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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 12, 2001
(Part A)

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 12, 2001

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*English*]

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service 2000 public report.

* * *

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Derek Lee (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 three petitions.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34 I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the chair of the Canada-Japan Interparliamentary Group's 11th annual meeting with its counterparts in the Diet of Japan held April 30 to May 4.

The 11th biannual consultations were very successful. The message that Canada is at the forefront of the new economy and is an important partner for Japan in many areas was well received. Consultations reinforced the bond which exists between the Canadian parliamentarians and Diet members. Japan is a friend and a valuable partner to Canada.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, entitled "A Common Vision".

The report was produced by our two subcommittees on the status of persons with disabilities and on children and youth at risk. It looks at ways of focusing government resources across departments to meet the needs of children and the disabled. It makes recommendations on how the government should work horizontally rather than using the usual vertical silo approach.

The report is a good example of how an all party committee can work. Our subcommittees are smaller and work more informally than the parent committee. It makes for more productive interaction between MPs, between MPS and witnesses and, as this is a joint report, between committees. I congratulate all concerned.

I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities entitled "Access to Higher Education and Training". The report is a follow up to a series of public hearings we held on access and mobility with respect to training, ranging from apprenticeships to the professions.

As this is our last report, I would like to thank all members of the committee, all witnesses who appeared before the committee this year and, in particular, I would like to thank the staff.

INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology entitled "Transparency in the Information Age: The Lobbyists Registration Act in the 21st Century".

Routine Proceedings

The committee conducted a statutory review of the Lobbyists Registration Act and many important ideas emerged from the hearing. The Internet is changing the way policy is made. Lobbying aims at all levels of the public service, and government policy making has changed a great deal in the past decade.

I want to thank the witnesses and the members of the committee. I also want to thank our clerk, Normand Radford, our researcher, Geoffrey Kieley, and all the staff for their diligence.

• (1010)

I would also like to table, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology entitled, "A Canadian Innovation Agenda for the Twenty-First Century". This report is the committee's third report on innovation. Canada's recent record in acquiring knowledge and producing highly skilled workers has been impressive.

The committee recommended two general avenues of pursuit: ensuring that more research and development is done in Canada and broadening current innovation targets to include indicators of commercialization and diffusion of Canadian and world research and development.

In closing, I want to thank all the witnesses, all the members of the committee and our staff, our clerk, Normand Radford, our researchers, Dan Shaw and Daniel Brassard, and all the staff for their diligence in ensuring that we could table this report today.

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages.

I am pleased to table this report, which is an interim one. We feel it necessary to point out that the bilingual services provided by Air Canada are of vital importance for Canadian travellers.

The committee has expressed the wish that, if possible, the government respond to this report by the end of September, so that the committee may continue to study this matter when we resume sitting in September.

[English]

The committee wishes to underline the outstanding collaboration and support of the people who appeared before the committee and also of the people who served the committee.

[Translation]

We wish to thank researchers Robert Asselin and Françoise Coulombe, from the Parliamentary Research Branch of the Library

of Parliament, as well as co-clerks Tonu Onu and Jean-François Pagé and their support staff for their invaluable contributions, which have enabled us to table this fifth report this morning.

[English]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present in both official languages the second report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food entitled, "The Future Role of the Government in the Grain and Oilseeds Sector".

I would like to point out that while agriculture as a whole is doing well in this country, there are serious concerns in the grains and oilseeds sector. With that, our committee will be progressing in the fall to meet with producers to look at our various areas of Canada and hopefully bring back to the House a report on that sector.

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 81(7) and (8) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs on the plans and priorities of the estimates 2001-02 of the Department of National Defence. Pursuant to Standing Order 109 the committee requests a government response.

The report takes advantage of recent changes in the standing orders which gave committees the opportunity to comment on the future plans and priorities of the departments under their responsibility.

I have been asked by members of the defence and veterans affairs committee to note that time constraints prevented us from commenting on the plans and priorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs this year. However it is our intention next year to provide full comment on the plans and priorities of both departments.

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wish to seek unanimous consent for the following motion regarding the disposition of business over the next couple of days. I move:

That at 5.15 p.m. on June 13, or when the business of supply in the present supply period is concluded, whichever is later, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted and all questions necessary to dispose of Government Order, Government Bills (Commons), Number C-11 and Government Order, Government Bills (Commons), Number C-24, and Government Order, Government Business Number 7 shall be put without further debate or amendment, provided that no division requested thereon may be deferred and provided that, if the House is not sitting at that time, a special sitting shall be convened for the purposes of this Order.

That, during the consideration of the business of supply this day, if a division is requested on any motion to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates, immediately after the taking of the said division, the questions on all subsequent motions to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates shall be deemed to have been carried on division.

● (1015)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Is there unanimous consent to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

MICRO CREDIT ACT

Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-385, an act to facilitate micro credit for self-sufficiency.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this private member's bill.

The purpose of the bill is to encourage a greater availability of banking and other financial services to those with low or unstable incomes, and to increase the availability of credit in small amounts, up to \$5,000, for small entrepreneurial enterprises.

The bill calls for an annual report to be published by the Minister of Finance showing the progress in improving micro credit by the financial institutions that agree to participate. The institutions that attain a certain level of activity could describe themselves as being recognized by the government as micro credit specialists.

This enactment would affect directly low income people for the purpose of increasing their ability to generate income. These small loans, made at a reasonable and commercially viable rate of interest, would enable them to start or expand their own businesses and to work their way out of poverty with dignity.

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-386, an act to amend the Criminal Code (breaking and entering).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today on behalf of the constituents of Calgary East to reintroduce my private member's bill that would amend the criminal code to impose a two year minimum sentence for repeat offenders of break and enter crime.

Break and enter crime is not only a property offence, it is a crime against a person. It is a psychologically damaging crime, often leaving victims feeling personally violated and traumatized. It has

Routine Proceedings

the potential to be a violent crime because every break and enter is a home invasion.

The bill is a victims' amendment to the criminal code because the result will be fewer victims brought about by imposing a real deterrent on professional break and enter criminals.

The bill would also cut out what is the real source of revenue for career criminals and organized crime by breaking the cycle of using the proceeds of break and enter crime to finance other criminal activities.

I welcome the support of my colleagues for this non-partisan initiative.

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-387, an act to amend the Criminal Code (bail for those charged with violent offences).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the following private member's bill, an act to amend the criminal code, bail for those charged with violent offences.

The bill would prevent a person accused of sexual assault with a weapon, aggravated sexual assault or criminal harassment, who has been identified by the victim or by a witness to the offence, from being released on bail. The result would be that the accused would not be released unless the charge was withdrawn or the accused was acquitted at the trial. This would be in the interest of victims.

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

* * *

● (1020)

[Translation]

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTERS ACT

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-388, an act to regulate conflict of interest situations for ministers and to provide for a code of ethics for ministers.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to regulate the conduct of ministers with respect to conflicts of interest during the exercise of their duties and post-employment.

It provides for the introduction of a code of ethics, primarily based on the conflict of interest and post-employment code for public office holders and the code of conduct for members of parliament of the United Kingdom, which would henceforth be part of Canadian legislation. Any breach could then be the subject of penalties.

Routine Proceedings

It also provides for the creation of the position of ethics commissioner, who would report directly to the House of Commons and who would have the authority to conduct investigations with respect to the application of the code of ethics and the provisions of this bill. Moreover, this is a measure which the Liberal Party of Canada promised to implement in 1993.

Given the troubling events brought to our attention in the murky Grand-Mère affair, in which the Prime Minister would appear to have placed himself in a conflict of interest situation by contacting the president of the Business Development Bank regarding a loan for the Auberge Grand-Mère, which adjoined the golf course in which he had apparently previously owned shares, it appeared important to tighten up the legislative and regulatory framework guaranteeing the integrity which the public is entitled to expect from federal cabinet members.

This is what we must do if we are to restore our fellow citizens' high level of trust in their political institutions.

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

Mr. Antoine Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As my request is on the notice paper today, I would seek unanimous consent to introduce a bill to promote shipbuilding.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Does the member have unanimous consent of the House to introduce a bill on shipbuilding?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

SHIPBUILDING ACT, 2001

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-389, an act to promote shipbuilding, 2001.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill revives a bill introduced earlier, which was within an hour's debate of third reading. It was Bill C-213 intended to promote shipbuilding. This bill is the same as the previous one, except that an election has been held in the meantime. I would remind you of the three components of the bill.

First, it would establish a program of loans and loan guarantees for shipbuilding.

Second, it aims to amend the Income Tax Act to improve the tax treatment of lease financing, which would apply to the area of ships as well.

Third, it would provide for a refundable tax credit for ships, oil platform facilities and other things.

I waited until the end of the session to introduce this bill in the hope that the Minister of Industry would act on his commitment to

introduce measures himself. As it appears he will not be doing so, I am introducing this bill as insurance.

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

* * *

• (1025)

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 56(1), I move:

That at 5.15 p.m. on June 13, or when the business of supply in the present supply period is concluded, whichever is later, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted and all questions necessary to dispose of Government Order, Government Bills (Commons), Number C-11 and Government Order, Government Bills (Commons), Number C-24, and Government Order, Government Business Number 7 shall be put without further debate or amendment, provided that no division requested thereon may be deferred and provided that, if the House is not sitting at that time, a special sitting shall be convened for the purposes of this Order.

That, during the consideration of the business of supply this day, if a division is requested on any motion to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates, immediately after the taking of the said division, the questions on all subsequent motions to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates shall be deemed to have been carried on division.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): All those members opposed to the motion will please rise.

And fewer than 25 members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Fewer than 25 members having risen, the motion is adopted.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS**CHEMICAL PESTICIDES**

Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present two petitions today. The first petition calls for a moratorium on the cosmetic use of pesticides.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my second petition deals with abortion. The wording of this petition is done so carefully and with such respect for language.

The students, faculty and staff of Redeemer University College, draw the attention of the House to the following: incidents of abortion are becoming more and more frequent; each incident of abortion harms the public; and there would be fewer such incidents if certain legislative measures were taken.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon parliament to enact legislation protecting the rights of the unborn.

I think the people who compiled that petition should be congratulated on doing it in a very temperate way showing a great deal of respect for all people who have different views on the issue of abortion.

• (1030)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to present a petition on behalf of many residents of the riding of Winnipeg South Centre and the city of Winnipeg.

The petitioners call upon parliament to declare that Canada objects to the United States national missile defence program and they call upon Canada to play a leadership role in banning of nuclear weapons and missile flight tests.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition today on behalf of my constituents of the riding of Scarborough Centre.

The petitioners are asking that the Parliament of Canada, under section 15(1) of the charter of rights and freedoms, uphold the Supreme Court of Canada decision regarding Robert Latimer.

VIA RAIL

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present thousands of signatures on a petition from citizens of southwest New Brunswick to the House of Commons.

The petitioners say that since the VIA Rail Atlantic train linking Halifax and Montreal through southwestern New Brunswick was a successful service from 1985 until its discontinuance in 1994 with over 66% occupancy and 330 passengers handled per trip, including 70 at Saint John and 50 at Fredericton Junction in its last full year of operation in 1993, and that since the scarcity and price of fossil fuels, along with concerns over health related air quality issues and global warming mean that air and private auto options for travel are becoming less attractive, they request that the House of Commons act through Transport Canada and the federal crown corporation, VIA Rail, to restore passenger train service linking Saint John and Fredericton westward through Sherbrooke to Montreal and east through Moncton to Halifax.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is my honour to present a petition on suicide prevention. Approximately 3,500 to 4,000 Canadians die each year by suicide. Suicide is the second leading

Routine Proceedings

cause of death among young people ages 15 to 24. In comparison to other countries, Canada does not have a national suicide prevention strategy.

The petitioners in Etobicoke—Lakeshore call upon parliament to pass legislation to create a national suicide prevention strategy.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present, on behalf of some 30 respondents in my riding, a petition which decries the possession and the use of child pornography.

The petitioners urge the government to do everything possible to stop the blight on our society of child pornography.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present a petition on behalf of numerous constituents urging the government to enact legislation explicitly recognizing the freedom of conscience of health care workers and to prohibit coercion and discrimination against workers because of their refusal to participate in matters contrary to the dictates of their consciences and establishing penalties for coercion and discrimination.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government will answer Question No. 49 today.

[Text]

Question No. 49—**Mr. Keith Martin:**

With regard to the tragic civil conflict in Sudan: (a) has the Minister of Foreign Affairs developed a comprehensive strategy to engage the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, SPLA, in constructive peace talks; and (b) has the minister developed a plan to work with the private sector, NGOs and other shareholders to rewrite the Special Economic Measures Act, SEMA, in order to provide unambiguous guidelines for Canadian companies wishing to invest abroad?

Mr. Denis Paradis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): We share the hon. member's concern over the tragedy of the civil war in Sudan and the terrible suffering this has brought upon the Sudanese people.

There is clearly a role for Canada to play in the search of a peace agreement among the warring parties. The government has in the past offered its good offices to the government of Sudan and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army, SPLA, and will continue to explore this possibility. However, the problem is less the absence of a neutral venue than the lack of a genuine willingness by either party to negotiate in good faith.

Supply

Canada has long supported the peace process sponsored by the intergovernmental authority on development, IGAD, and our efforts continue to focus on assistance to the IGAD process as a member of the IGAD partners' forum, IPF. Canada agrees with the IPF consensus that any new initiative to accelerate a negotiated settlement must not undermine IGAD and its principal achievement to date, namely the endorsement by both parties of the only currently viable basis for a negotiated settlement, the IGAD declaration of principles. It is important to emphasize that Canadian action is designed to complement work already underway.

In the press release on Canada's Sudan policy of May 23, 2001, it was announced that Senator Lois Wilson, Canada's special envoy for Sudan, will be travelling to the region. She is expected to meet with high ranking figures in the government of Sudan and the SPLA, and these discussions should provide us with a better sense of the opportunities that exist for engaging the two sides in this conflict.

Regarding the hon. member's query concerning the Special Economic Measures Act, SEMA, it should be pointed out that in general the international experience has been that unilateral sanctions are largely ineffective. Canada's own experience with sanctions has confirmed that multilateral measures are the most effective course of action. To amend the SEMA to allow for unilateral sanctions against Canadian companies abroad would undermine Canada's longstanding objection to extraterritorial measures by other countries.

The department continues to work with the private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders to look beyond sanctions at ways of shaping Canada's corporate presence abroad, including Sudan. On several occasions in the past few weeks we have organized large scale consultations with a range of interested parties to discuss ways of ensuring a positive international Canadian corporate presence. The Government of Canada values these exchanges of views and sees this as part of a permanent process of consultation.

We wish to assure hon. member that Canada remains engaged in the search for a durable negotiated peace settlement in Sudan and is pursuing options which provide the best chance for success.

[English]

Mr. Derek Lee: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft, and report to this House no later than November 1, 2001, changes to the Standing Orders improving procedures for the consideration of Private Members' Business, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending June 23, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1035)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise to address the motion that our party has put forward, which will hopefully be supported by all members in the House.

The main intent of the motion is to improve the workings of the House of Commons. It is also in the best interest of all of us here, including the government, the opposition and therefore all Canadians.

Unless we can change the system, we will not change much else. That means that unless we can improve our procedures and the way in which we make decisions, we will not really be able to do much to improve the lot of most Canadians as we deal with legislation and issues in the House. We need to put in place legislation and policies and to make changes that make parliament work for all Canadians.

I would like to refer to a book that we have regarded as the handbook for the orders and procedures of the House. The first principle in Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules & Forms* states:

The principles of Canadian parliamentary law are:

To protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority; to secure the transaction of public business in an orderly manner; to enable every Member to express opinions within limits necessary to preserve decorum and prevent an unnecessary waste of time; to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure, and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse.

Everything I say today will be based on that first principle of parliamentary procedure.

Points of Order

By making this change, we would trigger meaningful debates across the country on various issues. The change I am referring to is to amend the standing orders in order to allow all private members' business items to be votable if a member wishes it to be that way.

I sincerely believe that one of the problems we face in Canada is that we, as politicians, and Canadians generally, do not scratch below the surface on key issues. Many issues are often left unexamined and this hurts all of us.

In order for democracy to work and to work well we must be well informed so that we can make decisions intelligently. Many Canadians may not realize how important the motion is but if they have ever tried to bring forth an issue through their elected representatives, they will realize the importance of the motion.

We could play a very effective role in having everyone look more closely at the issues that affect them greatly and yet in our current system they are not examined in depth. For democracy to work effectively, those people making those decisions must understand the issues, and this change hopefully would do that.

I would like to give a bit of an historical perspective before I go into the arguments for this because history can really help us understand why these changes are necessary.

My source of information is from the Library of Parliament. It is a paper that was prepared by James Robertson for the subcommittee on private members' business. I cannot go into all the details that he provided going back to 1867, but as we look through the report we see that private members' business has not been static.

From 1867 to 1962 the standing orders gave precedence to private members' business on particular days in each week. However successive governments found such a distribution inadequate for the conduct of their own legislative programs and regularly gave precedence for their own business via special and sessional orders. What this means is that private members' business used to dominate the business of the House of Commons, but gradually that has been eroded.

● (1040)

The agenda in private members' business has taken second place to what we do. We need to bring more prominence to that issue. By 1955 government business dominated the agenda of the House and the standing orders were brought in to protect private members' business.

In 1962 the House abandoned the allocation of a certain number of days each session for private members' business and instead set aside one hour per day for that purpose.

In 1982 the practice of considering private members' business for one hour on certain days was replaced by a single private members' day.

In 1983, however, the House reverted to the consideration of private members' business for one hour per day on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, with no maximum amount of time on Mondays and Tuesdays. The omission of this part of the former rule meant that the amount of time provided for private members' business actually increased as a result.

Until the late 1950s there were two criteria which determined the order in which private members' business was considered: their date of notice and, in the case of bills, their stage in the legislative process.

Other secondary criteria, whose purpose was to distinguish the different categories of business from each other, also became important. For example, in 1910 a higher precedence was accorded to unopposed private members' notices of motions for the production of papers while opposed motions of this kind continued to be considered with other motions until 1961 when they were given a specific category in the order of business and were debated on a designated day.

I refer to portions of this report in order to show that private members' business has not been static. There have been changes throughout our history.

In 1982 there was a single draw of members' names held at the start of each session. In the 1970s private members' business was organized by the government House leader's office. That was criticized by many members as undue government interference and eventually the private members' office was established under the Clerk of the House.

We are back to the same situation now because the tradition has become such that only bills that receive the consensus of the private members' business committee are deemed votable. We again find it almost impossible to bring forth items for debate and a vote when two or three members of the committee may not wish to bring them forward. It has become a great source of frustration for many members of parliament.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER REPORT

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have just been advised that the information commissioner's report has been released. The government has an obligation to table that report in the House of Commons but for some reason that has not happened. There has not been an opportunity to bring forward this very important report.

Supply

We have heard in the past from the information commissioner and his predecessor that there is what appears to be a very nefarious attempt by the government to become less than transparent. To not bring forward this report furthers that perception amongst the public.

I would respectfully suggest that there is an obligation on the government to table this report so that the House of Commons and members of parliament will have an opportunity to examine that important report before the recess.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member has inadvertently stated that a little differently than how he should have. I agree that any report to have been tabled by the Speaker should have been tabled by the Speaker, if that is the case, but I am in no position to confirm or deny it.

However the information commissioner does not work for the government. If the hon. member wants to change the act and make that official work for the government, perhaps there would be some enthusiasm for that, but the information commissioner is an officer of parliament, not of the government. If the Speaker wants to table that information, we will be glad to receive it as well.

* * *

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue the review of history and point out that in 1985 a very significant review called the McGrath committee tabled its report. It stated:

The House does not attach any great importance to private members' business as it is now organized. This is evident from the fact that members are seldom greatly concerned to claim the priorities they have drawn in the ballot governing the use of private members' time, and this is largely because private members' bills and motions rarely come to a vote.

● (1045)

This is a key point we are raising here today. We are asking that all private members' business be deemed votable if the private members wish. The committee said that its proposals were designed to achieve a number of improvements in the way private members' business is dealt with. I do not have time to go through them all but there have been many changes since then.

Private members' business has eroded significantly in importance. It is time to again review what we do and improve the whole area. We have evolved to the point where minority rights are not

respected. By establishing the custom at the private members' committee that there be a consensus of committee members before an item is deemed votable we have again ensured a tyranny of the majority.

It is in the best interest of the government, the opposition and all Canadians that we make significant improvements to private members' business.

Much discussion has taken place in recent years on the topic of making parliament more effective and democratic. We began this parliament by saying that we must improve the way we do things in this place and bring back more democracy. A lot of controversy has taken place of late concerning pay and benefits for parliamentarians. My question is this: Why do we not focus more effort on doing our jobs well? The rest will take care of itself.

As many members know, I along with many members have had great concerns that we as MPs lack effectiveness in representing the people of Canada. Much of that is because of the lack of democracy in the House and the inability of MPs to speak freely on issues and vote on the merits of legislation rather than along party lines.

The motion that all private members' business be votable is predicated on the assumption that free votes on private members' business will continue. Much of the debate in the House is meaningless because MPs do not listen to it. Why? It is because they are not free to vote based on the arguments presented. They are told how to vote. Why listen to the pros and cons of the debate? Why listen to constituents? Why even be here? MPs do not even have to make the decision. Someone else likely makes it for them.

