make the following observation. The federalists have no reason to apologize to the separatists in this House. We must counter their

separatist arguments with intelligence, logic and positive use of emotion and patriotism. The separatists would like nothing more than to provoke another incident like the desecration of the Quebec flag in Brockville in the early 1990s.

We must be diligent to keep the debate focused. It would be refreshing if all parties and all members would take the high road and get on with the serious debate that Canadians expect us to carry on in this House of Commons.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member just stated if we cannot bring the Canadian flag into the House where can we bring it. I and many of my colleagues have been bringing the flag on our lapel pins into the House ever since we were elected. I do not know where the member has been.

This debate is not about flags. It is about the institutions of Parliament. It is about the institution of free speech. It is about the ability of expression in this House. The Reform Party does not seem to understand or respect our basic institutions of Parliament. Is it fair to wipe out somebody's ability to speak freely in this House just by having demonstrations? What other kinds of flags can we bring into this House? The Canadian flag and what about some provincial flags? Would that be acceptable to the member?

Ms. Val Meredith: Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to bringing provincial flags into the House but the motion is—

• (1300)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Ms. Val Meredith: Mr. Speaker, I have proven my point. We do not need any flags to disrupt a person's right to speak. We are all capable of disrupting a person's right to speak and of denying them the opportunity. We do not need flags.

Whether the Liberals want to listen to the answers to their questions, the point of this motion is clear that it is Canadian flags.

An hon. member: That's not what you just said.

Ms. Val Meredith: No. They asked me what I thought and I said I have no objection to provincial flags being brought into the House. But the motion is very clear that we are talking about the Canadian flag.

As a member of Parliament, when I want the right to express myself by putting a Canadian flag on my desk, it is wrong but if somebody wants to wear a button or make comments on the expression of their position, that is okay.

I suggest I have as much right as anybody else to express my emotions or whatnot in whatever way I feel is applicable. Maybe a small Canadian flag is the way I wish to express myself, and I am being denied that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Before the hon. member for York South—Weston poses his question, I remind all hon.

Supply

members to address each other through the Chair. In particular when emotions run high, it tends to keep us at arm's length.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, can the hon. member advise the House whether she is aware of any other place in Canada, whether it be a public place or a private place, where the displaying of the Canadian flag is prohibited? Could she also comment on whether she believes the prohibition of the displaying of the Canadian flag in a place other than the House of Commons would be contrary to the charter of rights and freedoms?

Ms. Val Meredith: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any place where the Canadian flag is prohibited from being displayed. Any infringement on a person's right to put a Canadian flag up in a public place would be an infringement. It certainly would be in the House of Commons. This is the seat of government for the country called Canada. If we cannot put a small flag on our desks, I think it is an infringement on my right.

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have one point to make and a short question. It is not against the law to display the flag. We have two flags here. We are talking specifically about putting them on our desks.

Last week one of our colleagues, the member for Medicine Hat, threw the flag on the floor. As far as I know, he did not apologize for it, nor did he pick up the flag. Did the hon. member have the chance to speak to her colleague about the incident? What does she have to say on this subject?

Ms. Val Meredith: Mr. Speaker, no one condones what happened at that time and the member for Medicine Hat has apologized for throwing the flag.

Mrs. Sue Barnes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Brossard—La Prairie.

I have asked to speak today but I am saddened that this debate is taking place. I think of all the things we could be debating tonight. We are voting on budgets, among other things. I think of what has been displaced by this time. But it is a choice. Canadians have to understand that while the government is elected and generally puts its legislation forward to be properly debated in this House, we have these days of opposition motions, and it was the Reform Party, the party of the member who just spoke, that chose to have this debate. We must understand that.

This debate is not about who is the most patriotic. I do not find this debate to be about patriotism. I firmly believe that patriotism is not only individual. It is collective as a nation. It is the sharing of values and what we believe.

I do not find it necessary to stand up and parade all the examples of how I show my patriotism. I am here as the servant of the people who elected me from the constituency of London West. They elected me to do the business of the nation. They elected me to come to this Parliament and to debate with my words, not with props, with flags or with noise. They elected me to think, to research, to represent and, I believe, to lead.

• (1305)

When I was thinking about what I would say today I looked back to my first speech in 1993 when I talked about what a privilege it was to serve in this House. I talked about having the courage and the courtesy to serve not only my constituents but my own sense of values. That courtesy, I believe, extended to members sitting across from me.

When I spoke for the first time in the 36th Parliament I said "I wish to congratulate the Speakers", and I went on to say that I would co-operate and respect this office and this Parliament. I also said that I would continue to treat other members with the respect and courtesy which any member of Parliament deserves.

I believe that is fundamental. I think the issue we are really addressing today is how this Parliament functions for all Canadians and how we bring the legislature out of the war of words into action in our communities.

This is a very democratic institution. From across the nation men and women are drawn together, often sacrificing time from their careers and their families, to express ideas and to battle each other through ideas and policies, not individually, not the political thrust of the cheap shot. How we manage to do that is through an institution called the Speaker.

The Speaker in Canada is elected by all members of the House. It is the very first thing we do each time we come together to open a new Parliament.

The Speaker has been given the obligation to make sure that order is maintained in the House. The Speaker is there to make sure that when I rise to speak I do not have to fear someone coming at me physically. I can get my ideas across to all the people in the land. I can put forth an argument that can be heard. The Speaker ensures that I have the ability to make my argument democratically, logically, without coercion or fear from anyone in the Chamber.

There are parliaments, such as the one in Kenya, where last spring the members almost began a fist fight. There have been other examples throughout the Commonwealth and other democracies.

The purpose of this Chamber is to debate ideas. It is not for stunts.

I ask how have we come to this position where it is us and them politics. The symbol of our nation sits beside us. It has not been

Supply

outlawed to have the flag in this Chamber. I am looking at it. Canadians can look at it. Every time the camera is focused on the Speaker they see it. We are not outlawing the flag. This is not about flags. This is about our being able to speak freely. We are able to speak freely because there is a person sitting in that chair who keeps order in this place.

This is a back door effort to appeal a ruling of the Speaker, whom we all said we respected when we elected him, which was made yesterday.

I heard an hon. member opposite say that all they are asking for is a yes or a no today. They want to talk about it again. If they had ears or eyes in the House yesterday they would have seen every party except one stand to applaud the Speaker. The Speaker's decision was right. It was based on precedent and precedent in this Chamber has ruled out props. Why? Because they are not necessary.

It is not necessary to have push button politics and stunts on the Hill. It is not necessary to hire mariachi bands to know that absenteeism is wrong.

I have two teenage sons. I do not want to see grown men sitting around in an unsafe manner, abusing the flag as was done on the Hill.

The taxpayers do not want to see any member of Parliament behave as these people have behaved in the last little while.

• (1310)

I remember a time in 1993 when somebody said "we came to Ottawa to do politics differently". How different has it been? It has been very different. It seems that research, logic and courtesy have gone the way for cheap headline hunting. I see this motion as political manipulation of a very base kind. I do not have to defend myself that I do not love my country or I am not patriotic enough because there is a symbol sitting in front of me. I wonder how many people sitting at their desks today have a symbol sitting in front of them. However, I would never question their loyalty to this country.

The absence of symbols in this House in this manner is not the be all and end all. I appreciate the fact that members opposite have even acknowledged that today. I think it is reasonable.

This is about reasonable debate, following the rules, courtesy and respect for the institutions of our democracies as shown by the Speaker's rulings. To my knowledge there are no appeals to Speaker's rulings. We do not do things in democracies by the back door. There are rule books such as Beauchesne's which states very strictly how to go against the Speaker. One may bring forward a motion and debate it. Do the members opposite have the courage to debate that? I do not think so.

I think this is a way out. However, things are very rarely answered properly by a yes or a no.

What we have here is something which I regard as one of the lower days of debate and it is not because I do not value my flag. The flag deserves to be known for what it really is. In Canada it is a symbol of a country that knows peace, shows tolerance and knows understanding. It is a symbol of those that are greater than the individuals who stand in this country, whether they are here by choice or by birth, and it is worthy of respect. It is not worthy of disrespect to make cheap political points and play political games that are not entertaining, funny or worthy of the democratic institutions as fine as Canada has.

We have one of the best democracies in the world. We have one of the best parliaments in the world. In my maiden speech in 1993 I said to a member of the Bloc, who talked to me about the right to speak, that I would defend their right to speak but did not have to agree with their ideas.

I will be voting against this motion tonight because I do not believe that I need to have a prop to show my love for my country or the value of this institution. I know what I am doing and I know my constituents will understand.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I did note very carefully the member's comments about respect for the Chair and that is something that I share. I wonder if she could reflect for me on the Chair's statement that the Chair could not unilaterally change the conventions of Parliament but that Parliament itself could. We have a convention which states that flags should not be used in the House. This convention came from a specific display years ago. However, the Speaker said that Parliament could change the conventions.

Would the member stand and explain to me how she finds this process today, which is attempting to do that, offensive?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Before the hon. parliamentary secretary responds, because we had other members from the opposition wanting to ask questions, we will go to the opposition for the second question.

Mrs. Sue Barnes: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that the member of the Reform Party had the right to choose the subject matter of debate. There is also no doubt in my mind that Reform members knew last night, as we applauded the Speaker, what the outcome of that vote would be. All they had to do was look around to see that the only persons not applauding the Speaker's decision were the Reformers.

Yes, they have the right to bring this to debate. However, it is not a debate that was needed to take the time of this Parliament when we have situations of unemployment, the budget and other important situations. However, that was not my choice. It was theirs and they have made. I also think there are other manipulations going on here which I think Canadians are beginning to understand.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is so opposed to the debate, why is she participating in the debate?

• (1315)

I have been listening to the debate all morning. Perhaps the hon. member can explain why, instead of dealing with the merits of the motion before the House, she and her colleagues have chosen to attack another political party. They accuse the Reform Party of being partisan in bringing forward this motion. Rather than dealing with the merits of the motion itself, she has chosen to attack the Reform Party, presumably to make political points.

My question to the member is does she feel somewhat inconsistent? On one hand the Government of Canada is saying to Canadians to fly the Canadian flag and it sent out hundreds of thousands of flags to Canadians this past year at a cost of millions of dollars. On the other hand, she would support a restriction of the use of the flag in the Canadian House of Commons.

Mrs. Sue Barnes: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the member has shown up for this debate. I am glad he is here.

I am here because I am on House duty today. Members of Parliament come to this place to work. This is part of my work, being in this House at a time when I am responsible to be here, to partake in the debate of the day and I will do that.

I wonder if the member opposite knows that is a part of the work of this House.

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member talk about how reprehensible the stunts that have revolved around this issue are and how offensive they are to her. I would ask her if that is the case, speaking for herself or her party, why all the flags were waving on that side of the House on the day the incident took place. It was a Liberal member, I believe, who distributed the flags. It was a Liberal member who started to sing *O Canada* during the debate. What has her party done to discipline those individuals for this reprehensible display that they started?

Mrs. Sue Barnes: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member opposite, but of course I am constrained from doing so, what his party has done to discipline those members who threw the flags in this House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting that the opposition, given a day of debate, uses the whole day to talk about flags, when there are so many national issues and concerns. I consider this opposition party is paying us a remarkable compliment on the work we have done.

Perhaps I could point out that I consider respect for patriotism is also expressed through respect for the language of those who make

Supply

up our country and I can only deplore the fact that the text of the motion, which arrived by electronic mail, contained so many mistakes in the French as to insult me personally.

Patriotism is a fine thing, but it starts with respect for those who make up this country and respect for my language.

On the subject of patriotism, I would like to mention two or three very brief experiences demonstrating that patriotism does not always find expression in a flag. It is something we feel very deeply.

Last July 1, my first Canada Day as a member of Parliament, I was given the honour of an invitation to attend a citizenship ceremony. I spoke with the new Canadians saying "Look, I arrived here twenty years ago and like you I ended up here on these chairs; today I represent the Government of Canada". That was a symbol of pride for me. That is my patriotism.

At the great demonstration in Montreal before the 1995 referendum, my daughter Jessica had the honour of singing the national anthem. I was behind the podium when she did. I saw the crowd. I saw the emotion. That is what patriotism means to me.

In 1991, I was elected to chair the Quebec wing of the Liberal Party of Canada, when it was very difficult being a federalist in Quebec. And for my daughter to have sung the national anthem and for everyone to have risen with tears in their eyes, that for me is patriotism.

• (1320)

My patriotism is not the show off type. It is deep and genuine. It is not made up of symbolic values artificially displayed for purely political reasons.

I realize that symbols are very important. I noticed, in Quebec in particular, that the Quebec flag was appropriated by the separatists, as if it belonged only to separatist sympathizers. I have deplored that.

The word "Quebecois", as in Parti Quebecois and Bloc Quebecois, was also appropriated by the separatists, as if the other parties in Quebec were not "Quebecois". I know how powerful symbols can be, but beyond the symbols, there is something greater, there is what we feel deep down. To fight about flags in this House is to use a highly respectable symbol for partisan reasons of opposition and appropriation, which I vehemently condemn.

This seems to me to be a pointless motion. It seems to be counterproductive, unnecessary. What saddens me above all is that we are wasting so much time debating it. It is as if we were giving Canadians the signal, or symbol, that we parliamentarians are prepared to waste precious time that would be better spent serving the people of this country.

Supply

I find it most unfortunate that this flag debate has been turned into an exercise in demagoguery. I want to believe that, when the flag is used, there is a modicum of sincerity—

[*English*]

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I was listening very intently to my colleague opposite and to his impassioned speech about patriotism and so forth.

It seems to me that when we impugn motives in this House that we should be censured. The member opposite has just accused us of practising demagoguery. I submit that that is impugning motives behind our motion today. The motion today is not about that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I apologize. I was not paying attention to the hon. speaker. I did not hear the words being used. However, the hon. member for Wetaskiwin is quite right. If the word or the inference was there, I would ask the hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie not to impute motive.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Saada: Mr. Speaker, when one moves a motion, one should logically have a reason to do so. And if so, it is my duty, as a parliamentarian, to make a value judgment on that reason. I am not imputing motives. So, I stand by my comment to the effect that this is a red herring. It is not a debate on patriotism, but a debate that has absolutely no substance. Again, I deplore this.

I was going to conclude by saying I sincerely hope that everyone in this House will agree on the eminently respectable character of the Canadian flag. However, I will conclude by asking this question: If the motion is passed, if those who want to display a flag on their desk are allowed to do so, and if I do not want a flag on my desk, would this mean I am less patriotic than other members? This is totally absurd. I condemn it and I deplore it.

[*English*]

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speaker and certainly I think he should read our motion. Our motion is not about asking or forcing people to put flags on their desks.

It is entirely about the ability to put a flag on one's desk if they so choose. I think if this debate were to be held anywhere else in the free world, it would be surprising. Our flag is welcome absolutely anywhere on foreign soil and it is just amazing to me that we are debating whether or not the Canadian flag can sit on members' desks if they so choose.

• (1325)

As has been pointed out over and over again today, we are certainly at liberty to wear a maple leaf lapel pin, one of which I am wearing today. I do not see any difference in that.

When the hon. member tries to infer that we are trying to make out that anyone who does not display a Canadian flag on his or her desk is less of a Canadian, I think he is completely off the mark.

I notice this period is known as questions and comments. Those are my comments.

Mr. Jacques Saada: Mr. Speaker, it is the kind of comment that reminds me of the position of someone who is so preoccupied by preparing a question he has forgotten to listen to the one who is speaking.

I said very specifically in French, and I will now do so in English, if this motion were to be adopted and if I decided not to have a flag on my desk, the question was clear, should that mean, would that mean or could that mean that I am less patriotic than someone else who has it? I say putting the question is totally absurd.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

At page 145 of Beauchesne's, on June 16, 1963, "demagogue" was deemed to be an unparliamentary term. I would ask that the member withdraw that statement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I will have the blues checked. If the hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie used the term demagogue, I will ask the hon. member to withdraw.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie, who became a Canadian about 20 years ago.

I simply want to remind him that, originally, there were two founding peoples in Canada, and the first one was a francophone people called the Canadiens. At the time, the term "Canadiens" referred strictly to francophones. Then came a period known as English Rule. Being the nice people that we are, we agreed that there would be two founding peoples, and Canadians who, until then had always been Canadiens, redefined themselves as French Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Stoffer: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I wish to point out to my hon. colleague from Chambly that there are three founding peoples of this nation: Aboriginal, French and English.

Supply

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): That is not a point of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel: Mr. Speaker, if this can make my NDP friend happy, I will say that francophones were one of the first two founding peoples. It was only later, when the English came, that we called ourselves French Canadians. Then, when we realized that this definition put us in opposition with English Canadians, we decided to call ourselves Quebecers, and today—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie has one minute to reply.

Mr. Jacques Saada: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the hon. member opposite has decided I needed a lesson on Quebec history. However, I feel I do know a fair bit about it.

I am very pleased that he raised the issue of the founding peoples. These days, we hear a lot about the people of Quebec, and I am glad to see that the member opposite knows that the founding people did not only settle in Quebec, but includes all French speaking people in Canada. Together they do form what I recognize as a founding people.

[*English*]

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Surrey Central to state our view with respect to the Canadian flag flap caused by the antics of certain members in the House.

Today my constituents and I will be proud to vote yes to displaying the Canadian flag on the desks of the members.

● (1330)

We have other more important issues that we could be dealing with, but unfortunately we are being forced to debate this issue in the House today.

I would have thought it was understood that it is the right of every Canadian to have, to hold and to wear the Canadian flag in Canada. Of all the places on earth it is inconceivable and hard to imagine that Canadians could be prohibited from displaying even a small Canadian flag in the House of Commons.

Where else can we display our flag? Tomorrow someone could stand and ask me not to wear a Canadian flag pin. Is there a more sacred place to display our flag than in our own national legislature? In the highest law making body of our country we cannot have a flag on our desks. This is unbelievable.

When I embraced Canadian citizenship I assumed that I was given a bundle of rights. The first thing I did after my swearing in as a Canadian citizen was to sing our national anthem. I then carried home a Canadian flag which I respectfully put on my desk in my home office.

I am very proud of our flag like all other Canadians who have called my office in the last few days. I have a Canadian flag on my desk in my offices, yet today I am defending the right to place a Canadian flag on this desk, my constituents' desk in the House of Commons. This is unbelievable.

This is the most respected House and the highest court in the land. I strongly believe and join with my colleagues in their belief that we should respect decorum in the House. Every Canadian's voice is roaring without fear or intimidation in the House. Ridiculous heckling is allowed in the House and sometimes it is disrespectful.

What some Canadians would say are treasonous comments. Disrespect for our national symbols is allowed in the House. However, Canadians have a problem when our national symbol, the flag of this great country, is considered offensive in the House. I feel intimidated that my right to display the Canadian flag is being denied today.

It seems to me and my constituents that this weak government has been blackmailed by those who are bent upon tearing the country apart. It seems as if the government has been scared by the separatists. The Liberals are running like scared cats. They have spent \$25 million of the taxpayers' money to give away Canadian flags so that our flag would have an increased presence in our country.

With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, the number of flags around your chair has doubled since 1992 and now the presence of the Canadian flag is being decreased in the House. The government has given me large quantities of Canadian flags and Canadian flag pins to take to my constituency and present to my constituents.

What answer should I give to someone who may ask me where our flag can and cannot be displayed? This is not a flag waving issue today as stated by some members and as reported in the news. The issue is not that I must put a flag on my desk, but the issue is why I should be prohibited from putting a flag on my desk. It is about the infringement of my rights, freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

Just because someone feels offended by the displaying of the Canadian flag in the House, I feel more offended when I am prohibited from honourably displaying my country's flag.

The constituents of Surrey Central and I want the record to be very clear that this problem was not initiated by the Reform Party. Let me remind the House and Canadians that the flag we are debating today was distributed and displayed by Liberal members to all members in the House. Members from all the parties except the Bloc participated in singing the national anthem on the day when the issue arose. If props are not allowed, why were they distributed in the first place in the House? Even on the day the

Supply

budget was tabled some Liberal MPs displayed a big flag in that corner of the House. Why were they not ruled out of order?

• (1335)

It is not the Reform Party that originated this issue. The official opposition is simply fighting a forceful denial of the right to exhibit the flag on our desks in the House because of a fear of the separatists.

It is not an issue between the Reform Party and other parties. It is an issue of calling a spade a spade and having the right to fight, to defend our country's flag, to defend the integrity of our great country and to respect our national symbols.

The issue separates those who are afraid from those who do not like the Canadian flag. Those who are afraid to defend our Canadian flag are those who are afraid of offending anyone in defence of our flag. Those are the members of the Liberal Party and other parties in the House. They wanted to unnecessarily drag the issue on and bury it in a committee. They have made the issue a political football. It is shameful.

They fail to recognize the consequences of their cowardliness in Canadian history. They are not only leaving behind high debt and high taxes for future generations, but today they are leaving behind a legacy of a shameful story in our history. What else can we expect from the government?

Everything the government does raises suspicion. The House and the government voted against my motion asking the government to call a Canadian a Canadian and discourage the concept of hyphenated Canadianism. That motion could have been uniting and integrating Canadians rather than segregating them further. It could have helped restore national pride. Instead, the Liberals do not want Canadians to be encouraged to call ourselves proud Canadians. They do not foster and develop Canadian culture. Now they allow our right to sing the national anthem and the right to display our flag to be attacked.

On the weekend my 13 year old son, Livjot, asked me what country all members of Parliament represent in the House of Commons. I said "Canada of course". He asked if Quebec was a country. I said "no". Then he asked why there was a problem about the Canadian flag in the Canadian parliament. I was ashamed. I could not answer.

To conclude, a vote against the Canadian flag being displayed by an elected and sworn Canadian is like a vote against motherhood. The flag flap has gone on long enough and certainly should not be decided by backroom negotiations but by Canadians through their MPs in the House.

On behalf of the constituents of Surrey Central I will vote in support of today's official opposition motion and I will be proud to have the Canadian flag displayed on our desks in the House of Commons. I urge hon. members in the House to put the issue to rest and focus on more important issues. Let us have a free vote on the matter in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): On questions and comments, we have the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre and then we have the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood who has been trying to get up for the last hour.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I continue to be quite shocked at the way the Reform Party attempts to divide the country. What it is doing in this assembly, in this House of Commons, is what a very famous writer by the name of Samuel Johnson once said about actions with respect to so-called patriotism or the flag.

Samuel Johnson, a great political writer of another century, wrote about this kind of action, this kind of party, and said that patriotism was the last act of a scoundrel, a desperate act of a scoundrel.

The Reform Party is exercising hooliganism tactics of former decades which political parties of other countries have used to bully people around this issue.

• (1340)

I love my flag as much as I love my country and as much as I love my family. I wear my flag over my heart, not on my desk.

If the Reform member is so patriotic about the flag, how many Reform members have a flag on their property, on their homes, hanging in front of their houses on poles or in their offices in their ridings? How many have those flags in their houses to show what great patriots they are?

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, we expect these comments from the member of a party that is out of touch with Canadians.

The issue is not putting a flag on a desk. The issue is why we are not allowed to put a flag on our desks when we want to put one there. For many years there were no flags on the desks of members of the House. We did not start the problem.

The members who are not listening now are the ones who are using it as a political football. The issue was decided upon by members on the other side. They displayed the flag. Why did they not object the other day when the flag was displayed on the other side of the House? It is simply because they want to get political mileage out of it, which they will be unsuccessful in doing.

We respect the Canadian flag. If we respect the Canadian flag then why are we forced not to display it in the House?

Supply

Mr. Dennis J. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this debate is unbelievable. The Reform Party motion talks in its last sentence of “purposes of decorum”.

We can look around this Chamber which was designed and built by some of the greatest craftsmen and women in the history of our country. We see stained glass windows and woodwork. This Chamber is very much like a cathedral in Rome or in some other great European city. This is a room of decorum.

Reformers are missing the whole point of what this Chamber is all about. They are trying to suggest that none of us really care about the flag, even though there are two flags on either side of the most respected chair in the House of Commons. They could not be in a more prominent place.

In that Reformers are so interested in the decorum of this place, the look or the design of this place, they should also present some other ideas that I have heard from that side. What about flags of different sizes across the banisters here from left to right or from north to south like we see at gas stations or at Canadian Tire stores? Is that the kind of decorum the Reform Party wants in the House of Commons? These guys—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I am sorry to interrupt. The hon. member for Surrey Central has about 35 seconds.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to answer the question. He is one of the members who displayed the six foot flag on the other side of the House the day the budget was tabled. Where was he or his colleagues—

Mr. Dennis J. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I can stand in the House of Commons and say that on the day that display took place I was at the opposite end of this Chamber. I did not have a flag—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood has made his point. Now perhaps the hon. member for Surrey Central could finish up. You have 10 seconds.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Mr. Speaker, maybe he is not the member who displayed the flag but it is in that same corner that the flag was displayed.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Order, please.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to contribute to this most important and emotional debate. I take pride in being a Canadian in a country where any so-called commoner can aspire to a legislative role. Two short years ago I held my breath with millions of others as Canada barely survived Quebec's referendum vote.

• (1345)

Today I take part in a debate about our flag, the symbol of our land. As with all that occurs in this honourable House, our contributions are made both with a view to the current benefit of Canadians and as a testament to our time and our history.

Be it 10, 20 or 50 years from now, students and scholars of Canadian history will read our words and interpret what has gone on here. We should always be mindful that every time we speak as members of this honourable House we contribute to the history of our nation.

I trust that the words of myself and my colleagues will be viewed in this light. I trust that my colleagues' expression of support will serve as a catalyst to do more to help break the bonds of apathetic Canadianism, to usher in a new found spirit of love for our country and its symbol, our flag.

Permission to display a small, aesthetically appropriate desk flag as we speak to the world and as we speak to history is all that is being requested. For those who wish, as I do, to have the choice to be identified with a flag in this way as we debate, why not?

For those who know why I strove to arrive in this House, they understand. For those who fought, spilled blood, lost friends on foreign lands for our great country in three wars, they understand. For millions who held their breath two years ago when the no side came through, they understand. For the 150,000 people who gathered in Montreal two days before the referendum, they too, understand. For the 2,000 people from all parts of Canada who gathered in Quebec City one year later, they also understand.

I wish *Hansard* to show how I see this debate. I want history to record my sentiments toward our flag and how our flag has been viewed in this debate, and the events leading up to it.

I speak to my hon. colleagues and to history as follows. How a nation views itself is a measure of its pride and self esteem. How a nation is viewed by the world is a reflection of its collective deeds. How a nation projects this image is through its national symbols.

Our nation is known throughout the world for its deeds in war and peace. Canada's symbol is its flag which floats over this very House. Our flag is the embodiment of our nation's heart and soul. Our flag is inseparable from our national will. This House must carefully ponder why my voice should be put to rest when the flag stands by my desk.

We wish to reflect our support. We choose to have a small flag on our desk for the country we represent, to identify our role.

I was privileged to have been elected to this House by the constituents of Edmonton East. I am privileged every day I am permitted to sit in this honourable House at this desk, a desk that

Supply

shall never belong to me or any politician of the day but instead remains the property of my constituents.

It is with this sense of privilege that I express myself today. I am one of the parliamentarians who declined to remove the Canadian flag from his desk when requested to do so by the Deputy Speaker. In doing so, my privileges as a member were adversely affected. I was not recognized for the purpose of speaking.

Out of respect for the office of the Speaker and out of respect for the need of orderly regulation in this House, I did not protest further. I was saddened but I did not protest.

The Speaker now has ruled. It is out of respect for the office of the Speaker that I have removed my Canadian flag today. I am pleased to be able to participate in the debate to support a motion to allow my flag to return to my desk.

I wish to speak about respect for our Canadian flag and respect for our Canadian institutions, of this institution, this honourable House and the Supreme Court of Canada or any other through which our democracy is preserved and enhanced.

To my great sadness, I notice that the display of the Canadian flag has been regarded by the separatists in the House as a form of provocation. I notice, too, that the request to remove the flags from our desks came from a separatist. Provocation is a word used many times in the House, both today and last week, provocation by the Liberals and provocation by Reform. The simple fact is that this sad affair was started by the Liberals bringing flags into the House, exasperated by Bloc members wanting them to be removed.

• (1350)

Now closure has been effected by the Reform motion.

I have received many e-mails on this issue in the past three weeks. Almost every one of them has been supportive. Over and over again Canadians asked: How can it be provocation to fly the flag of our nation? Many of these grassroots Canadians suggested that if a member has a problem with the sight of the Canadian flag, perhaps he or she should look in the mirror for the source of the problem.

As I have indicated in my motion which is on the Notice Paper, the flag should not be considered to be offensive and should always be welcome in the House. I agree that it should not be used to suppress the rights of a fellow member, but the mere sight of the flag does not do that. It is a symbol of our commitment to our country.

For most of the history of this House there was not a Canadian flag present, until the efforts in 1973 of Alexandre Cyr, then the hon. member for Gaspé. Today that riding is represented by the Bloc. Representing his constituents, Mr. Cyr brought a flag to this

House 25 years ago. Now there are two, twice as many as the 1973 motion allowed.

I am concerned that this flag debate is considered by some to be provocation and by others to be frivolous. Provocation is in the eye of the beholder. No provocation is intended in my contribution to today's debate, nor in my earlier actions. However, I must say that I certainly do not approach this debate with a sense of the frivolous.

Canada's problem is a deep-seated inferiority complex. Canadians have been uncomfortable with flag waving, celebrating our country and singing our national anthem. There is little hesitancy in other countries. The national pride, as exemplified by the waving of flags, is seen everywhere in England, France and the United States.

Let me provide the House with an example of how the display of flags, both in this House and elsewhere, is important to our future as a nation.

I recall a well published event which took place outside Montreal's city hall. Visitors from France spoke to Jacques Parizeau and a group of his separatist cohorts on the steps of the city hall. Many Quebec flags were visible. Where did the flags come from? From inside Montreal's city hall. What was the problem? There were several veterans present who wished to see the Canadian flag displayed before the delegation from France.