Making all private members' business votable would mean that MPs would need to pay attention. They would need to listen to all the arguments, put their brains in gear and think carefully about how to vote because every vote would be a free vote. Every vote would be theirs and theirs alone.

Making all private members' business votable would be a huge change in this place. It would probably do more to change the dynamics of parliament than any other change I could contemplate, other than of course making all legislation a free vote.

If we want to send a serious signal to the citizens of Canada that we are here to do a job and do it well to earn our salaries, this would be one of the best ways to start doing that. What are some of the consequences I would anticipate if private members' business were made votable and free votes were to continue? Of course the role of backbench MPs would suddenly become much more meaningful.

As it now stands, the Prime Minister and cabinet have all the means at their disposal to bring forth legislation and put in place initiatives they wish to promote. However Canadians have many concerns and issues that are never addressed because there is no

mechanism to do so. We generally pay very little attention to issues not introduced by the government because we know they have little or no hope of being passed. This would change considerably.

Canadians are frustrated that they cannot advance issues through their elected representatives. With these changes, MPs would be forced to be better listeners. We would need to listen to our constituents and listen to debate in parliament. It would become much more obvious if an MP was not on duty and doing his or her job.

Another change I anticipate is that MPs who bring forward a bill or motion would need to do a lot more work in preparing to introduce it. They would need to do their homework because they would likely only have one opportunity to put forth the issue in the life of the parliament, but one opportunity is certainly better than none.

Another change is that the apathy Canadians have for politics and for parliament would diminish. The cynicism so prevalent throughout the land would decline as they saw and heard us doing our job. There should be a much more serious attitude to the processes that go into making the laws and rules we all must live by in this democratic society.

• (1050)

If all private members' business is made votable there would need to be an assurance that it would then be properly and effectively advanced, not swept under the table by the government or the Senate or in any other way.

I come back to where I started, that unless we change the system we will not change much else. The process is most important. If we do not bring meaningful democracy to the House we will not be effective in making the positive and meaningful changes people look to us to make.

We would need to review the workings of the change because the devil would be in the details. We would need a careful examination of all consequential changes that would need to be made if the motion were passed.

How many private members' bills and motions could realistically be handled in the life of a parliament? That is one question we would need to answer.

Another question is how the items would be selected to ensure that the most important issues were advanced and the rights of each MP were respected. I come back to the first law in parliamentary procedure, that we respect the rights of all members.

We must examine the cost of doing this. We must review and make additional changes so the change has maximum effectiveness. By simply passing the motion we would open up a complete

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study of how to make private members' business and all consequential changes more effective. There would be a lot of changes and we would need to ensure the principle was respected.

I urge all MPs to have the courage to make these key changes. Let us be willing to work harder to ensure this place does what it was originally intended to do in a democracy. Let us make it more relevant to the lives of all Canadians. By making the change we would trigger meaningful debates across the country on various issues. That needs to happen here and across the country.

I will conclude by sharing some of my personal experience with regard to private members' business. Since I was first elected to parliament in 1993 I have had a total of four private members' bills and eight private members' motions selected for debate in the House of Commons. That is twelve private members' bills and motions. Not one has been deemed a votable item by the private members' business subcommittee.

During my one hour of debate on each bill and motion I introduced motions asking for unanimous consent to have them declared votable and sent to the standing committee for further study. All my motions were refused or deemed not votable by members of the government on the other side of the House. Most MPs in the House have not had much better luck.

I will give hon. members some statistics I compiled as I was preparing for the debate. In the 35th parliament, 207 private members' bills and motions were drawn. Only 77 were made votable. That is 37%.

In the 36th parliament, the parliament before the last election, 223 private members' bills and motions were drawn. Only 58 were made votable. That is 26%.

So far in this parliament, the 37th parliament, 60 private members' bills and motions have been drawn. Only 12 have been deemed votable. That is 20%.

The way the process is structured that percentage will decline. We have a distinct pattern. Fewer and fewer private members' bills and motions are being deemed votable. Since the beginning of this parliament we as Canadian Alliance MPs have had 24 items drawn and placed on the order of precedence. Only 2 of them have been deemed votable. That is 8%. These statistics show that the situation is getting worse over time, not better.

• (1055)

One thing that concerns me is that at the committee we have developed the custom that all decisions be a consensus. We have determined that all bills and motions which are deemed votable, which are drawn in the lottery and come to committee to be deemed votable or not votable, should receive the support of most or all members of the committee. That flies in the face of Beauchesne's first principle:

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To protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority; to secure the transaction of public business in an orderly manner; to enable every Member to express opinions within limits necessary to preserve decorum and prevent an unnecessary waste of time; to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure, and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse.

We must go back to that. We must ensure that the rights of every MP are respected. That is the basis of democracy. That must happen. Unless we go back to that we will be wasting our time in a lot of the things we do.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Fournier (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, an MP or a party introduces a bill surely with the prime objective of improving the living conditions and environment of the public.

As no one has a monopoly on the truth, we have debates. The aim of debates is to convince the members of the merits of the amendments and motions presented. The aim is also to listen to colleagues who have suggestions to make or who say a given clause or paragraph of the regulations should be changed. There could be amendments that produce solid regulations that have the support of everyone.

Members will agree with me that debates have no meaning if we have expended energy, effort and time and cannot measure them by means of a vote. The vote determines whether the debate was properly held, whether the subject matter was treated properly and whether we have managed to convince our colleagues of the merits of the amendment to regulations, of the introduction of a bill or of the presentation of a motion. I agree totally with those who say each member should be able to introduce a bill.

Does my colleague agree that every debate and every amendment must be consolidated with a vote at the end of the debate?

[*English*]

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, the short answer is that if the member who introduces a bill or motion wishes parliament to decide on it and have a vote, the right of the member should be respected. The answer is yes, unless the MP who introduced the bill or motion does not wish to deem it votable.

I will pick up on something else my hon. colleague raised. It was a very good point. I appreciate that he is supporting the motion we brought forward. The point he raised is that debate in the House is designed to convince colleagues that the position a member takes in debate is correct.

There is nothing in the motion that would override the principles of democracy. It would enhance democracy because it would allow minorities, through their elected representatives, to bring forth issues they feel are important to the whole country.

As members of the House listen to debate and engage in dialogue they will need to decide whether an issue deserves the support of the majority. That is why the motion would enhance democracy. It would allow all of us to make decisions on matters that a private member has deemed important enough to bring to the House.

• (1100)

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a quick question for the hon. member who did such a good job of introducing this idea.

There are now criteria in place that are required of a private member's bill in order for it to be considered votable. I am not sure what the number is. The criteria include such things as the bill being of national interest rather than regional interest and a few other things. In the past I think all bills sent to the committee did meet those criteria, but for some reason they were still not made votable.

Would the hon. member have any idea as to why a bill that meets the criteria presently laid out in legislation would be refused by the committee? Second, if the motion today were to pass would he agree or disagree that there should be some criteria in place in order for a bill to qualify for votability?

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, there used to be 11 criteria that a private member had to comply with before the bill would be considered votable, or at least most of those points had to be complied with. Now there are only five. The member has mentioned one of them, that of national interest. Also, if it is on the government's agenda already it is not be deemed votable and so on.

In answer to his question on why a bill is not deemed votable, it is almost impossible for me to guess why other members on the committee would not allow an item to be votable or would not allow it to come forward. It almost appears to me as if the committee has become partisan. The committee has been divided on government and non-government or right wing and left wing lines. If a certain issue comes up that is deemed to be on the agenda of the other side, it is almost impossible to get that item to be votable. It may be very important, but it is almost impossible to do.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague for Yorkton—Melville, not only for his very good presentation this morning but for his championing of this cause over the time he has been here.

He is also a member of a party that very much promotes the democratization of the House of Commons. In other words, members of parliament are here to represent their constituents. The job of private members, whether they are backbenchers on the Liberal side or in opposition, is to represent the constituents.

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My question for the member is this: If every private member who introduced a private member's motion or bill had the opportunity himself or herself to determine whether or not it was votable, would that not drive the government bonkers? The government would have to deal with a whole bunch of things that the people out there want but the government does not.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, I think we have to respect the ability of each member in the House to decide an issue. Maybe there is a concern on the government side that they would not be able to control the agenda in the House of Commons. However, if we sincerely believe in democracy we would have faith in the members in this place to make the right decision. In fact, we have to put more of an onus on members to make those decisions in this place.

If we put the responsibility on MPs to listen to the debate and to decide on the merits of a motion or a bill or whatever legislation is introduced, they will begin to realize that if they are to do their job they have to listen to the debate.

• (1105)

Yes, there could be a concern that the government may lose track of everything in this place, but I have faith in the MPs of the House and in their ability to make decisions. That is why we have to make this key change. I hope that is an answer to the question that was posed, which is a very key and very important question.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the motion from the official opposition asking that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft by November 1, 2001, changes to the standing orders improving procedures for the consideration of private members' business.

[*English*]

First of all let me thank the hon. member across the way for this very constructive motion, which I and my party intend to support. I think it is excellent.

I perhaps neglected to indicate so at the beginning, but I wish to share my time with the hon. member for Durham.

The role of private members' business draws on a long tradition in the U.K. house of commons which allowed individual members to propose legislative initiatives to reflect their own interests and beliefs.

The government's 1993 election platform made commitments to give members of parliament a greater role in the development and debate of policy issues. In 1994 the government implemented a commitment for more free votes in the House of Commons by

making every private members' business item a free vote. I want to congratulate the Prime Minister for this initiative.

We have also supported initiatives to increase the flexibility of private members' business so that it can respond to the changing interests of members and their constituents. The government has supported the view of members to continue the role of the subcommittee on private members' business in administering the draw of private members' items and determining which of these items should be votable.

As all members know, the current arrangement allows more items to be debated than would be the case if all items were made votable. Let me explain that. The reason for this is that a votable item is in effect time allocated. It is pre-programmed in the standing orders with three hours of debate at second reading and three additional hours that can be used in either report stage, third reading or a combination thereof.

To make an item votable, then, displaces five non-votable items because of course it takes six hours or thereabouts to get it through the House. I know that is a maximum of six hours. Sometimes they can get by more quickly. I understand there was a case like that last week where one item, which I believe involved Sir John A. Macdonald Day, was passed in one day. However, I still think the principle generally holds true. There is a cost in terms of time, then, for making all items votable.

Today's motion indicates that there is an interest among members in studying the issue further, and I agree. We are fortunate in having a considerable amount of work already done on the subject. As a matter of fact, I want to congratulate the subcommittee and of course the procedure and House affairs committee for the surveys on these issues carried out in 1997, in 1998 and again in 2001.

The 1998 survey indicated that 48% of members said all items should be votable and 50% said no. However, 70% felt that the system could be changed or improved. I think that is what makes the motion today so valuable. The 1998 survey was updated early this year and the Library of Parliament reported on the results in May. Now 62% of members feel that all items should be made votable while 37% say no, so there has been a change of opinion in the membership. In other words, there is a considerable shift, with 10% or so more MPs saying that these items should be votable. Of those who said no, some felt that more than the current 10 items could be made votable. The House procedure committee is continuing to study this issue.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

On June 1, the Special Committee on the Modernization and Improvement of the Procedures of the House of Commons tabled its report. As regards private members' business, the report of the

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committee chaired by the deputy speaker of the House reads, and I quote:

A great many of the Members who spoke during the debates in the House of Commons on March 21, 2001, and May 1, 2001, addressed the issue of Private Members' Business.

Among the suggestions that were made were that all items should be votable; that all Members should have an opportunity to propose a votable bill or motion during the course of a parliamentary session. . .

Considerable support has been indicated for making virtually all items of Private Members' Business votable, but serious concerns have also been voiced.

The report also dealt with this issue.

[*English*]

I believe that the modernization committee's report is consistent with the text of today's opposition motion in that it asks the House procedure committee to consider the issue of making more private members' items votable and to report to the House on this matter. As I mentioned, the procedure committee would benefit from the results of the modernization committee's report as well as recent surveys, such as the one I have described, indicating that a majority of members are now interested in this.

However there would be a cost to making all items votable. It may be that the cost is the proper price to pay. That is fine if that is the determination of course. As I said, that is something worth considering as long as we are not misled in our collective effort by thinking that there is no price to pay. It would multiply exponentially both the number of private members' items and the number of them that are votable, because in a way one could be achieved at the cost of the other.

In conclusion I would like to thank the member for Yorkton—Melville, both for putting the motion and for amending it yesterday in a way that makes it acceptable, hopefully, to all members of the House. It is clearly a matter of interest to all our colleagues in the House of Commons.

I am a minister now so therefore I cannot propose private members' items, but there was a period when I could. I was usually very fortunate in that draw. For reasons that I cannot understand, my name was picked often in the process. I also have been very fortunate in that some of the items I proposed actually were adopted by the House, so I can relate to the benefits of some of this.

Members will know that there is a statue on Parliament Hill in honour of Lester B. Pearson. Many years ago that statue was sculpted and subsequently erected on the Hill pursuant to a motion I offered to the House. Perhaps in the eyes of some this is but a small item, but I consider the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson to be a very great Canadian. I still do. He is a hero to me. I proposed the initiative to parliament and it was adopted. It is a grand day when things happen on the Hill as a result of issues about which we feel

profoundly. I thought that this was important. Other members might think that their favourite criminal code amendment is important, or their favourite rights issue, or their favourite issue involving a whole variety of things.

Finally I want to pay tribute to members of parliament who propose issues. The mere fact that they generate these debates means that the issues come back as part of government policy later. I think of a number of colleagues on this side. I think of the member from Mississauga who, through petitions, private member's initiatives and so on, has raised the issue of fetal alcohol syndrome. I think of our colleague from Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot and his initiatives on access to information. Several other colleagues have raised this issue. I think of the member for Kitchener Centre and her efforts, which have now found their way into government bills, to stop people from gouging consumers through the postal system and through 1-900 telephone lines. I think of the member for Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge for his initiatives on competition policy.

• (1115)

Many good ideas have come from both sides of the House through private members' items. Some have found their way into law. Some have found their way indirectly into law. Many of them have made this place better with the quality of debate they have produced. Again I congratulate the hon. member and offer him my support.

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I quickly jumped to my feet to ask the hon. government House leader a question because it is such a rare opportunity. When he says he supports the motion I wonder if he is saying that he and his party will be voting for the motion.

Hon. Don Boudria: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the intention of the government. The motion is about private members' hour but it is not a private member's motion. It is a supply motion so I can indicate clearly the government's position thereon, which is to support the motion.

As I said, it is a subject that we addressed in our modernization committee. I am sure all hon. members have read the report of the modernization committee and will know that we addressed many issues. We had to report by June 1 but we could not complete it as a result of work being done by the subcommittee and others and so on. We have addressed the issue. We welcome the opportunity. We encourage the committee to continue working on the initiative to make it better.

Something was said by the proposer of the motion today which disturbed me a bit. He sees a tendency to make less items votable. That is very unfortunate. I am sure it is accurate. That he has raised it, I am sure it is true, but it is unfortunate that I have not noticed

that trend. If that trend is occurring as we are now told it is, I believe that to be very unfortunate.

When we made the rule to have a maximum of 10 items votable, certainly none of us at the time ever envisioned that the number would be progressively decreasing. That was not the purpose. It was meant to identify a critical mass of items that would be made votable to ensure that there was a healthy mix. I suppose the five party system we have now with the subcommittee operating on consensus with majority opposition and minority government membership is a rather strange construct.

Perhaps this is the opportunity to raise it. Whatever the committee recommends, it must find ways to ensure that if not all items are votable, should that be the conclusion, the reduction in votable items should be arrested forthwith and the trend should be reversed toward making it what it used to be, at the very least, what I call the critical mass of votable items. Anyway, I do not want to give the conclusions of what the committee will do because it will report however it wishes.

However I am concerned by the statistics given to us by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville earlier this day. I do not think it is healthy if those numbers are decreasing, particularly at the pace which he identified.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I express my appreciation for the hon. House leader's support of the motion and the government's expression of support for it. I do know from my work in this place that there has been a lot of support for making more private members' items votable.

The hon. member talked about cost. I know there would likely be a cost to making more items of private members' business votable because we would need more time. I am not sure when time would become available, but would there be support on the other side for making more time available in a week? Would there be support for having the resources of the House of Commons made available to have more time for debate?

• (1120)

If we go back in history, there was a lot more time given to private members' business. As we moved away from that there has been a kind of apathy developing among members and Canadians generally. Would more time be made available for this?

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, it is pretty hard to give a conclusion to that debate at the moment. Having heard what we heard earlier, unfortunately the difficulty is that we are not even using all the votable time available to us now. Getting into a debate on how much we need to increase it is rather academic because we are not doing that which we should be doing at the present time.

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In any case, it is a little early to arrive at that kind of conclusion. I am looking forward to the report of that committee and to working in co-operation with the committee. I am sure I will be doing so along with other House leaders when the time comes.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to enter the debate on the excellent motion of the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville. I share the frustration of many members of the House in dealing with private members' bills.

Indeed in the 35th parliament my own private member's bill actually made it not only through first reading but also through second reading and was referred to a committee of the House. Then we adjourned for an election. After that I tried to reintroduce it and it was deemed non-votable. It seemed like a ridiculous procedure to me, so I certainly look forward to changing some of the rules that deal with private members' business.

From listening to the debate I have a couple of questions. The hon. member mentioned that in a sense there would not be a lot of rigorous machinery to make a bill votable. It seems there are two issues involved in that.

I do not know who will be the judge of all this, but what happens if a bill is totally ludicrous? In other words, we are all responsible for the House and for the image that the House portrays to Canadians. If bills that were totally ludicrous or totally unacceptable to the general public were made votable in the House, it would reflect poorly on the institution of parliament.

I understand we now have a rigorous procedure to go through as to whether it qualifies as a private member's bill. The hon. member seems to be talking about loosening up on that kind of jurisdiction, allowing almost all bills proposed by one member in one term to be deemed votable.

I have some concern about that. I am not sitting in judgment of other members' bills. Every member who brings a bill forward certainly thinks that the bill has a great deal of merit, but I wonder on a collective basis whether we need to focus on some kind of filtration system, maybe not one that is overly onerous but one that exists just the same.

There is a second issue I want to question. I visited Westminster, the mother of all parliaments, in London. I discovered that a system has evolved there with private members' bills such that lobbyists or private interest groups, often commercial private interest groups, whether the pharmaceutical industry or whatever the case may be, have discovered that a way to promote their cause has been to select a private member.

I am not saying that the private member is recompensed economically, but it would appear that is true. The private member

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then becomes an advocate of the particular policy because it is very difficult to influence general government policy. All members of parliament are allowed to have votable private members' bills before the house. For instance, if companies were trying to get their pharmaceutical processes approved in Great Britain, they may well choose a private member who would put forward a bill promoting their philosophies.

• (1125)

It seems to me that what we are talking about today would lead to that kind of process. I know members of parliament want to feel that they are important, but it could be that they are attached to private interest groups that possibly have other agendas. In that case it would actually do the reverse of some of the things the member is talking about. It would not actually enhance the democracy of the institution. It may go in the opposite direction.

We see that all the time in the United States where private sector groups do what they can to influence congressmen and senators to bring forward legislation which is of interest to them in particular. It is a lot easier to influence one person than a whole government. If those agendas can be brought to the House of Commons and therefore to the polity and to the media, it is a great avenue to use.

It would concern me that if we moved too much in this direction abuse could exist. I am sure what the member is suggesting is that we study how we can make it work. The House leader was talking about private members' bills that are looked upon as great successes. I know the Prime Minister is often quoted as talking about his private member's bill to change the name of TransCanada Airlines to Air Canada. I know all members of the House at various times have been involved in the private member process.

Historically, if we go back in time in the country, private members' bills were more common. It seems that as the parliamentary system matured we moved more toward government bills taking the onus of the day than private members' bills. To some extent the member is attempting to enhance the role of individual members of parliament. I applaud that process. We have to move toward more democratization of the House. We have to improve the rights and responsibilities of members of parliament.

I say responsibilities because quite often it is easy to hide behind a party platform and not take responsibility for the thought process. Lifting that veil comes with a cost to individual members who have to think out the process of their individual private members' bills. Ideally they will have to confront the public with them and justify them. I certainly see where the move toward a greater use of private members' bills is a good and positive move for the Chamber.

No one has a monopoly on good ideas. Sometimes we all think, whether we are the opposition or the government, we have a monopoly on good ideas, but there are a lot of good ideas in the

country. This process would open up that concept, allow more good ideas to come to the floor of the House of Commons and allow us the opportunity to debate them. The member certainly has brought forward a compelling argument to proceed with greater democratization of the House. I look forward to that debate going forward.

I guess another aspect is that there is a cost to people who want to put multiple bills before the House. We can point to a number of members who have 30, 40 or 50 bills before the House. Obviously they will be at a significant disadvantage because only one of their bills will be votable. There may be a cost benefit relationship there. I do not know. I suppose they put forward that many bills so that they could promote various causes. They will have to find other ways to do it.

Many members decline putting forward private members' bills because of the whole concept that they will not be made votable. They put much work and effort into the process only to discover that it is not votable. It would be great if each member during the term of a parliament would have the right to put forward one votable private member's bill.

I certainly applaud the member for bringing the motion forward and look forward to supporting it.

• (1130)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the remarks that the hon. member made. I would like to pick up on something that he said, and that is no one has a monopoly on good ideas in this place.

He has asked some very key questions and I do not want to pretend to have all the answers. That is why we are having this debate and that is why a committee will likely have to deal with everything that members bring forward as a solution to the dilemma we find ourselves in.

Two of the concerns he raised are very legitimate. If a bill is ludicrous and it is deemed votable, will that reflect on the institution of parliament? It may but it will also reflect on the member who brings it forward. His constituents, the people of Canada, will I think render a judgment on an abuse of this provision to make all private members' business votable.

What kind of machinery would be put in place to examine private members' business? The devil is in the details. I said that in my speech. We will probably have to have some kind of a system, and I do not know what it will be, to examine issues that come before the House so that there is not an abuse of the system. I would welcome suggestions. I do not have a monopoly on all the ideas.

The concern for the abuse of the system is a legitimate concern. We have swung so far in one direction in having very little votable, that if we swing maybe all the way the other way, some other

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problems will develop. We have to try to foresee that and prevent that.

Mr. Alex Shepherd: Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of co-operation, I think we are all trying to find answers to the same questions. I raised some of the ones that occurred to me because of my experience in other places. I am sure there are ways to resolve them. That is our great benefit, that we can study what has gone on in other jurisdictions and hopefully can cull the bad parts of those practices.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to intervene on this motion by our colleagues in the Canadian Alliance within the framework of opposition day.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I am intervening as a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and, like my colleague from Yorkton—Melville, as a member of the subcommittee on private members' business, because the opposition motion of today, on which we should vote in the House, addresses this directly. I believe it would be appropriate to read the opposition motion:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft, and report to this House no later than November 1, 2001, changes to the Standing Orders improving procedures for the consideration of Private Members' Business, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable.

I wish to indicate right off to my colleague from Yorkton-Melville that the members of the Bloc Québécois support this motion for the various reasons I shall be sharing with hon. members in the next few minutes.

The motion per se addresses an element on which we should focus: that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs must produce a workable proposal; it must be realistic and realizable.

I will be suggesting some improvements. All of us here agree that there is room for considerable improvement. It is all very well to say that the government should do this or that, but we ought to suggest some improvements.

• (1135)

For the benefit of our listeners, whom I could describe as uninitiated, one of the problems I have noticed here in the House is that sometimes, when we deal with rather obscure technical details, we have a tendency to address our speeches to each other, as parliamentarians, and forget that we are above all democratically elected representatives of the public.

One of the reasons that parliament agreed to cameras in the House of Commons and in certain committees was to ensure that

the public, those acting as watchdogs over the work of their elected officials, could take in the debates.

I think that we should begin by explaining the process as it now stands, what this opposition motion is all about, and what could be changed, so as to help the public better understand the changes we might suggest.

Right now, a member from either the government or the opposition side may introduce a motion or a private member's bill, as opposed to a government bill.

A member, whether he is a Liberal member, as he is in this case, or a member from one of the other four opposition parties, may introduce a bill on any topic he wishes, subject, of course, to certain criteria, which I do not have time to go into here. Any member may introduce a motion or a bill.

Since there are 301 members and the time allowed for consideration of these motions and private members' bills is quite limited, parliament has instituted a draw procedure so that all members have an opportunity to introduce a bill.

It is clearly understood that in 2001 we could debate at length this draw procedure. The names of members who want to table motions or bills at first reading are in a container, a sort of urn, or hat—well, not exactly—a sort of container from which the bills are literally drawn.

Since 1993, I have been thinking about a way to improve this procedure of the draw, because it might well be considered archaic, from another era. Sometimes we like our old symbols here in Canada. Sometimes they are holdovers from the monarchy or of the British system.

The best proof of that is the continued existence of the Senate here. We still have a Governor General, and lieutenant governors in the provinces. This is the product of a monarchy of another era, but at any rate we have not time here to go on at length on the subject.

They came up with the system I consider archaic. However, I cannot suggest anything better or more transparent or fairer than the draw.

When the name of a member is selected, following the draw, the member may want his bill to be voted on. There are members, though, who say when their name is drawn "I really do not care that much if my bill is voted on. I am happy to be drawn, to have my name drawn, but I only want to have an hour's debate on the issue, just to draw the attention of the House and of public opinion to it". That is the member's choice.

• (1140)

I must admit that it is rare for an MP to decide that even if his or her name gets picked in the lottery his or her bill does not need to be voted on. The bulk of members whose names are picked come

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before the subcommittee on private members' business where they have to plead their case, no more and no less.

This subcommittee is made up of representatives of all parties. I can say, as a member, it is not seen as a partisan committee. The same party divisions are not felt there as in the others, be they on environment, transport or Canadian heritage. One is not aware of the same partisanship, the same party lines.

Each member of the subcommittee on private members' business listens attentively to the case being made by colleagues who have been selected, so that at the end of the process when all those whose names have been selected have been heard they can reach a consensus on which bill can be made votable and which not.

If the bill falls into the non-votable category, there is one hour's debate on it and then it dies at the end of the hour.

If the bill is deemed to be votable by the subcommittee on private members' business, then there are three hours of debate on second reading. These three are not consecutive. There is one hour on one day, a second on another, and the third later on. Once there have been three hours of debate, a division follows. That is, in a nutshell, the current procedure.

What the opposition motion suggests is, of course, that we should arrange things so that once all bills have been in the lottery and the subcommittee on private members' business procedure has been carried out—one of the rare committees, as I have already said, that is non-partisan and holds informed and consensual discussions—all bills should then be votable. However, if we want all items selected following a draw to be votable, we must basically eliminate the procedure involving the private members' business subcommittee.

This is not a major objection. Some of my caucus colleagues might have preferred the status quo, but we realize that there could be some improvement. All private members' business would become votable.

However, we must devise a formula so that interested members can always have their turn. Neither the Prime Minister nor the ministers introduce private members' bills. If we eliminate these 30 some people, it leaves 271 other members, not all of whom introduce bills or motions under private members' business. Technically, there is a considerable number of them and this is why the opposition motion provides that we should find a functional formula, a workable proposal.

This is why I will now make suggestions to improve things. As member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I have a suggestion to make on behalf of my party, but we will also discuss other possibilities. Among the realistic and feasible suggestions to deal with this issue, there is one that is of particular interest to me.

• (1145)

We could set aside one day for private members' business, even if this means extending sitting hours on other days or beginning earlier on other days. On Mondays we start at 11 a.m.; on Tuesdays we begin at 10 a.m.; on Wednesdays, because of the caucus meetings, it may be difficult to start before 2 p.m.; on Thursdays and Fridays, the House begin its proceedings at 10 a.m. Since we would have one day of debates on private members' business and the government would in effect lose one day to discuss its own bills, it would certainly be possible to make up for the hours lost on that day during the rest of the week by beginning earlier or finishing later.

I would see Friday as the day for private members' business, motions and votable bills. Fridays have become a bit of a joke. Those following the debates on Fridays can see that most of our questions are addressed to empty benches.

We see that on Fridays, 17, 18 or 19 of the 24, 27 or 28—I am not sure of the exact number—members of cabinet are missing on average; we can provide the statistics if members wish. Answers to our questions are given by parliamentary secretaries who are absolutely, totally and completely ignorant about the issues our questions address. I do not necessarily wish to imply that these parliamentary secretaries are themselves ignorant, but they are not familiar with the issues, with the result that Oral Question Period on Fridays, as any journalist following the business of the House can testify, is a farce, a circus.

In any event, most members return to their ridings on Thursdays. Canada is a big country, and members are returning to the Yukon, Labrador, British Columbia and Newfoundland. I do not have a problem with this but, as a democratic institution, are we effective on Fridays? Unless I am dreaming, unless I am not on the same planet as my colleagues, is Friday a model of parliamentary efficiency?

Mr. Speaker, you have been a member for quite a long time. You know the answer, but I know you cannot reply to my question. In your innermost being, you are telling yourself that the member for Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans is right.

We must take the bull by the horns and improve how things are done on Fridays. If Fridays were kept for private members' business, there would be ample time, even if it meant changing sitting times, to accommodate more members.

I have not drawn up any mathematical model or virtual timetable of what I am proposing. It will be up to us, to our clerks, and those connected with the business of parliament to suggest how this should be done. I personally would like to see the matter of Friday's sittings seriously re-examined.

The government House leader might come back with “Yes, but on Fridays we have time set aside for government orders. How could that be handled?” As I have said, we could start earlier or finish later the other days, so that at the end of the process the government would still have the same number of hours weekly. This is a non-partisan proposal, a realistic and practicable proposal I am making. The government might find this to its liking and would ensure that it was not deprived of its time for debating the bills it introduces in the House.

• (1150)

The private members’ business subcommittee did a survey. My colleague from Yorkton—Melville is well aware that a majority of members recognize that there should be a new approach. These colleagues recognize that this matter could be improved.

As the results of the survey have not yet been officially tabled in the House, I do not want to discuss the results further. I want to preserve the confidentiality of the work of the private members’ business subcommittee. I do not think I would run afoul of its confidentiality by saying that the feeling is largely shared by all of our colleagues.

What changes should be made? What should the new approach be? It will be up to us to develop it.

I close by saying that a piece of business from a private member is foremost the expression of the member’s deep values. When a member is elected, in a way it amounts to telling him to take our words to the House. A member is there as well to express the wishes of his riding, and he must not forget this role.

In the context of this process, I introduced a bill that would enable mechanics to have the cost of their tools deducted from their taxes. Unfortunately, 91 Liberal members changed their opinion on this. Before the election, there was one attitude, after it, another. It had been debated.

Unfortunately, the bill was not passed. I was lucky enough to have my name drawn. A colleague may come along with an interesting idea—no one has a monopoly on interesting ideas in this House—and could have it debated if the procedure were changed.

[*English*]

Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to voice my support for the member’s suggestion that Fridays should be dedicated to private members’ hour. In fact, if the members so chose, I think the hours of sitting on Friday could be extended. If the members want to debate private members’ business they should not be confined to 8 hours. They could do it for 10 hours or 12 hours so long as they wanted to carry on a discussion of private members’ business. I

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think that would be a very progressive thing to do and might take some of the pressure off making all private members’ bills votable.

I would like to ask the member opposite a very specific question, knowing that he has extensive knowledge of private members’ business and the history of private members’ business in the last couple of parliaments.

We used to have a 100 signature rule that enabled private members’ bills to bypass the lottery. What it meant basically is that if a member could get all party support or the support of three parties in the House then a private member’s bill would bypass the lottery and go directly onto the order of precedence. It did not work. We know it did not work. There is a variety of reasons why it did not work.

However, I wonder what the member thinks about a situation whereby if all bills are votable, rather than requiring the lottery only to determine whether these bills actually come forward, perhaps in this case the 100 signature rule might work in fast tracking bills of exceptional value to the House onto the order of precedence.

• (1155)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, I will begin by saying that I have no problem with the number of hours we sit on Fridays being increased, with the House beginning at 8 a.m. on Fridays or sitting for 12 hours in order to consider private members’ business.

When a member has introduced a bill, it is in his interest to be there when it is debated. If he is told that his bill will be called the following Friday at 5 p.m. or 5.30 p.m., the member will arrange to be there. When we know the time in advance, we can adjust our schedules. This could be one solution to consider.

I find it strange that the member raises the issue of the 100 signatures. The private members’ business subcommittee tabled a report recommending that the 100 signature rule be eliminated, and this was adopted by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The problems we had came up as a result of one of his bills. He is the very one who brought all this to a head. Certain members said that their free and informed consent to the wording of a bill had been altered by amendments introduced by the member, with the result that the consent implied by the 100 signatures no longer necessarily obtained.

I am surprised that the member is bringing up the matter of the 100 signatures, because he is directly responsible. He can try to claim responsibility for the fact that everyone in the House wanted to drop this procedure, but it is not necessarily to his credit and I am not necessarily complimenting him. I personally would be trying to have the whole thing forgotten rather than drawing attention to myself.

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We could perhaps discuss using the 100 signatures to replace the draw. We know that sometimes the 100 signatures resulted in bargaining. Sometimes members were uncomfortable because it was for a fellow committee member and there was the issue of fair play after all.

Even though we are adversaries—I am not saying the fight is fixed; we know that our political opinions differ—we are still able to respect one another. We ask for the respect of members whose opinions differ and we give them our respect in turn.

Sometimes this made us uncomfortable: “So and so is a member of my committee and I cannot turn him down”. I can tell the member that it would be studied. I do not know if that is the solution. As I mentioned earlier in my opening remarks, perhaps the draw, although not perfect, is still the best way of deciding.

* * *

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER REPORT—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Before we get involved in more questions or comments, the Chair would like to make the following ruling on the point of order made earlier today by the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough concerning the tabling of the report of the information commissioner. The Chair wishes to make a brief statement to clarify the situation.

I refer hon. members to Standing Order 32(1) which concerns documents deposited pursuant to a statutory or other authority. I would like to inform members that pursuant to this standing order the annual report of the information commissioner, 2000-01, was tabled with the clerk earlier today. Once a document is deposited with the clerk, it is in effect a public document. Therefore the report is available to members at the distribution counters across the Hill.

I thank all hon. members for the opportunity to make this statement.

* * *

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation for the constructive suggestions that my hon. Bloc colleague made to this debate.

I am really pleased to see that political stripes have been laid aside, that our partisanship has been put aside, because this motion goes beyond politics. It would benefit all individual MPs and would really enhance our ability to do our jobs.

• (1200)

The member supported the idea that Fridays could be dedicated to dealing with private members' business. That is probably a very good suggestion.

Would the hon. member support more time being allocated to private members' business if all bills were deemed votable? If we had one hour Monday to Thursday and six hours on Friday we would actually double the time that would be allocated to private members' business. Would he support more time?

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, I think that if this evening, the hon. member were to take a fresh second look at the speech I just gave, he will see that it might be an excellent idea.

Personally, my focus or deep motivation will be to improve the effectiveness of Friday sittings and to see that six, seven or eight hours are set aside on Fridays, because it has now become ridiculous to sit here on Fridays. We are totally inefficient. I have no problems with setting aside other hours during the week.

I will conclude by telling the hon. member that this is indeed an issue that transcends party lines. It has nothing to do with being a sovereignist, a federalist, a member of the green, blue or red party, or a right or left wing militant, not at all. We are here first and foremost to represent the people. We were democratically elected by our constituents and I take for granted that everyone here wants to further the interests of his or her constituents.

Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to the question, not the one which was just answered, but the previous one, and say that as a new member of this House I think it is important that a mechanism be put in place to ensure that all bills that may be debated really be debated.

The requirement to collect 100 signatures could result in something tantamount to lobbying, because one has to know as many members as possible to get signatures. If this were the case, a new member would prefer a draw.

I am very pleased by the motion of the Canadian Alliance, because it would benefit all members equally, regardless of the number of signatures collected.

I ask the hon. member: Does he endorse these comments?

Mr. Michel Guimond: Mr. Speaker, indeed it had escaped my mind, but we had 45 new colleagues from all parties join us after

the November 27, 2000 election. My colleague from Châteauguay, who proudly and very effectively represents the people of Châteauguay, was one of these new members. As a result, as a new member he may not necessarily share the ties we have forged with colleagues from all parties since 1993.

This, the 100 signatures, is a kind of blackmail, a kind of begging, and I believe we ought to revert to the luck of the draw.

[*English*]

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems appropriate, given that we are debating a motion which has as one of its goals a workable proposal for allowing all items to be votable, to remember that at one point in this place no private members' business was automatically votable.

I say that with particular significance given the fact that the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa and the member for Burnaby—Douglas are in the House, and I am on my feet, and all three of us are the only surviving members of the class of 1979. When we arrived in this place, private members' business routinely came up for only an hour, was talked out and could only be brought to a vote then and there if there was unanimous consent. Generally that involved some kind of skulduggery on the part of people who were in the House at the time.

• (1205)

On the few occasions that things were passed with unanimous consent, they were certainly never voted on. They were only done if they were unanimously agreed to, and that was an unsatisfactory procedure. I say this for newer members of the House because perhaps it has been so long since that was the case that they no longer see the system that we now have as an improvement because what we have today has been the case since 1986. Fifteen years is a long time of doing things a particular way and we have found that it does not satisfy all members. There has been a recurring debate about the wisdom or even the possibility of all private members' business becoming votable items.

We in the NDP feel we can support the motion and intend to support it because we think it would be a worthy task for the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to come up with a workable proposal. I register my skepticism about whether or not this can be done because it would seem to me that one of the things a workable proposal would involve, and this would be my concern with respect to making all private members' business votable, would be some kind of mechanism whereby the House would not be forced to divide on matters that would seem to be frivolous or not worthy of the consideration of the House of Commons.

The McGrath committee in 1985 recommended the procedure we have now. It was thought to be an achievement just to get six out of twenty items to be votable.

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Having said that, the other perspective behind that was that there needed to be some kind of filtering or discerning mechanism to make sure that what came before the House for lengthier debate and ultimately for a decision was worthy of that kind of attention. Any kind of workable proposal would have to give the House, either by special committee, by negotiation or by some way that is not clear to me at this point, a way to make a discernment as to what should come before the House for lengthier debate and for a vote.

I wish the committee well in trying to do this. We are certainly not against the idea because this is something we have all been working on. It was part of the *raison d'être* behind the 100 signature mechanism, which I was skeptical about at the beginning and which ultimately did not work for a variety of reasons. Like a lot of reforms around here, they do not always work out exactly the way they are intended. They have unforeseen consequences, and that was the case with that reform.

However there has been a will, off and on, to try to come up with a better system than the one we now have. I am not standing here today to say that the system we have is perfect, but I am somewhat skeptical as to whether or not we can come up with a better imperfect system than the one we have. We shall see.

With respect to the idea suggested earlier by a Bloc spokesperson, if I understood him correctly, about devoting Fridays to private members' business, the member thought that Fridays were not exactly a highlight of the parliamentary week.

• (1210)

If he thinks the Fridays we now have are not the highlight of the parliamentary week, my fear for Fridays that would be used to deal only with private members' business is that they would make the Fridays we now have look exciting and well attended. We have to be somewhat more realistic about the number of members who would stay in town so they could catch a private member's debate on Friday morning or Friday afternoon.

Maybe I am wrong about this but one of the things we need to do, which would be much better to do and to some extent we do it already, is to embed private members' business in the ongoing routine business of the House so that people are here and so that it happens in a context where members are available and do not have to make a special effort for private members' business.

That is too bad in a sense. One would think, given a lot of the rhetoric about private members' business from many members and from all sides of the House, that people would be rushing in here to deal with private members' business. However anyone who has ever come to private members' hour knows that it is not necessarily the case.

Supply

I would like to put on record my own reservations. I am not necessarily speaking for my colleagues on this when it comes to the Friday analysis because it is not something we have taken a position on, so to speak. I am not sure that the notion of devoting Fridays to private members' business would work as well as some people think it would.

Some of the rhetoric that applies to developing a better private members' business model sometimes comes in the context of a larger argument for giving members of parliament more power as individuals. That is where we really have to look in terms of enhancing the role of individual members of parliament, both individually and collectively.

I say with regret that the modernization committee report which may be debated later today or tomorrow unfortunately did not really do that. It did not change the balance of power in this place so that members on committees, for instance, both individually and collectively, would have more power over the government and the cabinet and would have more independence. Those are the kinds of things that are all critical to empowering the private member, to empowering the individual member.

When the McGrath committee made its recommendations on private members' business, the recommendations with which we have lived for the last 15 years, it made them in conjunction with another set of recommendations having to do with committees that have not been implemented.

We should have taken the full spirit of McGrath and implemented it so that it was not just in terms of private members' business but also in terms of committees. Taking parliamentary secretaries or government coaches off the committees and keeping them off; giving members on committees, particularly government back-benchers, more independence from their whips so that they could not be removed at a moment's notice if all of a sudden they developed an independent thinking capacity or came to be critical of a bill or to see its inadequacies in a way that the government did not like; and changing the rules so that these people could not be yanked and replaced with others would go a long way toward giving individual members more power to do the kind of job that Canadians expect them to do when they come here.

I do not see any point in belabouring the debate. We are in favour of the motion. We hope the committee will be able to come up with a workable proposal. Of course we will do our part when the committee is engaged in that task.

Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just wanted to make an observation pertinent to the 100 signature commentary. I think we all agree that it does not work.

• (1215)

I observed that one of the flaws in making all bills votable would mean there would be 264 MPs who would have the potential of having a votable bill before the House. The problem with that is the reality is that the number of MPs who are actually active in private members' business and who have been activists is comparatively small. If we suddenly say everyone can take part and have a votable item, we will have a lot of people coming forward with bills that perhaps have not been thought out carefully or they are just doing it because they have an opportunity to do it and that kind of thing.

I would suggest to the member that regardless of the 100 signature rule, whether it works or not, surely in this context we need some sort of fast tracking mechanism, some sort of screening mechanism that will make sure that the House debates bills that are indeed worthy of the House's attention.

Would the member perhaps have a comment on that?

Mr. Bill Blaikie: Madam Speaker, I think the member is trying to make a similar point to the one I was making. Whether or not it should be exactly as he describes it is another matter, but I think we both agree on the fact that we want to see the House debate things that either a representative group of the House or the House itself in some way has decided is worthy of the House's attention. It seems to me that that should be a guiding principle of whatever process we come up with.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to my NDP colleague for support of this motion. I agree that we must change the balance of power and empower individual members. He made that statement, and I could not agree more.

He expressed a concern that the House may be forced to divide on matters that were frivolous and that we should have some kind of a mechanism whereby we would prevent those kinds of bills or motions coming forward. My response to that would be that I would rather rely on the common sense of MPs in this place to decide whether something is frivolous or not rather than put in place a mechanism that could be used by others to control issues that come forward here.