I was in Montreal that day on one of my frequent visits to the city. The veterans who I met that day were beside themselves with angst. To describe matters in a most charitable fashion, it appeared that the display of the Canadian flag had been very much discouraged at the time of the appearance of the visitors from France. France is free today, due in no small part to the efforts of our proud veterans.

Today I ask the House to allow the display of this symbol of our country when we speak in this honourable place. I want to show to all that our national symbol may sit with us in this honourable place as a symbol of how close it is to our hearts. When I speak to Canada, there is no flag visible to those who see and hear my words. I wish only to do as I did at the chamber of commerce meeting in Edmonton two weeks ago. I placed the flag of Canada on my table in that chamber. I would like to do likewise in this Chamber.

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is a passion filled debate today. I do not think for a second that members of the House should forget why we are here and what this is about.

I listened closely to the words of the hon. member and I have some serious problems and difficulties with where he was coming from and what exactly he was talking about. There are a number of people who are watching this debate who may not understand it. It is simply a question of respect and trust.

There is one group in the House of Commons, along with some members opposite, who wave the flag and use it as a type of sledgehammer to beat upon someone else who may not be willing to wave it. That is why we do not have flags on our desks. That is why there are flags beside the Speaker.

This is not about the Canadian flag; this is about a waste of time. We are wasting the Canadian taxpayers' time to debate whether we should have flags on our desks.

• (1355)

I want to add another point. We are listening to talk about the flag today. On February 15, 1995, the leader of the member's party was the guy who stated that the debate over the Canadian flag on Canada's flag day at that time was frivolous and a waste of time.

You don't wear the flag—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Excuse me. I would remind members to address other members through the Chair. It tends to keep the tempers in control.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is missing the whole point of this issue. The point of this issue is that we are in the television era. We are in an era where I can speak here and I can speak directly to the constituents in Edmonton East.

As I view the TV camera and if I am speaking in my critic area of veterans' affairs or some other important issues, there is nothing visible here to say where I am from. If I wish to have a Canadian flag on my desk which would help indicate my loyalty to the flag and to the country when I speak on veterans' affairs issues, I think it is important.

I specifically wish to have this flag on my desk.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Scarborough Centre has about a minute.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is funny that the Reform Party which came here after the 1993 election, four years down the road has just discovered where it is from. I am surprised why its members did not put on a flag in 1993 when they first got elected.

The point I want to make is this. They talk about the flag and the pins. I happened to be in Nagano during the olympics. I want, for a moment, to tell this House what the member from Rimouski—Mitis did.

She was very proud to give out the Canadian pins, one that I wear today. She was very proud to wave the Canadian flag celebrating our athletes. I do not see their Canadian olympic pin being worn.

S. O. 31

My point when they talk about a form of provocation, was the member for Rimouski—Mitis provoking when she was handing out the pins, when she was waving the flags celebrating our athletes? I do not think so.

Many people have said to me what has taken the Reform Party so long to discover that they want to display the flag? In the opinion of my constituents, the flag is best suited right on each side of your honourable chair.

In the many parliaments that we have visited, we have not seen members displaying flags on their desks. I see no reason why we have to do that now. They are best presented right where you are.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member opposite is forgetting what I just said in my speech. I will repeat it.

The simple fact is that this sad affair was started by the Liberals bringing flags into this House. They were exasperated by the Bloc and wanted them removed. Now the Reform Party is affecting closure on it by bringing forth this motion.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

GLAMMIS FLYERS BROOMBALL TEAM

Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I must admit that there are two reasons for me being on my feet today. First, I am happy to inform the House of the notable achievement of a group of individuals from my riding.

Huron—Bruce is home to, among other places, the small hamlet of Glammis. Although the small population may not place Glammis into the category of a major metropolitan centre, what the citizenry lacks in numbers they more than make up for in spirit.

As a result of that determination, next month the Glammis Flyers Broomball Team is destined for the National Men's Broomball Championships in Regina.

This brings me to my second reason for rising today. At the risk of sounding a little boastful, I am pleased to inform the House that the Glammis Flyers last year won the prestigious Ontario Broomball Championship, defeating teams from Barrie, Teviotdale, Arthur and Ottawa. They were all casualties of the Flyers as they steamed along the road to the national championships.

If the success of the past 50 years is any indication of what lies ahead for the Glammis Flyers, I am confident that they will once again be victorious. I wish the entire team all the best in their endeavours.

S. O. 31

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the homeowners in Clydesdale Estates, in my riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands, face yet another year of uncertainty.

• (1400)

They are caught in the middle of a legal battle between the Tsarlip Indian Band and the department of Indian affairs. The department, on behalf of the band, negotiated and signed a lease to allow a residential development on band lands. This same band is now suing the department over this lease.

To voice its protest over this development, the band unilaterally elected to cut off the sewer main between the development and the municipality.

This has had a devastating impact on the residents of Clydesdale Estates. They have seen the value of their homes decline and some have been forced to abandon their homes and declare bankruptcy. I would remind members that this is no laughing matter. These people are in a crisis situation. They have put their entire savings into these homes.

Over a year ago they went to the minister for help and she told them to be patient. Would she wait this long?

The Speaker: The hon. member for Erie—Lincoln.

* * *

MALNUTRITION

Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year the focus of the United Nations Children's Fund, commonly known as UNICEF, is on child malnutrition.

Malnutrition is a world problem. It is an invisible killer which affects 800 million children annually. Incredibly and sadly, more than half of child deaths worldwide can be attributed to malnutrition. This is unmatched by any other infectious disease since the black death and, further, those who survive are usually left vulnerable to infectious disease, illness and intellectual disability.

The right to nutrition is a matter of international law. Agreements such as the 1989 convention on the rights of the child, ratified by 191 countries including Canada, recognized the right of all children to have the highest attainable standards of health, including the right to good nutrition.

I urge the Government of Canada to support UNICEF and honour the provisions of our international declarations by helping overcome this silent killer of the world's children. Action against malnutrition is both imperative and possible. No child should be hungry in this world of plenty. No child should be hungry in Canada.

[Translation]

SEMAINE NATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Ms. Aileen Carroll (Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week is the Semaine de la francophonie. As the member for Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford, I have had the opportunity to meet many francophones from outside Quebec who are proud of their culture.

I encourage all French-speaking Canadians, and Franco-Ontarians in particular, to be proud of their language and culture.

[English]

Yesterday in Barrie I joined members of the club Richelieu in raising the Franco-Ontarian flag at city hall to celebrate this week and their Franco-Ontarian communities.

Being a member of La Francophonie allows Canada to convey to the rest of the world a spirit of understanding and respect for diversity.

I encourage all Franco-Ontarians and indeed all Canadians to be proud of their culture and their language.

* * *

THE IRISH

Mr. Larry McCormick (Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has sometimes been said that there are only two kinds of people in the world, those who are Irish and those who wish they were.

Well, I have good news today. Everyone is invited to be Irish. Here on the Hill our newly formed all-party Irish Canada friendship group is a fast growing, popular organization.

Irish immigrants have always left very powerful footprints on our Canadian soil and have always contributed positively to this great country. During the years of the great potato famine, my own ancestors came direct from Ireland to Canada. My grandmother's people sailed to the new world in four weeks. On my grandfather's side, the family spent three months-plus on the high seas. Many survived the trip but many did not.

Landing in Quebec, they were welcomed and received warmly and cared for by their new neighbours. Friendship again reached beyond all language barriers.

Today Irish eyes are smiling around the globe. Top of the day to you, Mr. Speaker, and a tip of my Irish topper to all my colleagues.

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, 1998 is certainly a year of sports highlights. This week Canadians have yet another exciting opportunity to follow the challenges and incredible skill of our best athletes.

The 1998 Arctic winter games are now officially under way. Since the games began in 1970, this is the 15th time that northern athletes from Canada, the United States, Greenland and Russia have come together in friendly competition and cultural celebration.

More than 1,600 athletes, coaches, officials and cultural performers have converged on Yellowknife for these games. They will participate in 19 different sporting events, including a number based on northern living and Inuit and Dene sporting skills.

These games showcase the skills, sportsmanship and cultural pride that are so much a part of our northern communities.

I want to convey my best wishes to all the participants, coaches, volunteers and supporters. As for the Canadian athletes, the rest of Canada is cheering for you. Continue to make Canada proud.

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• (1405)

[Translation]

MAGOG-ORFORD OPTIMIST CLUB

Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while our budget is focused on youth, the contribution of the volunteers who work with young people must be acknowledged.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Optimist Club of Magog-Orford, and I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the initiative of founding chairman Yves GrandMaison and the dedication of all the members over the past 25 years.

Our young people need to hear an optimistic message: summer jobs, money to pay for their education and hope for the future. That is what our young people want from our governments.

Congratulations to Yves GrandMaison and all Optimists across Canada, who talk about good health, happiness and prosperity to everyone they meet.

* * *

[English]

MART KENNEY

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in March 1928 a young Vancouver musician played his first professional date on his 18th birthday. That man would become known as Canada's top big band leader and would bring joy to millions of

S. O. 31

Canadians from coast to coast through the difficult years of the Depression, the war, and ever since.

I am talking about Mart Kenney, my grandfather, who this week celebrated his 88th birthday and his 70th anniversary as a professional musician. He is still going strong and still bringing happy memories as he plays to sold out concerts across the country.

My grandfather has always had a special love for Canada. At the height of the big band era he turned down offers from the big record producers to move his band to the States because he wanted to raise his family here. Now he has rewritten the lyrics of his popular wartime patriotic song *We're Proud of Canada* to herald "the heritage we each proclaim which makes us different but the same". It will be featured this summer by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

On behalf of all members this very proud grandson wishes a happy anniversary to a great musician, a great Canadian and a true western gentleman, Mart Kenney.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the last employment insurance reform is almost two years old. Under this Liberal government, the percentage of unemployed workers eligible for EI benefits dropped from 60% in 1993 to 42% in 1997.

We are in the so-called spring gap, the time of year when thousands of unemployed workers see their benefits run out as they wait for seasonal work to start again. These families have to turn to social assistance or use up their savings to provide for their needs.

Yet, the federal government continues to reduce its deficit by dipping into the employment insurance fund. The employment insurance fund keeps growing by \$17 million a day, for a total of \$14 billion to date.

Enough. It is time the money went back to those to whom it belongs. The government should give back to the unemployed the benefits it took away from them and to workers the portion of their premiums in excess of what is needed to maintain a fair and equitable system.

* * *

SEMAINE NATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Government of Quebec reiterated its intention to move to the forefront in the issue of francophones outside Quebec. I congratulate it.

Our government has played a consistent leadership role in this matter, and we encourage all provinces in Canada to pass measures

S. O. 31

supporting francophone groups in a spirit of respect and openness and to promote Canada's linguistic duality.

The Government of Canada is playing its role fully by ensuring that the people of Canada have access to all government services in the language of their choice, in accordance with Canada's cultural and linguistic reality.

We are giving full support to francophone groups outside Quebec and encouraging all of Canada's provinces to do the same.

The Government of Quebec has an important role to play in connection with the francophone community, and we hope it will continue to take action in this regard.

I think that the Semaine nationale de la francophonie provides a special moment to underscore all the efforts made to unite francophone groups throughout Canada in a spirit of friendship, sharing—

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

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[*English*]

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Council of Canadians is calling on Canadians to oppose the Multilateral Agreement on Investment for the following 10 reasons.

The MAI would give new rights and powers to foreign investors and corporations; cripple our ability to create jobs; give corporations more power to fight environmental regulations; leave our culture at the mercy of U.S. entertainment mega corporations; open up our health care and public education to multinational corporations; threaten our ownership of fisheries, forests, energy and other natural resources; give corporations the right to sue our elected governments to protect their profits; be decided in secret by trade experts with no public input; impose tough unfair rules on developing countries that are not even part of negotiations; and lock us into a bad deal for 20 years.

Canada should not be part of any such agreement.

* * *

• (1410)

VANCOUVER KINGSWAY

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the last few days I have had the honour of announcing over \$45,000 in funding from Heritage Canada to two local organizations in my riding of Vancouver Kingsway. The federal government is supporting projects by the Society for Children and Youth of

British Columbia and the Helping Spirit Lodge Society. These projects will be promoting child advocacy and human rights and helping aboriginal women overcome family violence.

I thank the minister of heritage for supporting these local initiatives. I commend both organizations for endeavouring to make our community a better one.

* * *

THE IRISH

Mr. Charlie Power (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, today is St. Patrick's Day. It is the anniversary of the death of St. Patrick and it is a day in which the Irish and those who wish they were celebrate being Irish. There are over 75 million Irish descendants worldwide. It would be difficult to find an area in which the Irish have not played a key role.

However, the influence on Canadian politics is unmistakable. Politics was not alive until the Irish invented it, said Don Pidgeon, a Montreal historian. The list of Irish politicians is a long one, but one that should be remembered is Thomas D'arcy McGee, one of the Fathers of Confederation who campaigned for the country that would encompass both official languages and cultures. There is no question that the Irish agenda helped to determine the politics of this country not only in the latter half of the 19th century but well into the 20th century.

Today I wish all my fellow Irish men and women and all those who are Irish today a happy St. Patrick's Day. Considering the—

The Speaker: I remind members not to use props in the House. Please, I have enough.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FRANCOPHONIE

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the flurry of activities surrounding the sixth Semaine internationale de la francophonie, I am proud to pay tribute to the city of Jonquière, the first city in Quebec to be twinned under the title of «Ville des mots 1998» with Braine-l'Alleud of the French-speaking community in Belgium.

This honour recognizes the dynamism of the city of Jonquière in promoting francophone culture with, among other things, its Fêtes de la francité and its theme park.

I invite all Quebecers, and more especially the people of the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean and North Shore regions, to take part in the activities marking us as members of the francophone community, where people are bound together in solidarity.

Together, let us celebrate the future of French and the francophonie.

Oral Questions

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

JUSTICE

Mr. Jim Gouk (West Kootenay—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Young Offenders Act is a high priority concern for the Canadian public and for the Reform Party of Canada. In response to the demands of Canadians for changes to the act, Reform has developed a list of amendments and will be presenting it to the public in a series of town hall meetings throughout the country.

The first of these town hall meetings will be held in Castlegar in my riding this Saturday evening. These meetings will explain how the amendments were arrived at, how they will work and their impact on young offenders.

The justice minister recently made headlines by stating that she is thinking of revising the Young Offenders Act. I hope she is more in touch with Canadians' demands than she and her predecessor have been in the past. If she really wants to learn what ordinary Canadians want, she should attend one of our town hall meetings. I invite her to attend the one in Castlegar this Saturday evening.

Canadians are always willing to speak. The problem is getting Liberals to listen.

* * *

[Translation]

CHILD SEX ABUSE

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Ahuntsic, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week in Victoria, I attended the International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth. This gathering was co-chaired by Senator Landon Pearson.

[English]

The summit theme, out from the shadows, reflects the importance of giving a voice to sexually exploited youth and children. We listened to children talking about their personal experiences. We listened as 15-year olds and 16-year olds said they were not given the chance to be a child and to enjoy all the joys and challenges that come with childhood, as my daughters have.

Thousands of children across the world and here in Canada are victims of abuse related to child pornography and child prostitution. Since Canada is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the summit was an excellent opportunity to renew our commitment to the right of all children and youth to live free from sexual abuse and free from sexual exploitation.

[Translation]

A statement and action plan expressing the will of these children was passed at the summit. I would invite all my colleagues in this House to read this statement.

• (1415)

[English]

THE SENATE

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, today British Columbia's latest unelected unaccountable senator was sworn in at the Senate.

Fitzpatrick is not like other patronage appointments though. He actually hired the Prime Minister when the Prime Minister was out of a job. Last week the Prime Minister told Canadians that he received no remuneration for that work. Insider trading reports showed that Fitzpatrick gave the Prime Minister a sweetheart stock deal worth at least \$45,000.

How does the Prime Minister explain this contradiction?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every document is absolutely public. Everything occurred during the time when I was not a member of Parliament. Every transaction is absolutely legal.

The Reform Party likes to attack the personal integrity of people rather than deal with the issues of Parliament.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Ross Fitzpatrick made a private stock deal with the Prime Minister. He sold him shares at a huge discount, which the Prime Minister flipped a week later. That stock flip gave the Prime Minister at least \$45,000 in a single week.

The Prime Minister said he received no remuneration for his work at the company so what was the \$45,000 for? Was it a downpayment on a seat in the Senate?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was out of politics and I never told my father that I would be Prime Minister so I had no commitment with destiny. I did not know at that time that I would come back to the House of Commons as Prime Minister.

I know why the leader of the Reform Party is preoccupied with this issue. It is because Senator Fitzpatrick is an extremely able citizen of British Columbia. For years he has worked in the public domain giving advice to a lot of people. He has served the province very well, as the premier of B.C. said a few days ago.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government feigns outrage at our questions on this

Oral Questions

subject but it is the people of British Columbia who ought to be outraged. A Senate appointment tainted with patronage. A Senate appointment tainted with backroom deals. An appointee who could not get elected dog catcher in British Columbia if he had to submit to a democratic vote.

If the Prime Minister wants to clear the air, why does he not cancel this outrageous appointment now?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of Mr. Ross Fitzpatrick the senator, as I stated. At a very early age he worked in Parliament as an assistant to a minister. Since he has left that job he has remained committed to public service helping everybody who wanted to serve, whether it was a provincial or federal government. There were years when it was not easy being a Liberal in British Columbia, but because of his good work it is now very pleasant.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we are not accusing the Prime Minister of doing anything illegal with those things back then. We are just asking questions now about the fact that just last week in the House of Commons the Prime Minister said he received no remuneration. In fact he got \$45,000 in one week.

What we want to ask is this: What is the problem with the Prime Minister saying "Sure, here is a Senate seat for you" a few years later. Was this \$45,000 not a downpayment on a Senate seat, yes or no?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a few months ago the hon. member made an accusation against me about my riding and she had the company completely wrong. It was a company from Winnipeg and she did not know the difference between Winnipeg and Shawinigan.

I am still waiting for the hon. member's apology because she misled both the House and the nation.

The Speaker: Let us be very judicious in our questions and our answers please.

Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we are taking our facts from the insider trading reports. The Prime Minister knows exactly where he got the cash, how much he bought the shares for and how much he sold them for just one week later.

Air Canada, Canadian Airlines and the Prime Minister all seem to offer seat sales, but there is only one of those that flies straight to the Senate.

• (1420)

Let me ask the Prime Minister this. The swearing in ceremony is going on right now, at 2 o'clock. Will he cancel his Senate appointment while there is still time?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, certainly not. I am delighted that he will be a senator and he will

represent British Columbia in Ottawa better than any member of the Reform Party.

* * *

[Translation]

SEMAINE NATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a letter dated March 5, the president of the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française accuses the heritage department of trying to use the Semaine de la francophonie to serve its own ends.

He wrote as follows: "The heritage department feels that it is legitimate to appropriate the week and to alter it to suit its own exaggerated need for visibility".

What does the Minister of Canadian Heritage have to say in response to the president of the ACELF's accusation that she is appropriating the Semaine nationale de la francophonie in order to raise the government's profile?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year's contracts to the ACELF were in the same amount as those awarded in previous years.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): We were not disputing the amount. We were questioning those who received it.

The ACELF president, Mr. Bordeleau, speaks out against what he calls, and I will repeat his exact words, "the heritage department's exaggerated need for visibility".

Does the minister realize that she is insulting francophones, offending them, just to satisfy her burning need for visibility?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if anyone is trying to make political hay at the expense of francophones, it is the Government of Quebec.

The Quebec minister of the day never supported francophones in getting the Jeux de la Francophonie for Canada. He even wrote saying they ought not to come here, but he had a change of heart this week because it is the Semaine de la Francophonie.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are going to set the record straight for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

In a letter dated March 5, the president of the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française, Louis-Gabriel Bordeleau, said, and I quote "Less than a month before the event, greatly disappointed and with reluctance, we had to let the private firm of Leroux Rhéal & Associés use our trademarks until March 31 in exchange for a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage".

Oral Questions

What explanation does the minister have for resorting to such blackmail?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I clearly explained to the leader of the third party—

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien: Soon to be the sixth.

Hon. Sheila Copps: —that the contract amounts were exactly the same as last year and the year before.

As for recognition of francophones in Canada, I am proud that my colleague, the member for Moncton, is working with all francophone and francophile colleagues in the House to ensure that the visibility of francophones, here in the House and across Canada, is greater than in the past.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to say to someone “I will give it to you only if you do this against your will” is blackmail and that is what the minister did with respect to the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member not to use the piece of paper as a prop. I give the floor back to the hon. member.

Mr. Michel Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, I can say it out loud because it pains us to see the Minister of Canadian Heritage resorting to blackmail.

How can she justify “I will give you a grant if you do this against your will”? It is revolting. What does she have to say?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the member opposite are completely false. If ever anyone did a flip-flop, I would like to recall what the Hon. Sylvain Simard wrote, and I quote “As for the Jeux de la Francophonie, the uncertainty that hung over the Madagascar games, and that, in some respects, still hangs over them, calls into question the very model of the games”.

He was against the Jeux de la Francophonie, but now he is indulging in petty politics, and that is scandalous.

* * *

• (1425)

[English]

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to date, Canadians have heard not a peep, pas un mot, from the Prime Minister about the MAI. Not a peep.

Last week European parliamentarians representing 15 different nations voted overwhelmingly, 437 to 8, to reject the current MAI proposal because of the undemocratic nature of the negotiations.

Will the Prime Minister today show the same respect for democracy, commit to full public debate and cross-Canada hear-

ings and allow Canadians to decide the fate of the MAI and the future of our country?

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the council of Barlow cancelled a meeting with ministry officials and me last week. I am disappointed that the council of Barlow has chosen not to take advice, not to look for advice from the chief negotiator of the MAI.

I point out to the leader of the NDP that a full debate was held in this House on February 23 on this very subject. I would suggest to her that she advise the council of Barlow that all of the information and all the—

The Speaker: The hon. leader of the New Democratic Party.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, once again absolute silence from the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister sits in his seat, dumb as an oyster.

How can any self-respecting Prime Minister consider signing an agreement with such massive implications to Canadians without first consulting them? This deal could rob Canadians of our ability to make our own decisions about our health care, our environment, our resources, and our very culture. Our sovereignty is at stake.

Instead of his stony silence, will the Prime Minister withdraw Canada from the MAI negotiations, until and unless he has the—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree entirely with the very able parliamentary secretary who gave a very good answer.

We are negotiating there and we are consulting here in Canada. We have debated the issue in the House of Commons and we will be consulting. The deal is not tomorrow. We will not sign a bad deal. We will always be sure that Canadians are present in the world. If we follow the policies of isolation of the NDP, Canada will go nowhere.

* * *

PENSIONS

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister had an opportunity during his budget speech to tell Canadians that he has heard their concerns regarding the proposed seniors benefit plan, but he blew it, for he was silent.

Why does the finance minister continue to push ahead with his idea of clawing back Canadians' retirement savings by 70%?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made it very clear that over the last two years we have consulted with Canadians. There will be changes brought down based on the principles that have been set forth.

Oral Questions

The hon. member asks why we want to proceed. We want to proceed in order to assure Canadians of whatever age that they will have a secure and safe retirement.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, the proposed seniors benefit plan would claw back benefits by 20% on those with a family income of \$26,000. This added together with the existing tax rates would mean a tax rate for middle income seniors of 70%. This would kill any incentive to save for retirement. They would not even be able to buy green for St. Paddy's Day.

Canadians are worried that their savings will be taken from them. What is the finance minister prepared to do today?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, and a very attractive green it is.

We have made it very clear. There will be changes to the seniors benefit following upon the consultation with caucus. One thing is very clear. We are going to make sure that Canadians, regardless of their income level, have a safe and secure retirement. We do not believe it is fair that people should be in poverty in retirement. This party and this government have always stood to make sure that those who have devoted their lives to this country—

• (1430)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni.

* * *

THE SENATE

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals were in opposition they said they believed in integrity. They even wrote it in their red book. It has now been shown that this is absolute red book rubbish.

We can only imagine what the Prime Minister would have said in opposition if Brian Mulroney had appointed somebody like Fitzpatrick to the Senate.

My question is quite simple. Why are this government's ethical standards worse than those of Brian Mulroney's?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the opposition is very short of subjects to attack the government with.

When I became the Prime Minister I put all of my assets in trust. This transaction happened at a time when I was not a member of Parliament. There is a rule, which we follow all the time, that the information be made public. It is all public information. Everything was done above the table.

Not being able to attack the policies of the government, the opposition tries to attack the person. Next month I will have been in Parliament for 35 years.

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about policies when \$45,000 has gone to line the Prime Minister's pockets. We are talking about integrity.

Ross Fitzpatrick is not just the Prime Minister's friend, he is the Prime Minister's former employer. As I said, he lined the Prime Minister's pockets with \$45,000 in stock market gifts—

Some hon. members: Order.

The Speaker: I would ask the hon. member to get directly to his question.

Mr. Bill Gilmour: Mr. Speaker, the question is: Are Canadian Senate seats for sale?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will not ask him to apologize for the lines he used. I have too much contempt for the member to ask for an apology.

It is very clear. I have explained this situation very clearly. I repeat that Mr. Fitzpatrick is an extremely competent person who has served his province very well. For many years when he was a private citizen he spent hours and hours helping people—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

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[Translation]

ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY ICE STORM

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for regional development in Quebec.

Last February, the federal government refused to co-operate with the Government of Quebec and came up with its own program of assistance to businesses that suffered losses in the ice storm. We have just learned that, to date, two months after the crisis, only 28 of the 25,000 businesses affected have received federal assistance.

How can the minister justify the failure of his program of assistance when, at the time, he used the urgency of the situation as an excuse for refusing to reach an agreement with the Government of Quebec?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the House will recall that the reason my colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, and I were forced to take unilateral action was because the Government of Quebec refused to

take action and to co-operate. They wanted to drag things out and use the issue for political ends, but we would not go along.

I am proud to say today that, with the assistance of chamber of commerce representatives, we put together a program that meets their demands, which is to say it covers fixed costs. It is an innovative program delivered by 3,200 points of service and I will be giving an update on this program next Friday.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, one might well ask who is playing politics, because the Government of Quebec's programs are chugging along, while all the minister is doing is talking.

Will the minister admit that, by worrying more about the federal government's visibility than the effectiveness of its program, he and his Treasury Board colleague have associated their names with an appalling failure that does precious little to serve the interests of SMBs in areas affected by the storm?

• (1435)

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to listen to my colleague, because things are going smoothly with respect to the disaster assistance program to which the Canadian government contributes up to 90%.

We are, however, asking for a 50% contribution from the Government of Quebec for our program of assistance to SMBs. It still refuses to take action and that is where pressure is required. My colleague should devote his energy to putting pressure on the Government of Quebec for that 50%.

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[English]

THE SENATE

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, British Columbians are fighting mad about policies of the government and the latest appointment to the Senate.

B.C. does not have its fair share of seats in the Parliament of Canada. B.C. does not have a proportionate share of government contracts. B.C. does not get the same attention for the west coast fish crisis that the Atlantic fisheries does. B.C. lighthouses are shutting down and CFB Chilliwack, B.C.'s only army base, is being closed.

When will the Prime Minister return Mr. Fitzpatrick to B.C. to run in a Senate election?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was there not long ago when we had the APEC meeting in B.C. That was a great success.

Oral Questions

I was there for the open skies policy which has given a big boost to the Vancouver airport and has made it one of the most important air bases in North America. I have said that the future of Canada is on the Pacific. We have always helped B.C. to be the door to Canada on the Pacific coast.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the open skies agreement the Prime Minister talks about is a direct seat in the Senate, by air, by the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister sold that Senate seat and British Columbia—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

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[Translation]

MILLENNIUMSCHOLARSHIPS

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

In recent days, the Minister of Human Resources Development has been trying to meet separately with various groups from Quebec's education sector to discuss the millennium scholarship program, without the Quebec government being present. However, the stakeholders in the education sector formed a coalition and they just called the minister to order by demanding that the Quebec government be present at any discussions on the millennium scholarships.

How can the Prime Minister refuse to meet Premier Bouchard regarding the millennium scholarships, while his minister is trying to organize meetings with individual stakeholders?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will answer the question. I am prepared to meet Mr. Bouchard at any time. It is perfectly normal that stakeholders should meet the responsible minister.

The minister met a number of them and they discussed every aspect of the program. Some people are just trying to get publicity, instead of working to find a solution through discussions with the minister responsible.

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, by going over Mr. Bouchard's head, is the Minister of Human Resources Development not demonstrating that the federal government wants to bypass the Quebec government and is trying to buy the education sector with Quebecers' own money?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like young people in the rest of the country, young Quebecers will benefit from the millennium scholarships. It is very important

Oral Questions

to ensure that young Quebecers, like other young Canadians, have access to an education that will prepare them to face much stronger competition in the 21st century. This is why the millennium scholarship program was greeted with enthusiasm by students from across the country.

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[English]

AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have boasted about their newfangled accounting policies that have rankled the auditor general.

Now, the government has sent a three page blistering letter to the auditor general saying "hold your nose, don't rock the boat, and approve the audit based on our rules, not your rules".

Will the Minister of Finance withdraw the letter and apologize to the auditor general for interfering with his independence?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge a letter from the Department of Finance to the auditor general is not an interference with the auditor general's role.

What we have done is set out the government's position. The government's position is very clear and that is that we intend to be open and transparent. We see no reason why the public sector should hide things when the private sector reveals them. We will at least be as open and transparent as any private sector company and the hon. member should support that as a position.

• (1440)

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government has tried to intimidate the auditor general by sending him a letter saying this is the way we want you to approve the audit.

The auditor general has spoken before, last year, when he qualified the audit. Now you want to do the same thing on exactly the same basis and that, I think, is intimidation. That is why we want you to withdraw the letter. That is why we are asking, will you withdraw the letter?

The Speaker: All questions should be addressed to the Chair. I know the hon. member knows that.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is perfectly acceptable parliamentary practice for the government to respond to the auditor general when the auditor general raises an issue. It happens all the time.

It is a little difficult to understand that this member who has been a member for quite some time does not realize what is in fact the convention of this House.

[Translation]

OPTION CANADA

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage wrote Claude Dauphin, the senior advisor to the Minister of Finance and former president of Option Canada, who, two and a half years after the fact, still cannot tell the people of Quebec and Canada how, in the midst of the referendum period, he spent \$4.8 million in 33 days.

Could the minister tell the House whether she has received a reply from him?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am still waiting for clarification from the member, who totally misinformed the House last week. I am still waiting.

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[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry. Small and medium sized companies in Canada's aerospace industry face an uphill battle when competing against companies from countries with large defence budgets.

Can the minister tell us what has been done to help these Canadian companies competing for international defence contracts?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to say that through the efforts both of technology and the partnerships Canada program as well as the Export Development Corporation, a number of Canadian corporations have been very successful in winning aerospace and defence contracts internationally.

This includes recently Spar Aerospace, which won a \$91.5 million contract with NASA; CAL Corporation, which has sold innovative tracking systems in France; Bristol Aerospace, which has won a \$98 million contract with Boeing Corporation; and Computing Devices of Canada Limited in Calgary which has successfully sold into the U.S. market.

This is a very successful sector of the Canadian economy. We are moving from sixth to fourth in the world.

* * *

AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are these. The government has played fast and loose with billions of taxpayers' dollars. It has cooked the books of the

Oral Questions

country and violated its own accounting guidelines. The auditor general has rightly criticized this in public.

Now the finance department has tried to shut down the auditor general in a toughly worded letter, calling into question his professional judgment. The letter says that they also wish to register their profound astonishment that this issue has now been reported to the press.

Public scrutiny, what a terrible thing. Why is the finance minister trying to muzzle the auditor general?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact what we are seeking is public scrutiny. The reason that we want to put it on the books is so that it will be open and transparent.

The real issue is why is the Reform Party against having transparency in the public statements? Why would the Reform Party support archaic accounting principles that have nothing to do with the evolution of modern accounting and in fact have nothing to do with transparency and openness in government?

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are very clear here. The finance department feels threatened by the auditor general's criticism and it is doing what it can to shut him down.

The fact is that the finance minister cooked the books. He has played fast and loose with billions of taxpayers' dollars. Instead of threatening the auditor general, my question is why does the finance minister not be a big boy, take his lumps and start accepting criticism from the taxpayers' watchdog?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is not about taxes. There are \$7 billion worth of tax cuts over the course of the next three years. What this is really all about is that it is the Reform Party's objection to the millennium foundation and to investing in education.

The real issue before the country is in a modern age, why does the Reform Party not understand that equality of access, that modern education is essential to job creation? Where the heck are they?

* * *

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. As he knows, B.C. government initiatives like the jobs and timber accord and legislation to protect young people from the exploitation of tobacco companies are threatened by the MAI.

• (1445)

The B.C. government has acted on the agreement of trade ministers for public hearings on the MAI, but where is the federal

government's commitment? Why does the federal government not have the guts to inform Canadians about the threat to the rights of provinces to create jobs and protect health care under the MAI?

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, quite the contrary. There is nothing in the negotiations that would threaten the ability of Canada to function and operate its own house.

We have laid down a complete set of reservations that will go into the MAI and that is being negotiated right now. We will not sign a deal that is not good for Canada.

[Translation]

Ms. Angela Vautour (Beauséjour—Petitcodiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

On December 16, 1997, the Prince Edward Island legislature stated that the multilateral agreement on investment would give the major multinationals nation status. The Prince Edward Island MLAs also called on the federal government to impose a moratorium on the ratification of the agreement pending public hearings on the matter throughout Canada.

Is the government prepared to make a commitment today to holding public hearings on the MAI throughout Canada before asking Parliament to ratify the agreement?

[English]

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government, through the subcommittee on foreign affairs, held hearings last fall and continues to hold hearings as long as they are in demand.

Because of those hearings the subcommittee produced a report that I wish the hon. member would read. If she would read it, she would find out exactly where Canada stands on the issue. I urge all members to do the same.

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[Translation]

SENIORS BENEFIT

Mr. Jean Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche, PC): Mr. Speaker, the government is going ahead with its seniors benefit scheme.

Because of this new plan, some financial experts are advising middle income Canadians over 50 years of age against buying RRSPs. The reason is simple: what they will be saving in income tax today will not make up for the income tax they will have to pay later.

Why does the Minister of Finance stubbornly insist on discouraging saving for retirement?

Oral Questions

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. member's question is not valid.

[English]

Mr. Jean Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche, PC): Mr. Speaker, the government continues to gouge Canadians through excessive EI and CPP premiums and refuses to cut income taxes. Now it wants to impose an unbearable tax burden on Canadians through the so-called seniors benefit.

The Association of Canadian Pension Fund Management says that the seniors benefit should be structured to prevent an effective tax raise of over 50%. Is the finance minister listening?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am having a little trouble with the definition of a tax gouge. We eliminated for all Canadians earning \$50,000 or less the 3% surtax imposed by the Conservative government. We reduced EI premiums from \$3.07 imposed by the Conservative government to \$2.70.

The fact is that we have reduced the taxes the Tories increased. Under those circumstances perhaps the definition of gouge is a little different for the Tory Party than it is in the Oxford English dictionary.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Two-thirds of Canadians risk premature death, heart disease and other health risks all due to physical inactivity.

If all Canadians were active, the savings for the health care system for heart disease alone would be \$700 million a year. What is the minister doing to address physical inactivity? Who will he be partnering with to achieve this goal?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Oak Ridges has put his finger on an item of crucial importance in our effort to reduce health costs.

The connection between physical activity and health is both direct and dramatic. If over the next five years we could reduce the level of inactivity by 10%, we would save about \$5 billion in health care. It is remarkable.

The government has taken action. We are working with dozens of partners to make Canadians more aware of the importance of physical activity. With 50 organizations including the Canadian Medical Association we have produced a booklet of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

• (1450)

FIREARMS

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, through access to information we found that the RCMP commissioner tried to get the justice department to correct data that overstated the number of firearms involved in violent crimes.

The misleading data was being used to support Bill C-68 and was used in the Alberta Court of Appeal. Out of over 88,000 violent crimes investigated by the RCMP in 1993, only 73 involved firearms. The justice department used a figure nine times higher.

My question: what possible reason does the—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Justice.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify the report to which the hon. member refers. This was not a report of the Department of Justice alone. It was work that was done by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the RCMP, the solicitor general, and provincial representatives from Quebec, B.C. and the OPP.

The hon. member is probably aware that there was some confusion as to the methodology that was used in relation to the compilation of these statistics.

I would be happy to file with you this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, a letter from the commissioner of the RCMP in which he and my deputy—

The Speaker: Probably the hon. minister could do that at the end of question period.

* * *

[Translation]

JEUX DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

In a letter dated March 12, the Quebec international relations minister and his municipal affairs colleague question the willingness of the federal government to include Quebec in any serious way in organizing the Jeux de la Francophonie. They contend that the federal government is in fact “placing Quebec before a fait accompli”.

How can the minister justify that, more than eight months after Ottawa-Hull won the games, the minister—

The Speaker: The Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this shows the absolute gall of a minister who tried

Oral Questions

repeatedly to assure me, in writing, that the games were not coming to Canada, that they were not coming to Ottawa-Hull.

For him to claim to be highly interested in the games at this time is deplorable. This is a good example of how Bloc and PQ members play politics with Canadian francophones.

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[English]

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The Saskatchewan government has called on the federal government to subject any future consensus draft on the MAI to a full impact analysis, including its impact on federalism; to involve the provinces and the public in its review; and to submit both the impact analysis and the draft treaty to full parliamentary debate before Canada moves to ratify any treaty.

Will the Prime Minister agree to the request from the Government of Saskatchewan for an impact analysis, a full parliamentary debate and a vote before the government endorses an MAI treaty?

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, holding hearings through the subcommittee is precisely the way an impact analysis is determined in the parliamentary process.

I would suggest to the hon. member that if he would participate in the work of the committee he would soon find out that is exactly what we do when we meet on a regular basis.

* * *

PENSIONS

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, the CPP fund is predicted to grow from \$6 billion to \$26 billion by 2007. Raising the foreign content rule will increase investment returns on this fund and benefit all Canadians. Even the Conference Board of Canada feels that the foreign property rules will make Canadians poorer.

Why does the finance minister not trust his own investment board and give them the freedom to make investments with the greatest possible return for all Canadians?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the other day when the hon. member asked his first question as finance critic I forgot to congratulate him. I would like to congratulate him now on his appointment and on his question.

• (1455)

The reason we are not prepared to move at the present time is that given the high level of Canadian borrowings we think there is reason to hold back on that decision. On the other hand, we are very open and it is one we will continue to monitor.

* * *

ORGANIZED CRIME

Mr. Lynn Myers (Waterloo—Wellington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the solicitor general.

Police and prosecutors across Canada are receiving threats and are subjected to intimidation by motorcycle gang members. This affects not only those directly involved but their families as well.

What exactly is the federal government doing to protect our police and prosecutors from this kind of harassment?

Hon. Andy Scott (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the illegal activities of motorcycle gangs and organized crime generally are a serious concern to the government. By its definition organized crime transcends municipal, provincial or national boundaries. That is the reason we need to fight organized crime in an organized way.

Early in April I will be bringing together law enforcement agencies from all over Canada. We will recommit all our resources to dealing with this very serious challenge.

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YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there is fear among Canadians that without their knowledge a violent young offender may be living next door. This cloak of anonymity is not solving crime in Canada. I have never heard of a case where hiding names helps but I know of individuals who are dead because of it.

Does the Minister of Justice agree that the names of young offenders should be public to protect communities? Will she include this in legislation and not just in her musings to reporters in the media?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have told the House before on numerous occasions, it is the government's intention to respond to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights report on youth justice. I will be filling that report in the coming weeks.

Point of Order

[Translation]

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

The MAI is stirring people up everywhere in the world. For instance, the European Parliament passed a motion last week which called for parliamentarians to play a role in the negotiations.

When the Liberals were in opposition, they demanded a special debate in the House when NAFTA was being negotiated. Does the government commit today to doing the same before the MAI if and when an agreement is reached?

[English]

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the process is simply that parliamentarians who are elected to the House have all the input it is possible to have to the negotiating team. The negotiating team listens to all the parties that participate on that committee.

I assure my hon. friend that with her participation on the committee her points of view and the points of view of her constituents will be passed—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Yukon.

Ms. Louise Hardy (Yukon, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in November 1997 Yukon legislation called on the federal government to cease negotiations on the MAI.

Normally international trade agreements bind national governments alone but the MAI is different. It gives the ability to sue local governments.

Will the Prime Minister commit to the cross-country hearings that Saskatchewan, Yukon, P.E.I. and B.C. have asked for and table an analysis of local hiring and the impact on first nations, or will he end the negotiations?

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, through our committee we have already heard from every part of the country. We have heard expressions repeated on just about every issue of concern that there could possibly be over the MAI.

My hon. friend suggests that we should back out of negotiations, turn tail and run. Canada will stay in negotiations right to the very end. We will sign a deal only if it is a good deal for Canadians.

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CANADA PENSION PLAN INVESTMENT BOARD

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, the other chamber is currently holding hearings on Bill C-2 and the appointment process to the CPP investment board. The appearance of

non-political appointments to this investment board is paramount to the integrity of the board itself and to Canadians' trust and confidence that their money will be invested properly.

What steps has the Minister of Finance taken to ensure that the board will not simply become another pit of patronage for this government?

• (1500)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we certainly share the view as do the provinces, that confidence in the board is paramount. That is why we have set in place a process whereby the provinces and the federal government will put together a list of nominees from which the directors will be chosen.

I can assure the hon. member that each and every one of those nominees will be a person of the highest character, integrity and competence.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of Dr. Gonchigdorj, chairman of the State Great Hural of Mongolia, and other members of a parliamentary delegation from Mongolia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the allegations made by the hon. member of the Bloc Québécois, I would like to table a letter from ACELF, the organization to which he has referred today, which reads as follows: "As for the quote in the newspaper article—we wish to dissociate ourselves from this false statement, and we apologize for having attributed certain intentions to the Minister of Canadian Heritage without justification".

I would therefore like to table this letter which, in fact, confirms that the hon. member's statement is incorrect.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, following up on the minister's action, I request the unanimous consent of the House to table the letter from the president of the organization in question, which was the object of—

[English]

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1) I wish to table two notices of ways and means motions. The first is to implement a Kamloops Indian band tax on alcohol, tobacco and fuels. The second is to amend the Budget Implementation Act, 1997. I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of these motions.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1505)

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FLAG

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kitchener Centre.

We usually begin our addresses in this place by saying we are pleased to rise on the particular issue. I wish I could say that about this issue.

The first thing I want to do is surrender to the authorities if that is appropriate, to admit my guilt that I waved a flag in this place. Members opposite referred to someone over here waving a full size Canadian flag. Guilty. The member for Scarborough East and I held it up. We sang the national anthem. We were proud to do it, no question. We were making a point to the separatists and to the reactions of the member for Rimouski—Mitis at the Olympics.

The deputy House leader for the Reform Party seems fit to chirp as she leaves her seat. She knows and you know, Mr. Speaker, that members of the Reform Party are absolutely nothing but opportunists in this issue. They are a disgrace to this place. They are a disgrace frankly to the Canadian flag for using it for their own political benefit. Reform Party members should be ashamed of themselves for what they are doing.

Far be it for me—

Miss Deborah Grey: You never want to wave it again?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: If the member opposite wants to take her seat and debate this in a normal fashion, I would be delighted to take her on.

Miss Deborah Grey: I did that already this morning. You were not here when I was speaking.

Supply

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Order. Hon. members may feel free to address other hon. members through the Chair.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I would make the point that if members of the official opposition really wanted to deal with this issue in a proper parliamentary form, they would participate with the House leaders in coming to a resolution. There is an option.

Government representatives and all other representatives of every party in this place came to an agreement proposing that the House Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs could be mandated to study possible uses of the flag on Parliament Hill and in the House based on the conventions in other parliaments, particularly in the Commonwealth countries. I could support that if that was the motion put forward by the opposition. It would make sense. It would calm the issue down. It would allow for some proper time to study how we might more appropriately use the Canadian flag in this place and in the precincts around the capital and Parliament Hill.

Far be it for me to quote from the media, but I want to read from an article that Andrew Coyne wrote. It says there is nothing wrong with “a little flag waving so long as honest love of country is the motive”. I think the Canadian people will in time recognize the motive of the Reform Party as being purely political in this matter. It has nothing to do with freedom of speech. No one’s freedom of speech is restricted in this place as long as they do so within the rules.

It is an interesting thing that happened. We broke the rules and I think everybody knows it. Some 200 of us waved little flags in the air, my colleague and I held up the large flag, and we broke into a rendition of *O Canada*. I was proud to do that and I would do it again.

Even though I know it is against the rules in this place, it was important for once to make the point to the Bloc Quebecois, to the member for Rimouski—Mitis that we do not accept her remarks at the Olympics with regard to the display of the Canadian flag on behalf of Canadian athletes and Canadians everywhere. In fact it was a proud thing to see.

It was particularly proud to see the Olympic athletes smuggle in that huge flag. And it is against the rules in the Olympics. It was the second time it has happened at the Olympics. It became the focal point of the televised section of the closing ceremonies of the Olympics. It was a marvellous thing to see. If it bends the rules a little bit, so be it. Those athletes, not all of them kids, had a Canadian heart beating in them and they wanted to share that with the world. They wanted to tell the world that they had just competed for their country.

• (1510)

For a member of Parliament to make a comment like the separatist member has made is enough to make the hairs stand up on the back of one’s neck. We wanted to send a message and did so

Supply

with our demonstration. The message is that Canadians right across this land, including Canadians who live in Quebec and want to stay in Canada, are fed up with that brand of separatism as that member would try to sell to her constituents back in Quebec.

My constituents have called and said they were really angry with this. They know we have called a vote to put the flag on every desk. They think it is a difficult argument but wonder why we would not put a flag on our desks. Maybe we should.

I have been in legislatures and Parliament for several years and I have seen many, many instances where the rules were bent. I have seen people filibuster by reading names and addresses out of telephone books. Should we make that legal? Is that a proper form of debate?

When I was in the Ontario legislature I even presented Mike Harris with an American flag to make a point. The point was that we could see the Americanization of the agenda that has since come out as the common sense revolution.

An hon. member: Point over there.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: The member says I should point there and he is right, but I have trouble pointing to the left when I talk about them.

The reality is that I did that for effect. I knew that the Speaker would admonish me and say it was not proper parliamentary procedure. I also knew I would not do it again because the point had been made.

We also made the point to the separatists. Let us not forget that what the Reform Party is doing by turning this into a debate over our cherished flag, by saying we have a bigger flag than they do or that we are prouder to be Canadians than they are, we are totally allowing the separatists to get off the hook. They started this. They are the ones who denigrated our flag with the comments by the member, on federal taxpayers' dollars, at the Olympic games with Canadian athletes fighting for their country. And we are letting them off the hook.

I object to the cheap political antics of painting a car. Imagine. A member has put a private member's bill forward as a result of one of the Reform members actually throwing the Canadian flag on the floor of the House of Commons in anger. The private member's bill states that it will be a criminal offence to desecrate the national flag of Canada. It should be a criminal offence. If that bill existed, that member would be hauled out of here and charged with a criminal offence.

For Reform members to now get on their high horse and try to tell Canadians across the country that only they care about the flag, I reject that. It makes me so damned angry. Canadians right across

the country are proud of our flag and proud to be Canadians and so is the Liberal government.

These people are just playing cheap politics which in fact is a method of denigrating the Canadian flag. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Mr. Jim Gouk (West Kootenay—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that we are letting the Bloc Quebecois off the hook by bringing forward this motion.

• (1515)

I would suggest that the member is letting it off the hook by opposing this motion. The member is saying that we are to be patriotic yet he is castigating that party because it said there are too many flags at the Canadian Olympics. The member is saying that is wrong. There should be flags at the Canadian Olympics. But what the hon. member is also saying is that there should not be in the House of Commons, the federal government of this country.

I still suggest that if there is a problem in this House it is not the matter of the Reform Party's bringing this motion forward, but rather the hon. member rejecting the idea that Canadians should be able to see their federal members with their federal flag on their desks. What is wrong with that?

I asked a question earlier but time did not allow it so I was cut off. I put it to him. The minister of heritage spent over \$20 million of taxpayer money giving away flags and trying to get Canadians to be more patriotic. Why, after spending all that taxpayer money, is he opposed to a small display of the Canadian flag here in this House of Commons?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Reform Party opposes the distribution of flags by this government which was an attempt to share the patriotic view of the House of Commons. It was done on behalf of all members across the country.

I did not say I am opposed to the flag being displayed. I am not opposed. It currently is displayed and I can see two of them as I speak. If the Reform Party were serious it could have adopted the agreement made by most members in this House over the weekend. The members said the issue should be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and the committee be mandated to study the possible use of the flag on Parliament Hill.

If we really want it done, we can send it in the proper procedural way to a committee. Let the committee bring a report and we can depoliticize this issue. To play games with the Canadian flag is to do an injustice to that proud flag that I will stand behind in my constituency.

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House for four years plus but I have never during

Supply

all the time in this House seen anybody destroy the integrity of this House and the credibility like the member who just spoke.

This is what it says on this little label: "As a loyal Canadian, please wave this flag the first time you see the Bloc member stand up to speak in question period". These flags were put out by the member for Oshawa. The credibility of this government is such that I am mad, and damn mad. My relatives died for a flag. This type of credibility in this House is not deserved and I want to know what this member would do when a gun was pointed at him, not just a little stick?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I understand the passion the member feels because I too feel passionate about this issue. He is right. It was a Liberal backbench member who put these flags in everybody's desk and the message was to send a message to the member from the Bloc who was making the comments in Japan, and we sent that message with pride. I stood here and waved a full size flag in this House with pride and sang the anthem with pride. My relatives fought for this country too.

They do not have a corner on being self-righteous about this country or about this flag and I resent the comments by that member attacking my integrity and the integrity of this government. We should send this to a committee. We should calmly discuss it and if the committee can come up with a way to properly and in a larger way display our wonderful flag in this House, then that is what we should do. It would be supported by all members.

It is not grandstanding the way the Reform Party is doing it that will work and solve this issue.

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this has not been the finest hour in this House. As a matter of fact, I am disappointed to stand and take the floor today to talk about some of the rhetoric that surrounds this issue.

• (1520)

There are a couple of points that I would like to make at the outset.

Members of the official opposition have been speaking to the effect that only small desk flags would be the result of the passing of the motion before us. However, the motion clearly states that the flag would be no larger than that of a standard recognized flag. This indicates that a flag of any size would be permitted to be displayed on desks. I would ask why members opposite are being so selective as to the flags they are referring to in the debate we are having today.

Another point is that members of the official opposition have been stressing the importance of flags being permissible in the House of Commons. I remind these members that it is difficult to

sit here in the House today and not see the two Canadian flags proudly displayed on either side of the Speaker's chair.

These two points aside, I have thought about this issue a lot over the past week and a half, as I know many of my colleagues have. I was in the House the day the flags were spontaneously waved and our national anthem was sung. I was in the House to see a member of the official opposition throw a Canadian flag on the floor of this Chamber.

I understand the emotion of members of this House and of Canadians upon learning what the hon. member of the Bloc said about the display of our national flag in the Olympic village. Her comments were, at least to say, unfortunate.

However, the actions in this House upon her return have also done damage. They have further politicized our national emblem. It has been used as a mere prop of nationalism.

This motion does not suggest that flags be mandatory. My question to members opposite is if I do not have a flag on my desk and my seatmate has a flag on his desk, does the logical extension then say that he is more nationalistic, a prouder federalist than I am? I think not.

Nationalism and patriotism run deep. They are not limited merely to the display of our national flag. They are demonstrated in numerous ways, too many to count.

Need I remind our colleagues that just over two months ago regions of Ontario and Quebec, just across the provincial border, close to the Hill where we now are, were stricken by an ice storm? Need I remind members of this House how Canadians of all political stripes, from all regions, from all backgrounds and ethical beliefs banded together in a massive demonstration of nationalism of the strongest kind, nationalism of action?

We are elected representatives to the House of Commons. We are elected to represent the people of our constituencies. We are elected to use our best judgment when dealing with sensitive issues based on our firsthand knowledge. We are elected and sent to this House to debate government policies and to initiate action.

I do not deny members of the official opposition the right to introduce any motion of their choice on their allotted day. I do, however, regret that they have decided to further debate the issue which was ruled on yesterday in this House by our Speaker; an issue which most parties represented in this House recommended be directed to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs for further study; a study based on precedent and the conventions of this and other parliaments, particularly those of the Commonwealth countries.

The fact that members of the Reform Party do not support this recommendation, which is based on respect for the institution and

Supply

the procedures of our democracy, further demonstrates that their motion is not about patriotism but merely about politics.

Members of the Reform Party are using the flag as a lightening rod to attract the attention of the media, overshadowing larger issues, issues which need to be discussed in the House, issues of job creation, health care, child care and industry development.

Let us not allow politics to be ruled by sound bytes used by the media, short clips heard on television and printed in newspapers. Yes, these things do provide information, but it is only a snapshot, not the whole picture.

The issues we deal with in the House are much larger and much more substantive than the way this whole issue has been portrayed.

• (1525)

I ask the House to return to the issues of importance to all Canadians. I ask Canadians to see this motion as one that will not move the envelope of Canadian unity toward a lasting stability for the country. Canada's future lies in a strong society.

I ask that the orders of precedence be respected and that we return to work on the important substantive issues facing the country which will make longlasting differences and help shape the future for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member's speech, but my recollection of the event that led to this parliamentary crisis is not quite the same as hers.

She spoke of a spontaneous demonstration. What I remember is that, when my colleague, the member for Rimouski—Mitis, rose to ask a very relevant question, flags began waving everywhere in the House, and it did not look spontaneous. It looked very well organized, by both the Liberals and the Reformers.

The result today is that all Quebecers have understood that this demonstration that fired up nationalist sentiment in English Canada apparently did nothing to improve relations between Quebec and Canada.

I went back to my riding. What I found most distressing was that people were saying "What is it with that Parliament? You are wasting your time on this sort of thing. Is Parliament some kind of farce?"

In that sense, today's Reform Party motion only makes matters more farcical.

Would it not have been more important today to address the issues of employment insurance, poverty, and the multilateral agreement on investment, all daily concerns of Quebecers and Canadians?

[*English*]

Mrs. Karen Redman: Mr. Speaker, I would concur with the last comments of the member opposite that there are more substantive issues and there is a more productive way we could use this time. However, I would also like to underline that the comments, although made outside this Chamber by a member of the Bloc, were indeed unfortunate and were responded to with almost unanimity from members of other parties in the House. It was very difficult to deal with.

Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it saddens me somewhat to even address this issue because I feel it should not even be discussed today. We must look realistically at how the issue commenced in the House. I emphasize in the House because members are free to do what they want outside. If people have concerns, they should be dealt with outside.

When the flags were waved in the House as a prop and the national anthem was sung to silence a member who had the right to speak, that was wrong. It is wrong now to be debating this issue as if it were one about flags. It is not an issue about flags. It is an issue about people wanting to get their way, to prove what they did was right and to justify what they did. I hear people making all kinds of excuses as to why they did it. It was wrong then and it is wrong now. It is not an issue of flags and we should not misinterpret it as being an issue of flags.

I feel very sad because the Canadian public is being taken in by this whole issue. We as parliamentarians who are supposed to be responsible people elected to serve our constituents are here wasting our time, spending taxpayer money debating an issue that ought not to be debated, should never have begun in the first place. The people who started it should be big enough to stand up and agree they were wrong and let it drop at that. Not every member of the House stood and sung O Canada.

Mrs. Karen Redman: Mr. Speaker, I agree. The Chair ruled on the events of that day. We are more than willing to accept that ruling and move forward.

• (1530)

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, I will try to address my concerns to the Chair and keep them very brief.

There is a greater question here and I would like to ask the former speaker what she thinks of this. If we display a Canadian flag on our desk, what does that tell the people who do not display the Canadian flag? It does use it as some type of a weapon or some type of coercion to convince everyone else that they too should have one.

Mrs. Karen Redman: Mr. Speaker, I fully support this being referred to a standing committee and being dealt with through the proper channels and procedures.

Supply

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this debate has had an interesting fate in the way it has progressed over the last two weeks.

There are a number of issues I want to deal with. I think one of the most important things is that all of the people who are listening to this understand why we are doing this, putting an end to this. This issue admittedly arose from members of the government side standing to wave a flag, as well as members of this party, and rightfully so. They should have. I stood up proudly and waved the flag in response to comments made by a member of the Bloc. We said enough is enough, we have to get on with the important governing issues.

The members repeatedly have said send it to a committee. Sending that to a committee would be a colossal waste of time. It is important but it is not rocket science. We are talking about a very simple question.

This is the only way we can put this thing to an end once and for all and make every single member in this Chamber stand up and be counted. Will you allow a flag on your desk or will you not?

When we debated this supply day motion as to whether or not to proceed with it, that was the number one issue. Let us get this thing over with, make people stand up and be counted and move forward.

The fisheries and oceans committee I am involved with meets two or three times a week and we do a lot of good work. By sending something like this to committee to be buried in months and months of meetings is insane. It is absolutely ridiculous it has arrived at this point where we have used a supply day motion because there are lots of important issues. We were forced into this. We were pushed and we had to respond. This is one way to put an end to this and that is what this is all about today.

It can be argued that we are sitting here using up valuable time but we are not going to have this issue go on until May or June and then into next fall because that is crazy. That is what you guys keep telling us to do, send it to a committee and let us talk about it.

Yes, we did get a ruling from the Speaker yesterday and he did say it was clearly out of order. I accept that. No question. What happened? There were about 200 members of Parliament responding to comments made outside the House when a member was visiting a foreign country representing Canada with taxpayers' dollars. They were infuriated. They were outraged and they responded.

There were comments by the Speaker yesterday that this should not be repeated. With the highest respect for the Speaker himself and the authority of that chair, I would suggest that if these kinds of comments are made outside the House again exactly the same thing would happen.

We saw members of the government proudly wave a three foot by six foot flag during the budget debate only weeks ago when this issue came up. I supported them. I stood on my feet and sang *O Canada*, and I was proud to do that.

This debate has been elevated and it has progressed but thank goodness the Reform Party is bringing it to an end. It will not go to a committee. It will not go off to further meetings. They will not be talking about this in June. We will not be hearing grumblings about it. It is over today, once and for all.

● (1535)

Every member will have to stand in this House and be counted. There will be no ducking behind some orders of the government. They have an opportunity to stand and be counted on whether they will allow members to have a flag on their desks.

We are advocating that we should have this place give each person their right. They do not have to if they do not want to. I heard a member opposite just moments before referring to the flag as a weapon. For goodness sakes, that is the craziest thing I have heard. It is the elevation that this debate has come to. They talk about respect for institutions.

I do believe that a majority of these members, with the exception of one party, believe in this country and are patriotic. Some members just want to demonstrate that. However, I do not want to lose sight of why we are here today.

This is a very important question: Can some members put a flag on their desks? I admit that we did not do this in 1993 and we did not do it last September. This whole thing evolved out of the outcome of actions by a member of this House on a taxpayers' junket to another country and the House responded.

It has elevated to this and it is time that it has to stop. It has to be over and done. This is the one way that it can be done. The Reform Party had to use its supply day motion to put an end to this nonsense, to make sure they stand up and are counted.

I am in a state of awe that those members are sitting over there saying "Send it to a committee. Let them talk about it. Let us come back in June. Let us come back next fall. Let us carry this thing on".

This is such an elementary question. It is so painfully simple that we have to make sure they stand up in this House, that they are heard and that we move forward.