I would ask the hon. member: Why are we here? Is it not to make decisions that matter to Canadians, that Canadians deem to be important? Is it not incumbent on us to thoroughly examine and debate issues that are important enough to be brought forward? Should we allow government or certain parties to block certain issues from coming forward? If we put a mechanism like that in place, would it not then be abused?

I really cannot think of any examples of frivolous matters. Maybe the member would like to suggest that, but I would fear

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some kind of a mechanism that could be used to prevent issues from coming forward.

Mr. Bill Blaikie: Madam Speaker, there is a legitimate debate here between people who want to err in favour of protecting the institution of parliament from being perceived as a place where things are considered and voted upon that really are not worthy of the place, and people who would err on the side of the individual rights of members of parliament to cause the House, not just to debate but to have to vote on anything that tickles their fancy.

For instance, what if the member for Calgary West wanted to put forward a private member's motion that the honorary citizenship of Nelson Mandela once it is achieved be taken away? It seems to me that this is something that a committee or whatever process we might set up should have the ability to rule out and should have the ability to say that is a frivolous matter and it is not on.

The member may have some opportunity in procedure to bring it up for debate, and that would be regrettable enough, but to cause the House to automatically have to vote on certain things that would bring the law into disrepute and there are also certain things that would bring the House into disrepute, I wonder whether or not we should have some kind of mechanism for that.

• (1220)

However, I understand the dangers. I understand the worry but that is what we have in terms of the subcommittee. Although the subcommittee is like some courts, it does not have to issue an opinion as to why it chooses some things or not, which is good, because if it did then we would have all kinds of debate about the opinions of the subcommittee as to whether or not it was justified.

I think the system we have actually works not too bad in that respect, partly because the subcommittee does not have to give reasons. We are not then embroiled in a continuous debate about the appropriateness of its reasoning on these matters.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise in perhaps this next to last debate of this session of parliament, and to do so on a supply motion of the Alliance Party.

As for the motion itself, I will speak to that. I agree with a lot of what is in the motion, and certainly the party I represent will be supporting it for any number of reasons. I will get into that.

The first thing I should mention is that I had hoped that the final supply day of the Alliance Party could have put a topic on the floor of the Chamber that was a bit more pertinent to the issues of the day. I can think of any number. Perhaps Bill C-15 could have been one.

We sat in this Chamber and talked about the Minister of Justice not being prepared to split a justice bill, which I think each and every member of the House could accept, with respect to Internet pornography and stalking legislation. It simply would be a matter of splitting off what I consider to be two areas of Bill C-15 which have no business being in the omnibus bill. They are the issues of gun control and cruelty to animals, which are very specifically pertinent to me because I am a member who represents a rural riding.

That issue could well have been debated. In fact, the government of the day could have been taken to task for not doing something that it should have done in order to get the legislation through the House.

Another issue of which the member is very cognizant, and he certainly is a member who is prepared to have a lot of political capital expended on it, is gun control. We perhaps should have had the opportunity to have a debate on the floor of the House today, as it pertains to Bill C-15 as well.

We have a government that has not put a budget together for the House for almost a year and a half. It will be two years before we have a budget. That is a very important issue which we should be talking about today before we break for the summer. However, what we are talking about is private members' business, which is important, but not as I understand it of the most prevalent importance as we head into the summer.

I would also like to say now that I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough. He can take that particular concept from there.

Regarding private members' business, I sit on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and also on the private members' business committee, so I perhaps have some knowledge of which I speak. That may be corrected under questions and comments I am sure.

This is an issue, as the learned member from the NDP knows, the member for Winnipeg—Transcona who has been here since then, since 1979. We know there is an evolution with respect to private members' business. We know that ultimately there will be refinements and changes to a system. We as a society change over the years. We as a House change over the years. We as members of the House representing our own respective constituencies change over the years and require and demand more ability to stand in the House and speak on issues that are very important and prevalent to us.

The member talked about 1979 and referred to newer members in the House and not older members. Obviously since 1979 he would have to refer to himself as an older member. However, I have a lot of respect for the hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona. Being here for that length of time, he knows how difficult it is to move this House and governments of any guise, whether they be

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Liberal or Conservative, to make the necessary changes within the procedures of House affairs.

• (1225)

I am one who specifically believes unequivocally that all private members' business should be votable. I can speak to some experience as recent as last week when I put forward a bill to the House which had been diligently worked on over the last number of months. I felt very strongly about the bill because it specifically impacted my constituents. It dealt with safety nets for agriculture because I felt it was very important that we come to some resolution on that issue. I put forward a bill which in my opinion would have taken us in that direction. Lo and behold the bill was deemed not votable.

A number of members from the Alliance Party and the New Democratic Party, and I spoke in favour of that piece of legislation. Unfortunately, it was limited to one hour of debate, was not votable and died when I gave my final five minutes of comments. That piece of legislation will no longer have a chance to go through the House.

I speak of my own personal experience but every member sitting in the House has had the same experience and can say the same thing. They believe very strongly that with their particular issue it is important to have the vehicle, not only to debate in the House but also to give everybody the opportunity to stand on his or her feet and say yea or nay to that particular piece of legislation. I would love to see the committee work toward that end, and we are. The motion by the member for Yorkton—Melville would also assist us to work toward that end.

Recently in committee we discussed suggestions to change the current model to allow all bills to be votable. There was some difficulty trying to massage this through the necessary model and process.

For example, it was suggested that 264 members of the House could have a private member's bill that was votable. What is the model? Does each member of the House get one votable bill per parliament? Perhaps. This would mean there would be 66 per year depending on when the Prime Minister called an election. That figure of 66 was based on an average of four years, but it could be three and a half or two and a half years. We do not know. However we will use the average of four years.

A survey was conducted and it was found that not all members wanted to have a votable bill or motion. Some did not wish to go through the process or they wished, for their own reasons, not to have that particular tool. That is their decision to make. Nobody should be forced to have a votable motion or bill. However, in my opinion, those who wish to have a votable item should have the ability to have at least one that is votable throughout a parliament. That can be accomplished.

It was also suggested that there should be some criteria available to stop what others may consider to be frivolous. What one person deems frivolous, another person may well deem very serious. Criteria have to be established. Currently within the guise of private members' business there are some criteria already established, but they have to be changed and massaged.

However, it is a fairly reasonable start to say that if a bill proposed by member x conformed to the list of criteria, then it should go forward as a private member's bill, votable within a parliament. If for some reason a committee felt that it did not conform to that criteria, there could be an appeal process built into the system. The appeal process could be to a non-partisan, all party committee. It could be an appeal process from the Speaker or an appeal process from House leaders. Maybe that would be the vehicle to use to make sure that the bill conformed to what we considered to be the criteria.

• (1230)

However what I am saying is that anything is possible. I think we all agree that members should have the right to have their bills voted on. We all agree that there should be a move in that direction.

The motion we have before us today says that the report should be tabled before parliament by November 2001, and I will add please. The committee is working toward that. The timeline may well be a bit limited. As the member for Yorkton—Melville well knows, the wheels of this place move somewhat slowly. Perhaps we will have a break this summer, perhaps not. We may sit until August, who knows. If that is the case, we can keep the committee going. If not, the committee will break. Only coming back in September does not leave a long time to have this report tabled in the House.

Suffice it to say the member is right and the motion is right. We will support it going forward. Hopefully an evolution of this Chamber, this House, ultimately will come up with a solution whereby all members will be happy. By the way, that solution may last for only a short period of time because not all members are happy with everything that is done. We may well have to look at adjustments in the future.

Mr. Joe Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for that. I assure him that I listened to every word he said. He and I are veterans of the private members' process.

I would like to congratulate the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville for bringing this forward today. I think we are having a very good debate. I would like to make a couple of comments and then ask a question.

First, having experienced serve time, I guess, on the procedure and House affairs subcommittee on private members' business, I know that none of the members would want to leave the impression

that the decision on whether a bill is votable is a partisan decision, because it is one of the few committees that does not have a Liberal majority. It has one member from each party, a chair who does not vote and it operates on consensus. I can say from my experience that given the job we were assigned to do, I thought it worked quite well. It was a case where the decision on whether an item was votable or not was a decision that was truly made by our peers.

At some point here I think some members might have been misinformed in some of the debate on private members' business, leaving the impression that this was a committee where the Liberals had the majority and the iron hand of the whip was dictating what was done. That simply was not the case.

The issue comes back to what the NDP House leader was talking about. It comes down to a numbers game. If we do not expand the hours for private members' business, and we do the math, we see that we need to have some kind of filter.

When I first sat on that committee we had about 12 criteria, which were known to members, and members' bills were vetted. When members went to the Table for assistance in the drawing up of their bills, they followed those criteria. When we changed those criteria from 12 down to 4, thinking that we were making the process more open, I think we threw the train off the rails. I think that it then became a subjective process as opposed to an objective process.

I intend to support the motion, but I will be on the receiving end of this in the procedure and House affairs committee and I think what we need is an expanded set of criteria. I think everything that meets those criteria should be votable, but we have to introduce some filters or the whole thing will break down, even with the best of intentions.

I would be interested in the hon. member's comments.

Mr. Rick Borotsik: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct. In fact I have with me a copy of the list of criteria that were originally used. There were 11 criteria, by the way, and they were very detailed. I was listening to every word the hon. member said. That comes from a committee meeting, Madam Speaker, and it is kind of an inside issue.

We used to follow 11 criteria. That has been changed to five, whereby it does allow us certainly an ability to deal with those private members' bills and motions that come forward and perhaps do not fit or are perhaps, as the hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona said, a little frivolous. I think we can deal with that.

As for the private members' business itself, the member is correct: where it is non-partisan it is dealt with by consensus. The problem is that we must choose a number from a number, like 10 out of 30. Every time I sat at that table and we chose the ten, the six, the five or the three that we had to plug the holes with, every

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member sat around that table and said "They are all worthy and I wish we could pick all of them". We could not because we only had three or four or five holes to fill and that was all we could choose, but they were all worthy.

• (1235)

If they are all worthy then let them be debated and let them be voted on. That is what we are here for and that is what we are trying to achieve. It is not simply that there are three, four or five holes to fill. That should not be the case.

We do have consensus within the private members' business committee itself as well within the procedure and House affairs committee. Now we must try to work out the model itself so that it can be workable.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Madam Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to the PCs for supporting making all private members' business votable.

The question was raised as to why the Alliance did not put a more significant motion forward, such as Bill C-15. The member should realize that we have been addressing the Bill C-15 issue every day in question period. As to his suggestion that I should have brought forth the gun control issue as it relates to Bill C-15, the PC member misses the point of this debate, that is, unless we change the system we will be able to do very little to change what happens in the House.

All of us in opposition have been frustrated by the government's ability to block our initiatives. We could debate Bill C-15 all day. We could bring all our concerns forward. It would probably have little effect.

However because of the change we are proposing today, if we have concerns we can bring them forward. That is the whole point of this debate. If we have concerns about certain bills we have very few mechanisms to address them, unless we change the way we do things. That is what we are proposing here.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Madam Speaker, I as well am pleased, as my predecessor the member for Brandon—Souris indicated, to take part in the debate. I commend the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville for bringing forward this matter.

I have the greatest respect for the work he does both in the House and in the committee, but I must echo some of the remarks of my colleague from the Conservative Party. There is an issue that would have been very timely and that is the issue of Bill C-15. I fully acknowledge what the hon. member has said, that this matter has been brought forward, not only by his party but by the Conservatives and perhaps by other parties as well. We would very much have liked to see that piece of legislation enacted, legislation that

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is so important to Canadians and that would have such a profound effect on the law enforcement community in terms of bolstering its ability to combat pornography on the Internet, to combat stalking of children on the Internet, to bring in legislation to protect police officers from those who act violently towards them to try to disarm them.

All of this legislation and more is packed together in the form of an omnibus bill. For those who are not familiar with that term, it means broad legislation that brings together a number of different elements, albeit under the criminal code. Some parties in the House, including the party of the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville, take great umbrage at and have great difficulty with the fact that cruelty to animals provisions and firearms provisions are included in some of the changes proposed by Bill C-15.

That is not to say that this type of legislation in and of itself does not have to be examined. The cruelty provisions in particular are such that we in the Conservative Party and others would like to see them examined. That is why those provisions should be given greater scrutiny at the committee. They should be severed out along with the firearms legislation, which has no connection whatsoever to stalking on the Internet or the perpetration of child pornography.

That bill in its current form is difficult to accept from the opposition's perspective, because we may be vehemently opposed to certain elements of it and yet it is presented in such a way that if we do not take all of the legislation part and parcel, if we were to vote against it, we would be in the terrible position of voting against 90% of what we believe in because of the 10% we have difficulty with. It is akin to going to a yard sale, seeing a box of items and wanting to buy 90% of those items. There are a number of items that we do not want to have anything to do with and yet we are told to take it all or take nothing.

What we are suggesting, and have suggested adamantly, is to simply sever part of that bill, to sever out part of that legislation, and we can completely pass the bill. We could pass the bill without delay. It would go on to the Senate and could come into being before we recess. Why are we in such a hurry to leave? Some legislation we can pass very quickly. MPs' pay is an example. We can put that through post haste without any delays, yet this important legislation that would impact on peoples' lives is going to languish on the order paper over the summer.

• (1240)

This supply day motion is on an important issue that is receiving attention in a number of committees, not only in the procedure and House affairs committee. We had an opportunity to review this exact issue at a recent special committee that was chaired by the Deputy Speaker of the House. This committee has been meeting over the past number of months and has now tabled a report which

will be the subject of a debate in the House at some point in the near future.

Unfortunately the clock is running again and the government is champing at the bit to shut down the House of Commons. In fact there was a motion moved today by the House leader for the government. What that motion does, Madam Speaker, as you know, is essentially limit any real examination or any real opportunity on the part of the opposition to stand up and vote.

Mr. Derek Lee: Relevance.

Mr. Peter MacKay: I know the hon. member is not relevant, but the point is that again an opportunity has been stripped away from the opposition by the actions of the government House leader in saying that there will be but a single vote, that the government by way of a procedural manoeuvre will not allow members of the House of Commons to stand up and express on behalf of their constituents whether they support the government's spending. The way in which this occurs is that essentially we will be passing \$160 billion plus of spending on behalf of the Canadian people without the opportunity to stand up and vote individually on those various departmental expenditures.

That is unprecedented. It is unacceptable. It is undemocratic. However it is very much in keeping with the government's arrogant attitude toward Canadians and toward the House of Commons. We have repeatedly seen the government stripping away the abilities that the hon. member seeks to point out in terms of private members' business, in terms of debate, in terms of votes. We see it time and time again.

I know there is another hon. member present here who is concerned about the transparency of government. We have heard very recently about the information commissioner and his concerns that the public's access to information in the country is in fact being severely curtailed. The ability to get at information through access to information has been limited. We are being told that there will be more information deemed off limits, there will be lengthy delays when those requests are made and there will be fees attached.

The current information commissioner and his predecessor as well expressed themselves in a very open way at a forum initiated by an hon. member opposite, the hon. member for Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, who has taken an extraordinary step as a backbench member of the government and initiated the opportunity to review the access to information procedures. He is being told by John Reid and others that the government is in fact doing a great deal. In fact the headline reads quite clearly: "Liberal leadership to blame for weakness of access" to information. We are being told quite clearly that the information law and the access will be weakened, that the "privacy watchdog predicts more limits, higher fees and longer waits" when it comes to this type of information.

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All of this very much impacts on the rights and privileges of members on behalf of their constituents. It impacts very directly on the functioning of this place, these hallowed halls, on our ability to do our jobs on behalf of our constituents.

More important, it affects Canadians. It affects the ability of Canadians to have faith in this institution and to have faith in the importance and the relevance of what it is that parliament is supposed to do. In the bigger picture and in the grander scheme of things this is what I think we should all be concerned with.

The most direct indication that public faith is waning and failing in the country is the last election, when there were record low turnouts. Those low turnouts speak volumes as to what Canadians hold dear. Unfortunately it is not our parliamentary system right now.

• (1245)

That is why there is concern among members of our party and others that we engage in a debate on private members' business. It is an important part of the puzzle when it comes to improving the ability of members of parliament to do important work on behalf of their constituents, bring forward independent ideas, draft legislation and have it voted upon. In relative terms that is the way the stamp of approval is placed on initiatives from both the opposition and government benches.

We have seen continual resistance to these types of initiatives. We have seen continual attempts to strip away the powers and ability of the opposition to express itself through the Chamber and various other means.

We speak quite duplicitously about modernization and new ways in which members of parliament can be empowered and made more relevant. The real truth or the real upshot is that we are seeing efforts by the government to strip those powers away.

Hon. members opposite may cackle and laugh because they are sitting pretty. They know that if they vote in line with the government and follow instructions from the PMO they will be happy. They will rush home with their pay pocketed, and away they will go back to their constituents to be quiet. That is very much what the government wants. It wants silence from the backbench and a muzzling of the opposition. That is what this is all about.

Mr. Lynn Myers: What about silence now? Sit down.

Mr. Peter MacKay: The hon. member who is yapping now knows nothing about silence. He could not be further from it. It is unfortunate that we will not have an opportunity to debate these important pieces of legislation before the House recesses.

It would have been the preference of the Progressive Conservative Party to bring Bill C-15 forward, split it, pass it through the

Chamber and put it into law before the House recesses. If we had an opportunity to discuss issues of health, taxation and all sorts of other issues that impact on the private sector we would be far—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I did allow a lot of leeway in terms of the content of the member's speech. It is not up to the Chair to censor what is said by the member, but points of order are welcome.

Mr. Joe Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is merely a question, not a point of order. When I look at the reform of private members' business it strikes me that we run a risk if we start tweaking one place and have unintended consequences in others. Does the hon. member not think it would be worthwhile in terms of the process of reform to address the issue of committees?

In a system that is functioning at a high level, a lot of the frustration people are expressing about private members' business could probably be addressed at the committee. However for a variety of reasons, and these are not reasons or rules that we invented, the process seems to be that opposition amendments at committee do not generally see the light of day. They therefore turn up in one form or another in private members' business.

Does the hon. member not think it would be worthwhile to address the issue, role, function and structure of committees and then pick up what is left in private members' business? I feel we are trying to solve two problems at once.

Mr. Peter MacKay: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. He makes an extremely good point. Committee work is perhaps the most useful and productive because it is often done away from the glare of cameras and in a more non-partisan and productive fashion. However the member has hit upon a number of elements of the committee that are most important.

Reasoned, logical amendments are often brought forward by opposition members but the committee structure is controlled very much by the government. This is not particular to this parliament. It has happened in previous administrations as well. Parliamentary secretaries sit on the committees. The chairs are hand picked by the government.

As a result the committee process becomes a microcosm or mini version of what takes place in the House. Amendments, even those which would improve a bill immensely, are turned down. They are voted down blindly because the whip comes down at committee in the same way as it does in the House of Commons.

• (1250)

Anyone in the Chamber who has been affiliated with a party that has been in government, as I have been, must take responsibility

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for that. It was the Progressive Conservative Party which, after having followed the instructions of the McGrath committee to take parliamentary secretaries off committee, put them back.

We must recognize the error of our ways and admit that we do not have clean hands. However if there is now a willingness to change and improve the committee structure, we should by all means do so.

I thank the hon. member for bringing the point forward. It is an important issue in the greater context of how to improve the functioning of the parliamentary system. The committee system is absolutely critical to any type of reform.

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to once again rise in the Chamber to speak to the issue of parliamentary reform. I will be splitting my time with the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, a riding whose name is sometimes tough to get one's tongue around.

The motion today is as follows:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft, and report to this House no later than November 1, 2001, changes to the Standing Orders improving procedures for the consideration of Private Members' Business, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable.

I suggest that we all take a serious look at what we are attempting to accomplish here. I particularly appeal to backbenchers of all parties. The constituents of their electoral districts equally elected all 301 members of the House of Commons but only a select few are ever really provided the opportunity to enact legislation for the benefit of our citizens.

Ministers bring forth legislation from time to time. It all gets passed as there is little substantial opportunity for members to influence the government to accept suggestions or amendments.

Backbenchers must overcome private members' business rules when attempting to advance legislation of importance to themselves or their constituents. To be successful they must have their names drawn in a lottery and then be able to convince the subcommittee in charge of private members' initiatives that the proposal should be deemed a votable item. A member's bill or motion is then given three hours of debate and voted upon.

I fully understand the limitations of time in this place to debate private members' initiatives. Everyone with private members' business on the order paper has an equal chance to be drawn for debate, and that is just fine. Over the past few years I have been successful a few times in winning the lottery, so to speak, which is the way we refer to it around here. I have no problem with the system up to that point.

As a footnote I should point out that I had a bill deemed votable and passed by this place at second reading. I got the bill to third reading in the last parliament but it died when the election was called. I had to start the whole process again when we returned for this parliament. There is some good news in that the substance of my bill in its entirety was incorporated into the recently passed Bill C-7. However I have also had bills deemed non-votable.

The bill incorporated into Bill C-7 was the only time my name was drawn in the lottery in the entire 36th parliament, in spite of the fact that I had private members' business on the order paper about 99% of the time.

After first being elected it took me a few days to get bills drafted and on to the notice paper. I also fully appreciate that well over 200 backbenchers are in competition for the lottery. This goes to show how difficult it is to get one's name drawn. Mine was drawn once in over three years. Some of my colleagues have told me that they have never been drawn.