I have heard people suggest that the Reform Party is using this as a lightning rod and as an opportunity. I will tell this House and every single Canadian out there watching in all sincerity that we do believe in this country. We do believe in the flag. I proudly stand here on Wednesdays and sing the national anthem. I do. If I did

Supply

not, I would not be standing here right now making this speech. I would have a lot better things to be doing.

I will continue to fight for this country and fight for my kids so that they have a good place. I mean that sincerely. I really do.

To carry on with this nonsense is just absolutely crazy. The only way that we could force an end to this matter is to use our supply day. That is exactly what we have done. Every member over there will have to stand and be counted. They will have to say what side they are on. Let us talk about what this is all about.

Those members can say that it is a weapon. I heard one of the top strategists for the Progressive Conservative Party equating this to a Reform member having this tattooed on their body and displaying it in the House and whether that would be acceptable. There is all this craziness.

That is where all the other parties are taking this debate. It is simple. Can we take a little desk top flag and put it on our desk when we want to talk about a very important issue? Maybe we will want to leave it there all the time.

This is the House of Canada. This is the Parliament of Canada. There is only one flag for Canada. There is only one national anthem for Canada. I will stand up in this House and say that the Quebec flag does not belong in here any more than the Newfoundland flag or the British Columbia flag or any other flag from this country.

The only flag that belongs in this House is the maple leaf. I am sure I would have a lot of people who would agree with me. I stand in this House as a proud Canadian. Those flags belong beside the Speaker and no other flag on this desk.

Every member of Parliament sitting in this House should be standing up and fighting for the good of all Canadians. That is what we are doing today.

Now we are hearing comments that we are wasting time. The reality is respect. We are spending three or four hours debating this in this House.

• (1540)

This started out as an appropriate response to comments made and it has now elevated to this. This nonsense has to end and end today. People have to stand up and make sure they are heard, which is what we are here for.

I am happy to ask anyone to ask me any question on this issue. I will be glad to give them a response as long as they do not want to get into some silly debate about a whole bunch of issues that we are not talking about today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Before we go to questions and comments, we have a point of order from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

POINTS OF ORDER

TABLING OF DOCUMENT

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the letter that the minister referred to during question period, if I have unanimous consent.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Do we have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FLAG

The House resumed consideration of the motion and the amendment.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what foolishness this motion is. It has crowded the talk show lines in my riding and people believe that what this is all about is that parliamentarians cannot stand and speak in this House holding the Canadian flag as a symbol.

When I was elected in 1993, I put a Canadian flag pin on my lapel. In all that time, Mr. Speaker, you have never ruled me out of order because I have stood in this House with the Canadian flag pinned on my jacket.

Moreover, from time to time I have risen to speak in this House wearing a tie that had Canadian flags on it and you have never, Mr. Speaker, ruled that out of order.

There are plenty of opportunities to stand and speak in this House wearing a Canadian flag as a symbol.

What is wrong with having a Canadian flag at the desk? Well, we saw it with the Reform member for Medicine Hat. He got angry and took the flag, threw it on the floor and desecrated it. On this side we tried to figure out how to retrieve the flag from the floor of the House of Commons before it was stepped on.

I submit to the member opposite that a flag in the hands of the Reform Party or on a desk may be desecrated. It is safer next to you, Mr. Speaker. Why can he not have on his jacket, as I do, or even on his tie a Canadian flag? Why is that not sufficient for him?

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, I am going to bring this back. It is very simple. We even heard members of the Bloc talking about the flag as being vulgar. Imagine that. People responded to that, including the people in the member's party. The government party stood up and responded like the people did here, appropriately. I stand on those words. I stood proudly and waved that flag and stood proudly and sang *O Canada*. That is what this is about.

Supply

This debate has elevated from that. We can all argue about this but that is the reality. That is what has happened and what has gone on for two weeks and it has to end. People out there have to know where we stand. We are going to make people stand up and be counted, that is what this is all about. We want to bring a closure to this issue once and for all today so we can address the other important issues.

Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to a good deal of the debate today and the word that keeps coming back is the word “flagrant” which consists of two words “flag” and “rant”, which is what we mostly have today from the Reform Party.

I hear the member for Blackstrap bellowing away.

What we are seeing here today is a flagrant waste of time. I will be very proudly voting against this motion in a couple of hours time, but I will take no back seat to any of the members of the Reform Party in terms of their patriotic endeavours.

I am probably the only person in this House who had the privilege of being outside this building on February 15, 1965 when the Canadian flag was raised for the very first time on top of the Peace Tower. I remember it very well. I was a student at the university here and came down to a relatively small gathering. Prime Minister Pearson came out for the event. Had the Reform Party members been around in 1965 they probably would have voted against this new flag because of the red ensign. They would have wrapped themselves in the previous flag because they are very good at promising Canadians a better yesterday.

I have two questions for the previous speaker.

● (1545)

In the vast research the Reformers have done, could they tell us what other countries allow flags to be displayed on members' desks in their parliaments? If they want to bring an end to this debate today, why are they running ads on radio stations in Saskatchewan?

Mr. Gary Lunn: Mr. Speaker, the member asked me what goes on in other parliaments. I have been to many countries and have been to their parliaments. I have yet to hear people refer to their flags as vulgar. I have yet to hear their elected officials go off to other countries and say that there are too many of their own country's flags.

The people in this House responded and appropriately so by saying that was not acceptable. The ministers, the government and the Reform Party stood and said that we were not going to allow that. This has elevated from that.

How can we put an end to this? How can we stop it? How can we get on to the governing of the country? We said we would force them to stand and be counted, and that is what we have done.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to take part in a debate such as this one.

Many members of the House have turned what I believe to be a positive initiative on behalf of the official opposition into an un-against them debate that would divide us rather than bring us together as Canadians.

An hon. member: You should be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: I am ashamed right now to listen to these heckles. Here we are talking about pride in Canada and the flag, and here we have people yelling at us from the other side. As a relatively new Canadian who has adopted this country and takes pride in its flag and what it stands for, I do not know why in a democracy I cannot rise in an institution like this one to address those things and say how proud I am to be a Canadian.

We have heard from the other parties today that Reform does not respect rules. I beg to differ. We were waiting for the Speaker to rule on the issue. He took some time to rule. If we look around today we see that members on the Reform side have respected his decision. We took the next step, which was to hear from other Canadians in the House on how they feel about the flag, if they feel it is a positive initiative to display it on their desks.

If many members opposite feel it is not a positive initiative then they can say so. That is what the debate is all about. We on the Reform side continuously argue that if members of the House representing people from across their country who are proud to be Canadians want to display that flag on their desks on behalf of the people who elected them, why not allow them to do so. It is a positive initiative. I have yet to hear some constructive debate from the other side as to why it is negative, instead of attacking this side for being proud about our symbols.

We have heard from members of different parties that this is a negative initiative. This is what the House of Commons is all about. It is a place in which to freely debate ideas that may be of contention, that may mean something to some and not to others. Bringing this issue to the floor and letting the members decide is not negative. Members opposite and members from all parties have the right to vote yes or no in the end to the motion, whether they like it or not.

I resent the fact that people have been so negative overall in the debate when the initiative in the official opposition motion is very positive. I wish we would hear less rhetoric and more about why a flag on a desk is so negative.

To some extent I was happy for a little while to hear members from all sides talking about what Canada means to them and what the flag means to them. It was somewhat enlightening to hear some of the stories of various members of Parliament and their families

Supply

and what exactly the flag means to them. To have this kind of debate once in a while is healthy for parliament.

I briefly touched on what that means to me. I am a recent Canadian. I have been here for 26 years. I came here as a little child. I adopted the flag and the country. It is mine and it is my home. For me it means freedom. It means opportunity. It means democracy. Those are things that did not exist in the country my family had to flee from as refugees.

• (1550)

To be able to take a moment to reflect on those things in the House is the perfect place to do it. I am very proud that we have the opportunity to do so. I resent the fact that we are hearing such negative comments from all other sides of the House on this issue.

I heard members of the New Democratic Party yelling out that no other parliament or legislature in the world may necessarily have flags on their desks. This is an opportunity for us as Canadians, as we have been in the past, to be leaders and maybe start something positive, start something to be proud of. It is not negative.

It is a chance for us to stand and actually start something new. If we took the time to reflect on that for a moment and reflect on how it could bring us together, maybe we would have more support in the House than what we see today.

Those are some of the issues I would have liked to address. Many of us have misinterpreted what the motion is supposed to be about and how positive it is.

[*Translation*]

I would now like to address the people of Quebec, people who love Canada and the Canadian flag. Do not be mistaken: while Quebecers love their province, they also love their country. If the members opposite refuse to give them a way of expressing their patriotism in this House, I will be proud to take on that responsibility.

The flag is an emblem, a deeply important symbol. Displaying the Canadian flag shows commitment to Canada, but this commitment to Canada is not one to the geographical boundaries of our country. To display a flag shows commitment to the values honoured within those boundaries.

My family and I came to Canada looking for a place to rebuild our lives. We were not looking for handouts, but opportunities, which we found. Canada gave us the opportunity to go to school and to build prosperous businesses. So, when we see Canadian flags, we are reminded that Canada gave us a second chance.

I am now a part of a country which gave me the opportunity to represent the electoral district of Edmonton—Strathcona in the House of Commons. I came from a country where there was no

respect for democracy to a country where, at age 26, I was allowed to speak as an equal in this House.

The community of Edmonton—Strathcona judged me on the basis of my abilities and allowed me to come and represent it here because it liked what I had to say. So, when I look at the Canadian flag, I also see freedom. When I look at the Canadian flag, I am reminded that, in Canada, democracy is the principle of equality which is part of our laws and our government institutions.

I am sure that the people of Quebec see what I see when they look at the Canadian flag: freedom, opportunity, democracy and equality. I am convinced that, given the chance to speak with one voice in this House today, the people of Quebec would ask their representatives to make the best decision and support our motion.

[*English*]

On the last note, I would like to focus specifically on the fact that we have gone through a really strange week in the House. We have had funny behaviour on both sides. It is an emotional issue and it goes without saying that people react the way they do when issues of symbolism and patriotism are discussed in the House.

I encourage all members to take a moment to see the principle behind the motion and to support it because they are proud of their country. If all hon. members take a second to take a step back, they will see that the motion in its principle is something positive for all of us. It allows freedom of expression for individual members in the House who are proud to be here.

• (1555)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member who spoke before me say that a spirit of democracy and respect was needed. I invite him to bring that up with the Reform member who spoke before him. That member accused a member of the Bloc Québécois of having called the Canadian flag vulgar. I challenge him to find a single instance of a Bloc member having called the Canadian flag vulgar.

What the hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis said was that she found there were too many Canadian flags in Nagano. It was an assessment, and as far as I know we are entitled to our personal opinions on the subject.

I want to point something else out. He said we have been elected here for the good of Canadians. For those who elected me as their member of Parliament, what would be good for the whole of Canada would be to create two sovereign countries that would enter into a partnership.

This is the message I have for the House on behalf of my constituents. In 1993, more than 50 members of the Bloc Québécois were elected. Today, there are 44 of them. This is still a

majority of members from Quebec who, as sovereignists, have been elected to pass on the message that the solution in Canada, in fact, is to create two sovereign countries having economic ties with each other.

In conclusion, I agree with him that the Liberals also had a hand in the initiative that led to this crisis, and that they are now adopting a position I find unacceptable. I agree with him on that.

I would like the hon. member to answer my question. For Quebeckers and Canadians to become proud of living in this country, instead of putting a flag on the desk and waving it about whenever the spirit moves them, would it not be preferable for the members of this House to have democratic debates on the issues of real concern to Quebeckers and Canadians, including the national issue?

[*English*]

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to whether or not it is good to debate this type of motion in the House, given the fact that his mandate is to create two sovereign nations.

We are talking today about whether a member of Parliament, who is proud to be a Canadian member of Parliament and wants to display a flag on his desk in the House, should have the right to do so. That is the fundamental basis of the motion. That is what we are debating.

The hon. member said that most electors in his riding elected him and his party to create a vision of two sovereign nations. They are free to work to that end. However, as it stands right now, we are still a united country. While we are in the House we should have respect for the symbols that represent the country. It is not negative to have the flag displayed on anyone's desk in the House.

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like the member opposite, I too come from an immigrant background. My father came here over 70 years ago. Before I learned my first nursery rhyme, I learned how lucky I was to be a Canadian.

I take no back seat to anybody when it comes to pride in this country. That is precisely why nearly two weeks ago I stood in the House and did something that I knew was absolutely out of order. I waved a flag. I sang my national anthem. I was quite content then to sit down and let the member for Rimouski—Mitis have her say in the House.

I had to respond to an insult to something that means more to me than a symbol of a country. For me it is a symbol of my father's life which was dedicated to this country. That is precisely why I will not vote for the motion tonight. I will not have the flag sitting here to be knocked over, to be fiddled with, to fall on the floor, to be trampled on, to be treated with the kind of disrespect I saw from some of the members in the House last week.

Supply

I value the flag too much to use it as a symbol to point to separatists members of the House and say "in your face". That is not what it is for. It is to cherish.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: Mr. Speaker, we have heard from members opposite that people had disrespect for the flag in the House. I would like to put that issue to rest. The hon. member for Medicine Hat had lunch with the snack pack prior to that event. His hands were greasy because he had a greasy meal and I believe he dropped the flag.

• (1600)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer: Mr. Speaker, if I could just have a second—

The Speaker: I should point out that on questions and comments we try to be fair. If members have been in the House during the course of the debate, for most of the day, we would normally recognize those members before others who have just come in. Sometimes it seems a little arbitrary, but it really is not.

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party, by putting this motion before us, is trying to create the impression that it is leading the country in patriotism. The motion purports to start a practice of allowing the displaying of the Canadian flag on members' desks in the House as an act of patriotism. That is what it would like the Canadian public to believe.

How can we take the motion of the Reform Party with any modicum of seriousness and sincerity when barely two weeks ago it condoned utter disrespect for our national emblem?

This is the same Reform Party which allowed one of its members, the member for Medicine Hat, to desecrate the Canadian flag on the floor of this Chamber, duly documented in the media.

Indeed, when Canadians realize all of this, the motion before us quickly loses its moral edge, particularly when it is realized by all that the Reform Party did not introduce the motion before the Speaker's ruling but one day after that ruling.

Recall that the Reform Party has been widely reported in the media as having threatened the Speaker with a vote of non-confidence if he ruled against the Reform's pleading. This motion is a classic example of the Reform Party's sense of procedural justice.

Frankly, I would like to display the Canadian flag on my desk. I know I would treat it with the utmost respect and dignity befitting our national emblem, the embodiment of Canadian dreams, a sentiment aptly articulated by John Matheson in his book *Canada's Flag: A Search for a Country*: "The traditions of our people, their

Supply

accomplishments, and their hopes for the future are summed up in the symbolic meaning of our flag”.

How then can the House show support for this motion when its authors belong to the same party which has failed to discipline one of its own members who showed a complete lack of decency in handling the Canadian flag on his desk?

Let me remind all colleagues and all Canadians that the said member of the Reform Party, a senior member of that party, instead of apologizing for his cowardly act, had the arrogance to tell the media “it was no big deal”.

The Reform Party ought to heed the words of Jennifer Robinson, that our flag is not a prop for the Reform Party’s stunts, which appear in a column in today’s issue of the *Montreal Gazette*: “Reformers may love their country, but they do no honour to the flag by using it as a prop for their political stunts. There is no honour in singing the national anthem if it is only to drown out political adversaries, no patriotism in waving a flag if it is only to show contempt”.

A distinguished member of the House, the hon. member for Sherbrooke, correctly said on the weekend: “A flag is meant to be cherished and is to be a symbol that unites people, not something to be banded around for the purpose of trying to make a political point”.

The leader of the Reform Party said: “We think there is a second principle, equally important, the freedom of expression”, in hinting his disagreement with the ruling by the Speaker, who based his decision on the principle of decorum and order in the House.

Let me remind the leader of the Reform Party that freedom of expression, like all freedoms, is not absolute. As the old saying goes, my right to swing my fists ends where your face begins.

I agree with the wisdom of the Speaker’s ruling yesterday. He said: “Without order there is no freedom of speech and, fundamentally, that is what this place is really about”.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* in today’s issue timely reminded Canadians about the Reform Party: “Above all, they declared their determination to restore seriousness and decorum to Parliament and to put an end to the raucous disorder that infected question period. So what has happened to turn the Reformers into the bunch of merry mischief makers that they are today?”

● (1605)

Truly it is an appropriate question begging for an urgent answer from the Reform leader.

I agree with today’s issue of the *Toronto Star*: “The two and a half week controversy that led to yesterday’s ruling was damaging and unnecessary. It cheapened Canadian patriotism, hurt national unity and put the Speaker in an impossible position”. It went on to

say it is a shame that the Canadian flag was used to disrupt the proceedings of the House.

The *Toronto Star* posed a challenge to the Speaker: “The Speaker should set himself the higher task of ensuring that the Canadian flag is used to symbolize tolerance and pride in the House of Commons”.

I remind all members and respectfully inform all Canadians that we already have in full view two full size Canadian flags on each side of the Speaker’s chair. Moreover, we sing O Canada every Wednesday before question period.

Perhaps I could even force myself to understand the Reform Party’s frustration or political argument with the Speaker. But the utmost of my understanding cannot condone any immature display of temper, to say the least, or any unconscionable deliberate insult to our flag, an act unbecoming any citizen, let alone a member of Parliament.

The Reform Party would like Canadians to believe that it is serious and sincere with this motion to display the Canadian flag on our desks as a manifestation of patriotism. Anyone can see through the Reform Party’s motion a veneer of hypocrisy. A disguise is a disguise is a disguise. A disguise of outrage cannot hide a vacuum of sincerity in the motion.

Yesterday the Speaker of the House issued his ruling, pointing out that such a display of the Canadian flag on members’ desks is not sanctioned under the present rules of the House. It should be said that the Speaker’s ruling is not without precedent. In 1964 the then Speaker of the House in a precedent setting ruling prohibited flags at MPs’ desks to be used as props.

Part of Reform’s motion reads “that the said flag remain stationary for the purposes of decorum”. Yes, by this motion the Reform Party pretends to be the defender of decorum in the House.

The Reform motion purports to do one thing while its behaviour in the House clearly showed manifest disrespect for the flag and for decorum.

Mr. Hugh Windsor of the *Globe and Mail* in yesterday’s issue rightly observed in his column “The Power Game” that the Reform Party has, to some extent, effectively used a staged photo opportunity as a tactic to draw media attention but that in the case of the hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis, alluding to the flag waving fuss which should have been another one day wonder, it carried the game too far by totally disrupting proceedings, denying the MP her right to speak and turning the Commons into a minstrel show by jumping up and singing O Canada.

In today’s issue editorialist John Dafoe of the *Winnipeg Free Press* writes: “Obviously inspired by the success of that photo opportunity, they moved on to their newest caper, fun with flags.

They turned the Canadian flag into a prop for yet another of their sight-gags”.

That is why even before the Speaker's ruling I regretted the disruption to the proceedings of the House the incident caused. I imagined before the Speaker's ruling what would happen to the business of the House were we to allow ourselves to be drawn to such actions so often. That is why, in all humility, I see the wisdom behind the ruling of the Speaker who emphasized the need for civility in the Chamber.

A wise man once said he who says he has learned everything, for him that is the beginning of educational death. There is a place for a dose of humility in the House.

The Reform Party did not hide its threats, its displeasure of the Speaker on the flag issue. Why did the Reform, in the interest of a greater goal, to allow the business of the House to proceed, decline to give its hands of peace, setting aside partisan politics?

• (1610)

Without decorum and order, the House cannot be expected to conduct its business, government proceeding with its legislation and the opposition holding the government accountable. What a pity that we are using this time not to debate the budget, education and health care but this issue.

Displaying flags on the desks of the members could invite further indignity to the flag as exhibited by the Reform Party. I intended to propose an amendment, but I will decline.

In his book *The Story of Canada's Flag* published in 1965, George F.G. Stanley, a leading Canadian historian, captured the historic and emotional significance of the Canadian flag when he wrote: “A flag speaks for the people of a nation or community. It inspires self-sacrifice, loyalty and devotion”.

This motion is just that, a motion, an empty statement devoid of sincerity, good will and respect, a parody of patriotism and a travesty of civility and decorum in Parliament.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when the incident occurred, two weeks ago, I rose and said I was a proud Canadian. I said I was a proud Canadian from New Brunswick with a flag in both his Ottawa and New Brunswick offices, but that I was not proud of what the Reform Party and the Liberal Party had done, particularly when a Reform member threw the Canadian flag on the floor. I said all of that.

I am proud because the flag is close to my heart. It does not have to be displayed on my desk. I am truly proud of that. And the flag will not be thrown on the floor because I am proud of it. But I cannot be proud of the fact that, today, Parliament is spending over

Supply

\$1 million of Canadians' money to hear about the flag, while some children in our country go hungry because their parents are on welfare, and while 730,000 people will be forced to rely on social assistance because of the changes made to the employment insurance program. This is what we should be debating here today. We should be debating the budget, because that was the issue before the House on the day the incident occurred.

I have a question for the member opposite. Reformers claimed that the member from Quebec was still able to put her question that day. However, since oral question period lasts 45 minutes and since each member only has 35 seconds to put his or her question, is it not true that, because the proceedings were interrupted that day, some parties were prevented from asking a fourth question, as is the custom? There was an interruption which may not have had an impact on the hon. member from Quebec, but which had one on the New Democratic Party. We were entitled to a fourth question, but could not put it.

[*English*]

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan: Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the member that we should be spending this time debating the issues that matter most to Canadians, the issues of the budget, health care, education, research, job creation and all those many issues.

I also concur with the member that we ought to discipline ourselves. We cannot tolerate any behaviour that will insult our colleagues. However, when the record says so, we must state the record. For that, we have a duty to perform.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a number of people today have said that we should be debating important things, and I agree.

However, I think this is best summed up in what a writer of a fax sent to me. He said that we can debate the budget all day but that the Liberals, with their majority, will do whatever they want anyway. He said that the debt will not go down any faster because of our debating this all day.

What he suggested was that if we lose the most fundamental of freedoms, the freedom of expression, then really it does not matter anyway. This is really a matter of freedom of expression.

I would like to ask the member a question. I presume he also stood and waved the flag and joined in the singing of our national anthem as a way of saying to the Bloc that we love our country. I agree, it was a demonstration that obviously has been ruled out of order and which we are not proposing. In fact, we are proposing the opposite in this motion.

Later on I was asked by the same separatist party to remove my flag because I had not had the sense to put it away. I left it sitting here. I stood on principle and said that I do not want to comply

Supply

because of a party that wants to tear the country apart asking me, a loyal Canadian, to put away the flag of this country. That is why I refused. That is what this motion is about, to say that if a member has a small flag he cannot be required by someone else to take it away, thereby taking away his freedom of speech.

• (1615)

I would like the parliamentary secretary to respond.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The parliamentary secretary has 60 seconds, please.

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my debate, no freedom is absolute. There has to be a limitation. I must admit that I too stood and waved the flag. I too sang *O Canada* as a spontaneous show of love for the country.

I ask myself what would happen to House proceedings if we would do it every 10 minutes during question period. That is why I deferred to the wisdom of the ruling of the Chair.

On the question of the flag, I discussed it in my debate. It being so reachable, it can be played with, it can be used as a prop during the passion of debate. We have the two big flags on both sides of the Speaker's chair. That more strongly signifies the commitment to patriotism we have for this country. If I may say the Bloc's commitment—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Simcoe—Grey.

Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I speak to this motion I might convey my feelings as a Canadian, as a first time elected member. The day I walked into this House, the day we started to sing the national anthem, I cannot put into words the sense of pride I felt as a young Canadian, as a third generation Canadian, as a representative of Simcoe—Grey. It hurts me to see the Reform Party twist that feeling. It has damaged the pride of this House. I have great concern over the Reform Party's approach to this thing.

Where does it stop? Today, a small flag on the desk? Tomorrow should the curtains behind us be Canadian flags? The next day should the windows in front of us be Canadian flags? We should make no mistake why the Reform Party is doing this. It is simple grandstanding. Nothing more than that. It should be absolutely ashamed of itself for what it has done. It is showing absolutely no respect for this House. It is showing no respect for the Canadian flag. Most important, it is showing no respect for the Canadian people. For that I say shame, Reform. You have turned yourself into a mockery. You are looked at both in Canada and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I would ask members to address each other through the Chair.

Mr. Paul Bonwick: My apologies, Mr. Speaker. As you can see, I am somewhat passionate on this issue because of the absolute disgust that I have for the way this thing has gone on for the last two weeks.

There have been some comments made here today with respect to the members on the Reform side suggesting that they are being respectful, that they are following due process, that they are simply trying to get these Canadian flags on their desks. They feel that it is a good use of time discussing this for two weeks, effectively shutting down government for two weeks when we should be discussing things like health, we should be discussing things like education, we should be doing things like true parliamentarians and not simply grandstanding.

I am going to quote a couple of statements that were made by my Reform colleagues just to refresh their memories.

On February 15 the member for Edmonton North sent out a press release. I will quote it. "I just wish there was some substance to go along with this symbolism. Setting aside a day for waving the flag, jumping up and down, singing stirring songs, is a nice gesture. It is also a good way to keep warm in February."

I do not find that very humorous. Canadians would rather see some substance from this government, a national unity plan, real job creation, a balanced budget and much needed tax relief. That is exactly what this government is trying to do. That is exactly what this opposition party is trying to stop. It is simple grandstanding and they should be absolutely ashamed of themselves. They have been carrying on like spoiled children. Imagine driving around the Parliament Buildings in a car with the Canadian flag painted on it, with the roof cut off, hooting and hollering and waving the flag. True parliamentary spirit? I think not.

• (1620)

I heard a statement made by the member for Fraser Valley that this is ridiculous and it should not be happening. This was on March 9, not that far in the past. He said we should be on to the business of the budget.

The hon. members can say what they want about newspaper articles, but what we are going to do is waste our time. It is absolutely shameful.

I know that my colleagues on this side and that side of the House are truly proud Canadians. I suggest that my Reform colleagues reflect on what they are doing to this nation. They suggest that they are a national party. I say shame on them. They are not a national party. They are driving a wedge.

We must understand the true reason why the Reform members are doing this. The true reason is not because there is some great sense of patriotism that has come over them in the last two weeks.

Supply

The true reason is that it is nothing more than headline grabbing. It is an opportunity to drive a wedge in this country, ever widening the problems that we are facing right now. I am absolutely disgusted at what has actually been taking place.

I have sat here and listened to my hon. friend—I should say my Reform colleague. I will not use that term when dealing with them from now on. I have listened to my Reform colleague talk about how proud his members are of the Canadian flag and how this is such a just issue that we should be debating, costing the taxpayers hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars.

As I sat there and listened, I almost believed him. Then, when he was talking about one of his Reform colleagues having greasy fingers from lunch and slipped and dropped the Canadian flag on the ground, that is not the way it happened and he should not try to twist it that way. The flag was thrown on the ground in disrespect.

I am a very proud Canadian. I look around this House and see all sorts of symbols that represent what Canada is to me. I see young people. I see a democratic process taking place. I see two very large Canadian flags. I look around at the lapels of most of the people in this room and see Canadian pins. I can demonstrate my sense of pride without having a flag on the corner of my desk. I too have had constituents call me and they are absolutely disgusted about the way the Reform Party has carried on for two weeks. It has compromised the integrity of this House of Commons which has a proud tradition.

If there is one saving grace, it is that Canadians truly understand now that there is absolutely no level that the Reform Party will not sink to in order to grab a headline or to grandstand. That is shameful. The only good thing about this is that Canadians now know what the consequences would have been had they ever made the Reform Party a government. Reform members should be completely ashamed of themselves.

We have some extremely important issues that we need to be discussing in this House. The government should be dealing with issues of tax relief and the direction of this country and not just today but for years to come. No party should ever tie up this House for several days for no other reason than grandstanding.

If the Reform Party truly had this sense of patriotism that it seems to be showing with its Canadian ties, shirts and flag cars, it would withdraw this motion. I do not think Reform members truly understand the harm that they are doing to this country.

Despite the fact that my NDP colleagues, Conservative colleagues and Bloc colleagues are all trying to come to some sort of an agreement on this issue, the Reform members simply do not want to play ball. They see an opportunity to get front page coverage. They see an opportunity to drive around in a funny little

car with a Canadian flag on it, throw some flags and insult some people. Well, that is not what a parliamentarian is to me.

Back in my riding of Simcoe—Grey, shortly after being elected I decided to put in place a program where I have actually toured around and visited schools. I have handed out Canadian flags to students and Canadian pins to those who are travelling abroad.

● (1625)

There is lots of room in this country for Canadian flags. I am sure members will agree with me that this motion is truly unconscionable and is disrespectful to this House. It is disrespectful to Canadians and you have absolutely embarrassed yourselves.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Before we get to questions and comments, it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Frontenac—Megantic, Asbestos Industry.

On questions and comments, the hon. member for West Kootenay—Okanagan and then a member for the Bloc.

Mr. Jim Gouk (West Kootenay—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member that just spoke talked about disrespect and what a terrible thing this is. Let us examine what terrible thing it is we are doing. We are asking for the right to display a small stationary flag on our desk.

This matter arose out of deliberately instigating an event which we joined in along with everyone else. Their party instigated the disruptive part of this matter. The members of his party were the ones that instigated this and the hon. member should keep that in mind.

We are not asking for the right to use these as props, but simply to have them available and have them on our desks. One member did something that was totally inappropriate and he is very sorry for it. If someone right now at tax time is doing their tax returns and in frustration at the taxes they are going to pay, throw their coffee mug at the wall, they do not do it to punish the cup. They do not do it to punish the wall. They do it out of frustration. This does not make it right. Let us get things in perspective.

I would ask this one question. After all the rhetoric by that member, would he be ashamed to display a small Canadian flag on his desk as he probably does on his desk in his office in Ottawa and perhaps even in his riding?

Mr. Paul Bonwick: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Reform member for the question. I do display a Canadian flag. It is here on my lapel. I do display Canadian flags in this House. They are on each side of the Speaker's chair.