Getting drawn is just a small part of the battle. It seems almost as difficult to subsequently get one's motion or bill deemed votable. I have appeared three times before the subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Each time I made a very similar case on the merits of deeming my bill votable. In each case my legislation met all the criteria to be considered votable according to House rules. I do not know why the subcommittee approved one bill and disapproved the other two.

I will not second guess the subcommittee. It must be difficult for members to decide on the basis of a five to fifteen minute examination with the presenting member of parliament.

● (1255)

I expect that most, if not all, private members' initiatives meet all the qualifications for being votable. Otherwise, why would members even try?

While I will not question or second guess the subcommittee, I will point out some of the problems or questions that arise from a process that does little to enhance House procedure and reputation.

First, the subcommittee has recently not been taking full advantage of its powers to declare motions and bills votable. At times the full complement of items is not deemed votable. The subcommittee can deem up to 10 items votable but seems to seldom go that far. It apparently keeps some space in reserve but that does little to encourage members who are arguing for votability.

I had to wonder about that when my legislation was unsuccessful. Why was my bill unsuccessful when there were vacancies on the votable list? Does the committee determine votability on the basis of party affiliation or favouritism toward certain members of the House? I am not saying it does but the question must be raised.

Is the subcommittee playing politics with private members' business? We all know this whole place reeks of politics, so that too is a fair question.

Private members' initiatives can cover a multitude of issues, almost everything under the sun. I often wonder how committee members can be up to speed on all issues of environment, finance, justice, health, technology or what have you. How can members of the subcommittee know the importance or relevance of all initiatives presented to them on the basis of only a five minute presentation by the sponsoring member and the opportunity to ask a few questions? How can they weigh the benefits of one presentation over another?

Members of parliament may be very capable individuals but I wonder whether we are expecting the unreasonable when we task them to decide on so many disparate issues.

These questions, concerns and others, I should imagine, raise the question of why we do not make all items votable that are selected through the lottery process. Private members' business is the one avenue whereby all backbenchers can bring forth legislation of importance to their constituents and to Canadians.

Why do we allow games to be played to obstruct private members from successfully pursuing the process? If my experience is any example, I was provided three hours to convince this place of the importance of changing the young offenders' legislation. As I said, I was successful.

In another case I was provided only one hour to convince this place of the importance of changing the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. I do not know if I was successful because my proposal was deemed non-votable. The House did not get the opportunity to deal with the matter. Recently some collateral matters of that private members' bill have been receiving a great deal of public attention.

We may all be criticized before long for sleeping at our posts because the subcommittee has spoken for all of us on one issue.

In my other case I suggested that those who commit multiple motor vehicle thefts should face more serious consequences. I specifically attempted to attack what is becoming more and more an organized crime activity. Once again the subcommittee deprived this place of the chance to consider the matter.

I will now briefly respond to skeptics who may think I am trying to mislead or entrap others into agreeing with my arguments. Deeming all items votable would not end the matter. This place would still have the opportunity to vote on each and every issue. For various reasons we all support or oppose private members' proposals. There is nothing wrong with that. If we are forced to make difficult decisions that is good as well. If we are to be paid at

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the level of senior executives we should expect to be forced to earn our keep, so to speak.

When decisions concern what is best for the citizens of the country rather than what is best politically, they become much easier and simpler to justify. It is that type of choice we should be considering with this motion.

Lastly, the motion we are debating today merely proposes that the issue be sent to committee for further review. We are not making the final determination today. We are sending the matter on for more detailed and reasoned analysis. It is in the interest of all members of parliament to improve our rules so our work may be more beneficial to citizens. That is, after all, why we are here.

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to this subject. I compliment endlessly my colleague for Yorkton—Melville for having brought it up. It is a wonderful topic.

I was first elected in November of last year, so this is my first term in the Chamber. Unlike my hon. colleagues from Surrey North and Elk Island, I have had the pleasure of having private members' bills drawn twice in the last five months.

An hon. member: Buy a lottery ticket.

Mr. James Moore: Precisely, so I have hit headlong into this.

● (1300)

I am a conservative person and conservatives by nature are cynical people. I subscribe to what George Will calls the "Ohio in 1895 Theory of History", so named because in Ohio in 1895 there were precisely two cars in the entire state and one day they collided. That is a true fact. Therefore, as a conservative, I am temperamentally inclined to worry and believe the worst. However I must say that I have not been disappointed with private members' business. I was quite excited when my first private member's motion was drawn.

When we are campaigning during an election we think people will want to talk about the big issues and the ideological divide between parties. However, when we get to the doorstep and actually talk to people face to face, we realize that the issues they are most concerned with are the bread and butter issues, such as how much money they have in their pockets and whether they will be protected when they go to the park with their kids in the evening. These are the core issues.

In my constituency one of those issues was leaky condos. I drafted a private member's bill, put it in the pool and it was drawn and brought to the House. I was very disappointed when I discovered it was deemed non-votable, as were the vast majority of my constituents.

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However, there is a broader issue here. At the beginning of all political philosophy there is a stark question that is asked: Who shall rule? There are three basic answers, the first being, a few or many. In a liberal representative democracy, the answer to that question is that the many shall rule but they shall do so through the few.

In the greatest single essay on representative politics, *Federalist No. 10*, James Madison said that representation, the delegation of decision making to a small number of citizens elected by the rest, is supposed to define and enlarge the public views.

As Harvey Mansfield, a professor of government at Harvard University says, "the function of representation is to add reason to popular will".

As members of parliament, our delicate task is to listen to the wants and needs of our constituents. Then it is to deliberate over the longings and desires of our constituents and decide how to advance those views as effectively as possible while acting in concert with our campaign commitments, party principles and priorities, and our private consciences.

Once we have arrived at the point where we are prepared to act, members of parliament, other than party leaders and cabinet ministers, have very few legislative tools at their disposal. One legislative mechanism that we do have is the ability to draft private members' bills and motions which may be drawn by lottery to be brought to the House.

In our current parliamentary mode, because our institutions are so out of date, because of our warped view of what is supposed to be competitive federalism and because it is so disorganized, private members' business for members of parliament is a key element for citizens to feel that their representatives can represent their interests, or, if they represent their own personal interests they can be held accountable at the next campaign.

I speak from the prerogative of advancing the two different forms of federalism that can be represented by members of parliament in the House. One paradigm is the Edmund Burke model, which is to say that members of parliament come to Ottawa to pass judgment.

The second view is that members of parliament come to Ottawa to be bugles for their constituents back home. It is a very different paradigm and I want to refresh the House on that difference.

On November 3, 1774, Edmund Burke delivered a thank-you speech to some people who, upon hearing it, may have wished they had not done what he was thanking them for. They had just elected him to Parliament. His speech was to the voters of the bustling commercial city of Bristol. After felicitously expressing his

gratitude, he proceeded to, as it were, step back and put some distance between himself and those who had embraced him. He said, "I am sorry I cannot conclude without saying a word on a topic" then on many minds.

He told them that he rejected the popular theory that a representative should feel bound by "instructions" issued by his constituents concerning how he should vote in Parliament. This doctrine, he said, is incompatible with the duty of a representative. . . a representative should "live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents". But all he was saying was that a representative should hear, understand and empathize with his constituents. "Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinions high respect; their business unremitting attention." But, he said, a representative does not owe obedience. He owes something more than his "industry". He owes his "judgment".

And not just his judgment about how best to achieve what his constituents say they want. No, a representative is duty-bound to exercise his judgment about ends as well as means. His job is not just to help constituents get what they want; he also is supposed to help them want what they ought to want.

Burke was taking issue with something that had been said to Bristol voters by another man they had just elected, a man more pliable to them. Burke noted, "My worthy colleague says his will ought to be subservient to yours." Burke tried to soften the blow of his disagreement by saying that if government were a mere matter of willfulness, an endless clash of wills, then "yours, without question, ought to be superior." "But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that in which the determination precedes the discussion, in which one set of men deliberate and another decide, and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments?"

They were, he said, sending him to a capital, but not a foreign capital. He was going to Parliament, not to "a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates." He should not be guided by merely "local purposes" or "local prejudices." "Parliament," he said, "is a *deliberative* assembly."

● (1305)

Many members of parliament come to the House with the view that they are here to deliberate, act and pass judgment on what they think is in the best interest of the whole country and of their constituents.

There is an alternative view, a more popular representative view. Mr. Trudeau had this view and many members of the official opposition have had this view for many years, that their primary responsibility is to come to Ottawa to represent primarily the views of the constituents back home as they best determine what that view is.

The problem with our current system of governance in Canada is that because the Senate is so detached from its responsibility of representing regional interests, and because the Governor General is not a national unifying figure because she is not given a mandate through the electoral process, the House of Commons is bound by the responsibility to represent the private interests of individual constituents, the personal views of members of parliament, the national aspirations of a grand vision for the whole country and the regional needs, desires and differences among the federation.

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It is very difficult for individual members of parliament to fulfil all those tasks within what is supposed to be a competitive federalist model. We have been handcuffed into that because of the outdated institutions of the Senate and, in my view, of the Governor General, and the fact that this House of Commons is more often than not a rubber stamp.

I was faced with this on May 9 when my private member's motion was debated in the House. When I was standing and speaking to my non-votable motion, there were so few members in the House that I half expected tumbleweeds to blow through because it was so poorly attended. That is a reality. If there is not going to be a vote, then private members' business debates on motions and bills mean nothing. We are wasting, whatever it costs, about \$100,000 an hour, to keep this institution running, and there is no point at the end of the line for having done that.

Canadians should know that once a member puts his or her private member's bill or motion into a pool it is drawn. The member then has to appear before a committee. The committee is known as the subcommittee on private members' business of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, whose chair must have the largest business card in the history of western civilization.

In order to make a private member's bill votable, the bill must meet five criteria, as the member for Brandon—Souris mentioned, and these criteria are entirely subjective. The third criteria states that bills and motions should concern matters of significant public interest.

In order to get a private member's bill or motion made votable, it must meet all five criteria. The committee, which is dominated by the government, must give unanimous consent in order to make a bill votable. One of those criteria, that bills and motions should concern matters of significant public interest, is defined by whom?

As I said, in the last campaign people told me that they wanted me to go to Ottawa and address the issue of leaky condos because it was a significant local issue affecting over 10,000 people, so I did that. I drafted a private member's bill and was lucky to have it drawn. I then went to a committee where it had to be unanimous that my motion be made votable, and one of the criteria was that bills and motions should concern matters of significant public interest. My issue was of relevance only to the lower mainland of British Columbia. There was not one single British Columbian on that committee. How would members of that committee know if they do not live with the constituents who are impacted by this issue?

I therefore emphatically support the motion and I am encouraged that it will pass tonight. It is a step in the right direction. It should have happened a long time ago, and passing it will send the right message that we are undertaking the first steps of modernizing this institution.

• (1310)

Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I like the member's enthusiasm. He has raised an important issue on behalf of his constituents. It is a file that I am familiar with. A member would certainly want to have local issues, particularly regional or issues that are not necessarily national, brought to the fore with the ultimate objective of making sure the government becomes aware and that action is being taken.

I would ask the member to comment on the problem that sometimes we have issues that are urgent in nature which require action in months. Having been a parliamentarian since 1993 I have had a number of bills and motions before the House, a couple of which have been votable. The process takes an awful long time.

By the time a bill or motion is drawn, goes through the process of getting votability and getting on the list, we get our first hour of debate. We wait 30 sitting days to get the second sitting hour and another 30 days for the third hour and a vote. Then it goes to committee. I actually had a bill that was tied up in the process for almost two years.

Does the member think we should be sensitive to making private members' items more relevant to long term policy rather than short term issues?

Mr. James Moore: Madam Speaker, the two words in a democracy that constituents hate to hear most are the ones I will use. It depends. If I look at the sweep of private members' bills and motions that I have read and frankly the ones I have drafted, they are largely non-partisan bills that affect people locally. I keep raising the leaky condo issue. It is not a partisan issue. One cannot take a clear position and say that it is driven by ideological concern. Local issues that are an urgent need can be brought forward.

My second private member's motion that was drawn was supposed to be debated on June 22. It has been moved back to the fall. It would establish a law that would make it impermissible for the Prime Minister to appoint senators for provinces that have Senate election laws.

It is not time sensitive in the relative context like the droughts in Alberta or the water issue in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. If it were established by the committee after this motion is passed and the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster asked me if we could swap slots, that would be an appropriate consideration the committee should take into account.

I caution that private members' bills and motions should have a local emphasis. They should be local concerns. Some of the issues I have raised in the private members' bills I have drafted, including the one that was drawn, are not issues of concern to Mississauga.

Supply

Private members' bills are drawn and deemed votable. What frustrates a lot of us in the opposition, and I know it frustrates the hon. member as well, is that some private members' bills become votable. The member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine had a private member's bill to create a parliamentary poet laureate. It was drawn and deemed votable. Meanwhile, 10,000 of my constituents are being taxed on repairs to their homes that are no fault of their own.

The member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey had a private member's bill in the last parliament in which he asked the House to consider the creation and the designation of a national horse. That was deemed votable. Meanwhile, private members' bills and motions to have an elected Senate or to give GST relief to leaky condo owners were deemed non-votable.

The examples are endless. There is another one from the Bloc Québécois that asked the House of Commons to call upon the Governor General to ask London to give an official apology to Acadians from 250 years ago. I as a member of parliament from British Columbia, and there is not an Acadian within an eight hour flight of where I live, was in the House speaking to that. If that is an issue of concern for that member, I have to respect that. It has to be debated and brought forward.

• (1315)

In British Columbia we are in a particular predicament. We have six senators and a vacancy. Two other senators have said they want to stand for election. We have only six senators for our province.

In my constituency I represent 135,000 people. It is the third largest constituency in the country. The province of Prince Edward Island has eight representatives for the one, myself, in British Columbia. Because of that individual members of parliament like myself should have the authority to bring forward bills of local interest and get them on the national stage because sometimes the government will not.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I should point out to begin with that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Scarborough East.

I rise to speak to the official opposition motion:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft, and report to this House no later than November 1, 2001, changes to the Standing Orders improving procedures for the consideration of Private Members' Business, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable.

Since the beginning of this parliament six months ago, close to 200 private members' motions or bills have been introduced in the House, which is evidence of the importance MPs attach to these

initiatives. As we are all aware, the private members' business subcommittee selects at random 30 of these items, which are then entered on the list of priorities for debate in the House. At the present time, the standing orders allow a maximum of ten of these to be votable.

Let us point out that contrary to what people might think the work of the subcommittee is carried out in a totally independent manner and the government is not in any way involved.

To have all proposals votable presents certain advantages. The vote enables members to officially support or not support a proposal. This way any doubts members may have on the objectivity of the members of the private members' business subcommittee are eliminated. To some members, this could increase parliament's usefulness in the eyes of the public and give it a more democratic face.

As only ten proposals can be voted on, excellent proposals may be left by the wayside. While the simple fact of raising a question is enough in certain cases, members more often want the House to decide. That way we know more clearly what the House thinks of a question.

There are many disadvantages, however. The number of motions and bills put before the House must manifestly be reduced, unless other changes are made to reduce the number of hours spent in debate. The effect could be to reduce the importance given to each, so that the more important ones currently voted on could receive less attention.

In the opinion of the McGrath committee, mandating a committee of MPs to choose votable motions and bills was a fair and just way to proceed. If all proposals are voted on, members will lose the latitude they enjoy at the moment. They may in some cases want the House to debate a matter without holding a vote. They will not have this option anymore.

In my opinion, the way the House manages private members' business is based on two broad principles. First, members themselves run the process; the government is not involved in it in any way. Second, the members are free to manage their business as they see fit.

I agree with the members who feel that the vote is important, but does the best solution consist in making all items votable? Such a measure would ultimately create other problems for members.

Today, the opposition is suggesting that the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs take a closer look at these issues and submit its report no later than November 1, 2001, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable. This suggestion is perfectly appropriate.

Supply

• (1320)

The committee has been reviewing these issues for many years, thus making it the guarantor of the fairness of the rules relating to private members' business, which are always very complex, and giving it a great deal of expertise in this area.

In recent years, the committee has made numerous recommendations to improve the management of private members' business and strengthen the rules that serve members of parliament.

I expect the committee to determine whether all items should be votable and to look at alternatives, such as increasing the number of votable items, allowing a larger number of bills to be referred to a committee, or proposing other means to allow members to submit to the House issues that are of interest to their constituents and to themselves.

I fully support today's motion and I am anxiously awaiting the report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague on this side of the House. I will make a comment with respect to his speech and use my remarks as a vehicle to address comments which have been made erroneously by some hon. members debating today.

The hon. member who just spoke is a member of the subcommittee on private members' business. I am looking at the *Hansard* for Friday, June 1, which indicates the membership of the various committees. I wonder if the hon. member would agree with me, since he is a member of the committee, that there are six members on the committee of whom two are Liberals and four are opposition members.

A number of speakers, and certainly the most recent speaker, have indicated that the subcommittee on private members' business is dominated by Liberals. I would like the record to clearly show, and the Canadian people to know, that only one-third of the members of the subcommittee on private members' business are Liberals and two-thirds are opposition members. Would the hon. member agree that what I have just said is factual?

Mr. Marcel Proulx: Madam Speaker, my colleague is right in stating that I am a member of the subcommittee. He is also right in stating that there are two Liberals among the membership of the committee. He is also very right in assuming that it is not a situation where Liberal members dominate the committee. It is the contrary in the sense that there are two Liberals and four non-Liberals.

I am not at liberty to divulge details of how we deliberate in camera at the subcommittee. However I do not think anyone needs much knowledge in mathematics to realize that two versus four does not win very strongly.

Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this will probably be my last opportunity to wish you well during the summer. I hope all members have a relaxing summer, notwithstanding what some of our constituents might think.

The reason for the motion is quite simple. A lot of members in the House are pretty frustrated with the whole issue of private members' business. I dare say that the frustration opposition members have expressed is probably matched by the frustration government backbench members feel. Indeed I dare say that certain ministers feel somewhat frustrated in their ability to move departmental legislation forward.

• (1325)

The reason is that government is quite a large entity. It takes a great deal of willpower on the part of individual members of parliament, or indeed ministers, to move a government on items of legislation no matter how seemingly simple or obviously correct they may be. We had an example of that just last week.

The motion is well framed. It speaks to a frustration that exists in the House as to the relevance members feel in terms of their role here.

Usually when a bill comes forward the government's easiest response is to say no. It may say the bill would create too many complications. The reasons it gives are sometimes devoid of logic or common sense, but no is the easiest answer. That in turn creates an atmosphere of exasperation which spills over into cheap politics. We say nasty things about one side and it says nasty things about us.

I will break out some of the ideas that are presently on the table and indicate why I think some of the problems exist. One of the problems we must deal with is the dumb idea. I say with the greatest respect that some of the ideas that go through the House affairs and procedure committee are just plain dumb and should not see the light of day.

Some ideas are awkward and create difficulties for the government. That makes life for us on the government backbench somewhat more difficult. I will use the illustration of the private member's bill with respect to tools for mechanics. On the face of it, who could oppose such a bill? It seemed plausible and sensible so why would we not support a bill of that nature?

The government took something of an ambiguous position on that bill and suggested in the end that the bill would favour one

Supply

class of Canadian taxpayer over another and was therefore not a good thing to do. It then sought to expand the category of person who would benefit from the bill.

Such ideas can also bring us into difficulty on this side because votable motions such as that cost the government moneys in terms of credits or deductions. They therefore limit government revenues and reduce the government's ability to move in other areas it might see as more preferable.

For members opposite that is of somewhat less concern, but for those on this side of the House it is of more concern. That is why I think members on both sides tend to feel frustration. There are no real consequences when a problematic motion goes through the House, costs the government money and leaves it in a very awkward situation.

The question is always how members on both sides of the House will take responsibility for what they are doing. As I say, for members opposite there are no serious consequences. For members on this side, however, there are serious consequences. Ultimately we end up in a situation where we are intellectually lazy and do not weigh all the benefits. When we are uninformed we frankly tend to make poor decisions.

I appreciate that the so-called Kilger commission has done some work on this. Every member believes that his or her ideas are the best and should be votable. My idea of course is also quite brilliant and should be votable. I am going through a level of frustration right now with my bill before the committee. I have basically five minutes to convince some of my colleagues that my bill should be votable.

• (1330)

My bill is very simple. It deals with fire safe cigarettes. The industry has known for years how to make cigarette paper less porous and tobacco less dense, the result of which is a fire safe cigarette. If it is dropped on furniture it meets certain flammability tests and the whole place does not burn down. The irony is that had that legislation been in place a number of years ago this building would not have burned down.

Such legislation has been adopted by New York state unambiguously so that cigarettes cannot be manufactured, sold or distributed in that state without meeting certain flammability standards.

The response I get from the minister and the government is that we cannot do it for a variety of unacceptable reasons. Needless to say, I think my idea is quite brilliant, and I have unanimous consent from those behind the curtains. The chance of my bill actually seeing the light of day is pretty remote.

That is the frustration that all of us face. Setting aside dumb ideas and setting aside the problematic ones, even very good ideas have some difficulty getting out of committee and on to the floor of the House to be debated in some sort of reasonable fashion.

In the way the system is presently structured the determination of votability is based on things that quite frankly are irrelevant to the bill. We end up lapsing into some sort of political speak, whereby members on the government side do not worry about embarrassing the government and members opposite worry that the only good thing is an embarrassed government.