I am part of this House and as part of this House those flags are every bit mine as they are the Speaker's. To sit here and have the Reform member trivialize our flag, trivialize a flag being thrown

Supply

on the ground to that of taking a coffee cup and throwing it against the wall truly epitomizes what the true Reform feeling is. It is absolute disregard for the flag.

This is not about the flag. Understand that very clearly. Do not believe for one minute that this is about some proud little Reformer having a Canadian flag on the corner of his desk. This is about grandstanding. It is about headlining and it is about embarrassment. They have truly done just that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Godin (Châteauguay, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have followed the debates since two this afternoon, and I was also present during the demonstration.

I would like to set things straight. The Liberals are sensing that the wind is changing direction pretty well everywhere, and also that the public is not thrilled about what went on, so now they are trying to dissociate themselves from it and point the finger at the Reform Party. The Reform Party, however, ought to have been aware that this is not the first time the Liberal Party has not lived up to its commitments. We saw it in 1980, when Trudeau promised to renew federalism. We saw it in 1995, when the present Prime Minister also broke his word.

Now, in this battle, this situation in the House, the Liberals are as responsible as the Reform members.

I have heard a lot of use of words like hypocrite and ridiculous, and a lot of reference to the Bloc Québécois, which is going to break the country apart.

My question is this: with a day like today and with all its buffoonery, is the Bloc really needed to break apart the country, or will their country break apart just as a result of their own actions?

• (1630)

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Bonwick: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member needs to realize that there are two separate issues. I would be one of the first to admit it. I too stood and waved my Canadian flag and sang the national anthem but I did it in response to a Bloc statement that was made while the MP was travelling on Canadian tax dollars. I was very upset with that. The young people who were in Nagano representing this country at the Olympics deserve more than that as do people from Ontario, Alberta and Quebec. The Bloc members should be absolutely ashamed of themselves for the statements they made.

There are two separate issues. The second issue is this motion that is coming to a head this evening. This motion is about being able to put a flag here. I say it once again. Where does it stop? It is

obvious grandstanding and nothing more than that. The good thing about it is the entire country realizes Reformers for what they are, headline grabbers and grandstanders. I am so ashamed of that party.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Before resuming debate, I should inform members that on questions and comments some members have been standing for quite some time. When we get to the next round of questions and comments we will get over to the member for Mississauga South first. That is a commitment.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The debate that is taking place is extremely important. I would like the assurance of the Chair and the House that as an independent member I will be given an opportunity to make submissions before the House with respect to this motion. If I could seek consent or have your undertaking to ensure that I would appreciate it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for York South—Weston has asked for consent of the House to ensure he will have the opportunity to speak on this motion. Our time will be fairly close with the people on the list. Does the hon. member for York South—Weston have the unanimous consent of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The member does not have unanimous consent.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The previous speaker referred to a letter sent to the member for Edmonton North. We request that it be tabled so we can have a copy of it. We do not know what he is referring to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Will the hon. member for Simcoe—Grey undertake to table the letter?

Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would certainly be more than happy to table the document. I am not surprised that one Reform member does not know what another one is doing. That seems to be typical in this House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since this morning we have been involved in discussing a matter which could very well have been debated within the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, except for the Reform Party's obstinate insistence that it be brought before this House once again.

We are discussing whether or not it is appropriate to have a small Canadian flag on members' desks. I will come back to this concept of the Canadian flag in a few minutes. For now, however, I would

just like to submit to your attention, and to the attention of all those watching us on television as well as those who are with us in the House to watch our debates live, that we have wasted many hours in discussing this unfortunate matter of flags.

We have wasted the time of this House needlessly in a debate on this matter, with all that involves in terms of costs, staff, utilities and so on to run this venerable institution, in order to discuss such a trivial question.

Trivial, because we have been forced, need I remind the House, to take many minutes away from the budget debate, just because the Reform and Liberal members decided in a fit of rehearsed spontaneity to teach our hon. colleague for Rimouski—Mitis a good lesson. I shall come back to that point as well.

• (1635)

Since then, we have consistently been wasting time in this House. We have been wasting the House's time debating this business rather than the budget, as we should have done, rather than the real misappropriation of funds the millennium fund program constitutes.

Rather than debate this matter, we could have discussed child poverty in Canada. We know that Canada's record on child poverty is one of the worst in the world.

We could have discussed the employment insurance program, I would even say the "so-called employment insurance program", since it is a euphemism for the unemployment insurance program, and we are in fact debating the unemployment insurance program.

We could have talked about it and the reform that has created problems of poverty throughout Canada, especially in those regions where the economy depends on seasonal work.

We could have debated all these issues. But no. Because of the opinionated Reformers, we are wasting our precious time as parliamentarians debating this matter. I consider this a fine example of the Reformers' double dealing.

I had a discussion behind the curtain. I will not mention the name of the Reformer I was having discussions with, but we were discussing the relevance of this debate, and he said, in all seriousness "This is a goodie for us. It increases our popularity, it is unbelievable. You, separatists, you too will benefit from this".

What could be more appalling than a political party that promotes its strictly partisan interests over what it claims to be defending—national unity?

I consider this a fine example of the double dealing—I would go so far as to say hypocrisy—of that party.

The tendency all too often is to intimate that this debate would never have occurred were it not for the member for Rimouski—Mi-

Supply

tis' unfortunate statement on the Canadian flag in Nagano. This is all a circus, a big sham, a farce.

Reformers and Liberal members could easily have used a forum other than this venerable House of Commons to express their disagreement with the remarks made by my colleague, the hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis.

Incidentally, what was so terrible in what the member for Rimouski—Mitis said in Nagano? She made the same comment many members of this House would have made in front of that many American flags displayed all over any Olympic village. They would have commented on the chauvinism of Americans, implying that they were happy to be Canadians because Canadians are different from Americans. And yet, we saw the very same shameful demonstration of narrow patriotism when too many Canadian flags were displayed.

The hon. member for Rimouski—Mitis never made any comment on the flag itself or questioned its relevance, symbolism and importance to a country like Canada. Never did she denigrate the Canadian flag in any way.

We show the Canadian flag the respect owed to the flag of every country around the world and I never heard any of my colleagues utter negative or disparaging remarks about the Canadian flag. Nor is that what my colleague from Rimouski—Mitis did. She simply noticed a fact, as any member of this House might have, had they witnessed a similar spectacle be it in Nagano or at any other Olympic Games.

I understand that several members of this House openly make this kind of comment about our neighbours to the South in particular, when they show off their patriotism for the world to see. Are we Americanized to the point that we now have to use the same tactics when we participate in international events, going as far as to display, during the closing ceremonies at the Nagano games, a huge flag taking up nearly one third of the olympic stadium in a country like Japan?

• (1640)

What poor taste! What a self-centred attitude, which carries with it the risk of bad press for Canada on the international scene. In the past, Canada had always distinguished itself on the international scene by its avoidance of such manifestations of bad taste. My colleague for Rimouski—Mitis said nothing against the Canadian flag or the national anthem. All she did was voice a very straightforward opinion that there were too many flags.

They seized upon this as a pretext for welcoming her back to Canada with a little surprise, one that was totally spontaneous, according to them. That is why all Liberal and Reform members had carefully set small Canadian flags on their desks all ready for a spontaneous demonstration for the benefit of our colleague for Rimouski—Mitis.

Supply

This totally spontaneous demonstration took place on two separate occasions on February 26. The first time was in the early afternoon, when she was speaking in response to the budget speech, and some hon. members rose spontaneously to show her their love of the Canadian flag. At that time, Mr. Speaker, you yourself felt that such a demonstration was totally inappropriate.

Despite the ruling made a few minutes later by the Chair, our spontaneous Liberal and Reform members very carefully kept their little Canadian flags ready on their desks in preparation for another spontaneous demonstration of their love for their flag the next time my colleague for Rimouski—Mitis spoke.

This occurred during Oral Question Period, when the Speaker called upon her to speak and she rose to do so. She rose to ask her question, but even before she could get a single word out, our spontaneous Reform and Liberal colleagues stood up, waving their flags, boomed her and, in another surge of equally great spontaneity, began to sing the national anthem, thus creating a lengthy interruption in the proceedings of the House and, understandably, giving their Conservative and NDP colleagues no choice but to stand up and sing along. And all of this was perfectly genuine.

What I personally deplore about this incident, is that the arrogant and exaggerated way in which the anthem was sung obliged me to remain seated during the national anthem, a thing I never do. I stand when any national anthem is sung. But it was done with such contempt that it forced Bloc Quebecois members to remain seated.

Some tried to take advantage of the situation by saying “You see, the separatists remained seated; they have no respect for the symbols of the Canadian identity”. This is not true. We respect the symbols of the Canadian identity.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Canada is a great country, as are the United States, Germany, Japan and France. It is simply not the country in which I would want to raise my children. But this is an altogether different issue.

Let us quickly go back to the Nagano incident. The member opposite said earlier “She travelled at the expense of Canadian taxpayers. She made disgraceful comments about the Canadian flag, at the expense of Canadian taxpayers”.

Mr. Réginald Bélair: She did too.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Indeed. It should be realized that, as long as Quebecers continue paying close to \$31 billion in taxes to the Canadian government, they will continue to benefit from this federation, even though they get too little out of it.

Those parliamentarians who say that the member for Rimouski—Mitis should not use taxpayers’ money to say there were too many flags in Nagano are really adding insult to injury.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: As for the unfortunate incident that occurred in this House, the hon. member for Roberval rightly pointed out—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

• (1645)

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, would you please tell the hysterical member opposite to keep it down while I am speaking?

My colleague, the member for Roberval, quite rightly pointed out that the Standing Orders had been infringed in several respects. First of all, as I pointed out to you earlier, you yourself had issued a ruling. In this respect, parliamentary tradition could not be clearer, and I will later quote article 333 of Beauchesne’s *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, fifth edition.

I will cite Standing Order 10, which is also mentioned in article 168.1 of Beauchesne. It says, and I quote:

10. The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum, and shall decide questions of order— No debate shall be permitted on any such decision, and no such decision shall be subject to an appeal to the House.

You yourself made a ruling. That ruling notwithstanding, our members, in their spontaneous enthusiasm, returned to the charge a few minutes later. Standing Order 16.2 states that, when a member is speaking, no member shall interrupt him or her, except to raise a point of order.

Obviously, the spontaneous interventions of our Liberal and Reform colleagues were not for the purpose of raising points of order. Their sole purpose was to interrupt, intimidate and poke fun at our colleague, the member for Rimouski—Mitis. In so doing, they were in contravention of the Standing Orders.

Props were also mentioned. The Speaker ruled on this yesterday. Article 333 of Beauchesne’s *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, fifth edition, to which I referred earlier, stipulates that speakers have consistently ruled that it is improper to produce exhibits of any sort in the Chamber, except written documents, of course.

Until further order, this category does not include Canada’s flag. It therefore had to be considered a visual prop that should not have been used for the purposes to which it was put.

Furthermore, as soon as the House disintegrated into confusion, the Speaker rose to call members to order. Despite that, our colleagues carried on their heckling to the point of singing the national anthem, thereby contravening another section of Beau-

Supply

chesne, paragraph 168.1, which I also referred to a little earlier. It provides, and I quote:

No member may rise when the Speaker is standing.

Members must accordingly remain silent. That is not what happened. In all respects, yesterday's ruling by the Chair was fair.

Getting back to the incident itself, we have been told, in connection with the remarks made by my colleague from Rimouski—Mitis and sovereignists in general, that we have no respect for the Canadian flag, for the national anthem and for the symbols of Canadian sovereignty.

The Bloc has never questioned in any way the presence of the flags in this House or the singing of the national anthem. In fact, it co-operated with the political parties present in the 35th Parliament to permit the singing of the national anthem here on Wednesdays.

When the Bloc arrived in the House in 1993, there was a single Canadian flag behind you, to your right, as flag etiquette provides. The flag is to be to the right of the Speaker, therefore on the observer's left. This is the way it had been for many years in the House.

Oddly enough, the day after the 1995 referendum, a second Canadian flag appeared, this time to your left, Mr. Speaker.

• (1650)

Although this decision was made obviously for political reasons, the Bloc Quebecois never questioned the relevance of Canadian parliamentarians having a second flag behind the Chair.

So it is not a question of lack of respect by the Bloc members for the symbols of Canadian identity. We are very proud of them. We are very proud that Canada chose as a symbol of its identity what were symbols of French Canadian identity. We are proud that Canada chose the maple leaf in the 1960s, with all the debate it provoked.

I am pleased to see that Reform members are now very proud of this flag. A reading of the debates of the day shows just how opposed members from the West were to the maple leaf flag, which they claimed was not representative of their region, their part of the country.

As for "O Canada", much has been said about it. It was played for the first time at Quebec City in 1882, on June 24, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, to be exact. The words were by Justice Basile Routhier, and the music by Calixa Lavallée, a native of my riding, incidently.

It must be pointed out, moreover, that when the decision was made to adopt it as the national anthem of Canada, only the first verse was selected, as the rest did not perhaps represent the notion of a national anthem to be sung from coast to coast.

When Basile Routhier wrote of the Canadian "living close to the giant river leading to the sea", I am certain he was not thinking of the people of the Yukon or Saskatchewan. He was, of course, thinking of the French Canadians, those who had been called "les Canadiens" for centuries, and whose name was taken over as the centuries passed so that it now applies to everyone here.

Much can be said about the Canadian national anthem, but the fact is that, returning to the object of today's debate, this motion by the Reform Party demonstrates that party's duplicity. There were negotiations among the leaders and they were going well. The only party that stood aloof was the Reform Party.

The purpose of the negotiations was to enable us to raise the flag question in the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in order to determine whether or not it was appropriate to have Canadian flags on our desks. But no, the grandstanding Reform Party wanted to get TV coverage by forcing Parliament to commit itself and vote on a motion permitting the presence of the flag in this House.

Had they really been serious in this desire, had they really wanted to advance this idea, they would simply have allowed this matter to be dealt with by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, but they did not.

This totally partisan attitude on the part of the Reform members must therefore be punished and condemned.

[English]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief comment and a question for the member.

Members certainly will know that this has been a media circus. The bottom line is that all of us, this place and all members, look worse. As a end result it has hurt us all.

Five years ago in 1993 when we were elected there was no call for flags on the desks by Reformers. Neither was there in 1994, 1995, 1996 or 1997. There is no question the only reason this came up is that there was a political opportunity. Despite their protestations, this is clearly a political, opportunistic move.

What do we have? We have the Reform member for Medicine Hat who wants to throw a flag. We have the member for Edmonton North who wants to throw books. We have the Reform member for Okanagan—Shuswap who wants to throw punches. All these actions show that there is clearly a bent toward aggressiveness on behalf of the Reform Party. Clearly the motion has to be defeated simply because if we were to put 300 flags around the Chamber it would be like a giant pin cushion. Surely within a week one of them would be impaled.

All Canadians will see through the childish games that are being played by the Reform Party. Canadians will also understand that most members of Parliament are here not only to defend the flag,

Supply

their country and their constituents but to do whatever we can to make this a better country.

• (1655)

My question for the member concerns the comments by the member for Rimouski—Mitis. The member should concede that her observations were with regard to the athletes' village. Did she go to the athletes and say "dear athletes, you have too many flags"? No, she did not. She waited until she got her photograph. She went to the press. She said to the Canadian people that they had too many flags.

Will the member rise now and concede that his own member is the sole reason we have this terrible situation in the House of Commons today?

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say that I am a long way from thinking that this whole business in the House began with the statement by my colleague, the member for Rimouski—Mitis. It was inevitable that there would one day be an attempt to use the symbols of Canadian unity to rally everyone against the nasty separatists.

The member for Rimouski—Mitis was certainly not going to go to the Olympic village to disturb Canadian athletes during their preparations for the various competitions in order to tell them there were too many Canadian flags and that they should curb their excessive display. She simply made an inherently innocuous comment to the effect that there were too many Canadian flags. If, through immaturity, hon. members flared up and used the Canadian flag for purposes other than those for which it was designed, well, that is their problem.

To those who say that Bloc Québécois members and sovereigntists in Quebec generally do not show respect for the symbols of Canadian sovereignty, I say that we have never treated the Canadian flag with as little respect, as little regard and as little dignity as the federalist members in this House. We never used our flag, the fleur-de-lis, to take part in this disgraceful demonstration in the House.

Yet, the House apparently expected that, on our election to office in 1993, we would march in, drums beating and fleur-de-lis held high, to show our pride. That is something we never did, because we respect the institution, we respect the rules of the House, and we respect our colleagues.

[English]

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

There have been consultations among the parties and I believe you would find consent for the following motion:

That, immediately following the vote to be taken later today on the second reading of Bill C-19, the Speaker shall put, without debate or amendment, all questions necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of Bill C-20, an act to amend the Competition Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have not been consulted with respect to this matter. A few moments ago I was asked for consent of the House to speak on the flag debate and I believe the member for Verchères denied me that consent.

I would like to co-operate with the House. I would like to give my unanimous consent to the votes later this evening, but I would also like the right to speak on this motion before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): May I suggest that the hon. member for York South—Weston again seek unanimous consent when the opportunity arises.

We have then the motion—

Mr. John Nunziata: I would be happy to give my consent to this motion and all other motions that come later this evening, if I could have the consent of the House now to be given time to speak to this motion.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Negotiations of this kind should be taken behind the curtains and not take place on the floor. We will not get into that now. I will simply ask for unanimous consent.

Does the parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): There is not unanimous consent.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, again there have been consultations and I seek the authorization of the House for two committee travel expenditures. I move:

That 10 members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to travel to Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Broughton Island, Main, Stanley Bridge, The Pas, Grand Rapids, Winnipeg, Gimli, Selkirk, Sault Ste. Marie, Southampton, Port Stanley, Leamington and Stoney Creek for the weeks of April 26 to May 1 and May 3 to May 8, 1998, in order to hold public hearings on the subject of fisheries management and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I have a similar order but would you care to deal with this one first.

• (1700)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the consent of the House to move the motion?

Supply

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): There is not consent.

Mr. Peter Adams: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I seek unanimous consent for the following motion.

That in relation to its examination of Canada's policy on nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, 12 members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, six from the Liberal Party and six from the opposition parties, be authorized to travel to Washington, D.C. and New York during the period March 29 to April 1, 1998, and that the necessary committee staff do accompany the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): There is not unanimous consent.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wish to seek the unanimous consent of the House to be given my full allotment of time to speak on the motion before the House today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for York South—Weston has asked for the unanimous consent of the House to speak for his full allotment of time on the motion before the House today. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): There is not unanimous consent.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to ask whether this would mean the extension of hours by 15 minutes or whether it would be the replacement of the last speaker on the list.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): It would mean an extension of hours.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I just wish to confirm where we are at in the debate. It is my understanding that the 10

minutes of questions and comments concerning my intervention are not up.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): That is correct. The hon. member for Verchères has five minutes and 33 seconds left on questions and comments. We will get to that just as quickly as we can, although under the standing orders this debate will conclude at 5.15 no matter what is going on in the debate.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am going to try once more. I am going to ask whether you would find unanimous consent to extend the hours by 15 minutes in order to give the member for York South—Weston the opportunity to speak to this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The House has heard the terms of the proposal. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the proposal of the hon. member for Elk Island?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Unanimous consent is denied.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I note that it was a Liberal member who denied unanimous consent. This is the party that cherishes the charter of rights and freedoms, the ability of members to speak to matters. I am frankly ashamed of the hon. member who denied unanimous consent. How hypocritical of him to talk about freedom in this House when he is denying me as an elected member of this house the opportunity to speak to this motion. He knows what the rules are in this House. Later this day—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): With respect, may I ask the hon. member for York South—Weston to pose a question or make a comment relevant to the debate today.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said that he “respects the symbols of Canada”. He repeated that on several occasions. Does the hon. member have any objection to the Canadian flag flying in the Quebec National Assembly? If he has an objection to the Canadian flag flying in the Quebec National Assembly, can he indicate the reasons why? Would he not agree that as long as Quebec is part of Canada and is a province in the country of Canada that it would be respectful for the Quebec National Assembly to fly the Canadian flag?

Also would it be respectful that the city hall in Quebec City should fly the Canadian flag? Does he agree for example that the city hall in Quebec City should fly the Canadian flag? Would he not agree that that would be the respectful thing to do?

Supply

• (1705)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I think that our colleague is trying to shift the focus of the debate slightly. While my respect for the symbols of Canadian identity suggests to me that they have their place, as in this case, in this venerable institution, I think this debate should not extend to provincial legislatures, and that of Quebec in particular.

It is up to the Quebec legislators to decide which flag shall be displayed inside the National Assembly. On a number of occasions, the Canadian flag was displayed in the National Assembly's red room; there were other occasions when it was not.

On the day the people of Quebec opt for sovereignty, we will no longer have to answer questions as to whether or not the Canadian flag should be displayed inside the National Assembly.

While I am on the subject of Canadian flags, are the provincial flags not Canadian flags? Since the hon. member for York South—Weston has asked the question, I would like him to answer it. Perhaps he could give me an answer behind the curtain later on.

Should the procedure and House affairs committee ever determine that the Canadian flag has a place in this House on members' desks, I think it will have to determine at the same time that, Canada being a federation, the flag of every province in this federation also has a place in this House.

That is what makes me say that this is a false debate, because we are going to lose any uniformity—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): We would still like to get in one more question. A short question of 60 seconds for the member for Saint John and 60 seconds for the response. This is going to be a struggle.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, what I have to say cannot be said in 60 seconds. Is there another speaker today?

I have to say that I have been in this House of Commons for the last five years and I have never been so embarrassed as I have been in the last few weeks. It is a sad situation, it truly is, that we take the decorum and the protocol out of this House of Commons as has been done in the last two weeks.

A school teacher in a history class will not allow the children to interrupt at any time. There has to be control by the teacher. And there must be control by the Speaker in the Speaker's chair. I know you are going to stand up and say "I have got the control".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The Speaker is about to demonstrate the control. The hon. member for Verchères.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, and I will do my best not to waste any words, I totally agree with what my hon. colleague just said.

However, I find it quite peculiar that this debate take place at this time in the House, when the Canadian flag has been around since 1965 and we have always been able to work, to function in this House without feeling this absolute need for a Canadian flag on every desk.

Why has this now become a national unity issue, and one of such vital importance? First, I think that, as we speak, the federalists are suffering from chronic insecurity. Second, I think the Reformers are trying to make the most of a political opportunity.

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, I spoke a couple of times here today. I realize there is five minutes left and I will try to sum up my feelings and I am sure some of the feelings of our party on this issue.

For all the Canadians who are watching Parliament today, for the men, women and children who are watching the parliamentary station, I think there are some things that have not been said which need to be said and need to be understood.

This is not about patriotism. This is not about whether or not we love the flag of this country. I am going to point out a couple of reasons why it is not about that.

• (1710)

We have here a motion which on its surface sounds positive. However if this motion goes forward it will only serve to perpetuate the problem. The problem will continue. The Bloc members will get up next week and will want to know why they cannot have the Quebec flag on their desks alongside the Canadian flag. Then maybe a member from Nova Scotia will want to know why the Nova Scotian flag cannot be on his desk.

I will tell members why we do not have those flags on our desks. It is because they are represented in this House at this time.

I want to address veterans. I have heard our veterans mentioned time and time again today by the party which proposed this motion.

My grandfather fought in World War I and in World War II. My father was a soldier in World War II. I can tell this House, and I have no shame in saying it, that my father never, ever, for one day, accepted the new Canadian flag. His flag was the flag which he served under. It was the red ensign. Does that make him less of a Canadian? I presume that it does not. I insist that it does not.

There are a couple of other issues at stake here. We have talked about cost. I have heard the name of the Minister of Canadian Heritage mentioned today and the \$25 million which she spent

distributing flags. Today it has cost us \$700,000 to stand in this Parliament to debate the flag issue.

There is also a cost to this institution, to the respect of this institution.

I have heard today that we need to stand to be counted. We will see if the flags go on the desks who will stand to be counted. If I put a flag on my desk does that make me a better Canadian than someone who does not have one on their desk? I do not think so. I will insist that it does not.

I have heard today an excuse as to why the flag was thrown on the floor of the House during a heated debate. It is something I am sure that the member who did it would like to forget. I am sure he would like it to go away. I can understand that.

The excuse was made that he had been eating greasy food and it slipped from his hands. Surely we are above making such ridiculous and petty excuses in the House of Commons of Canada.

The car that was painted to resemble the Canadian flag, did that red and white paint fall from the sky? Was the car just driving along and suddenly it got painted? No, it was a deliberate act meant to incite the Parliament of this country.

There is one thought I would like to leave with the House. It is not about the flag. It is not about patriotism. It is about levers. We all have agendas in this building. Should we ever use the Canadian flag, a flag which I honour and respect, as a lever to push our agenda in this House? I say that we should not.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the point which was made about the car because it has come up so often.

We received a phone call from someone who made a 1967 Oldsmobile his symbol of the 100th birthday of Canada. He had the car painted. When the flag issue became so prominent he phoned us and said "I would love to have some MPs take a ride in my car". He is an ordinary citizen. I thought, is it only okay to fly the flag here if it is on the limousines of the big guys in government? I thought no, let an ordinary person do it. We complied with his—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The last word goes to the hon. member for South Shore.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I note that the clock shows 5.15 p.m. I would like to ask again for unanimous consent to be given the opportunity to speak on this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Does the hon. member for York South—Weston have unanimous consent to speak to this motion?

Supply

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the indulgence of the House. I have been here for most of the day listening to the debate. I have had the opportunity on several occasions to ask questions of speakers. I wish to speak to the motion before the House on behalf of the residents of York South—Weston.

● (1715)

In my view, it is important that this debate take place. Much has been said today about whether or not this motion should be before the House. In my view, it is extremely important that we discuss this matter and that it be debated in the Parliament of Canada. I am not sure whether this is the appropriate time to do it given the events of the last several weeks. However, the motion was properly put by the Reform Party.

I will read the motion for the benefit of my constituents:

That this House should recognize the Canadian flag as an acceptable symbol that may be displayed at any time on the desks of Members of Parliament in the House of Commons provided that only one flag be displayed on a Member's desk at any one given time, and that the said flag remain stationary for the purposes of decorum and be no larger than the standard recognized flag.

Mr. Speaker, if you were to put this question to Canadians right across Canada, the decision would be overwhelming. If it were put in a referendum, of course they would endorse this. I find it regrettable that there are a number of different political agendas at play this afternoon. I believe the political agendas at play this afternoon have tainted the debate.

Of course, no one wants to vote against the flag but for whatever reason four of the political parties in this House have decided en masse to vote against the motion before the House. In my view, it should be a free vote. I regret that some of the political parties in this House have made it a political vote, a party vote, a whipped vote. In effect, several parties have given talking points with respect to the motion to their members.

It would be morally wrong for members of this House to prohibit the waving or the display of the Canadian flag in the Canadian House of Commons. Why are we as Canadians so proud to wave the Canadian flag when we travel abroad, so proud to wave the Canadian flag in an uninhibited fashion when our athletes are successful at the olympic games or when our hockey teams are successful at international competitions? Why are we so prepared to wave the Canadian flag during those moments yet we appear to be prepared as a House of Commons today to limit the display of the Canadian flag here in the House of Commons?

We are in the process of denying ourselves in the House of Commons of Canada the right that every Canadian has in this country, that is to display a Canadian flag. Could we imagine for a

Supply

moment an employer prohibiting an employee from displaying a small Canadian flag at his or her desk? There is no place in the country of Canada where the display of the Canadian flag is prohibited, where the right that is given to us under the charter of rights and freedoms is restricted or prohibited.

Others Canadian have the right under the charter of rights and freedoms to display the Canadian flag in their workplaces. If a person were prohibited from displaying the Canadian flag and a court case ensued, I submit that a competent court in this land would declare that to be unconstitutional. Canadians would have the right to display the Canadian flag, but not an unfettered right. As members have pointed out, it would be a qualified right. All rights are qualified.

As an hon. member pointed out, the right to swing your fist ends where the other guy's nose begins. The right to shout fire in a crowded theatre is limited.

• (1720)

Why are we limiting the right to display the Canadian flag? I submit it is for political reasons. I have a flag in my desk but I am prohibited from sitting it and displaying it on my desk.

In the 14 years I have served in the House of Commons I have never wanted to or had the opportunity to display a flag at my desk, but I knew I had the right to do it. That is what is important, having the right to display a flag at my desk. Some members may choose not to display a flag at their desk. That is their right.

Canadians express their patriotism in different ways. Some prefer to wave or fly flags outside their residences. Others do not. Some prefer to belt out *O Canada* at a hockey game. Others choose to remain silent. They have that right to do that.

As a member of Parliament, it seems to me I ought to have the right to display the flag. The Speaker yesterday invited members to make a decision. It is up to the House to make that determination. It seems to me that if we were truly representing our constituents as opposed to narrow partisan interests that we would vote in favour of the motion.

It seems to me that much of the opposition to the motion presented is not directed at the merits of the motion but at the authors of the motion, the Reform Party of Canada. I submit we are doing a disservice to our country and to our constituents by allowing narrow, partisan interests to interfere in a matter as important as this, a matter as symbolic as this is for Canadians right across the country.

I would like to share with the House some editorial opinion. The *Toronto Star* says "We believe there is no better place than the Parliament of Canada for Canadians to see their flag displayed

freely and proudly". They go on to state "We merely think an exception should be made for the Canadian flag. It is our most powerful national symbol. As long as MPs display it respectfully, we believe the public interest will be well served".

This, I believe, would be the sentiment shared by the overwhelming majority of Canadians. We tolerate much in the House. We have tolerated much in the House with respect to free speech and the ability of those who hold different political persuasions to speak in the House.

It seems patently strange that we say to people they do not have to swear allegiance to Canada in order to sit in the Parliament of Canada. I do not deny for a moment the right of separatists to sit in this House because they have received a mandate. It does not sit well with me but they received a mandate from their constituents to sit in the House of Commons of Canada and they have a right to sit here.

Surely, as members of this House, one has to respect the traditions of the House and respect the symbols of the House. Yes, hon. members say that there are two large flags flanking the Speaker, and rightfully so. They ought to flank the Speaker. Likewise, every member of the House should have the right to display a small Canadian flag.

What harm does it do to people? Are we offending somebody? Who is it that we would be offending if we were to display a small Canadian flag at our desk? Is that the reason why there are those in the House who would defeat this motion? Is it because they are afraid of offending a group of people in the House of Commons of Canada?

It is morally wrong to deny members of Parliament the right to display the flag. It is morally wrong to prohibit or limit the use of the flag of Canada in the House of Commons of Canada for fear that it might offend somebody.

• (1725)

I have always been chagrined by the fact that we as Canadians at times find it difficult to express our patriotism and love for this country. It is with envy that I at times watch our American friends when they are given the opportunity to exhibit their patriotism. Some people find that offensive and un-Canadian, but I find it touching for American nationals to be so proud of their flag and what it stands for and the freedom that it symbolizes.

Men and women have gone to war for the freedoms and rights that we have in this country. Mr. Speaker, the flag that flanks you as you sit in the House of Commons is symbolic of our democracy and the freedoms that we have in this country. To limit, restrict or in any way prohibit the waving or displaying of that flag I would submit is morally wrong.

Supply

I regret that when this motion is put in a few moments it will be defeated. It seems to me that this motion will be defeated not because it is not a good motion on its merits, but because of the various political agendas at play.

Surely we are sending out conflicting messages to Canadians. On one hand we are spending millions of taxpayers' dollars inviting Canadians to fly the Canadian flag as the Canadian government did a few short months ago at a cost of millions of dollars. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Canadians are now flying the flag. We were giving away free flags to Canadians a few short months ago.

What kind of a mixed message is the government sending to Canadians when it is telling them on one hand to fly the Canadian flag, do not be inhibited or shy, show their patriotism, but on the other hand we are about to deny ourselves the very right that we would give to other Canadians?

I would like to conclude with what I indicated earlier. The net effect of this motion is to deny ourselves the freedom that every other Canadian has. At times we are chastised and criticized because we give to ourselves certain rights such as the freedom of speech that most other Canadians do not have. We have the ability to say things in this Chamber that we could not say outside the Chamber because we could be sued for slander.

In this case the reverse is true. Other Canadians have that right. Other Canadians want us, as their representatives in the Parliament of Canada, to have that right. Yet, for some inexplicable reason I suppose we are about to deny ourselves the right to fly or display the flag at our desks.

This is not a question of order or disorder. Disorder is always contrary to the rules. If the Canadian flag is used to restrict someone from speaking or to prevent someone from speaking, that of course would be unacceptable as would any other display or prop that is used in this House.

However, to prohibit the display of a flag at my desk is excessive when dealing with the problem of disorder in this House. In the 14 years that I have served in this House only on a handful of occasions have we spontaneously sang *O Canada*. I recall when the government of the day was passing the free trade bill, members of the opposition and members in the gallery spontaneously broke out in a rendition of *O Canada*.

I do not believe that members are that irresponsible that if they are given the right to display a flag they would abuse that right. If they were to abuse the right it would be incumbent upon you, Mr. Speaker, to prevent disorder in this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak.

• (1730)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

BILL C-19

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, following consultations between the parties, I believe you will find consent for the following motion. I move:

That, immediately following the vote to be taken later today on the second reading of stage of Bill C-19, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code (Part I) and the Corporations and Labour Union Returns Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, the Speaker shall put, without debate or amendment, all questions necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of Bill C-20, an act to amend the Competition Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts.

(Motion agreed to)

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That ten members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to travel to Iqaluit, Pangnirtung, Broughton Island, Nain, Stanley Bridge, The Pas, Grand Rapids, Winnipeg, Gimli, Selkirk, Sault Ste. Marie, Southampton, Port Stanley, Leamington and Stoney Creek for the weeks of April 26 to May 1 and May 3 to May 8, 1998, in order to hold public hearings on the subject of fisheries management; and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That in relation to its examination of Canada's policy on nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, twelve members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, six from the Liberal Party and six from opposition parties, be authorized to travel to Washington, D.C., and New York during the period March 29 to April 1, 1998; and that the necessary committee staff do accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—CANADIAN FLAG

The House resumed consideration of the motion and the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): On questions and comments for the hon. member for York South—Weston, we will start with the hon. member for Frontenac—Megantic. We will then

Supply

go to Perth—Middlesex and then to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. If there is time we will start all over again.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to this House on October 25, 1993, I brought my little flag with me, all quite innocently, into this House and put it on my desk. An officer of the House came to see me, very discreetly of course, and said “In this place, sir, there are rules you must follow”. I told him I loved my Quebec flag. “No props are allowed here”, he said.

He also told me I could not have any grape juice or apple juice here, only water or ice water. Props in the House of Commons, even *La Presse*, were not permitted. I voluntarily complied with the rule.

As far as the flag is concerned, I clearly remember that, in Sault Ste. Marie, the riding of Ron Irwin, the former Minister of Indian Affairs, they stomped on the fleur-de-lys, the Quebec flag. What did the member for York South—Weston do to defend the Quebec flag? Nothing. What has this independent member done to punish or call to order the members of the Reform Party, who threw the Canadian flag to the ground, because the Speaker ruled against their wishes?

• (1735)

Could these whited sepulchres abuse the Canadian flag, when the Speaker or an opposition party—

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, the hon. member who threw the flag has since apologized to the House.

The point I would like to make to the hon. member is if he wants the right to display his provincial flag at his desk, I have absolutely no objection. If it is his desire to display a fleur-de-lis at his desk, that is his right. But please do not deny me my right to fly my flag at my desk.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have not been here as long as the hon. member and I have a great deal of respect for him. But we have to start building bridges in Canada. In the past two weeks we have put a whole lot of cracks in the foundation.

The hon. member referred to the Olympics. This is not the Olympics. We are not in here with a soccer ball. We are not in here for basketball. We have two Canadian flags here for which all of us have respect. We have really hurt Canada in the past two weeks.

When I looked up to the gallery that day I saw the shock on all the faces. People in the gallery could not believe this was happening.

I represent Canada's first incorporated city by royal charter which dates back to 1783. A flag cannot be placed in the council chambers other than the flag placed beside the Speaker. The flag is placed beside her worship. No other flags are allowed on the desks. Nothing else is allowed in the council chambers, the same as the House. We follow the rules laid down by the British Parliament. My colleagues ran on a platform to bring decorum to the House of Commons and they have ruined it.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member was not directing her comments at me.

The hon. member speaks of decorum. Since when is it not proper to wave the Canadian flag? When does that show a lack of decorum?

The motion before the House is not to allow members of Parliament to display large Canadian flags. The motion before the House is to give the right to members of Parliament to display a desk flag.

I have considerable respect for the hon. member and I know she has been an excellent member of Parliament, but she also takes pride in representing her constituents.

I cite a poll that was commissioned. The question was should MPs be allowed to have flags on their Commons desks, and 75% said yes to that question.

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of brief questions to the member. He made reference to it being morally wrong for members to vote to prohibit the placing of flags on desks in the Chamber. My understanding is that in the G-7 there is not another legislature that permits individual flags at individual desks of members.

• (1740)

Why is it morally wrong for this legislature to follow what is generally the accepted practice in the legislatures around the world?

There are already flags beside the Speaker's chair. Many of us wear the Canadian flag pin on our clothing. I wonder why he feels there is a need for additional flags.

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, with respect to other G-7 countries, frankly I do not care what other G-7 countries do with respect to how they treat their national symbols.

What I am saying to the hon. member is that the overwhelming majority of Canadians, including his very own constituents, want him to have the right to display the Canadian flag at his desk.

If he were truly representing the people of his riding, he would vote in favour of this motion. It seems that what is being asked here this afternoon is not the ability to disrupt the House, to wave large Canadian flags. Some members of Parliament, I included, want the

right to do it. Why should I be prohibited as a member of the Canadian Parliament from waving this flag at my desk? What is so offensive—

Mrs. Elsie Wayne: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member for York South—Weston referred to the fact that there was a poll—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): That is not a point of order. It being 5.43 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Call in the members.

● (1815)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 100)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Benoit
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Casson	Chatters
Duncan	Elley
Epp	Forseth
Gilmour	Goldring
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Hanger
Harris	Hart
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Hoepfner
Jaffer	Johnston
Kennedy (Calgary-Sud-Est)	Kerpan
Konrad	Lowther
Lunn	Manning
Mark	Mayfield
McNally	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Nunziata	Obhrai
Penson	Reynolds
Schmidt	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Strahl
Thompson (Charlotte)	Vellacott
Wilfert	Williams—50

Supply

NAYS

Members

Adams	Alarie
Alcock	Anderson
Assad	Assadourian
Asselin	Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Baker	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellehumeur	Bellemare
Bennett	Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bertrand	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Blaikie
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Borotsik
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brisson	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carroll
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Chan
Charbonneau	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégaric)
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clouthier
Coderre	Cohen
Collenette	Copps
Crête	Cullen
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
Debien	Desjarlais
Desrochers	De Villers
Dhaliwal	Dion
Discepola	Doyle
Dromisky	Drouin
Dubé (Lévis)	Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Earle
Easter	Eggleton
Finestone	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Gagnon	Galloway
Gauthier	Girard-Bujold
Godfrey	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Godin (Châteauguay)	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Guimond
Hardy	Harvard
Harvey	Herron
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jones
Jordan	Keddy (South Shore)
Keyes	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lalonde
Lastewka	Laurin
Lebel	Lee
Leung	Lill
Lincoln	MacAulay
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchand
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick
McDonough	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney	Mifflin
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Mitchell
Murray	Myers
Nault	Normand
Nystrom	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Patry	Peric
Perron	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Picard (Drummond)	Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Pillitteri	Plamondon
Power	

Supply

Pratt
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Rocheleau
Saada
Shepherd
St. Denis
St-Jacques
Szabo
Thibeault
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wayne
Wood—195

Price
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Rock
Serré
Solomon
Stewart (Brant)
Stoffer
Telegdi
Torsney
Turp
Valeri
Vautour
Wasylcia-Leis
Whelan

Manning
Mayfield
Meredith
Morrison
Obhrai
Reynolds
Scott (Skeena)
Strahl
Vellacott
Williams—51

Mark
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Nunziata
Penson
Schmidt
Solberg
Thompson (Charlotte)
Wilfert

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the amendment lost. The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say ye.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

• (1825)

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

(Division No. 101)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Casson
Duncan
Epp
Gilmour
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Konrad
Lowther

Ablonczy
Benoit
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Chatters
Elley
Forseth
Goldring
Grewal
Grose
Harris
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Konrad
Lunn

Adams
Alcock
Assad
Asselin
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellehumeur
Bennett
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Brison
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Crête
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Dromisky
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe
Dumas
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Gagnon
Gauthier
Godfrey
Godin (Châteauguay)
Graham
Guimond
Harvard
Herron
Ianno
Jackson
Jones
Keddy (South Shore)
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lalonde
Laurin
Lee
Lill
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchand
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)

NAYS

Members

Alarie
Anderson
Assadourian
Augustine
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélanger
Bellemare
Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bertrand
Blaikie
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Clouthier
Cohen
Copps
Cullen
Davies
Desjarlais
DeVillers
Dion
Doyle
Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duhamel
Earle
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Galloway
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Hardy
Harvey
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Jordan
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lastewka
Lebel
Leung
Lincoln
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken

Supply

Minna
Murray
Nault
Nystrom
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patty
Perron
Pettigrew
Picard (Drummond)
Pillitteri
Power
Price
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Rock
Serré
Solomon
Stewart (Brant)
Stoffer
Telegdi
Torsney
Turp
Valeri
Vautour
Wasylcia-Leis
Whelan

Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Plamondon
Pratt
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Rocheleau
Saada
Shepherd
St. Denis
St-Jacques
Szabo
Thibeault
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wayne
Wood—194

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

ALLOTTED DAY—EDUCATION

The House resumed consideration of the motion and the amendment.

The Speaker: Pursuant to the order made on Thursday, March 12, 1998, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment relating to the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent to have members who voted on the preceding motion recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting nay.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Ivan Grose: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that my vote be recorded with my party.

Mr. Tom Wappel: Mr. Speaker, I would like my vote to be recorded as having voted no with my party.

Mr. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Speaker, I would like my vote recorded as having voted no with the government.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi: Mr. Speaker, I would like my vote recorded as having voted no with the government.

Mrs. Judi Longfield: Mr. Speaker, I would vote no with my party.

Mr. Bryon Wilfert: Mr. Speaker, I am voting no with my party.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote no and I would like to note that the member for Kelowna had to leave. He is not included in this vote tally.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, Bloc Québécois members are obviously in favour of the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats present will vote no but I would like to add two members who have just arrived: the member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar and the member for Churchill River. These members will also be recorded as voting no on this issue and on subsequent motions.

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, all members of our party present will be voting against the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against the motion.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member for Burin St. Georges will be voting no with his party to this motion.

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negatived on the following division:)

(*Division No. 102*)

YEAS

Members

Alarie	Asselin
Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	

Supply

Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Desrochers
Duceppe
Gagnon
Girard-Bujold
Guimond
Laurin
Marchand
Picard (Drummond)
Rocheleau
Turp

Crête
Debien
Dubé (Lévis)
Dumas
Gauthier
Godin (Châteauguay)
Lalonde
Lebel
Perron
Plamondon
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Venne—29

Mark
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna
Morrison
Myers
Normand
Nystrom
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Penson
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Pratt
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Richardson
Robillard
Saada
Serré
Solberg
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Stoffer
Szabo
Thibeault
Torsney
Valeri
Vautour
Wappel
Wayne
Wilfert
Wood—223

Marleau
Massé
Mayfield
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McNally
Meredith
Milliken
Mills (Red Deer)
Mitchell
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
Obhrai
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patri
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Power
Price
Proud
Reedman
Reynolds
Ris
Rock
Scott (Skeena)
Shepherd
Solomon
Steckle
St-Jacques
Strahl
Telegdi
Thompson (Charlotte)
Ur
Vanclief
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
Whelan
Williams

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Adams
Anders
Assad
Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellemare
Benoit
Bertrand
Blaikie
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Copp
Davies
DeVillers
Dion
Doyle
Drouin
Duhamel
Earle
Eggleton
Epp
Finlay
Fontana
Fry
Galloway
Godfrey
Goldring
Gouk
Gray (Windsor West)
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Harris
Harvard
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Ianno
Jackson
Jennings
Jones
Karygiannis
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Keys
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Konrad
Laliberte
Lee
Lill
Longfield
Lunn
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley

Ablonczy
Alcock
Anderson
Assadourian
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélangier
Bennett
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brisson
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Casson
Cauchon
Chan
Chatters
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Cullen
Desjarlais
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Dromisky
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duncan
Easter
Elley
Finestone
Folco
Forseth
Gagliano
Gilmour
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale
Graham
Grewal
Grose
Hardy
Hart
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Hubbard
Iftody
Jaffer
Johnston
Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Kraft Sloan
Lastewka
Leung
Lincoln
Lowther
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Manning

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

The next question is on the main motion.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the main motion.

The Speaker: Is it agreed to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 102*]

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

• (1835)

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 1997-98

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

That Supplementary Estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1998, be concurred in.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yea.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote no to this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, members of the Bloc Québécois oppose the motion.

[English]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, NDP members present will vote no to this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, members of our party present in the House tonight will be voting against the motion.

[English]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no.

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the vote just taken, I would like to point out that my colleague, the member for Louis-Hébert, had to be away.

[English]

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

(Division No. 103)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Anderson
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevilacqua
Bonin
Boudria
Brown
Bulte
Caccia

Alcock
Assad
Augustine
Baker
Barnes
Bélaïr
Bellemare
Bertrand
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Bradshaw
Bryden
Byrne
Calder

Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Copp
DeVillers
Dion
Dromisky
Duhamel
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lastewka
Leung
Longfield
Mahoney
Maloney
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Rock
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Wappel
Wilfert

Supply

Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Cullen
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Drouin
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Galloway
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Harvard
Ianno
Jackson
Jordan
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lee
Lincoln
MacAulay
Malhi
Manley
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano
Reed
Robillard
Saada
Shepherd
Steckle
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Whelan
Wood—142

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bellehumeur
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brison
Chatters
Crête
Davies
Desjarlais
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas

Ablonczy
Asselin
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Benoit
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe

Supply

Duncan	Earle
Elley	Epp
Forseth	Gagnon
Gauthier	Gilmour
Girard-Bujold	Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Godin (Châteauguay)	Goldring
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guimond
Hanger	Hardy
Harris	Hart
Harvey	Herron
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Hoepfner
Jaffer	Johnston
Jones	Keddy (South Shore)
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)	Kerpan
Konrad	Laliberte
Lalonde	Laurin
Lebel	Lill
Lowther	Lunn
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Manning
Marchand	Mark
Matthews	Mayfield
McDonough	McNally
Meredith	Mills (Red Deer)
Morrison	Nunziata
Nystrom	Obhrai
Penson	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Power	Price
Proctor	Reynolds
Riis	Rocheleau
Scott (Skeena)	Solberg
Solomon	St-Jacques
Stoffer	Strahl
Thompson (Charlotte)	Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Turp	Vautour
Vellacott	Venne
Wasylcia-Leis	Wayne
Williams—109	

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras	Brien
Canuel	de Savoye
Fournier	Guay
Harb	Karetak-Lindell
Lefebvre	Marceau
Marchi	McTeague
Mercier	O'Brien (Labrador)
Scott (Fredericton)	Speller
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the supply bill motion for second reading in the name of the President of the Treasury Board.

The Speaker: I think I have to introduce the bill and then I can do that.

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that Bill C-33, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service for the financial year ending March 31, 1998, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the above motion.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 103*]

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Milliken in the chair)

The Chairman: The House is in committee of the whole on Bill C-33. Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

Mr. Monte Solberg: Mr. Chairman, could the minister give the House his assurance that this bill is in the usual form?

Hon. Marcel Massé: Mr. Chairman, the form of the bill is the same as those passed in previous years.

The Chairman: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

● (1840)

The Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Supply

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 7 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the schedule carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

(Title agreed to)

(Bill reported)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be concurred in.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote taken at second reading to the concurrence at report stage and the motion for third reading.

The Speaker: Is it agreed we proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 103*]

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 103*]

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

That the House concur in interim supply as follows:

That a sum not exceeding \$14,657,688,320.06 being composed of:

(1) three-twelfths (\$2,486,268,410.25) of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1999 which were laid upon the Table Thursday, February 26, 1998, and except for those items below:

(2) eleven-twelfths of the total of the amount of Finance Vote L15, National Defence Vote 10, and Treasury Board Vote 5 (Schedule 1) of the said Estimates, \$579,405,748.17;

(3) nine-twelfths of the total of the amount of Fisheries and Oceans Vote 10 (Schedule 2) of the said Estimates, \$31,195,500.00;

(4) eight-twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Heritage Vote 85, and Human Resources Development Vote 35 (Schedule 3) of the said Estimates, \$4,166,666.66;

(5) seven-twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Heritage Vote 30, Finance Vote 20, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Vote 5, and Parliament Vote 10 (Schedule 4) of the said Estimates, \$784,050,749.99;

(6) six-twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Heritage Vote 140, Industry Vote 50, Public Works and Government Services Votes 10 and 15, and Transport Vote 1 (Schedule 5) of the said Estimates, \$85,084,000.00;

(7) five-twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Heritage Votes 40 and 55, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 15 and 30, Industry Vote 110, Justice Votes 1 and 50, National Revenue Vote 10, Public Works and Government Services Vote 1, and Solicitor General Vote 5 (Schedule 6) of the said Estimates, \$2,799,449,166.66;

(8) four-twelfths of the total of the amount of Agriculture Votes 1, 10, 15 and 20, Canadian Heritage Votes 1, 20, 35, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 90, 105, 110, 120, 125, 130, and 135, Citizenship and Immigration Votes 1, 10 and 15, Environment Votes 1 and 15, Finance Votes 1, 30, 35 and 40, Fisheries and Oceans Vote 1, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Votes 1, 15, 20, 40, 45, 50 and 55, Governor General Vote 1, Health Votes 1, 5, 10, 15 and 25, Human Resources Development Votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 1, 5, 35 and 45, Industry Votes 1, 20, 30, 35, 40, 45, 55, 65, 70, 85, 95, 100, 105 and 115, Justice Votes 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45, National Defence Vote 1, National Revenue Vote 1, Natural Resources Votes 1, 20, 25, 30 and 35, Parliament Votes 1 and 5, Privy Council Votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40, Public Works and Government Services Vote 20, Solicitor General Votes 1, 10, 15, 25, 30, 35, 45 and 50, Transport Votes 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35, Treasury Board Vote 1 and Veterans Affairs Votes 1 and 10 (Schedule 7) of the said Estimates, \$7,888,068,078.33;

be granted to Her Majesty on account of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1999.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent to have members who voted on the preceding motion recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting yea.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote no. I would like to note that the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands and the member for West Kootenay—Okanagan are not present for this vote.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, Bloc Québécois members are opposed to the motion.

*Supply**[English]*

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, members of the NDP present vote no to this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, members of our party present in the House will be voting against the motion.

[English]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no.

● (1845)

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

*(Division No. 104)***YEAS**

Members

Adams
Anderson
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélanger
Bennett
Bevilacqua
Bonin
Boudria
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Coppes
DeVillers
Dion
Dromisky
Duhamel
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Godfrey
Graham
Grose
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Karygiannis
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Lastewka
Leung
Longfield
Mahoney
Maloney
Marleau
Massé
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proud

Alcock
Assad
Augustine
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellemare
Bertrand
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Bradshaw
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Cullen
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Drouin
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Galloway
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Harvard
Ianno
Jackson
Jordan
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lee
Lincoln
MacAulay
Malhi
Manley
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Pratt
Provenzano

Redman
Richardson
Rock
Serré
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Wappel
Wilfert

Reed
Robillard
Saada
Shepherd
Steckle
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Whelan
Wood—142

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bellehumeur
Bergeron
Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brison
Chatters
Crête
Davies
Desjarlais
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Earle
Epp
Gagnon
Gilmour
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goldring
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Harris
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Konrad
Lalonde
Lebel
Lowther
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marchand
Matthews
McDonough
Meredith
Nunziata
Obhrai
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Reynolds
Rocheleau
Solberg
St-Jacques
Strahl
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Vautour
Venne
Wayne

Ablonczy
Asselin
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Benoit
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe
Duncan
Elley
Forseth
Gauthier
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guimond
Hardy
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Laliberte
Laurin
Lill
Lunn
Manning
Mark
Mayfield
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Nystrom
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
Proctor
Riis
Scott (Skeena)
Solomon
Stoffer
Thompson (Charlotte)
Turp
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
Williams—107

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

Supply

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that Bill C-34, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the Public Service for the financial year ending March 31, 1998, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the motion for second reading.

The Speaker: Is it agreed to proceed this way?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 104*]

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Milliken in the Chair)

The Chairman: The House is in committee of the whole on Bill C-34.

[*Translation*]

The Chairman: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

[*English*]

Mr. Monte Solberg: Mr. Chairman, can the minister give the House his assurance that this bill is in the usual form?

Hon. Marcel Massé: Mr. Chairman, the proportions requested in the bill are intended to provide for all necessary requirements of the Public Service of Canada up to the second supply period in 1998-99. In no instance is the total amount of an item being released by the bill. The form of the supply bill is the usual one for interim supply bills.

The passing of this bill will not prejudice the rights and privileges of members to criticize any item in the estimates when it comes up for consideration in committee. The usual undertaking is hereby given that such rights and privileges will be respected and will not be curtailed or restricted in any way as a result of the passing of this measure.

[*Translation*]

The Chairman: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 3 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 4 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 5 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

Government Orders

(Schedule 6 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall schedule 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 7 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill agreed to)

The Chairman: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill reported)

• (1850)

[*English*]

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be concurred in.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent to apply the results of the vote just taken to the report stage and also to the motion for third reading of Bill C-34.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is it agreed to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: See list under Division No. 104*]

(Motion agreed to)

The Speaker: When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Marcel Massé moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 104*]

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS LOANS ACT

The House resumed from March 13 consideration of Bill C-21, an act to amend the Small Business Loans Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Friday, March 13, 1998, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at report stage of Bill C-21.

The question is on Motion No. 1.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree, I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberal members voting nay.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote yes to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will be voting against this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, the NDP members present will vote no on this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the members of our party who are present vote nay on this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting no.

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 105*)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Casson
Duncan
Epp
Gilmour
Grewal
Hanger
Hart
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner

Ablonczy
Benoit
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Chatters
Elley
Forseth
Goldring
Grey (Edmonton North)
Harris
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer

Johnston
Kerpan
Lowther
Manning
Mayfield
Meredith
Obhrai
Reynolds
Solberg
Vellacott

Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Konrad
Lunn
Mark
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Penson
Scott (Skeena)
Strahl
Williams—44

McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Plamondon
Pratt
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Rocheleau
Saada
Shepherd
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Stoffer
Telegdi
Thompson (Charlotte)
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wasylcyia-Leis
Whelan
Wood —205

Government Orders

McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
Nystrom
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Perron
Pettigrew
Picard (Drummond)
Pillitteri
Power
Price
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Rock
Serré
Solomon
Steckle
St-Jacques
Szabo
Thibeault
Torsney
Turp
Valeri
Vautour
Wappel
Wayne
Wilfert

NAYS

Members

Adams
Anderson
Assadourian
Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellehumeur
Bennett
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Brisson
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Coppes
Cullen
Davies
Desjarlais
DeVillers
Dion
Doyle
Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duhamel
Earle
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Galloway
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guimond
Harvard
Herron
Ianno
Jackson
Jones
Karygiannis
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lalonde
Laurin
Lee
Lill
Longfield
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McCormick
McGuire

Alcock
Assad
Asselin
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélanger
Bellemare
Bergeron
Bertrand
Blaikie
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Crête
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Dromiskiy
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe
Dumas
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Gagnon
Gauthier
Godfrey
Godin (Châteauguay)
Graham
Grose
Hardy
Harvey
Hubbard
Iftody
Jennings
Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Laliberte
Lastewka
Lebel
Leung
Lincoln
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchand
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews
McDonough

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 lost.

The next question is on the motion for concurrence.

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you would find consent to apply the result of the vote just taken, but in reverse.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 106)

YEAS

Members

Adams
Anderson
Assadourian

Alcock
Assad
Asselin

Government Orders

Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellehumeur
Bennett
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Brison
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Coppes
Cullen
Davies
Desjarlais
DeVillers
Dion
Doyle
Drouin
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duhamel
Earle
Eggleton
Finlay
Fontana
Gagliano
Galloway
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Guimond
Harvard
Herron
Ianno
Jackson
Jones
Karygiannis
Keys
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Kraft Sloan
Lalonde
Laurin
Lee
Lill
Longfield
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley
Marleau
Massé
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
Nystrom
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Perron
Pettigrew
Picard (Drummond)
Pillitteri
Power

Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélangier
Bellemare
Bergeron
Bertrand
Blaikie
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Cauchon
Chan
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Crête
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Dromisky
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe
Dumas
Easter
Finestone
Folco
Fry
Gagnon
Gauthier
Godfrey
Godin (Châteauguay)
Graham
Grose
Hardy
Harvey
Hubbard
Ifody
Jennings
Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Laliberte
Lastewka
Lebel
Leung
Lincoln
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Marchand
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Peterson
Phinney
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Plamondon

Pratt
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Rocheleau
Saada
Shepherd
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Stoffer
Telegdi
Thompson (Charlotte)
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Ur
Vanclief
Venne
Wasylcyia-Leis
Whelan
Wood —205

Price
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Rock
Serré
Solomon
Steckle
St-Jacques
Szabo
Thibeault
Torsney
Turp
Valeri
Vautour
Wappel
Wayne
Wilfert

NAYS**Members**

Abbott
Anders
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Casson
Duncan
Epp
Gilmour
Grewal
Hanger
Hart
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Kerpan
Lowther
Manning
Mayfield
Meredith
Obhrai
Reynolds
Solberg
Vellacott

Ablonczy
Benoit
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Chatters
Elley
Forseth
Goldring
Grey (Edmonton North)
Harris
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Konrad
Lunn
Mark
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Penson
Scott (Skeena)
Strahl
Williams—44

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

The House resumed from March 13 consideration of Bill C-6, an act to provide for an integrated system of land and water management in the Mackenzie Valley, to establish certain boards for that purpose and to make consequential amendments to other acts, be read the third time passed.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Friday, March 13, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at third reading of Bill C-6.

Government Orders

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, if the House agrees I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House, with Liberals voting yea.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote no to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois oppose the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, NDP members present vote no to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the members present from our party will vote in favour of this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting with the government on this matter.

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

(*Division No. 107*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Baker	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Borotsik	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brisson
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Carroll	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chan	Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clouthier
Coderre	Cohen
Collenette	Comuzzi
Copps	Cullen
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola

Doyle	Dromisky
Drouin	Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duhamel	Easter
Eggleton	Finestone
Finlay	Folco
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Harvard
Harvey	Herron
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Jackson
Jennings	Jones
Jordan	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore)	Keyes
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lastewka	Lee
Leung	Lincoln
Longfield	MacAulay
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
Matthews	McCormick
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan (Edmonton West)	McWhinney
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murray
Myers	Nault
Normand	Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pickard (Kent—Essex)	Pillitteri
Power	Pratt
Price	Proud
Provenzano	Redman
Reed	Richardson
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Serré
Shepherd	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
St-Jacques	Szabo
Telegdi	Thibeault
Thompson (Charlotte)	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Wappel
Wayne	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood—160

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Asselin
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)	Bellehumeur
Benoit	Bergeron
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)	Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Blaikie	Casson
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Chatters	Dalphond-Guiral
Crête	Debien
Davies	Desrochers
Desjarlais	Duceppe
Dubé (Lévis)	Duncan
Dumas	Elley
Earle	Forseth
Epp	Gauthier
Gagnon	Girard-Bujold
Gilmour	Godin (Châteauguay)
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	
Goldring	

Government Orders

Grewal	Grey (Edmonton North)
Guimond	Hanger
Hardy	Harris
Hart	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hoepfner	Jaffer
Johnston	Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Kerpan	Konrad
Laliberte	Lafonde
Laurin	Lebel
Lill	Lowther
Lunn	Manning
Marchand	Mark
Mayfield	McDonough
McNally	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Nystrom
Obhrai	Penson
Perron	Picard (Drummond)
Plamondon	Proctor
Reynolds	Riis
Rocheleau	Scott (Skeena)
Solberg	Solomon
Stoffer	Strahl
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)	Turp
Vautour	Vellacott
Venne	Wasylcia-Leis
Williams —89	

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will oppose this motion.