My bill will have some difficulties getting out of committee, not on the basis of whether it is a brilliant bill, a good bill or a bad bill, but on the basis of irrelevant political considerations.

That kind of thing turns Canadians off. They send us here and expect us to be legislators. They have good reason to question how we can be legislators if we set up a system of inertia which prevents good ideas bubbling up and being made available for the benefit of all Canadians.

Hon. members will be considering the motion, which I think is supportable. As it goes forward and returns to consideration by committee, the system should be given some modification. One possible modification might be that each member, once during the life of a parliament, gets an opportunity to insist that his or her bill be votable regardless of whether the committee thinks it should be votable.

It does not mean that members cannot have other bills before committee. It does not mean they cannot argue before committee that they be votable, but they have the opportunity to decide unilaterally.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I enjoyed the speech of the member opposite. It is interesting to hear today a number of backbench Liberals giving an indication that they will support the motion. I thank the member for his speech, for his sentiments, and for his tangible support later on today.

If private members bring forward motions pertaining to the wishes of their constituents, does he have any fears that it could potentially bring them into conflict with their party and with loyalty to their party, which Liberals opposite have been very good at showing at various times throughout the seven years I have been observing it? To a fault they follow their party leadership.

• (1335)

If all private members' business becomes votable, does he see a danger that the government would begin imposing party discipline on private members' business and undo the good that has come in the last number of years where private members' business has been deemed a free vote by all parties of the House?

Supply

Mr. John McKay: Madam Speaker, first of all let me deal with the member's reference to the wishes of the constituents. Some ideas that I receive from my constituents frankly should not see the light of day as they are awful. I am elected as a member to exercise judgment. There are ideas, however, that should see the light of day and that I should be able to advocate.

For a government member the equation becomes somewhat more difficult because, first, we have to deal with the issue of confidence. When dealing with the issue of confidence clearly a government member cannot be seen to be voting against the government on a matter of budget or money bills. It is certainly within the narrow confines of a budget and possibly even extended to money bills.

The second difficulty is the area of platform. If my party or the member's party ran on a platform and a motion is inconsistent with the platform, I would say that government members would have difficulty.

The third is the throne speech. If an initiative is not consistent with the throne speech, I would say a government member would have some difficulty supporting the initiative. Having said all of that, we would have to argue a government member into having a whipped vote at that point.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Surrey Central to participate in the debate on the Canadian Alliance supply day motion asking that all items of private members' business votable in the House. It reads:

The House does not attach any great importance to private members' business as it is now organized. This is evident from the fact that members are seldom greatly concerned to claim the priorities they have drawn in the ballot governing the use of private members' time, and this is largely because private members' bills and motions rarely come to a vote.

This was the observation of the McGrath committee in June 1985. It is as true or even worse today. Of the private members' bills and motions introduced in the first session of the 36th parliament less than 16% were drawn and under 4% were votable. In the second session, just 9% were drawn and less than 3% were votable.

In the 37th parliament 8% of private members' bills and motions were drawn and only 1.6% were votable. That is less than 2 out of 100 votable items. The ratio of votable private members' bills for the Canadian Alliance is so far one-third of the average of the House in the current session.

There is certainly something wrong. This emphasizes a dire need for reform of the House of Commons to restore to private members an effective legislative function, to give them a meaningful role in the formation of public policy, and to restore the House of Commons to its rightful place in the Canadian political process.

Some years ago it used to be said that members of parliament were nobodies outside the House of Commons. Under the arrogant Liberal government, members of parliament are nobodies inside the House. MPs are rubber stamps and backbench MPs are used as pawns by the Prime Minister's Office where the power is concentrated. As a result, members of parliament are frustrated and many lack morale and initiative.

Some hon. members: Are you talking about Liberals?

Mr. Gurmant Grewal: Yes, backbench MPs. The Liberals curtail, cut off and close debate. They vote for time allocation more often than ever before. There are no more free votes in the House, particularly on the government side. I bet that sometimes backbenchers do not even know what they are voting on. Committees are a farce and a partisan exercise to keep backbenchers busy. Their priorities are often wrong and their deliberations become good for nothing exercises.

● (1340)

Question period has become a circus. Some ministers are consistently in the habit of rejecting even the preamble to legitimate opposition questions. There are no answers given to legitimate and serious questions. Perhaps it is true to its name; it is only a question period and not a question and answer period. It should actually be called the accountability period.

I have tabled Motion No. 291 on the order paper calling for the name change. I hope with a name change that the nature of question period will also change.

Citizens work hard to collect thousands of signatures on petitions highlighting important issues and demanding the government's attention. After the petitions are tabled in the House they gather dust on a shelf rather than get a government response.

Debates have become a joke. Decisions are already made before a debate even commences. Rarely is there a quorum during a debate in the House. Sometimes there are more pages than members in the House. What good are take note debates without a vote?

The officers of the House are regularly snubbed by the Prime Minister's Office, including the auditor general, privacy commissioner, chief actuary, information commissioner and so on.

The Prime Minister has failed to hold his ministers accountable, even after boondoggles and serious unfounded allegations about things like cross burnings. It is no wonder that the public's perception of the integrity and credibility of politicians is so low and that voter turnout has fallen in recent elections.

The Canadian Alliance strongly advocates parliamentary reform and private members' business is one of the serious issues. The Canadian Alliance wanted every MP to have at least one votable item per session but the NDP opposed it.

Supply

Here we are today debating the motion. We are continuing our battle with the arrogant Liberal government to empower members of parliament but it will not. Since I have been a member of parliament I have seen my party dragging the government along while it kicks and screams. The Liberals are dragging their feet on this issue. They talk the talk but they do not walk the walk.

Private members' hour occurs every day. I have spoken on many private members' business items. It is the purest form for MPs, representing their constituents, to truly speak on behalf of their constituents in an attempt to contribute to the legislative process.

MPs work hard with stakeholders to prepare their bills and motions. The legislative branch of the House is involved in getting the bills drafted, translated and printed. Members and their constituents have high hopes and expectations from a bill or a motion.

I would like to give an analogy. When a baby cries, a mother sometimes gives the baby a pacifier. The baby starts working at the pacifier with expectations that something will come out of it. The baby actually gets nothing, even after a lot of work. Eventually the baby shuts up and remains busy. After some time, both the mother and the baby understand each other's role and, as a routine, both become habituated to the exercise.

This is exactly what happens with private members' business. It is an exercise to shut members up and keep them busy for some time with false hopes. It becomes a vain exercise with both the government and the members knowing their roles and what outcome to expect.

• (1345)

Veteran MPs know the usual outcome. They have a lower standard of expectation and aim for highlighting issues just for publicity purposes. This can bring media attention to some of the issues. That is the best outcome to be expected from private members' business rather than it becoming a law. The government keeps members busy and this bars them from lobbying the government.

There is no use for private members' business unless it is votable, adopted in the House and some concrete action is taken as an outcome. That is why the official opposition is trying to get the government to realize this and help change the procedure.

We are here to make laws. We are legislators. We should be working on legislation and voting on legislation. When an MP goes to the trouble of working the legal beagles in the House to the point where he or she develops a private member's bill, the bill deserves debate and a vote.

When was the last time a private member's bill was passed? Rarely, hardly ever. In the last parliament I submitted sixteen different private members' items, four of which were bills. I even had two motions for the production of papers. So far during this

parliament I have half a dozen motions and almost as many bills prepared.

However I am not optimistic about having the government debate and vote on any of the items that are important to the people of Surrey Central. The Liberals will try to ensure that the voices of Surrey Central and other members in the House are muted. My whistleblower bill cannot even get to debate stage.

The process is very disappointing. The Liberal chair of the subcommittee has control. Unanimous consent or unanimous agreement has to be reached before an item can become votable. It does not work. Members on both sides of the House are frustrated.

We are looking forward to making meaningful change in the House. One of the initiatives in that change is that private members' items have to be votable. There is no use debating when we cannot vote.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to be able to enter into this important debate. I was curiously interested in the comments of other members who thought that we as official opposition would have used this occasion, the last supply day motion before summertime when we go to work in our ridings, for a substantial debate on some big issue.

One of the issues listed was the splitting of Bill C-15 into its component parts so that we could deal with problems important to Canadians and to parliamentarians in a reasonable manner. Those problems could be solved instead of playing political games with them as the Minister of Justice is prone to do. Other issues were mentioned as well.

I have a reasonable response to that charge. With the passage of this bill I hope it will do something very important for parliament so that the work of members will be enhanced and all those problems will have another avenue in which they can be addressed through private members' business.

The way private members' business is run right now is disgraceful. We spend many days in the House. Today is the 77th sitting day of the House since the election. During that time we have spent most of the time debating government bills but some time on supply day motions and some time on private members' business.

• (1350)

As a member who spends a lot of time in the House paying attention to what goes on here, I have observed that probably the best ideas and the ones that are most relevant to ordinary citizens come from private members' business.

Many times the government brings forward legislation which obviously is designed simply to facilitate the work of government bureaucrats. Ideas bubble up through the departments to the minister. The minister says to go ahead and draft a bill to be

presented in the House. With the government having a majority, we go through the motions of debating it but it is automatically passed. Many of those things are administrative in nature.

Then there are others where frankly the government totally misses the boat on the aspirations of ordinary Canadians with respect to everything from taxes to the justice system, to the way parliament works.

The debate we have brought forward today will further the work of parliament. Hopefully it will enable us as parliamentarians to do a much better job than we have been able to do because of the restrictions placed upon us.

Members of the public who may be watching television today should know that private members' business is not a very high priority of the government. As a matter of fact, the present standing orders relegate private members' business to the least desirable hours of the day.

On Monday it is the first item, the assumption being that it is difficult for members to get back here after having been in their ridings on the weekend. Thus private members' business is considered while there is nobody here. I resent that because it is very important. Members should be here to hear the arguments and the debates.

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday private members' business is taken up in the very last hour of the day when members are off to receptions and other meetings. They are tired and finished for the day, so there is not a very great number of members who pay attention to private members' business on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On Friday it takes place again in the very last hour of sitting. That is the day when anyone who happens to be left in Ottawa, not having gone home on Thursday, might be here for a debate. In any case members are eager to go and most of them are totally unaware of private members' business.

I have made it a point to pay attention every day to the goings on in the House, including private members' business. As I have said, my observation is that the best ideas, the most relevant to Canadians, are brought forward by ordinary members who go to their ridings on the weekends. During the weeks when we are able to meet with our constituents we get ideas and bring them back as private members' business.

I have an issue which I have not yet formulated a private member's bill on. I do not know whether there is any point. Not long ago a person said that he had to quit his job to look after his ailing wife. If it were his handicapped child he would get a tax credit, but because he is doing it for his wife there is no tax credit. Would that not be a perfect private member's bill? We could include a recognition that some people have to do this for members of their family who are ill.

Supply

I did a little mathematics, as I am prone to do. I looked at the total number of bills and motions introduced during the time I have been in parliament. I was first elected in the fall of 1993. Since then, according to the numbers I was given, there have been 4,136 private members' bills and motions introduced. Some of them were repeats. Many bills and motions are prepared which are never selected in the random draw, so members reintroduce them after prorogation of the House or after an election. Of those 4,136 private members' bills, only 11.8% were selected in the random draw.

• (1355)

I would like to say something about the random draw. When I was a kid at camp many years ago we had a rule. When we went for meals no one was allowed seconds until everyone had a first. I think we should use that principle here.

I have been here since 1993. I have had private members' bills in the hopper. My name has been there but I was not one of the lucky ones to have my name drawn. Therefore I have not been able to put forward a private member's bill.

I propose that the system should be changed. At some point in time all currently elected members of parliament should be put on a random order list. I would be willing to provide the computerized process to do that, if necessary. Everyone would be on the list and no one would get back on it until he or she gets to the bottom. It would go sequentially.

If we are interrupted by an election or there are members that resign for some other reason, their names would be taken off the list and be replaced by other members' names being added to the bottom of the list as they are elected. I would like very much to support that notion.

I also believe that every bill should be votable. I do not have the fear of some that the House of Commons will become irrelevant or that members will waste their time. If we had a rule that each member could only have one bill or motion before all other members have had one, we could be assured that no member would waste that opportunity. They would put up their very best bill, their very best motion, to have it debated and voted upon. If it is a dumb motion or dumb bill the House would rule on it and it would be defeated, provided that we have a free vote on such things.

I have another concern. If every bill is votable I fear the government will start interfering and will start pushing party discipline on the outcome of the votes on private members' business. Some private members' bills could serve to be a slight embarrassment to the government.

I have used up my speaking time, but I look forward to questions and comments which I am sure will come after question period today.

S. O. 31

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

ABDUL GILL

Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perseverance and dedication to one's job pays off for those who pursue their quest. Forty-two year old Abdul Gill of Halifax just recently became one of the Canadian air force's newest and oldest recruits, and certainly a very talented one.

Originally from Pakistan, Mr. Gill has experienced flying MiGs and Mirage fighter jets both as a pilot and as an instructor. Now he wants to sit in the cockpit of one of the Canadian F-18s.

Mr. Gill moved to Canada nine years ago and ran a corner store and gas station. He recently finished officer boot camp. While he knows he could be posted anywhere in the Canadian armed forces, flying remains his job of choice. Mr. Gill is an example to all of us who have a goal and a drive to succeed.

I congratulate Mr. Gill on successfully completing his officer training and wish him every success in becoming one of Canada's proud fighter pilots.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, when the price of gas goes up the government's gas tax revenues go up as well because of the 7% GST that is on top of the cost of gas and the other excise taxes.

We are going into a long, hot summer of rising gasoline prices. The federal government does not need the co-operation of the provinces to eliminate the GST on gas. The government can help reduce gas prices but it has not.

In fact an analysis has shown that if it were not for gas taxes Canada would have cheaper gas than the United States, but this federal government refuses to act. I call upon the Minister of Finance to make a difference in gas prices by removing its GST component.

* * *

GARY NORTON

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the wonderful volunteer efforts of Mr. Gary Norton of Burlington.

• (1400)

Mr. Norton went on two CESO assignments with the Central Reserve Bank of Peru. During his first visit, he assisted in the

creation of a new statistics system and recommended that the bank install a project manager to oversee its successful implementation. Using his expertise of payment systems from Canada and Peru, Mr. Norton authored a report that will allow the existing Peruvian system to improve and evolve to meet Peru's statistical needs into the future.

In this International Year of the Volunteer, volunteers like Gary Norton are positive role models in communities around the world. Mr. Norton's contribution to the Central Reserve Bank of Peru demonstrates the best of Canadian values. His wealth of experience and generous spirit make him an exemplary grassroots ambassador.

I ask all my colleagues to please join the friends and family of Gary Norton in commending him on his impressive accomplishments in Peru.

* * *

TRANSPORTATION

Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday at the smog summit in Toronto, the Minister of Transport announced a commuter rail strategy to help increase services in the areas of Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa.

I am both excited and delighted in terms of what this announcement means for my riding in Nepean—Carleton. Starting the Ottawa-Montreal service from south Nepean or Barrhaven means that both commuters and travellers to Montreal will enjoy a new service and new facilities. It is expected that a new station, estimated to cost between \$2.5 million and \$3 million, could be completed sometime next year. This station will also be a significant convenience for travellers to Toronto.

This particular project is a great example of the federal and municipal levels of government working together on a project that people of my area want and need.

In this regard, I would like to thank both the Minister of Transport and Mayor Bob Chiarelli in the city of Ottawa.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SENIORS MONTH

Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleagues and all Canadians that in most provinces June is Seniors Month.

[*English*]

It is a time to celebrate the contribution that seniors bring to our communities and to reflect on the impact that Canada's aging population will have on our society.

Seniors play an irreplaceable role in our lives. They provide caregiving and support. They act as advisers. They offer a sense of continuity and transmit knowledge and values between generations.

[Translation]

During this International Year of the Volunteer, we have one more opportunity to salute our seniors. Large numbers of them give of their time and energies to benefit their communities. In fact, this is the age group that gives the most volunteer hours.

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage you and our colleagues to take part in the celebrations of this special year and of Seniors Month in particular.

* * *

[English]

IMMIGRATION

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, nine illegal immigrants were landed by boat on the B.C. coast. In 1999, 600 illegal immigrants landed on B.C.'s shores.

The Liberal government then promised action regarding sovereignty for our coast line, but actions speak louder than words. Aurora surveillance aircraft from Comox has had its flying hours reduced from 12,000 hours to 8,000 hours. Pilot and crew training requirements are the same but other client services, especially coastal surveillance, have been reduced significantly.

This is not an illegal immigrant issue, this is a sovereignty issue.

Why is it that foreign boats can cross the Pacific, reach Canadian landfall and be outside the 200 mile limit again before Canadian authorities know anything?

A strong surveillance deterrent for narcotics and other criminal activities is required.

Coastal residents in my riding know our surveillance is lacking and that the national interest is being managed poorly. When will the government get serious about Canadian sovereignty?

* * *

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, recent reports indicate that since last September at least 600 people have died in outbreaks of violence between Israelis and Palestinians.

For every tragic death in the region, families on both sides suffer from the devastating loss of their loved ones. Yet their grief is quickly lost in the headlines with news of yet more innocent lives sacrificed to a senseless cycle of violence.

S. O. 31

I wonder what it would be like if every family were to see and feel the grief and suffering of the mothers and fathers on the other side.

Surely the voices of peace will prevail. I join with my colleagues, and indeed all Canadians, to call on the leaders in the regions to make peace a priority.

* * *

● (1405)

[Translation]

MARYSE CARMICHAEL

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the first time in its 30 year history, a woman, Captain Maryse Carmichael, is flying with the Snowbirds aerobatic team.

Her popularity was very much in evidence at the various performances at the Quebec City air show this past weekend, attended by over 100,000 people in all. Many of these came especially to see Number 3 pilot in action.

Captain Carmichael did not disappoint. As inner left wing, she excelled in close formation flying and in low level aerobatics, proving without a doubt that she can hold her own in the elite world of aerobatics.

Despite her celebrity, this native of Beauport has retained a simplicity and wisdom of which her parents, Jean-Yves and Francine, can be proud.

When asked recently about being a role model for girls, she replied that she was one for boys as well, adding "When a person wants to do something that has never been done, that does not mean it can't be done. If you work hard, the results will come. No doubt about it".

Bravo to Captain Carmichael. We are proud of her.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased during the last parliament that the Prime Minister persuaded the provinces to make a deal on health care and the children's agenda. This was a major step forward.

However, we must still work at strengthening the federal role in health matters.

In the end, it is only the federal government that can ensure nationwide standards. Only it can make sure that all Canadians, not just some regions, get the health care and early childhood support that they are entitled to.

Our health care system is designed to be universal, portable, comprehensive, publicly funded and publicly administered. Let us keep it so.

S. O. 31

GRADUATION

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, as we prepare for summer recess tens of thousands of young lives are about to change forever.

It is graduation season in our high schools, colleges and universities. The hours of hard work these young people have taken on is about to be rewarded.

As a former school principal I was never more proud of each graduating class after watching youngsters grow into independent thinkers ready to take on the world. The enthusiasm and energy each graduating class had brings back warm memories each June. These young lives hold the future of Canada in their hands and we should look to them for our inspiration.

I am sure each and every member of this House has fond memories of their own graduations. I would ask members to join with me in the last five seconds of this statement to wish the very best to all the graduating classes all across Canada.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, founded on July 15, 1901, this year the International Union of Elevator Constructors celebrates its 100th year anniversary.

The IUEC has a total of 10 locals across Canada which represent more than 2,500 mechanics and helpers who build, maintain and service elevators, escalators and moving walkways. IUEC has become the most qualified and trained constructors of elevators in the world. Without their skills and expertise the modern city could not be the reality that it is.

This August, delegates representing locals from across Canada and the United States will gather in Toronto for their IUEC international convention and to celebrate their centenary.

I want to congratulate and extend congratulations to all members of the IUEC on the milestone of their 100th anniversary.

* * *

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on June 20 the world will celebrate the first ever World Refugee Day. The theme this year is respect, respect for the rights of refugees worldwide and for the contributions they make to our societies.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the 1951 refugee convention, born out of the horrors of World War II and the will of the international community never to witness them again. Fifty years

later, the convention still remains a necessity today. Millions of people are living in refugee camps under difficult conditions or are trapped within the borders of their home countries unable to escape the horrors of conflict or persecution.

We owe it on this day to ensure our laws enshrine the values of justice and fairness for all refugees and we can start by bringing Bill C-11 in line with our international human rights obligations.

Let us honour the first World Refugee Day by strengthening our commitment to refugee protection and welcoming those who come here in search of the freedom and security we take for granted.

* * *

● (1410)

SAINT JOHN ARMY CADET CORPS

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honour today to rise in support of the 1691 Saint John Army Cadet Corps, affiliated with the 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, of which I am the only female honorary gunner in Canada.

This past weekend the young men and women of the 1691 Saint John Army Cadet Corps held their 60th annual inspection parade and were reviewed by the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, Madam Trenholme.

Having witnessed firsthand the commitment of these young Canadian citizens, I must remind the House of the invaluable service provided by the Royal Canadian Army Cadets. There is, in my view, no better training for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship than that offered by the Royal Canadian Army Cadets.

I must urge the government to renew and restore its financial support for our cadets and to assist in any way possible in the recruitment of new cadets each and every year.

When so many young Canadians are feeling alienated from the institutions of our country, the Royal Canadian Army Cadets gives them a reason to believe in their country of Canada. We thank them for their service as we also thank our Canadian armed forces personnel, for the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Mount Royal.

* * *

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I join my words to those of the member for Ottawa Centre. As a tenuous Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire hangs on a thread and threatens to explode into violence, it is more necessary than ever that the parties adhere to the recommendations of the Mitchell commission, including: first, the unequivocal and unconditional cessation of all acts of terrorism and violence; second, the cessation and desisting

Oral Questions

from all acts of incitement, for it is this teaching of contempt, this demonizing of the other, particularly that which is government sanctioned, where it all begins; third, the ending of the culture of impunity and the bringing of the perpetrators of acts of violence and terrorism to justice; fourth, the institutionalization of security co-operation between the parties so as to pre-empt acts of violence and incitement; fifth, the promotion of a culture of prevention through the institutionalization of confidence building measures; and sixth, the recommitment to direct negotiations between the parties as a basis for a just and lasting peace.

* * *

[Translation]

CENTRE DE LA NATURE DE LAVAL

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Centre de la nature de Laval, an immense garden built from scratch in an unused quarry, welcomed one million visitors in 2000, who came for relaxation and for cultural and family activities.

As part of the Grands Prix du tourisme québécois on May 11, the Centre de la nature won the Kéroul award, an annual award that goes to an organization whose facilities are particularly accessible to people with disabilities.

The Comité consultatif conjoint pour l'accessibilité des personnes handicapées and the Centre de la nature overcame all obstacles, as the construction of a play area safe for all children, regardless of their level of development and independence, testifies.

As a recipient of the Kéroul award, the Centre de la nature joins other prestigious recipients, including the Cité de l'énergie, Forillon park and the Musée d'art de Joliette.

I am proud to congratulate and thank, on behalf of the people of Laval, the Centre de la nature and organizations that work to improve the living conditions of people with disabilities.

* * *

● (1415)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: Hon. members, on your behalf, I would today like to thank our pages, who have worked for us over the year. They worked very hard in two parliaments, and we are very grateful for all they have done.

[English]

I also want to join members in giving all the pages our very best wishes for continued success, not just in your next few years of university work but also in your careers thereafter. I must say we

all look forward to your returning to this place either as employees of the House or as elected members of parliament.

[Translation]

I wish each of you good luck and thank you very much.

[English]

We wish you every success in the future. Thank you for your help this year.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, a forensic expert has said the bill of sale for the Grand-Mère golf course could have been altered.

Could the government tell us where the original is and will the original be available for independent analysis?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think this question should be directed to the Prime Minister's Office. It is a matter involving the Prime Minister's private business affairs before he became Prime Minister and does not relate directly to the operations of the government.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, late yesterday we learned from the ethics counsellor that the original bill of sale exists. The ethics counsellor told us that he saw the bill of sale in the possession of the Prime Minister's personal lawyer, Deborah Weinstein.

We believe the bill of sale could be available for independent analysis without leaving her possession. Will the government allow independent access to that original bill of sale to clear the air of serious doubts?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the air was cleared by the Prime Minister and the ethics counsellor. It is the hon. member who is trying to cast an unwarranted fog and unwarranted innuendo on the reputation of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the Deputy Prime Minister can figure out that the doubts are the reason that we raising this question.

Canadians were allowed access to a copy of the bill of sale. Now the accuracy of that copy has been put into question. Why will the government not commit to allowing access to the original? What could it be that the Prime Minister would be hiding?

Oral Questions

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I again point out that we are dealing with something that does not pertain to the activities of the government or the Prime Minister as Prime Minister.

I really think we should refrain from further comment until we have heard the outcome of the Alliance's consultations with their fortune teller, palm reader and psychic hotline.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we asked the industry minister whether the RCMP had finished the investigations into the alleged forgery of the loan authorization for the Auberge Grand-Mère.

BDC quickly sent that document to the police when it became apparent that the Prime Minister could be implicated. Did the RCMP finish its investigation into the alleged forgery? If not, could the industry minister tell the House when we can expect an answer?

• (1420)

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have said on this side of the House repeatedly that the RCMP is quite independent of government and ought to be independent of government.

If the member wants to consult the RCMP or give the RCMP advice about how to do its job, he should pick up the telephone and call.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I suggest he did not listen to the question, but I have another one for him.

In addition to companies maintaining accurate records, the Business Corporations Act requires that the bill of sale for the share transfer be an accurate document. The minister has the responsibility to ensure that the Business Corporations Act is enforced.

Will the industry minister use his legal authority to require that the date on the bill of sale for the Grand-Mère golf course also be verified by a forensic expert?

Hon. Brian Tobin (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to go back and repeat, first, the member is asking for the government to give direction to the RCMP. Nothing could be more wrong than the government attempting to give direction to the RCMP.

Second, there is a specific act of parliament which prohibits me or any member of cabinet or the House from probing into the private and confidential affairs of Canadian business participants. It is against the law.

First he wants us to direct the law and now he wants us to break the law. I say it is time for him to go home.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, during oral question period, the Minister of Human Resources Development gave her version of the election promises made by the Liberals to unemployed workers in Quebec.

The minister said, and I quote, "we promised to deliver the amendments that have now been passed in the context of Bill C-2".

Is the minister telling unemployed workers that the Liberals' election promises were limited to getting Bill C-2 passed?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government made good on its commitments to repeal the intensity rule, to modify the clawback provisions and to change the re-entrance provisions for parents. Beyond that, we also extended the period to review and monitor the Employment Insurance Act for six years. That will go on.

The work of the committee will be considered and, as has been proven by our track record, we will make changes where changes are warranted.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning at a press conference, Richard Goyette of FTQ-Construction said that the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport promised during the campaign to deliver an in-depth reform of employment insurance that would go well beyond the present Bill C-2.

Will the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport, the one who made a promise on behalf of the government to unemployed workers on the North Shore, have the courage to rise in his place today and tell the House whether his election promises were limited to getting Bill C-2 passed?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made changes to the Employment Insurance Act. We are committed to continuing to work with Canadians to review the impact of employment insurance on their lives and make changes as warranted.

When will the Bloc members admit that they are afraid to go back and face their constituents this summer because they voted against those amendments, with the Alliance Party?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government took advantage of people by promising, in the middle of an election campaign, substantial changes to the Employment Insurance Act, when it never intended to do more than was contained in Bill C-2, which everyone, even the Liberal members, found fell far short of the mark.

Does the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport deny that he promised unemployed workers and unions much more substantial amendments than those contained in Bill C-2 and that he did so to calm the rumble of discontent threatening to upset the Liberal campaign? Could he not rise today and remind the Minister of Human Resources Development that this was the case?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Minister of Human Resources Development.

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us look at what some people said about the amendments in Bill C-2. For example, the building and construction trades department of the AFL-CIO stated “Generally we are supportive of the reforms that are suggested in Bill C-2”.

The Canadian Federation of Labour said “The positive collective measures contained in this bill should be adopted rapidly”. We adopted those amendments rapidly but with no help from that party.

• (1425)

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning, the unions also said that the government had made promises during the election campaign and that, if it did not keep them, it would pay the price.

How can the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport sit by while his government, and this minister, go back on their word?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the real question is how Bloc Quebecois members can go home this summer and face their constituents when they voted against seasonal workers, when they voted against parents, and when they voted against all the important changes that Canadians have asked for in the Employment Insurance Act and that we have delivered in this bill and will continue to work within to deliver.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Kyoto accord is in peril. It is taking a beating from the Bush administration. The Europeans and the 33 nations that have already ratified Kyoto remain steadfast in their commitments, but this government runs hot and cold.

The minister claims that Canada is on track to meet our commitments. Would he explain what is preventing the Canadian government from ratifying the Kyoto accord before climate change talks resume in July?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the same thing is preventing Canada from ratification as it is every other one of the industrialized countries in the European Union and many others.

The reason is that while we have accepted and agreed to targets for various countries for Kyoto, there is no agreement on how those targets will be reached. We are having further negotiations in Bonn in July and I trust they will be successful.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not exactly flattering that the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* today called Canada environmentally insincere. There are dozens of good reasons, urgent reasons, for ratifying the Kyoto accord and only one reason that we can see for Canada’s foot dragging.

Is the real reason for the refusal to ratify the Kyoto accord that this government is waiting for Bush to gain wider acceptance for his feeble alternate climate change scheme and then fall into line?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): No, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, today the Liberal government threw the Magna Carta and the Canadian constitution in the trash can. By using a procedural manoeuvre, the Liberals are denying the members of the House of Commons their right to vote on the contents of \$165 billion in public expenditures.

The government has given itself a raise, refuses to do its job to protect children from exploitation on the Internet and shuts down parliament early. Is this the price for an early vacation for this Liberal government?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find the question from a party whose leader refused to show up here for 18 months and now wants to work one night of overtime a little less than totally sincere.

*Oral Questions***SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, the government had \$100 million in the 2000 budget for the sustainable development technology fund, Bill C-46. The government reintroduced the bill as Bill C-4 in the current session.

Part of this money was transferred in April 2001 in direct violation of section 2 of the Financial Administration Act which designates the end of the fiscal year as March 31. Why do the minister and the government continue to circumvent parliament?

• (1430)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is completely wrong in his description.

In the establishment of organizations such as the Canada Foundation for Sustainable Development Technology one could use specific legislation. One could use the Canada Business Corporations Act or one could use a contract dealing with an arm's length party outside the government. We have chosen an option of the first two in combination.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are concerned over Liberals ignoring the safety of children.

Members of the Manitoba legislature are expressing concern that unless the Liberals stop playing partisan politics with Bill C-15 provincial initiatives to assist children will fail. Why does the Minister of Justice allow partisan Liberal politics to stand in the way of important provincial initiatives?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reassure the House that the only things standing in the way of important initiatives to further protect children are the disgusting, unnecessary antics of the official opposition.

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that the Liberal government is standing in the way of effective child protection because it simply wants to embarrass the official opposition with its laws.

The Minister of Justice is prepared to gamble with the safety of children by playing American style politics. Why does the Minister of Justice not stop rolling the political dice? Why does she not do something for children instead?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would have to say that members of the official opposition do not need any help from us in terms of embarrassing themselves. They are able to do that quite well themselves.

In responding to what the hon. member believes is a serious issue, we on this side of the House have said consistently that we are ready to move on Bill C-15. We will pass Bill C-15 today if the official opposition is willing to move.

* * *

[Translation]

SOCIAL HOUSING

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there are urgent needs in social housing and the government must take immediate action.

How can the Minister of Public Works and Government Services justify allocating to Quebec \$147 million of the total budget of the program to create affordable housing when the province should get \$163 million based on its demographic weight and \$183 million based on actual needs? Why such a shortfall for Quebec?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Quebec will get its fair share, based on its demographic weight, of the total amount of \$680 million that we announced during the last election campaign and included in the throne speech.

I already wrote to Ms. Harel, the minister. I met her in New York on Friday and I told her that instead of issuing a press release she should have read the letter carefully, because she would have understood that Quebec will get its share based on its demographic weight.

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, under the minister's plan, rent for the social housing units that would be built in Montreal would be \$700 per month.

Does the minister not realize that at \$700 per month needy families would not have access to these housing units and that his plan is totally off target?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, Ms. Harel's press release says that a \$25,000 involvement is necessary for these programs to work. It just so happens that we are proposing that \$12,500 come from the federal government and that \$12,500 come from the provincial government. This amounts to \$25,000. I think we are on the right track.

Oral Questions

[English]

JUSTICE

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is odd, is it not, how opposition ethics are blamed for something that cannot pass through the House with a majority government in place?

• (1435)

The reason the bill is not going forward is that it is an omnibus bill dealing with many issues such as sexual predators on the Internet, firearms, cruelty to animals and disarming a police officer.

This issue could have been separated out and the bill would have been passed through the House by now. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice why it is that sexual predators are not a priority of the government.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have made it plain over and over again that sexual predators are a priority of the government and the protection of our children is a priority of the government.

Unfortunately it does not appear to be a priority of the official opposition. We are ready this afternoon to pass Bill C-15. Why do they not put their petty posturing to one side and join us this afternoon in the passage of Bill C-15?

Mr. Randy White (Langley—Abbotsford, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, talk about petty posturing. Three months ago in the House we passed a unanimous resolution to develop a sex offender registry, only to find out afterward that the government had no intention of bringing in enabling legislation to get the thing operational.

It is just another case of the government saying to the Canadian public “We will fix you up with sexual predators; we will bring in the legislation” and it is not doing a damn thing about it. I would like to know why the government is not dealing with sexual predators or a sex offender registry.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is asking us to put a registry in place like some of the states in the U.S., where less than 50% of the people convicted of crime register on the database.

What we have in this country is one of the best databases for police in the world. We work in co-operation with the provinces and territories to make sure we will continue to have the best database to support the RCMP and other police forces in the world.

[Translation]

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this morning we learned that Loblaw's is requiring its suppliers to stop labelling products as GMO free. The government's lack of leadership is creating chaos in the food industry.

Considering how tough the food industry is and considering that now we have a company like Loblaw's resorting to bully tactics, what does the minister intend to do to avoid the situation becoming worse?

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said to the House a number of times, the Canadian General Standards Board is working with many partners in the industry to put in place a system so that we are able to label foods for genetic modification. Those regulations are not in place.

At this time the decision is there from the buyer to work with the seller to arrange how they will accept labelling at the present time, but there are no regulations at this time to allow that to happen.

[Translation]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister seems not to understand the urgency here.

Now we have Loblaw's forbidding its suppliers to provide it with GMO free labelled products. This is not the same thing at all.

Does the minister not see this as a signal not only that the producers of biological food items must be protected, but also that legislation must be passed so that GMO free labelling applies to all products?

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the process and the parties have been in place now for about 18 months in order to come up with a set of recommendations that can be used hopefully in the future for the labelling of products that have some parts that may be genetically modified or that are genetically modified.

I look forward, the government looks forward and the industry looks forward to the recommendation from that body, which, it tells me now, will not be before us until this fall. I encourage that group to get its work done and get its recommendations to us so that we can move forward in this area.

Oral Questions

● (1440)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I rose on a point of order to indicate that the government was spending about \$4 million or \$5 million without the appropriate authority of the House of Commons. Now we find that the auditor general said on Bill C-4 in the Senate committee:

I am concerned about the transfer of large amounts of public money to foundations long before it will be spent on delivering services.

Why does the Minister of Natural Resources, who is responsible for Bill C-4, insist on engaging in shady accounting practices that will not stand up to the light of day?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. gentleman's question is absolutely wrong.

In order to establish a foundation of this nature there are three ways in which the government could proceed: either under specific legislation passed by the House, or under the general authority of the Canada Business Corporations Act, or by contract with an independent third party.

In any event the funding was provided for in the February 2000 budget and duly voted upon by the House.

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, here we go again. A few years ago the Minister of Finance gave \$2.5 billion for the millennium scholarship fund so he could spend the money just before the election. Here we have another slush fund being set up by the government so that it can just spend it before the next election. Therefore—

The Speaker: The Chair has concerns about some of the language being used and I urge the hon. member to show proper temperance in his speech.

Mr. John Williams: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but when they set money aside in a private bank account I have to call it something. The point is that parliament has to know what is going on.

My question is for the minister. When will they keep the public in public business and ensure that the public knows what is going on and how taxpayer money is being spent?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the accounts of my department are audited by the auditor general. The funding arrangement between my department, the

Department of the Environment and the new foundation will be reviewed by the auditor general.

The actual spending decisions by the foundation will be audited by a distinguished, independent auditing firm from the private sector according to generally accepted accounting principles fully within the law and all authorized by the budget of February 2000 in the House.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a member of parliament from Manitoba I am proud of the rich cultural diversity of my province. I am also proud of the government's commitment to create a more prosperous society that builds on the strengths of our citizens.

I understand that the member of parliament for Winnipeg North—St. Paul and Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific was in Winnipeg on Monday to announce Canada-Manitoba infrastructure program funding for the Philippine Canadian Centre. Could the secretary of state share with the House the importance of this project?

Hon. Rey Pagtakhan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Winnipeg South Centre. Indeed I was pleased to announce yesterday on behalf of the minister responsible for the Canada-Manitoba infrastructure program funding for the Philippine Canadian Centre in Winnipeg to the tune of \$900,000.

The centre will help with the settlement of new immigrants to the city and meet the social, educational and cultural requirements of that community and the community at large.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, complaints of grocery store supermarkets discriminating against low income people is a graphic example of why it is imperative to have social condition in the Canadian Human Rights Act. This has been recommended by the commission.

At the very least the government could stagger its own cheques to prevent stores from gouging poor people. Will the Minister of Justice take immediate action to change the way the government issues its cheques and change the act to include social condition in the Canadian Human Rights Act?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I am in a position to comment on how the government issues its cheques, but

Oral Questions

I will take that up with one of my colleagues, maybe the Minister of National Revenue.

• (1445)

In relation to the other issue of social condition, as the hon. member is probably aware, Mr. Justice La Forest undertook a review of the Canadian Human Rights Act. His task force issued a report with over 160 recommendations, one of which was to look at the possibility of adding social condition. We will pursue that as we—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Windsor—St. Clair.

* * *

ENERGY

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wind Energy Association launched an initiative today. Its goal is to create 10,000 megawatts of wind power capacity and provide at least 5% of Canada's electricity by 2010.

At the same time communities across Canada continue to issue smog alerts and thousands of Canadians are suffering from the harmful effects of air pollution.

Will the government take the opportunity today to endorse the association's ten by ten initiative?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of hours I have had an opportunity to receive the document from the Canadian Wind Energy Association. It will be reviewed with a great deal of care by the government.

I would also point out that we have been purchasing green power in the province of Alberta for the last three years. We will be purchasing green power in the province of Saskatchewan before the end of this year. Two weeks ago we signed a new wind power agreement in the province of Prince Edward Island.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence have now admitted that there has been a secret cabinet committee overseeing the replacement of the Sea King helicopters, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell the House what powers that secret committee of his exercised? Did it order changes made to the contract process? Did it recommend splitting the procurement contract?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence and I made no such admission.

There is no secret committee presently overseeing the procurement of the new shipboard helicopter.

The hon. member is so off base he is even thinking of trying to become leader of the Alliance Party.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, let me quote the Prime Minister himself saying that the Deputy Prime Minister "presided over a committee to look at the process of establishing the bids that are out".

I would like to ask a question of the Deputy Prime Minister. During his tenure as chair of the cabinet committee overseeing the maritime helicopter project, did the Deputy Prime Minister receive any representations or any interventions from any companies interested in bidding on this contract?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have heard from a lot of companies, as I think has the hon. member. I want to say that I am not supervising the procurement process. It is being carried out according to the established procedures by the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Yes, we looked in the past at how this process might operate. The work that we did in the past resulted in an open and transparent process. At this stage no request for proposals has yet been made. No bids have been received except the bid of the hon. member to head the Alliance Party.

* * *

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in an interview with *La Presse* last year Madam Tremblay acknowledged that her friendship with the Minister of Public Works and Government Services granted her an insider advantage over other firms in receiving government contracts.

Today we find out that this minister was handing out these contracts to Madam Tremblay as early as 1995. The government will not release even the most basic information about these contracts. When will the minister release the information?

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all contracts awarded by the government not only to this firm but to every firm are done under treasury board rules. These contracts were awarded under various ministers over a six year period of time. I repeat, they were done in compliance with treasury board rules.

• (1450)

Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, let me quote from the interview with Madame Tremblay:

—I know the minister. . .It's obvious that in that sense, it can be said that I have an advantage over others—

Oral Questions

That seems to say it all right there. Why will the minister not release the information in these contracts? What is the government trying to hide?

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a lot of people claim to be friends with the government. However, contracts awarded by the government are awarded under treasury board guidelines and the rules are followed.

* * *

[Translation]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the federal-provincial conference on the harmonization of legislation, Quebec's proposal to introduce ignition interlock systems for drivers who are repeat offenders received the support of 32 of the 33 provincial delegates.

Does the Minister of Justice intend to act on this proposal by introducing legislative amendments to the criminal code quickly to enable Quebec and all provinces to start up a program for an ignition interlock device for drunk drivers who could be repeat offenders?

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in receipt of and well aware of the resolution the hon. member speaks of.

My officials are working with Quebec and other provinces, and we hope to make amendments to the criminal code very soon to permit just that.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this is urgent.

Need I remind the minister that just about every week a child dies, men and women die, because of a repeat offender who could care less about the law?

For once, will the minister act like a minister and have her officials set to paper, in black and white, a bill that could be tabled this fall to fight these repeat offenders and enable the provinces that so desire to set up an ignition interlock device program for these alcoholics at the wheel? This is a serious question.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, drunk driving is a severe problem in society. Too many people die tragically every year. The criminal code is one part of a concerted response to the problem of drunk driving.

As I have indicated to the hon. member, my officials are working with Quebec and others, and we hope to be able to come forward with an amendment to the criminal code as early as this fall.

* * *

CRTC

Ms. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, democracy depends on a competitive and free news media. The decision by the CBC to pressure the CRTC to eliminate the competition for live coverage of Canadian events is an example of government agencies out of control.

For the sake of Canadians, will the minister ensure that Canadians will have a choice when it comes to live news coverage?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that the CRTC has asked for public comment.

I happen to have the phone number of the CRTC here. It is 819-997-0313. I urge all who share the views of the hon. member to please call the CRTC today.

Ms. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, with only the CBC complaining, the CRTC has no right to be in the business of denying choice in news reporting.