[English]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, NDP members vote yes on this matter.

[Translation]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the members of our party will vote against this motion.

[English]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting against Bill C-19.

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

(Division No. 108)

Bigras	Brien
Canuel	de Savoye
Fournier	Guay
Harb	Karetak-Lindell
Lefebvre	Marceau
Marchi	McTeague
Mercier	O'Brien (Labrador)
Scott (Fredericton)	Speller
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

CANADA LABOUR CODE

The House resumed from March 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-19, an act to amend the Canada Labour Code (Part I) and the Corporations and Labour Unions Returns Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The next deferred division is on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-19.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, if the House would agree I would propose that you seek unanimous consent that members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House with Liberal members voting yea.

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present vote no to this motion.

YEAS	
Members	
Adams	Alcock
Anderson	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélair	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Carroll	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Chan	Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)	Clouthier
Coderre	Cohen
Collenette	Comuzzi
Copps	Cullen
Davies	Desjarlais
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepola
Dromisky	Drouin
Duhamel	Earle
Easter	Eggleton
Finestone	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Galloway	Godfrey
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West)
Grose	Hardy
Harvard	Hubbard
Ianno	Iftody
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karygiannis
Keys	Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte
Lastewka	Lee
Leung	Lill
Lincoln	Longfield
MacAulay	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marleau

Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
McCormick
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
Mifflin
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Pratt
Proud
Redman
Richardson
Robillard
Saada
Shepherd
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Szabo
Thibeault
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Whelan
Wood—159

Massé
McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)
McWhinney
Milliken
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nystrom
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Proctor
Provenzano
Reed
Riis
Rock
Serré
Solomon
Steckle
Stoffer
Telegdi
Torsney
Valeri
Vautour
Wasylcia-Leis
Wilfert

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Benoit
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brison
Chatters
Crête
Debien
Doyle
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Dumas
Elley
Forsyth
Gauthier
Girard-Bujold
Goldring
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Lalonde
Lebel
Lunn
Manning
Mark
Mayfield
Meredith
Nunziata
Penson
Picard (Drummond)
Power
Reynolds
Scott (Skeena)
St-Jacques
Thompson (Charlotte)
Turp
Venne
Williams—90

Ablonczy
Asselin
Bellehumeur
Bergeron
Borotsik
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Casson
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Desrochers
Dubé (Lévis)
Duceppe
Duncan
Epp
Gagnon
Gilmour
Godin (Châteauguay)
Grewal
Guimond
Harris
Harvey
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Jones
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Konrad
Laurin
Lowther
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marchand
Matthews
McNally
Mills (Red Deer)
Obhrai
Perron
Plamondon
Price
Rocheleau
Solberg
Strahl
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Vellacott
Wayne

Government Orders

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras	Brien
Canuel	de Savoye
Fournier	Guay
Harb	Karetak-Lindell
Lefebvre	Marceau
Marchi	McTeague
Mercier	O'Brien (Labrador)
Scott (Fredericton)	Speller
Stewart (Northumberland)	St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

COMPETITION ACT

The House resumed from March 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-20, an act to amend the Competition Act and to make consequential and related amendments to other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: We will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division at second reading stage of Bill C-20.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bob Kilger: Mr. Speaker, you will find unanimous consent for the members voting on the previous motion to be recorded as voting on the motion currently before the House, with the Liberal members voting yes.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there agreement to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Chuck Strahl: Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members present will vote yes to this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will vote against this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. John Solomon: Mr. Speaker, NDP members present tonight vote no on this motion.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Harvey: Mr. Speaker, the members of our party will vote in favour of this motion.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. John Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in favour.

• (1900)

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

(Division No. 109)

YEAS

Members

Abbott
Adams
Anders
Assad
Augustine
Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Bakopanos
Beaumier
Bélanger
Bennett
Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Bevilacqua
Bonin
Borotsik
Bradshaw
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Brown
Bulte
Caccia
Cannis
Carroll
Catterall
Chamberlain
Charbonneau
Chrétien (Saint-Maurice)
Coderre
Collenette
Coppes
De Villiers
Dion
Doyle
Drouin
Duhamel
Easter
Elley
Finestone
Folco
Forseth
Gagliano
Gilmour
Goldring
Graham
Grewal
Grose
Harris
Harvard
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner
Ianno
Jackson
Jennings
Jones
Karygiannis
Kenney (Calgary-Sud-Est)
Keyes
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Konrad
Lastewka
Leung
Longfield
Lunn
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Malhi
Manley
Mark
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Matthews
McCormick
McKay (Scarborough East)
McNally
Meredith

Ablonczy
Alcock
Anderson
Assadourian
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Baker
Barnes
Bélair
Bellemare
Benoit
Bertrand
Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick
Boudria
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brison
Bryden
Byrne
Calder
Caplan
Casson
Cauchon
Chan
Chatters
Clouthier
Cohen
Comuzzi
Cullen
Dhaliwal
Discepola
Dromisky
Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)
Duncan
Eggleton
Epp
Finlay
Fontana
Fry
Galloway
Godfrey
Goodale
Gray (Windsor West)
Grey (Edmonton North)
Hanger
Hart
Harvey
Hill (MacLeod)
Hilstrom
Hubbard
Ifody
Jaffer
Johnston
Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)
Kerpan
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)
Knutson
Kraft Sloan
Lee
Lincoln
Lowther
MacAulay
Mahoney
Maloney
Manning
Marleau
Massé
Mayfield
McGuire
McLellan (Edmonton West)
McWhinney
Mifflin

Miliken
Mills (Red Deer)
Mitchell
Myers
Normand
Obhrai
O'Reilly
Paradis
Patry
Peric
Pettigrew
Pickard (Kent—Essex)
Power
Price
Provenzano
Reed
Richardson
Rock
Scott (Skeena)
Shepherd
St. Denis
Stewart (Brant)
Strahl
Telegdi
Thompson (Charlotte)
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Whelan
Williams

Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna
Murray
Nault
Nunziata
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
Pagtakhan
Parrish
Penson
Peterson
Phinney
Pillitteri
Pratt
Proud
Redman
Reynolds
Robillard
Sadala
Serré
Solberg
Steckle
St-Jacques
Szabo
Thibeault
Torsney
Valeri
Vellacott
Wayne
Wilfert
Wood—204

NAYS

Members

Asselin
Bellehumeur
Bernier (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok)
Blaikie
Crête
Davies
Desjarlais
Dubé (Lévis)
Dumas
Gagnon
Girard-Bujold
Godin (Châteauguay)
Hardy
Lalonde
Lebel
Marchand
Nystrom
Picard (Drummond)
Proctor
Rocheleau
Stoffer
Turp
Venne

Axworthy (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar)
Bergeon
Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)
Dalphond-Guiral
Debien
Desrochers
Duceppe
Earle
Gauthier
Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)
Guimond
Laliberte
Laurin
Lill
McDonough
Perron
Plamondon
Riis
Solomon
Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis)
Vautour
Wasylcia-Leis—45

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bigras
Canuel
Fournier
Harb
Lefebvre
Marchi
Mercier
Scott (Fredericton)
Stewart (Northumberland)

Brien
de Savoye
Guay
Karetak-Lindell
Marceau
McTeague
O'Brien (Labrador)
Speller
St-Julien

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

POINTS OF ORDER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to table the following documents: *Hansard* of March 9, 1998 and a news release from the office of Deborah Grey, member of Parliament.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): As a point of clarification, these are the documents that were referred to in debate earlier today.

Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table the documents?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is not necessary for the member to table copies of *Hansard* since they are a public record. Is that not true?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Whether or not it is necessary to table them, the hon. member has unanimous consent and they are tabled. The House will now proceed with the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.), seconded by the hon. member for Kamloops, moved that Bill C-245, an act to amend the Criminal Code, penalties for sexual offences involving children, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I stand today to perform one of my most important duties as the member of Parliament for Oxford. This duty is to introduce legislation when I see that current legislation is not responding to a need within our society.

Over the last year and a half I have identified such a need. I have found that those who sexually prey upon our children are merely being slapped on the wrist by our judicial system. This seems horrendous to me and to my constituents. Finding that the sentences for these crimes against our children are inadequate, I introduce Bill C-245 which we have before us today.

I would like to thank the NDP member for Kamloops for seconding the bill. The bill will increase the maximum sentence for sexual assault on a child to life imprisonment without possibility of parole for 25 years. As well the sentence for forcible confinement of a child is increased to 14 years from the current 10. The

Private Members' Business

definition of child pornography would extend to any information or reproduction transmitted by electronic means.

In the next few minutes I want to share with hon. members why my constituents and I believe the bill should be passed by Parliament.

The current maximum sentence for sexual assault is 10 years. According to information obtained through the adult criminal court survey, the average sentence given in 1993 and 1994 for level two sexual assault and level three sexual assault was 1,287 days, less than four years. Yet level two and level three sexual assault are sexual assault with a weapon and aggravated sexual assault. These statistics were compiled using data from nine provincial jurisdictions.

There is no real distinction between sexual assault on a child and other charges of sexual assault.

• (1905)

I would like to share with this House the average sentence for sexual touching of a child under 14. For this charge, in which sexual intent must be proven, the average sentence imposed by the courts was 288 days, not even a full year. Furthermore, 77% of the accused in solved violent incidents involving children under 12 had a relationship with the victim. In 31% of these cases, the accused was a member of the victim's immediate family.

As members can see, these are not statistics that make one sleep easily at night.

I spent 36 years of my life in education as a teacher, union representative, principal and superintendent. I worked with our children. I am witness to the effects of abuse on children. I know the innocence of a child is destroyed by sexual abuse. I have heard the confusion and self-guilt in the mind of a sensitive teenage boy after his experience with a pedophile.

We as legislators must ask ourselves how an average sentence of 377 days for level one sexual assault can atone for the loss of a child's innocence and self-respect.

Bill C-245 speaks directly to sexual assault upon a child. The bill seeks to amend section 271 of the Criminal Code by increasing the maximum sentence to imprisonment for life with no parole eligibility for 25 years if found guilty of sexual assault on a child under eight or under fourteen who was under the offender's trust or authority or dependent on the offender.

I want to make it very clear that this sentence is the same sentence as that for first degree murder. It is my belief and that of many of my constituents that in the very worst cases of child sexual assault the sentence should be equal to that of murder. Why? Because these assaults have murdered the child's soul, the child's self-esteem and the child's mind.

We cannot see a Martin Kruze throw himself off a bridge without knowing why. His abuser led him there and pushed him off with his continued abuse as surely as if he were present.

Private Members' Business

One constituent wrote to me of the sentence received by a sex offender. The writer said "He gets a lousy two years probation and my child gets life". Two years of probation to walk the streets, be employed and have a life while the child is devastated and emotionally murdered and his parents hope that just maybe he might find his life worth living again.

Unfortunately many victims of abuse find that life is not worth living again. And far too many of their abusers walk the streets after a sentence that does not reflect the severity of their crime.

My office has received many letters like the one I have just quoted from. Some are short and simply indicate support for this bill. Others are long and tell of the writer's experience with sexual abuse. These letters are not easy to read because they talk of the hurt and betrayal felt by the victims.

Of the three main cases I have received correspondence on, all have told of abuse delivered by someone known to the victim and to his or her family. The abusers were not strangers but a stepfather, a neighbour and a "big brother", that is in this case a volunteer from the Big Brothers organization.

I would like to quote from one letter I received from a woman in my riding whose son was abused by his Big Brother volunteer. The mother says "I cannot believe when this man came to my house, when I thought it would be good for my son to have a big brother to look up to, a father figure in his life, that he could end up doing the things he did to him. I interviewed this man for at least two hours and was happy to think that my son was lucky to have a man like this in his life".

Many years later this mother was devastated by the news that this man, this father figure, had sexually abused her child beginning at the age of eight. The woman's son had a very troubled adolescence. He spent time in jail and his mother now knows why. This woman has asked me to do everything I can to ensure that those who prey upon our children, as this man did on her son, are punished severely for their crimes. I want us to promise her today in the highest legislative body in this land that we will not let her down.

• (1910)

This issue was brought to my attention through a case in my riding. A father was convicted on three counts of unlawful confinement for locking his three sons in wire cages in a dark basement, three counts of administering a noxious substance for making them eat their own feces and drink their own urine, and three counts of assault for beating them. In addition this man was convicted of numerous sex charges, including three counts of intercourse with a girl under 14. The victims of the sexual assaults were his three stepdaughters. The perpetrator of these crimes was sentenced to

18.5 years in prison but he will be eligible for parole in just over six.

I would like to offer my thanks to the Woodstock *Daily Sentinel Review* for bringing this case to my attention. The reporter who covered this trial for the *Sentinel Review* called it the most disturbing case she has ever had to report on.

I can honestly say that this bill represents a fine example of how the press and the community has worked with me, their local member, to try to correct the weakness in our judicial system.

Because of the frightful instances of forcible confinement in the aforementioned case, I have included in Bill C-245 an amendment to section 279 of the Criminal Code. This amendment would increase the maximum sentence for forcible confinement to 14 years from 10 in the case of a parent or ward who confines their child and thereby harms the child's physical or mental health. Anyone who questions why I felt an increase in this sentence is necessary need only recall what that father did to his sons.

The final section of Bill C-245 would ensure that the definition of publication in the case of child pornography would cover display, transmission or storage by electronic mail and the Internet.

Some think government has no business regulating the information superhighway but I suspect that protecting our children in society from those who would trade in child pornography is far more important than any supposed right on the Internet.

Information technology is an incredible development. I continue to encourage my constituents to take advantage of the Internet to benefit themselves and their communities, but we cannot allow criminal use of the information superhighway to endanger our children.

It is my belief that my introduction of this bill into the House of Commons was my duty as the member of Parliament for Oxford. As I stated at the outset, it is a duty I take very seriously. As a member of Parliament and as a citizen of this great country of ours, I also have another duty. That duty is to speak for and to protect those members of our society who cannot protect themselves.

Each of us here in this House has a moral obligation to protect our children from those who prey upon them. I do not doubt for a moment that all members feel this obligation to our nation's children.

Bill C-245 is not a votable bill. During the subcommittee meeting I was asked by the member for Brandon—Souris why I felt my bill would increase sentences when in fact it did not impose a minimum sentence for these crimes. It was an excellent question. I dare say some members who are to follow me in this debate will raise this as an objection. For this reason, I offer my colleagues an answer.

Parliament speaks with a loud voice in the courtrooms across this land. If we were to pass this bill, we would be saying to our judicial system that the protection of our children is paramount.

Our voice with the governor general's signature attached would say that in the worst cases of abuse, those who prey upon our children must be removed from society for life. Our voice would represent constituents across the country who speak through us and who want their children protected.

Some changes may need to be made to this bill. I feel our colleagues on the justice committee can make these changes in the best interests of our children.

The support I received for this bill from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the Canadian Police Association has let me know that our front line law enforcement officers agree with increased sentences to protect our children.

● (1915)

I feel that this bill should be voted on by members of this House. For those members who are not familiar with the cases I have dealt with in my riding they need only look at cases in their own ridings. Any members who have dealt with children have met those who have suffered from the horrors of abuse.

We can all remember the recent problems within Maple Leaf Gardens or with Graham James and Sheldon Kennedy. We can recall the abuse perpetrated on our aboriginal children in orphanages and residential schools, religious or otherwise. Thank God for people like Sheldon Kennedy who spoke out about the years of abuse he suffered. He has battled back to be a model for victims but we must also remember that for every Sheldon Kennedy there is a Martin Kruze who saw as his only escape, especially after a ridiculously short sentence given to his abuser, a jump off Toronto's Bloor Street viaduct.

I would ask members to look into their hearts and ask themselves if we would be performing our duty if this bill was not put to a vote. It is time to send a message to sex offenders that the time for judicial slaps on the wrist has past. Canadians will not allow us to pass the buck to other jurisdictions or wait until some obscure commission passes recommendations.

If this House decides in approximately 35 minutes that this bill should not be votable I ask those members present to look into the eyes of a victim or the mother of a victim and tell them why they have to wait for justice. If amendments should be made let us send this bill to committee so it can hear witnesses and make changes to improve the bill.

Early in my speech I read from a letter sent to me from an abused child's mother. I would like to refer to that letter again. This mother says:

Private Members' Business

Child abuse of any kind has to stop, and the introduction of your bill will certainly be a start. I am tired of those people being set free and sent to counselling and everything is okay. It certainly is not okay, that doesn't do a thing for the victims who have to live with this the rest of their lives. In requesting higher sentences for these sex offenders, how can I ask this be considered out of line, when, in fact, the children are sentenced to life without parole, in trying to live with what was inflicted upon them.

It is time to perform our duty and to protect our children. I ask this House for its support of Bill C-245.

Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be able to speak today to the bill sponsored by the member for Oxford dealing with penalties for sexual offences involving children.

I commend the member for Bill C-245. I support the amendment he is making to the Criminal Code. I wish that more members from his side of the House would also recognize that creating stiffer penalties would go a long way to curbing crime in Canada, especially of this heinous type.

Reform members came to Ottawa in 1993 with a commitment to the Canadian people to reform Parliament. Included in those reforms was the promise to be supportive whenever possible of the people's agenda over party manoeuvres. We promised not to oppose government legislation or private members' bills simply for the sake of opposition. If a bill enhances public safety we will support it. We therefore support the member for Oxford.

Bill C-245 if passed by this House will change the definition of publication in the case of child pornography to cover transmission by electronic mail or posting the material on the Internet or any other electronic net. This amendment to the Criminal Code is simply in keeping with the advances of the technology and the prevalence of child pornography on the Internet today. I applaud the hon. member's effort in this regard. However, this amendment should and could have been enacted by the government. However, there is a pattern. The government is weak. When action is needed there is a pattern of Liberal government weakness.

While this government is introducing legislation which deals with technology and privacy it has neglected to make the necessary Criminal Code amendments to protect our children from the perverts who surf the net. It is not surprising given the low priority this government places on the protection of society and in particular our children. We have discovered sex slavery in Canada and sadly we have juvenile prostitution in every major city. The government has done little while at the same time shuts down private members' bills that deal with these things. The government is weak.

Despite claiming in June, 1997 that revamping the Young Offenders Act was a priority, the justice minister has failed to bring one single amendment. The minister's failure in this regard

Private Members' Business

has put our children who are most often the victims of crime at needless risk.

We also support the increase in the maximum penalty for forcible confinement from 10 to 14 years in the case of a parent or a ward who confines a child and thereby harms the child's physical or mental health.

• (1920)

The Reform Party fully supports the penalty of imprisonment for life with no parole eligibility for 25 years for anyone found guilty of sexually assaulting a child under 8 or a child under 14 who is under the offender's trust or authority or who is dependent on the offender.

I do, however, question the age of eight years. In 1994 the Liberal government refused to amend the Young Offenders Act to include 10 and 11 year olds, claiming they were much too young to be held accountable for their criminal behaviour. I therefore have to wonder why the hon. member for Oxford has not at least included 10 and 11 year olds. I would recommend including children up to the age of at least 13, in recognition of the vulnerability of children within this tender age group.

I also find it questionable that the member for Oxford has proposed what can only be considered a heavy penalty, one which would not be supported by a majority of his own colleagues.

In 1995 a majority of Liberal members voted against eliminating the faint hope clause for murderers. I question why this member and his Liberal colleagues would ever agree to put a child molester behind bars for a minimum of 25 years when they have repeatedly failed to keep murderers locked away for at least the 25 years.

Let us not forget that it was the Liberal Party which gave us the faint hope clause, claiming some hope must be given to first degree murderers.

Clifford Olson raped and killed 11 innocent children and after serving only 15 years of his life sentence this sadistic killer took full advantage of the Liberal made faint hope clause and applied for early release.

I might add that the former justice minister is directly responsible for Olson's full press court. The former justice minister failed to bring in Bill C-45 in time to prevent Olson from once again terrorizing these victims' families. There was plenty of warning. There was no excuse.

I and many of my colleagues were there the day Olson, to the horror of the nation, was once again terrorizing his victims' families. I and many of my colleagues were there, at court, the very day Olson, to the horror of the nation, was once again granted the absurd privilege of making a mockery of our justice system.

Last week when representatives of the Canadian Police Association were in Ottawa they left a message for the Liberal government. Topping their list was the elimination of the faint hope clause. Perhaps finally the justice minister will see to it to repeal section 745 of the Criminal Code and keep murderers behind bars where they belong.

There are a number of other areas which require attention. To date the justice minister has done little or nothing with regard to enhancing public safety.

Conditional sentences for violent offenders must be eliminated. How many more rapists must walk free before the justice minister amends specifically her predecessor's flawed section of the Criminal Code?

I point to one significant omission in Bill C-245. It does not amend the Young Offenders Act. Therefore, anyone under the age of 18 who sexually assaults a child will not be sentenced to life imprisonment. The maximum sentence they will receive under the YOA is three years, plus a possible two years of additional control.

Adolescent males commit approximately 20% of sexual assaults against teens and adults, and between 30% to 50% of such assaults against children. According to the forum on correctional research, January 1995, sexual assaults committed by youth are as serious as those committed by adults.

Without changes to the YOA the maximum penalty a youth can receive for raping or molesting a child will remain three years, with an additional optional two years. If the young offender is released into the community no one will know because of the privacy provisions of the YOA which do not allow for the publishing of young offenders' names, including young rapists. I mentioned that today in my question to the justice minister and received a very unsatisfactory answer.

Jason Gamache was a sex offender, but this fact was not made known to his neighbours. An unsuspecting mother allowed Mr. Gamache to babysit her young daughter. Her daughter was raped and killed by Gamache. The mistakes in the provincial administration of this case were all started by the secrecy provisions of the Young Offenders Act.

On September 26 my colleague from Crowfoot introduced a private member's bill to amend the YOA. Unlike the Liberal justice minister, the member for Crowfoot worked all summer on Bill C-210 and at the first opportunity introduced his bill.

We in the Reform Party have introduced many private members' bills on the Young Offenders Act. Where are the minister's? Amending the YOA is a priority for the Reform Party, as it is for many Canadians.

In June, 1997 the justice minister said that the YOA was a priority, and yet we have seen nothing.

Private Members' Business

Last year the justice committee travelled throughout the country, spending close to half a million dollars reviewing the act.

• (1925)

In April, 1997 the committee tabled a report containing a number of recommendations for amending the YOA and the Reform Party produced a minority report which was rejected by the committee because it was too comprehensive. We ensured that our report was given to all the provincial attorneys general, many of whom have been requesting similar changes to the Young Offenders Act.

Since the former justice minister mandated the committee to review the Young Offenders Act upon the 10th anniversary of its enactment, the Reform Party has questioned the commitment of the justice minister and the Liberal dominated justice committee to effectively change this act which is now 14 years old.

This government failed during its first three and a half year mandate to improve public safety and it is failing again. This justice minister has done very little. It has been a very weak performance.

The member for Oxford can count on Reform's support but, interestingly, he cannot count on the support of his bleeding heart pals who refuse to keep murderers locked up for at least 25 years. By the process of this bill today, we can see that the justice agenda of average Canadians is reflected in the Reform Party position and not the bureaucratic, top down agenda of the Liberals.

The conclusion is obvious. If Canadians want a good justice system they need to elect a Reform Party government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, private member's bill C-245 covers three extremely important points.

The first has to do with the transmission of child pornography through the Internet or electronic mail. The second has to do with sexual assault on a child, and the third has to do with the confinement of a child by a parent or ward. These are three extremely important points. As the member who introduced the bill said earlier, these are three things that cannot be tolerated in a free and democratic society such as ours.

I am going to examine the bill clause by clause, because there are only three of them. The first clause deals with the definition of publication per se. The issue raised by the first clause of the bill is a very special one. What is the role of the lawmaker with respect to cyberspace? Although clause 1 of the bill looks specifically at the

publication of child pornography, it raises the more general issue of governments' responsibility with respect to management of the Internet.

Each of us has his or her own perception of cyberspace. Some people positively worship the Internet. Internet surfers consider this virtual space to be one of the great achievements of the 20th century. Others fear the Internet. This electronic network seems to interfere with the respect of certain principles our community holds dear.

If the Internet is seen as a source of all knowledge, it is also the favourite realm of individuals with a warped view of the world, who spend their time using it to distribute illegal material. Child pornography is a perfect example. The following question therefore arises: What can we as lawmakers do to stop this unhealthy use of the Internet?

Whether to limit the distribution of hate propaganda, discriminatory material or child pornography, various initiatives have already been suggested.

In the United States, the suppression of child pornography focuses on protecting the children that are its subjects. In Canada, while not dealing specifically with publication on the Internet, section 163(1) of the Criminal Code defines child pornography in broader terms. Child pornography is condemned not just because of its direct impact on the young people who are its subjects, but also in order to eliminate its impact on pedophiles and various criminals of this sort who use these media.

Nonetheless, as the Université de Montréal authors of a work entitled *Droit du cyberspace* pointed out, the regulation of violence on information highways must be consistent with the imperatives of freedom of expression. Concerns about the circulation of violent material arise primarily from the fear that exposure to this kind of material trivializes the real phenomenon of violence or encourages people to resort to violence. To this general concern is naturally added the concern to protect children.

• (1930)

Striking a balance between freedom of expression and a justified control of material harmful to society is not easy. For example, in 1996, there was an American bill, the Decency Act, which was intended to criminalize the distribution of pornographic material, but it was declared unconstitutional.

Considering how difficult it is to establish the identity of a user, the effect of that legislation was to restrict the freedom of expression of the distributors on the one hand, but also the right of adult users to receive information on the other hand.

Private Members' Business

This clause does not solve all of the problems relating to use of the Internet, and others, but it does engage a debate, which makes us reflect as lawmakers. The Bloc Québécois is in favour of this more thorough analysis.

Clause 2 addresses sexual assault against children. There is most certainly nothing more abhorrent than sex crimes involving children. Children are the incarnation of everything that is most fragile in our society. When someone decides to sully the innocence of our young people, society as a whole suffers. Children are arguably our most precious resource.

How, then, can such acts not be vigorously denounced? How can we understand someone stooping so low as to commit such monstrous acts? A lawmaker cannot remain indifferent to offences of this nature.

The bill of the hon. member for Oxford is intended to offer some elements of a response to these questions. Clause 2 of the bill provides for special sentencing of those found guilty of sexually assaulting children.

This bill would add to section 271 of the Criminal Code, which pertains to sexual offences, and include in it a special regime for cases when children are the victims. The sentence proposed is harsh: imprisonment for life. This sentence is sought when the crime is particularly heinous, but that is what he are dealing with in cases of sexual assault of children.

Nevertheless, while the bill is severe, the member proposes certain application criteria that would require the courts to evaluate certain characteristics of the victim. Clause 2 thus provides that imprisonment for life would apply when the child involved is under the age of eight years or under the age of fourteen years and in the trust of or dependent on the offender.

Thus the terms provided in section 271(1.1)*b*) would provide a defence for the accused if it could be proven that the victim aged between 8 and 14 years was not in a in the trust of, under the authority of, or in a relationship of dependency on, the offender.

It should be pointed out that the Criminal Code currently provides a defence that the offender charged under section 271 could use. Section 150(1) of the Criminal Code provides that a person accused under section 271 may use consent as a defence, if the victim is between 12 and 14 and the aggressor is all of the following: aged 12 or older but less than 16; less than two years older than the victim and not someone with whom the victim is in a relationship of dependency.

The problem is that the bill makes no mention of section 150(1). While this silence does not affect the merits of the bill, that is, the application of a more severe sentence in the case of the sexual assault of children, the fact that it does not mention the terms of section 150(1) would have the effect of proposing two different defences for a single offence.

Once again, we agree with the content, with the objective of clause 2, but I believe it lacks some refinement to really achieve the intended objective.

Clause 3 deals with the confinement of a child or ward. It proposes an addition to section 279 of the Criminal Code to introduce more severe sentences when the offence of confinement or imprisonment involves children.

Like sexual assault, this offence is most intolerable, since it takes advantage of children's weakness. Once again, this situation must be denounced and the bill seems to meet that need.

As I have said, this private member's bill addresses three extremely important points, since situations or acts involving children are involved.

• (1935)

However, as always, we in the Bloc Québécois do not necessarily always have a visceral reaction in such cases. I believe that an analysis that is as cold and objective as possible of these clauses is necessary if we are to attain the objective of amending the Criminal Code in such a way as to truly have the desired impact.

The goal is to protect our young people, the most important thing in our country. I do not believe anyone in this House could be against this bill. I do, however, think that it merits more study in order to improve its clauses and its approaches to the objective sought.

[English]

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this important debate on Bill C-245. Let me first say how much I appreciate my colleague from Oxford for bringing the bill forward. It is very timely and very appropriate. It provides members of Parliament with the opportunity to speak out on behalf of those who are unable to speak for themselves. I refer particularly to the children of Canada.

Over the last number of years I spent a great deal of time with friends and associates who have worked in the Kamloops Sexual Assault Centre. I have received countless letters from constituents concerned about the issue of child abuse, sexual predation upon children and other related issues.

In my time before I became a member of Parliament I was a teacher for 15 years. I knew of countless cases of young people whose lives had been destroyed irreparably because of some unscrupulous person involving them in unwanted sexual acts at a very young age.

Many of my friends are guidance counsellors and family counsellors of one kind or another. Many are in the field of rehabilitation in terms of sexual assault victims as well as those accused and found guilty of sexual assault. The stories they tell can be summarized in a word and that is devastation. Young people who

are forced to experience this type of activity at a young age essentially have their lives destroyed in most cases forever.

I cannot help but mention many of my friends, particularly those in the Shuswap First Nation in Kamloops, who over the years brought forward the stories of their experiences in so-called Indian residential schools which, I am loathe to say, were sponsored by various religious orders. They tell of the physical abuse they experienced and in particular sexual abuse that not only destroyed their lives in many ways but destroyed the lives of their children as well.

We have seen generation after generation of people whose lives and the lives of their children and perhaps their grandchildren have been affected in a negative way because of being involved in some sexual predation.

My colleague from Oxford brought forth Bill C-245, an act to amend the Criminal Code regarding penalties for sexual offences involving children. I applaud him for this initiative. I assume all members of Parliament, when they have a chance to vote on it, will vote in support of the bill. I know I speak for myself and for colleagues to whom I have talked about the bill when I say we endorse it enthusiastically.

Let me simply say that the reason there is so much enthusiasm in support of this initiative is that many members of Parliament find that sentences for crimes against children are inadequate in today's court system.

Countless times people have said to me that we have a legal system but we do not have a justice system, that it lacks a sense of justice. Therefore, the bill which will increase the maximum sentence for sexual assault on a child to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for 25 years is supportable. As well, the sentence for forcible confinement of a child in the bill is increased to 14 years from the present 10 years. The definition of child pornography would now extend to any information or reproduction transmitted by electronic means.

● (1940)

In the next few moments I want to say why I support the bill so strongly. The current maximum sentence for sexual assault, as I said, is 10 years. According to information obtained through the adult criminal court survey, the average sentence being given for sexual assault is less than 1,287 days, less than four years.

These are sexual assaults with a weapon. These are sexual assaults resulting in aggravated assault. These are horrendous acts perpetrated against a person, in this case against children. It is difficult to imagine a more unscrupulous, heinous type of individual than one who would participate in these types of acts.

Because there is no real distinction between sexual assault on the child and other charges of sexual assault, the member shared with

Private Members' Business

the House the average sentence for sexual touching of a child under 14. This is a charge in which sexual intent must be proven, I might add. The average sentence imposed by the courts is 288 days, less than one full year.

People involved in a direct sexual way with the intent of having a sexual act with a child, if found guilty, may receive a penalty to serve time in prison of less than a year. What kind of signal does that send to people who have destroyed some young child's life? Having a few days in jail certainly does not deter one, but it sends a signal that we as a society essentially or relatively condone this type of behaviour. As a society we ought not to have any tolerance at all regarding violence toward people. We should not have any tolerance at all involving adults perpetrating sexual activity with a young child.

Seventy-seven per cent of the accused in solved violent incidents involving children under 12 years of age have had some kind of relationship with the victim. In 31 per cent of these cases the accused was a member of the victim's immediate family. This is the kind of information that does not make one feel terribly comfortable.

Bill C-245 speaks directly to sexual assault on a child. It amends section 271 of the Criminal Code by increasing the maximum sentence to imprisonment for life with no parole eligibility for 25 years, if guilty of sexual assault on a child under 8 years of age or a child under 14 years of age who is under the offender's trust or authority or dependent on the offender.

Just as an aside at this point, I might add that it is a rare case when a serious pedophile or someone who has been involved with aggressive sexual behaviour with a child is rehabilitated. I know there are programs that people attend. I know there are courses that people are required to attend when serving prison terms for these types of offences, but I think the evidence would suggest that it is a rarity for someone to modify their behaviour sufficiently to ensure that type of behaviour will not be repeated.

That is why I think locking these people up, these sexual predators of children, makes sense in terms of protecting society from this type of behaviour.

I want to make it clear at this point that the sentence being advocated in Bill C-245 is the same sentence as that for first degree murder. It was the mover's suggestion that many of his constituents felt that in the very worst cases of child sexual assault the sentence should be equal to that of murder, the reason being that these assaults have in many ways murdered the children's soul, the child's self-esteem and the child's mind.

We just need to recall the abuse of young hockey players that occurred in the Toronto stadium, Maple Leaf Gardens. One of the victims ended up committing suicide as a way of dealing with his trauma.

Private Members' Business

I could go on and on, but I will not take up valuable time because I know other of my colleagues want to speak to this important issue. I refer particularly to the section of the bill that suggests we should increase the maximum penalty for forcible confinement from 10 to 14 years in the case of a parent or ward who confines a child and thereby harms the child's physical or mental health. My colleague pointed out the case where the individual locked his three sons in wire cages in a dark basement.

• (1945)

We can all recall these kinds of examples we see revealed in the courts from time to time where parents or those responsible for young children for whatever peculiar horrible set of reasons decide to confine children in unimaginable circumstances. It is fair to say that anybody who is perpetuating that type of activity should be punished. More important, society needs to be protected from these kinds of people.

I thank the member for Oxford for introducing this bill. We have to take steps to keep child pornography off the electronic mail and the Internet. He can count on my support.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the bill put forward by the hon. member for Oxford. I support his initiative in this regard. It is indeed a pleasure for me to speak on this piece of legislation.

As a number of speakers have already mentioned, if adopted, this bill would essentially accomplish three things. In the worst cases of sexual assault involving children, the sentence imposed on the individual would be given the same emphasis, the same range of sentence for the judge who would be handing down that sentence. That range would include a sentence of up to 25 years.

The maximum sentence of imprisonment for life with no parole eligibility for 25 years would accurately reflect society's disdain for the serious types of sexual assaults that sadly do occur in our society. It would allow society to feel protected in the sense that it would have the assurance that a judge would have that at his or her discretion. If adopted, the act would create an increase in the maximum penalty for forcible confinement from 10 to 14 years in the case of a parent or ward who confines a child and thereby harms the child's physical or mental health.

It is important to consider the deterrent effect that this increased range of sentence has when looking at cases such as this. In this scenario, a judge's discretion should be expanded to allow for that. Sadly, in my career as a crown prosecutor, I encountered a number of cases where if the maximum sentence had been expanded, if the judge had that range, perhaps higher sentences would have been handed down.

The third thing this piece of legislation would accomplish is with respect to the Internet and the use of the Internet as a means of transmitting child pornography. The bill would make this a prohibited act under section 163.1. It would give assurances that the definition of publication in the case of child pornography would cover transmissions via electronic mail or posting of material on the Internet.

With a rapidly changing ability to transmit and the use of technology, it is with some sad reflection that we are faced with the fact that there are those in society who will use this mode of communication for such a sick and twisted purpose. This bill puts in place something in the Criminal Code that allows us to respond and to respond with force.

This private member's bill has received the support of both the Canadian Police Association and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. They have said: "Sentencing reform for sexual offences against children is, in our view, an important improvement and required".

I am sure the remarks we have heard in this Chamber and the remarks from many groups, including victims advocate groups, parental groups and society in general would certainly echo those remarks.

I am very proud to have worked in the justice system with many dedicated men and women whom I have spoken to in relation to this legislation. I voice their support of it through my comments today.

• (1950)

I have spoken to individuals in Antigonish—Guysborough who have worked in the justice system, Corporal MacGenny, Sergeant MacNeil and many others who are on the front lines. They are the thin blue line of the police who deal with these laws. I am encouraged to see that initiatives are taken to bring forward very positive changes to our Criminal Code.

I am also pleased to say that the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada equally embraces and encourages these initiatives taken by the hon. member for Oxford. It is indeed time to give children the protection that they need. It is time that we as legislators send a very serious message to the courts stating that sexual offenders deserve tougher sentences.

As victims of child sexual offences have asked many times, those victims who are struggling with painful stories, why does an individual who has perpetrated such a heinous act receive a light sentence and probation at times.

Again, to use the analogy that has been made in this House, the child is forced into a life sentence of coping and of dealing with this trauma. That life of painful memories and the damage that results cannot be erased and will never be erased because of the

ensuing court case and the ensuing cases. However, I would suggest that it does, in some small measure, restore some dignity and faith in the system and its ability to react.

At a time when victims' rights should be at the centre of the changes to our criminal justice system, this bill provides victims in question the comfort of having offenders at least sentenced or at least the possibility that they can be sentenced to a real significant period of incarceration.

Statistics have consistently shown that sexual offenders are not getting the length of incarceration that they deserve. There have been a number of references to those sentences. The ones that jumped out at me are based on the average prison sentences in 1993 and 1994 when statistics showed that sexual assault levels two and three, the more serious and high end assaults, get an average of 3.5 years incarceration. Again one has to ask if society is being sufficiently protected.

The average sentence for sexual touching of a child under the age of 14 is less than one year of incarceration. One questions the deterrent effect but one also has to question the rehabilitative aspect of a sentence of such short duration.

On top of that, let us remind ourselves that children under the age of 12 account for 16% of the population yet account for 28% of the victimization. I think that we as a society and as legislators must remind ourselves consistently that we have an obligation and responsibility to protect those most in need and those most vulnerable. That can be done through positive changes to our Criminal Code.

The numbers that I have referred to and others that have been referred to in this debate are incredible and do raise very important and serious questions as to what we as members of this House do in response and do we in fact do enough to protect those who are most vulnerable. Sadly, women and children in this country are the ones who are most often at the receiving end of victimization.

The very least we can do is take up the challenge, take these initiatives and see them through to fruition in a timely fashion. These changes to the Criminal Code are presented and put forward in a very common sense approach. It does not take a great deal of intellectual gymnastics to figure out what the intent of these changes are. Quite simply, I support them wholeheartedly. I really feel that sexual offences are not and should not be considered minor offences. Indeed, these short sentences somehow diminish the seriousness of the effect they have on victims.

By supporting this bill, we are going to tell the courts and those in the criminal justice system that we do consider these to be important changes.

Private Members' Business

• (1955)

By supporting the bill, we are also sending a very serious and strong message to perpetrators that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated and giving the judges an important tool to use in combating these types of human indiscretions.

Government improvements and general improvements to the Criminal Code transcend partisan politics as has been exhibited by the comments in the Chamber.

Let me end by referring to what a young mother has said to me about a young boy who was a victim of a sexual assault. She said "In requesting higher sentences for sexual offenders, I ask how can this be considered out of line when in fact the children are sentenced to life without parole in trying to live with what was inflicted on them".

Heinous crimes are happening right now as we make these remarks. It is up to us to take up that challenge. I support this bill fully and I am sure those in the House will do likewise.

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleagues on the other side of the House who have spoken on Bill C-245 for their support and their thoughtful input on my private member's bill which will bring about improvements hopefully in our whole justice system.

I want to thank the member for New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby for reminding us that the Young Offenders Act needs some improvement and changes. I know our government will be bringing those forward.

I want to thank the member for Berthier—Montcalm who talked about the balancing of the freedom of expression in the protection of our children with respect to the Internet.

I want to thank the member for Kamloops who seconded my private member's bill and who pointed out from his experience as a teacher that this was something he had some first-hand knowledge of.

Finally, I want to thank the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough who in his other life was a crown prosecutor and whom I feel made the point very clearly that major offences which incur short sentences are not really what we are looking for in Canada which is of course exactly what my bill is trying to address.

In my address earlier I mentioned how I considered the introduction of the bill to be my duty as a member of Parliament for Oxford. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines duty as a moral or legal obligation which one is bound or ought to do. I can assure hon. members I do feel a moral obligation to protect our children from abuse. This bill will help provide this protection.

As a member of Parliament I feel a legal obligation to introduce legislation that responds to a need within our society. My col-

Adjournment Debate

leagues have made that quite clear in the last hour we have listened to them.

The cases I have laid out for hon. members show why I feel there is a need within our society for this legislation. If any members doubt me, they need only read of Martin Kruze or any other victim of abuse and ask themselves if the sentences being meted out are adequate. If so, please tell me why 44% of those convicted of sexual touching of a child under 14 received only probation.

I believe that we have a duty here today to provide protection for our children from those who prey on them. As part of this duty I ask the House for unanimous consent to introduce a motion. I move:

That Bill C-245 be made votable, that it be eligible for two additional hours of debate and, at the conclusion of this debate, be put to a vote at second reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member for Oxford has asked for unanimous consent that this bill be made votable. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agree.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): There is no unanimous consent.

The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped from the order paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

• (2000)

[Translation]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

ASBESTOS INDUSTRY

Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on December 1, I put a very important question to the Minister of International Trade.

The asbestos region is facing hard times with chrysotile asbestos. Great Britain has announced its intention to ban this asbestos following in the steps of France and seven other European countries. Since March 1997, I have been calling on the Prime Minister to take vigorous action with France.

He, through his Minister of International Trade, preferred to take route of diplomatic negotiations. They led nowhere. What the asbestos industry needs is vigorous action before the WTO against France to avoid the domino effect that could result from other countries like Great Britain banning chrysotile asbestos.

In addition, Canada could claim financial compensation from France as the result of its unilateral action. Instead of dozing off with diplomacy in the style of Jacques Roy, the government must listen to the people in the industry and defend us just as vigorously as it defended durum wheat and the Sherritt company of Toronto against the United States and the Helms-Burton legislation.

In the asbestos region, Thetford Mines to be specific, the consensus is to demand the federal government take legal action before the WTO. Led by the Government of Quebec, asbestos producers, LAB Chrysotile, with Jean Dupéré, and Johns Manville with Bernard Coulombe; the three unions, FTQ, CNTU and CSD; the members for Québec, Vallières and Lefebvre, under the banner of the Liberal Party of Québec; the RCM, with its chairman Fernand Huot; the Thetford Chamber of Commerce; all are unanimously calling on the federal government to file a complaint with the WTO, but the federal government is refusing to take action.

Unfortunately for the asbestos region, the response I would have liked to hear from the Minister for International Trade, and it is undoubtedly a response dated December 2, will be read this evening by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada.

Of course, the response, which undoubtedly dates back to December 2, should have been modified to fit today's circumstances, because almost four months have passed since that time, but for lack of anything better, I will naturally content myself with this late response. I hope it will provide some hope for producers and especially for workers in our asbestos mines.

[English]

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the objective of the Government of Canada in this dispute, in partnership with Quebec, the industry, unions as well as local communities, is to maintain market access for asbestos products.

• (2005)

Turning to the specific question the member raises of challenging the French ban at the World Trade Organization, officials held exploratory discussions on WTO options with interested partners, Quebec included, the asbestos industry as well as the trade unions in September 1997.

A number of times the Prime Minister of our country has intervened with Prime Minister Blair, specifically on September 30, 1997 and on October 22, 1997 raising this issue. Our mission in Paris also raised the issue with senior French authorities. It was also raised during Premier Bouchard's visit to France and between our Prime Minister and President Chirac during the francophone summit. There have been ongoing discussions on this issue.

Adjournment Debate

The deputy minister of international trade on November 26 also held consultations with interested stakeholders, Quebec, the asbestos industry as well as the trade unions.

The meeting proved to be beneficial. All the key players were involved in all discussions that the government has conducted. The federal government meets regularly with the Quebec government, the industry and the unions to develop a common approach in addressing the French ban on asbestos use as well as its potential effects in other markets.

The federal government will continue to consult closely with all the major stakeholders with respect to our options in the WTO.

Let me assure Canadians that Canada attaches a high priority to protecting access to foreign markets for chrysotile asbestos and is prepared to explore all available options to accomplish this objective.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8.06 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Adams 4939

Committees of the House

Procedure and House Affairs

Motion for concurrence 4939
 Mr. Adams 4939
 (Motion agreed to) 4939

Petitions

Emergency Personnel

Mr. Szabo 4939

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Adams 4939

Questions Passed as Orders for Return

Mr. Adams 4941

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Supply

Allotted Day—Canadian Flag

Mr. Manning 4942
 Motion 4942
 Mr. Strahl 4942
 Mr. Manning 4942
 Mr. Keyes 4943
 Mr. Keyes 4943
 Mr. Hanger 4943
 Mr. Keyes 4943
 Mr. Adams 4943
 Mr. Keyes 4943
 Mr. Manning 4944
 Mr. Strahl 4944
 Amendment 4946
 Mr. Morrison 4946
 Mr. Keyes 4946
 Miss Grey 4946
 Mr. Keyes 4946
 Mr. Strahl 4946
 Mr. Boudria 4947
 Mr. Boudria 4948
 Miss Grey 4948
 Mr. Boudria 4948
 Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River) 4948
 Mr. Boudria 4948
 Mr. Gauthier 4949
 Mr. Loubier 4949
 Mr. Gauthier 4949
 Mr. Loubier 4950
 Mr. Gauthier 4950
 Mr. Abbott 4950
 Mr. Gauthier 4950
 Mr. Loubier 4951
 Mr. Gauthier 4951
 Mr. Loubier 4951
 Mr. Gauthier 4951
 Ms. McDonough 4951

Mr. Desrochers 4952
 Ms. McDonough 4952
 Mr. MacKay 4953
 Mr. Nystrom 4954
 Mr. Abbott 4954
 Mr. Nystrom 4955
 Mr. MacKay 4955
 Miss Grey 4955
 Miss Grey 4956
 Mr. MacKay 4957
 Miss Grey 4957
 Mr. Szabo 4957
 Miss Grey 4957
 Mr. Lebel 4957
 Miss Grey 4958
 Mr. Epp 4958
 Mr. Telegdi 4959
 Mr. Epp 4959
 Mr. McWhinney 4960
 Mr. Gouk 4961
 Mr. McWhinney 4961
 Mr. Abbott 4961
 Mr. McWhinney 4962
 Mr. Shepherd 4962
 Mr. McWhinney 4962
 Mr. Serré 4962
 Mr. Guimond 4963
 Mr. Serré 4963
 Mr. Guimond 4963
 Mr. Lebel 4963
 Mr. Guimond 4963
 Mr. Serré 4963
 Mr. Epp 4963
 Mr. Serré 4964
 Mr. Shepherd 4964
 Mr. Serré 4964
 Mr. Hill (Macleod) 4964
 Mr. Keyes 4964
 Mr. Hill (Macleod) 4965
 Mr. Telegdi 4965
 Mr. Hill (Macleod) 4965
 Ms. Meredith 4965
 Mr. Shepherd 4966
 Ms. Meredith 4966
 Mr. Nunziata 4967
 Ms. Meredith 4967
 Mr. Assadourian 4967
 Ms. Meredith 4967
 Mrs. Barnes 4967
 Mr. Hill (Macleod) 4968
 Mrs. Barnes 4968
 Mr. Nunziata 4969
 Mrs. Barnes 4969
 Mr. Chatters 4969
 Mrs. Barnes 4969
 Mr. Saada 4969
 Mr. Johnston 4970
 Mr. Saada 4970
 Mr. Johnston 4970

Mr. Saada	4970
Mr. Johnston	4970
Mr. Lebel	4970
Mr. Stoffer	4970
Mr. Lebel	4971
Mr. Saada	4971
Mr. Grewal	4971
Mr. Solomon	4972
Mr. Grewal	4972
Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	4973
Mr. Grewal	4973
Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	4973
Mr. Grewal	4973
Mr. Goldring	4973
Mr. Keddy	4974
Mr. Goldring	4975
Mr. Cannis	4975
Mr. Goldring	4975

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Glamis Flyers Broomball Team	
Mr. Steckle	4975
Aboriginal Affairs	
Mr. Lunn	4976
Malnutrition	
Mr. Maloney	4976
Semaine nationale de la francophonie	
Ms. Carroll	4976
The Irish	
Mr. McCormick	4976
Arctic Winter Games	
Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	4977
Magog—Orford Optimist Club	
Mr. Paradis	4977
Mart Kenney	
Mr. Kenney	4977
Employment Insurance	
Mrs. Gagnon	4977
Semaine nationale de la francophonie	
Mr. Saada	4977
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Mr. Blaikie	4978
Vancouver Kingsway	
Ms. Leung	4978
The Irish	
Mr. Power	4978
Francophonie	
Ms. Girard—Bujold	4978
Justice	
Mr. Gouk	4979
Child Sex Abuse	
Ms. Bakopanos	4979

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

The Senate	
Mr. Manning	4979
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4979
Mr. Manning	4979
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4979
Mr. Manning	4979
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4980
Miss Grey	4980
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4980
Miss Grey	4980
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4980
Semaine nationale de la francophonie	
Mr. Duceppe	4980
Ms. Copps	4980
Mr. Duceppe	4980
Ms. Copps	4980
Mr. Gauthier	4980
Ms. Copps	4981
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4981
Ms. Copps	4981
Mr. Gauthier	4981
Mr. Gauthier	4981
Ms. Copps	4981
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Ms. McDonough	4981
Mr. Reed	4981
Ms. McDonough	4981
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4981
Pensions	
Mrs. Wayne	4981
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4981
Mrs. Wayne	4982
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4982
The Senate	
Mr. Gilmour	4982
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4982
Mr. Gilmour	4982
Mr. Gilmour	4982
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4982
Assistance to Businesses Affected by Ice Storm	
Mr. Loubier	4982
Mr. Cauchon	4982
Mr. Loubier	4983
Mr. Cauchon	4983
The Senate	
Mr. Hart	4983
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4983
Mr. Hart	4983
Millennium Scholarships	
Mr. Crête	4983
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4983
Mr. Crête	4983
Mr. Chrétien (Saint—Maurice)	4983
Auditor General	
Mr. Williams	4984
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4984
Mr. Williams	4984
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4984
Option Canada	
Mrs. Tremblay	4984

Ms. Copps	4984
National Defence	
Mr. Perić	4984
Mr. Manley	4984
Auditor General	
Mr. Solberg	4984
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4985
Mr. Solberg	4985
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4985
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Ms. Davies	4985
Mr. Reed	4985
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Ms. Vautour	4985
Mr. Reed	4985
Seniors Benefit	
Mr. Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	4985
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4986
Mr. Dubé (Madawaska—Restigouche)	4986
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4986
Health	
Mr. Wilfert	4986
Mr. Rock	4986
Firearms	
Mr. Breitreuz (Yorkton—Melville)	4986
Ms. McLellan	4986
Jeux de la Francophonie	
Mr. Turp	4986
Ms. Copps	4986
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Mr. Solomon	4987
Mr. Reed	4987
Pensions	
Mr. Brison	4987
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4987
Organized Crime	
Mr. Myers	4987
Mr. Scott (Fredericton)	4987
Young Offenders	
Mr. Forseth	4987
Ms. McLellan	4987
Multilateral Agreement on Investment	
Mrs. Debien	4988
Mr. Reed	4988
Ms. Hardy	4988
Mr. Reed	4988
Canada Pension Plan Investment Board	
Mr. Brison	4988
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	4988
Presence in Gallery	
The Speaker	4988
Point of Order	
Oral Question Period	
Ms. Copps	4988
Mr. Gauthier	4988

Ways and Means	
Notices of Motions	
Mr. Peterson	4989

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Supply	
Allotted Day—Canadian Flag	
Motion	4989
Mr. Mahoney	4989
Miss Grey	4989
Mr. Mahoney	4989
Miss Grey	4989
Mr. Mahoney	4989
Mr. Mahoney	4990
Mr. Gouk	4990
Mr. Mahoney	4990
Mr. Hoepfner	4990
Mr. Mahoney	4991
Mrs. Redman	4991
Mr. Crête	4992
Mrs. Redman	4992
Mr. Earle	4992
Mrs. Redman	4992
Mr. Keddy	4992
Mrs. Redman	4992
Mr. Lunn	4993
Points of Order	
Tabling of Document	
Ms. Bakopanos	4994
Supply	
Allotted Day—Canadian Flag	
Mr. Bryden	4994
Mr. Lunn	4994
Mr. Proctor	4995
Mr. Lunn	4995
Mr. Jaffer	4995
Mr. Crête	4996
Mr. Jaffer	4997
Ms. Catterall	4997
Mr. Jaffer	4997
Mr. Pagtakhan	4997
Mr. Godin (Acadie—Bathurst)	4999
Mr. Pagtakhan	4999
Mr. Epp	4999
Mr. Pagtakhan	5000
Mr. Bonwick	5000
Mr. Gouk	5001
Mr. Bonwick	5001
Mr. Godin (Châteauguay)	5002
Mr. Bonwick	5002
Mr. Nunziata	5002
Mr. Epp	5002
Mr. Bonwick	5002
Mr. Bergeron	5002
Mr. Bergeron	5004
Mr. Béclair	5004
Mr. Bergeron	5004
Mr. Szabo	5005
Mr. Bergeron	5006
Mr. Adams	5006
Mr. Nunziata	5006
Mr. Adams	5006
Mr. Adams	5007

Mr. Nunziata	5007	Mr. Harvey	5017
Mr. Epp	5007	Mr. Nunziata	5017
Mr. Bergeron	5007	Mr. Bergeron	5017
Mr. Epp	5007	Motion agreed to	5018
Mr. Nunziata	5007	Mr. Kilger	5018
Mr. Nunziata	5007	Bill C-33. First reading	5018
Mr. Bergeron	5008	Mr. Massé	5018
Mrs. Wayne	5008	(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)	5018
Mr. Bergeron	5008	Bill C-33. Second reading	5018
Mr. Keddy	5008	Mr. Massé	5018
Mr. Epp	5009	Mr. Kilger	5018
Mr. Nunziata	5009	(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Milliken in the chair)	5018
Points of Order		(Clause 2 agreed to)	5018
Bill C-19		Mr. Solberg	5018
Mr. Adams	5011	Mr. Massé	5018
Motion	5011	(Clause 3 agreed to)	5018
(Motion agreed to)	5011	(Clause 4 agreed to)	5018
Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans		(Clause 5 agreed to)	5018
Mr. Adams	5011	(Clause 6 agreed to)	5018
Motion	5011	(Clause 7 agreed to)	5019
(Motion agreed to)	5011	(Schedule agreed to)	5019
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade		(Clause 1 agreed to)	5019
Mr. Adams	5011	(Preamble agreed to)	5019
Motion	5011	(Title agreed to)	5019
(Motion agreed to)	5011	(Bill reported)	5019
Supply		Motion for concurrence	5019
Allotted Day—Canadian Flag		Mr. Massé	5019
Mr. Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)	5012	Mr. Kilger	5019
Mr. Nunziata	5012	(Motion agreed to)	5019
Mrs. Wayne	5012	Third reading	5019
Mr. Nunziata	5012	Mr. Massé	5019
Mr. DeVillers	5012	(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)	5019
Mr. Nunziata	5012		
Mrs. Wayne	5013	Interim Supply	
Amendment negatived	5014	Mr. Massé	5019
Motion negatived	5015	Motion for concurrence	5019
Allotted Day—Education		Mr. Kilger	5019
Motion	5015	Mr. Strahl	5019
Mr. Kilger	5015	Mr. Bergeron	5019
Mr. Grose	5015	Mr. Solomon	5020
Mr. Wappel	5015	Mr. Harvey	5020
Mr. Karygiannis	5015	Mr. Nunziata	5020
Mr. Comuzzi	5015	Motion agreed to	5021
Mrs. Longfield	5015	Bill C-34. First reading	5021
Mr. Wilfert	5015	Mr. Massé	5021
Mr. Strahl	5015	Mr. Kilger	5021
Mr. Bergeron	5015	(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)	5021
Mr. Solomon	5015	Bill C-34. Second reading	5021
Mr. Harvey	5015	Mr. Massé	5021
Mr. Nunziata	5015	Mr. Kilger	5021
Mr. MacKay	5015	(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Milliken in the Chair.)	5021
Amendment negatived	5016	(Clausé 2 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Kilger	5016	Mr. Solberg	5021
(Motion negatived)	5016	Mr. Massé	5021
Supplementary Estimates (B), 1997-98		(Clausé 3 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Massé	5017	(Clausé 4 agreed to)	5021
Motion for concurrence	5017	(Clausé 5 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Kilger	5017	(Schedule 1 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Strahl	5017	(Schedule 2 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Bergeron	5017	(Schedule 3 agreed to)	5021
Mr. Solomon	5017	(Schedule 4 agreed to)	5021
		(Schedule 5 agreed to)	5021

(Schedule 6 agreed to)	5022
(Schedule 7 agreed to)	5022
(Clause 1 agreed to)	5022
(Preamble agreed to)	5022
(Title agreed to)	5022
(Bill agreed to)	5022
(Bill reported)	5022
Motion for concurrence	5022
Mr. Massé	5022
Mr. Kilger	5022
(Motion agreed to)	5022
Third reading	5022
Mr. Massé	5022
(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)	5022

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Small Business Loans Act

Bill C-21. Report stage	5022
Mr. Kilger	5022
Mr. Strahl	5022
Mr. Bergeron	5022
Mr. Solomon	5022
Mr. Harvey	5022
Mr. Nunziata	5022
Motion No. 1 negatived	5023
Motion for concurrence	5023
Mr. Manley	5023
Mr. Kilger	5023
(Motion agreed to)	5024

Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act

Bill C-6. Third Reading	5024
Mr. Kilger	5025
Mr. Strahl	5025
Mr. Bergeron	5025
Mr. Solomon	5025
Mr. Harvey	5025
Mr. Nunziata	5025
(Bill read the third time and passed)	5026

Canada Labour Code

Bill C-19. Second reading	5026
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Mr. Kilger	5026
Mr. Strahl	5026
Mr. Bergeron	5026
Mr. Solomon	5026
Mr. Harvey	5026
Mr. Nunziata	5026
(Bill read the second time and bill referred to a committee)	5027

Competition Act

Bill C-20. Second reading	5027
Mr. Kilger	5027
Mr. Strahl	5027
Mr. Bergeron	5027
Mr. Solomon	5027
Mr. Harvey	5027
Mr. Nunziata	5028
Motion agreed to	5028
(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)	5028

Points of Order

Tabling of Documents

Mr. Bonwick	5029
Mr. Epp	5029

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Criminal Code

Bill C-245. Second reading	5029
Mr. Finlay	5029
Mr. Forseth	5031
Mr. Bellehumeur	5033
Mr. Riis	5034
Mr. MacKay	5036
Mr. Finlay	5037
Motion	5038

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Asbestos Industry

Mr. Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic)	5038
Ms. Bakopanos	5038

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