Will the Prime Minister act now to ensure that interference with news reporting is stopped?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is precisely that interference we are trying to avoid. I would urge the hon. member, who has expressed a view which I am sure is shared by thousands of her constituents, to take the time today to listen to the CRTC's call for public comment and call 819-997-0313 and please make her views known.

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SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

Mr. Tony Tirabassi (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the most significant outcome of the summit of the Americas was the democracy clause and the commitment that foreign ministers would develop an inter-American democratic charter.

Recently foreign ministers from the hemisphere met in Costa Rica to discuss this issue. Could the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa inform us what action was taken on the democratic charter?

• (1455)

Hon. David Kilgour (Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a little off subject, may I congratulate the hon. Secretary of State for Children and Youth for today obtaining an honorary doctorate of letters from Brock University.

Oral Questions

The charter is moving. The OAS general assembly has considered the elements and 90 days from now—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Dauphin—Swan River.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, less than nine months ago the health minister advised the department of immigration to screen all potential immigrants for HIV and hepatitis B. As of today that advice was rescinded and the Department of Health is now recommending that Canada admit HIV positive immigrants.

I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Health. Why the flip-flop? Are we putting the health of all Canadians at risk?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have now brought the policy of this country in line with that of many others with which we compare ourselves.

The policy recommendation we have made to the minister of immigration is simply that we have mandatory testing for HIV and certain other diseases for anyone who would immigrate to Canada.

If persons are HIV positive they are counselled, informed and provided treatment if it is required. It is non-discriminatory. It is in the interests of public health in Canada and we have confidence that we have given the right advice.

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, conservative estimates state that the annual cost of caring for a Canadian HIV patient is about \$200,000. There were some 200 HIV positive immigrants allowed into Canada last year. That is \$40 million a year.

How does the minister of immigration expect the already overburdened health system to cope?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me clarify the policy for the member opposite. There will be mandatory testing for all of those who want to come to Canada as immigrants. That testing is important because it leads to counselling and treatment. However we are working with the provinces to determine who will be admissible to Canada. Those decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

I want to point out to the member opposite that just as the Minister of Health said, consistent with other countries that accept refugees, there will be no inadmissibility bar for refugees, spouses, partners and dependent children. That is the right thing to do.

[*Translation*]

REVENUE CANADA

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a taxpayer from my region filed his income tax return in French, as usual, but received a notice of assessment that was in English only. He was told that this was because he had omitted to check off the box to specify his preferred language.

Could the minister responsible for official languages tell us if his new policy is to consider all Quebecers as anglophones unless they clearly identify themselves as francophones?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we know, all the departments must comply with the Official Languages Act.

Of course, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency provides services in both official languages, but mistakes can sometimes occur. If this is the case, I would ask people to contact the agency to correct the situation.

However this works both ways, because I personally once received a notice in English from Revenu Québec.

* * *

[*English*]

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Rural Development. Yesterday the secretary of state attended a conference in Thunder Bay with community futures development corporations.

As a rural member I am very interested in the outcome of that conference yesterday. Could the secretary of state tell us of any new initiatives that were announced?

Hon. Andy Mitchell (Secretary of State (Rural Development)(Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to meet with the community futures organizations from across Ontario and to celebrate with them their work with small business in creating wealth and creating jobs.

To that end we are undertaking a number of new initiatives, including a pilot project to increase their lending limit from \$125,000 to \$500,000, a new common identifier so that businesses will be better able to access community futures and, in order that community futures across the country can learn from best practices, we are establishing a national network of community futures.

Private Members' Business

● (1500)

On behalf of the Minister of Industry and the secretaries of state responsible for the regional development agencies, I am pleased to announce \$600,000 to that end.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources recently stated that the solution to the agricultural income crisis was that farmers must diversify. However, for years he has steadfastly refused to end the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board which is an impediment to diversification. In one breath he tells farmers to diversify and in another refuses to remove the impediment to diversification.

The minister should either stop speaking out of both sides of his mouth or end the punitive monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board. Which will it be?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact the Canadian Wheat Board works very hard with farmers and others to encourage diversification and value added.

I think the hon. gentleman's criticism is a little bit off base. He is speaking as if the Canadian Wheat Board were the worst abomination in Canadian public life. According to his good friends, that position is already occupied.

* * *

[Translation]

AIR TRANSPORT

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, airline pilots are falling asleep in the cockpit, thus endangering the safety of their passengers, because Canadian rules governing the number of hours pilots can spend at the controls are among the least restrictive in the world.

Is the minister waiting for a disaster to happen before taking steps to ensure that in the calculation of the maximum number of hours pilots may work a distinction is made between time at the controls and overall duty time as is done in other countries, including the United States?

[English]

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have to remind the hon. member that Canada's safety standards in aviation are unparalleled in the world. We run the safest aviation system and that is recognized by other countries in the world.

I would caution my friend to not get the wrong impression from one set of newspaper articles which interviewed a number of people. Who knows what the agenda is?

Airline travel in this country is safe. Pilots do their job. I would ask the hon. member to look at the facts and not at the rhetoric in this case.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Adrian Severin, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

NELSON MANDELA

Mr. John McCallum (Markham, Lib.), seconded by the hon. members for Windsor West, Medicine Hat, Laurier—Sainte-Marie, Winnipeg—Transcona and Calgary Centre, moved:

That this House, recognizing the great moral leadership provided by Nelson Mandela to South Africa and to all humanity, agree that he be declared an honorary citizen of Canada.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise with a sense of both pride and humility, pride to be part of this process but also humility because I think the more one learns about Nelson Mandela the more one realizes that one is not worthy to so much as gather up the crumbs from under his table.

In defence of such admittedly extravagant language, if I had to defend it in a sentence I would say that he forgave his tormentors. Who in this House, in this country and on this planet would do likewise? He forgave his tormentors and those of his people.

● (1505)

With respect to the hon. member for Calgary West, talking about going from one extreme to another, all I would say is that I believe Mr. Mandela himself would agree that in a democracy everyone has the right to his or her opinion, however off the wall that opinion might be.

[Translation]

In our time I know of three leaders who were sent to prison and whose causes inspired the world.

There was Mahatma Gandhi, who was assassinated before being able to reach his goal of democracy. There was Martin Luther King, who reminded his mighty nation that there were two classes of

Americans, separate and unequal. He too was assassinated. And then there was, and still is, Nelson Mandela, who led the people of South Africa on a long march to freedom.

At that time, while many other countries were indifferent, Canada, and all political parties in Canada, beginning with the Progressive Conservative Party of John George Diefenbaker, supported Mr. Mandela.

[*English*]

Only once before in our history have we honoured a foreigner with our own citizenship, and that was Raoul Wallenberg, the great Swede who saved the lives of 100,000 Jews during World War II.

Now, in his sunset years, Mr. Mandela's long trek has only one more objective outstanding, and that is the children of Africa who he will help through his Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, to help give to them what we in this country take for granted: food, medicine and education.

It is my fervent hope that when Nelson Mandela comes to Canada in the fall, hordes of children from across the country will meet him and greet him and we will have a huge fundraising event to raise money for his children's fund.

[*Translation*]

As a Canadian, I am very proud that Canada will be the first nation in the world to grant this honour to Mr. Mandela.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I commend to you, citizen Nelson Mandela.

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to second my colleague's motion to grant honorary Canadian citizenship to an extraordinary figure in the history of the 20th century, Nelson Mandela.

[*Translation*]

Yes, it is a true honour to rise in this House today to second the motion of my colleague to make Nelson Mandela, an historical figure of the 20th century, an honorary citizen of Canada.

[*English*]

Why are we taking this extraordinary step to honour this great man, a step taken only once before to honour Raoul Wallenberg? This is because Canada has stood with Nelson Mandela and the causes of freedom, justice and equality to which he has devoted his life. In return, South Africa, Canada and the entire world have been given something very special through that life.

• (1510)

When he visited Ottawa in 1990, Nelson Mandela had just been released from 27 years of unjustified imprisonment by a system

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that oppressed its people because of their colour, because of their origin, and denied them justice, equality and freedom.

He accepted an invitation to speak to a joint session of the House and the Senate, seeking our support as Canadians in his struggle against apartheid and for the ending of the odious apartheid regime in his country.

In that year I was the leader of the opposition and I had the honour of meeting and talking with Mr. Mandela privately. On that occasion, in his presence I could sense his determination to build a country based on freedom and equality for all its people, regardless of colour or origin, in the spirit not of revenge but of reconciliation and forgiveness. That was in 1990.

In 1998 we again had the pleasure of welcoming Nelson Mandela, then president of a fully democratic South Africa, to Ottawa. It was during this visit that we again bestowed upon him the honour of a rare joint address to both of our Houses of Parliament. At that time he was hopeful for the future yet cautious and very grateful for the support given to his nation by Canada. He stated:

We are all too aware of the great deal that remains to be done. What is important is that we are united as a nation as never before and determined to succeed, and that we have friends like Canada who are working with us as partners.

I also heard Mr. Mandela in Pretoria on the occasion of the inauguration of his successor, Thabo Mbeki. What struck me during that visit was the gratitude of South Africans of all walks of life and origins toward Mr. Mandela as father of their new South African state based on freedom and equality for all.

I would like to think that Canada is also grateful to Nelson Mandela for his role in history, for opposing injustice and for striving to right an enormous wrong and thus setting an example for the rest of the world.

As he said at his own trial by the apartheid regime for opposing its prejudiced laws in 1964:

I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination, I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But if needs be, it is an idea for which I am prepared to die.

Fortunately for us and for the world and South Africa, it was and is an ideal which he lived for and achieved.

I want to conclude by quoting our Prime Minister, who said about Nelson Mandela:

... he is a living symbol of the two historic movements that have defined the 20th century: equality and democracy..few people in our time—or any century—have so symbolized the spirit of freedom that lives within every human being.

It is for these reasons that at the start of the 21st century the House should honour Nelson Mandela unanimously by voting in favour of the motion now before us. In doing so we confirm the values that we as Canadians hold dear: values of inclusiveness,

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equality, justice and freedom, values which provide the foundations for the fabric of our great country.

In doing this we show this parliament is worthy of honour by honouring a great man of this 21st century and every century, Nelson Mandela.

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I look upon this opportunity to represent my party in support of this motion as a distinct honour.

I have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Mandela on a couple of occasions. I acknowledge and thank the member for Markham for originating this overture to this esteemed gentleman.

• (1515)

In July 1991, I was part of an eight member international delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to South Africa, partly to acknowledge Mr. Mandela's release from his 27 year detention in prison and partly to observe and share thoughts with representatives and parliamentarians to South Africa's return to full democracy.

In that context, our delegation members had the honour of meeting Mr. Mandela as he welcomed the first official visit of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 30 years to South Africa after a hiatus from 1961 to 1991.

The CPA delegation leader at the time was the Hon. Clive Griffiths, president of the legislative council of western Australia. In his remarks at official ceremonies acknowledging this new beginning for South Africa, a ceremony which also included remarks by Mr. Mandela, Mr. Griffiths quoted Thomas Jefferson in his remarks, saying that compromise was all three of the main principles of politics.

He further stated that apartheid may have delayed but failed to destroy the destiny of South Africa to choose its system of government and that what we were bearing witness to was a transition from a racial oligarchy to a colourblind democracy. In these remarks, Clive Griffiths was really acknowledging Nelson Mandela as we are today.

We are practising compromise, tolerance and virtue, as did Dr. Mandela, who emerged from his 27 years of imprisonment without vindictiveness and in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

With his positive forgive and forget attitude, Nelson Mandela surely delivered his people and country from further racial strife after suffering a lifetime of apartheid. This serenity is what we are honouring here today.

In Mr. Mandela's remarks following Mr. Griffiths' introduction, I observed a sense of peace in Mr. Mandela's heart and soul. There was no room for recriminations of the past, nor should there be

today. The virtue of peace that Mr. Mandela bestowed on his country as it made the transition is a virtue we all should emulate. To give credence to this virtue, the House has moved to confer honorary Canadian citizenship on Mr. Mandela. What a dignified and fitting manner in which to emulate the peace of this Nobel peace prize recipient.

As I watched and listened to Mr. Mandela on that July day in 1991, I was naturally moved. Not only was I a personal witness to an historic world event and occasion, I was witness to the testimony of a man who had been through the terrors of apartheid, imprisonment and reprisal. He stood there at that moment devoid of any vengeance. What a testimony to the human spirit and faith.

I call on my colleagues, in Mr. Mandela's spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation, not only to honour this indomitable gentleman but to honour this institution and this country with his citizenship in it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there are few true heroes in this world. When one comes along, he is readily recognized. Nelson Mandela is one such hero.

He came out of prison after 27 years, strong, firm in his convictions, a modest man, close to his people. He is an example of courage and determination, but also of wisdom and intelligence. He became president of South Africa at a time when violence could have exploded at any moment.

His autobiography provides us with a better understanding of the greatness of this man, the liberator of his people, who forgave those who had imprisoned him and oppressed his people.

We who are elected by the people know what they expect of us under far easier circumstances that pale in comparison with those faced by President Mandela. Mandela's true successes are easily seen.

He represents humanity's hope for a better world. If our children, today's youth, can hope in the future, it is because they have in Nelson Mandela a tangible and contemporary example. It is that hope, and that commitment, to which we pay tribute today.

It is comforting to think that our civilization is still capable of generating men and women of this calibre. While those of us in the western world like to think that we are in the forefront of the great emancipators, it is stimulating to realize that an African, Nelson Mandela, sets us an example and shows us the way in this long march toward freedom.

• (1520)

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to support the resolution to grant Nelson Mandela honorary Canadian citizenship.

Private Members' Business

[English]

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak briefly on the motion before the House. I think it can be said that for most members, and I would have thought all members, of the House of Commons the occasion on which Nelson Mandela addressed us in this Chamber would have been one of the absolute highlights of our parliamentary careers. I know I speak personally when I say that will always remain so for me.

His message to us on that occasion and his wonderful autobiographical account, *A Long Walk to Freedom*, both remind us why Nelson Mandela, through his words and deeds, has been embraced by the whole world as a symbol of courage, hope and reconciliation.

I will quote briefly from words of a South African journalist and broadcaster who put together a wonderful little pocketbook of the words of Nelson Mandela. In 1998 she wrote:

—Nelson Mandela is the world's role model. A towering figure of strength and forgiveness, he has been able to do the almost impossible: unite the bitterly divided people of the country of his birth. In doing so, he has been taken to the heart of both the mighty and the dispossessed the world over.

On a political note, I do not think I was the only member who was shocked and saddened by the refusal of one of our colleagues to enter into that very spirit of tolerance, of reconciliation and of peace, and endorse the resolution to make Nelson Mandela an honorary citizen of Canada.

This is an occasion for us to call up the spirit and inspiration of Nelson Mandela, and to remind ourselves that for Nelson Mandela the struggle is never won and that one must always go on reaching out for greater understanding of all of our fellow citizens.

In that spirit, I hope all members of the House, including those who were not prepared to come up front immediately, will understand the importance of rewarding honorary citizenship to Nelson Mandela and be moved by that same spirit today.

On a very personal note, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the absolute high moments of my adult life was the very brief conversation that I was privileged to have with Nelson Mandela when your predecessor invited us into his chamber to do that. On that occasion I had the opportunity to ask Nelson Mandela a question that I am sure had been put to him thousands of times. I asked him how it was possible, after 27 years of wrongful imprisonment, for him to be able to emerge without rancour, bitterness and without being bent on revenge.

His answer was simple. He said "We had a nation to build, we had much work to do".

Let us always be infused by that speaker. Let us do honour to the contribution made by Nelson Mandela, but let us also honour this place and this nation today, with one voice and in that spirit of unity

and reconciliation, by endorsing the call for Nelson Mandela to be made an honorary citizen of Canada.

• (1525)

[Translation]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary-Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud and happy to support, along with my colleagues in the House, the motion of the member for Markham to make Nelson Mandela an honorary citizen of Canada.

This motion is intended to recognize his extraordinary efforts and leadership in his quest for democracy for South Africa and respect for the rights and freedoms of all.

I will never forget my first meeting with Mr. Mandela in Lusaka, Zambia, only a week after his release. I was at the time the first member of a western government—

An hon. member: That is not the right country.

Right Hon. Joe Clark: It is the right country. As I said, it was in Lusaka, Zambia. I know my geography and history, perhaps even better than the Canadian Alliance.

It was in Lusaka, Zambia, where Mr. Mandela had his first meeting in exile with the members of the African National Congress. It was not possible for them to meet in South Africa. It was one of the elements of the apartheid regime.

What struck me most was his behaviour. He was not bitter. He was not full of vengeance. He was full of hope.

[English]

On February 11, 1990, the unforgettable day of his release from prison, Mr. Mandela could have, with one flick of his wrist or one misstated word, triggered a revolution and his country would have been in flames. He did not. He did the opposite.

What I will always remember is that he recognized that the most turbulent element of that society at the time were the young people who had fought at his side and on his behalf, who had forgone their formation and their training to be supporters of his while he was in prison. His words to them were to put the past behind them and to build immediately for the future.

He spoke at the Soweto rally two days after his release, and I think it is well for this House to remember those words. Mr. Mandela said to the young of his country:

It has been the policy of the ANC that though the school and the entire education system is a site of struggle, the actual process of learning must take place in the schools. I want to add my voice, therefore, to the call made at the beginning of the year that all students must return to school and learn. We must continue our struggle for People's Education within the school system and utilise its resources to achieve our goals.

In other words, he was saying that the young people of that country should not reject the system that had rejected them. What

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they should do instead is embrace that system, improve it and move it forward into the future.

None of us who met Nelson Mandela can help escape personal reactions. I have to say to the House that the single, most dramatic incident in my political life was precisely in that meeting in Lusaka when he came out to meet the African National Congress in exile. I was there because Canada had chaired the commonwealth committee on Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa and I was the chair of that committee.

I recall that a question was put to Mr. Mandela that invited him to be highly critical of the Afrikaner who had imprisoned him for all those years. His answer was "we have to understand how difficult this is for them".

I was overwhelmed by the generosity of a man able to come out of prison and out of the conditions he had endured, who could speak for generosity and understanding of the other side. Yet it was precisely that capacity that made it possible for people who, for reasons of colour, of hatred, of ignorance, had been on other sides in South Africa, to come together in that extraordinary rainbow coalition to try to establish a nation that could thrive into the future. It goes without saying that in that tolerance and in that generosity there are extraordinary lessons for us in this diverse but much easier country than South Africa.

• (1530)

Nelson Mandela acknowledged Canada's efforts to end apartheid. When he spoke in these Chambers on June 18, 1990, he said of former prime minister Brian Mulroney:

We have been greatly strengthened by your personal involvement in the struggle against apartheid and tyranny, and the leadership you provided within the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Group of Seven and the Francophonie Summits.

Our efforts however pale in comparison to those of Nelson Mandela. We should all be proud to have Nelson Mandela declared an honorary citizen of this free country, Canada.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, I was born in the African country of Tanzania and am therefore no stranger to life in a society where there are racial strains and tensions.

Thankfully we are free to debate the granting of honorary Canadian citizenship to one of the great figures in recent history in a Chamber where there are no racial strains or tensions.

I for one have been very grateful to be accepted in Canadian society as a member of a visible minority. It is particularly validating that I have been chosen by thousands of people to be their representative in the House of Commons.

Not only is Nelson Mandela an international symbol of resistance to prejudice and injustice, he is also a symbol for peace and forgiveness because, following his release from prison when he became the president of South Africa, he made the country's transition from apartheid to democratic qualities a peaceful one. Here was a man who was hounded by police for 10 years and then imprisoned for 27 years as he struggled on behalf of the non-white majority for freedom from apartheid.

He was banned from all public activity, as the forces arrayed against him used everything under the laws they had written to maintain apartheid. A lesser mortal would have emerged from this ordeal either a broken man or a bitter man intent on revenge against his oppressors. However Nelson Mandela was not a lesser mortal. He preached peace and reconciliation and in the end was jointly awarded the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize.

I can attest, as one coming from Africa, that Africa has suffered tremendous racial discrimination. Discrimination robs one of his dignities. It should not have a place in any civilized society. Mr. Mandela fought for human dignity.

We are a society growing increasingly comfortable with the idea of a cultural mosaic. We all are free to practise our religion, maintain our cultural identity and live side by side with people born on the other side of the planet. Canada is recognized in the world community as a peaceful place where we can pursue our dreams both individually and collectively. We not only have two official languages, but all the languages of the world are spoken in our homes, shops and neighbourhoods. We too are an example of tolerance, forbearance and peaceful co-operation.

The issue for me is not the qualification and achievements of Mr. Nelson Mandela, but rather the lack of process by which parliament grants honorary Canadian citizenship. It seems to me that such an honour should be not granted without a debate.

In the future I would suggest establishment of an all party committee that would first set up the ground rules for why and how honorary Canadian citizenship should be granted. Once this has been accomplished, the committee would meet when required to consider qualification for such status and to discuss and ponder the qualifications of nominees, and whether a particular individual should be accorded such an honour. It is my belief that all members of parliament would be proud to serve on such a committee.

• (1535)

The committee would then bring forward its recommendations to confer honorary citizenship in the House of Commons. Once conferred, it would be clear to one and all that the status of honorary Canadian citizenship had been granted with the blessing of every Canadian from every corner of the nation.

Just last week I attended the ceremony to honour Raoul Wallenberg, a hero who saved thousands of Jews from the Holocaust during World War II and who died in a Soviet labour camp. It is lamentable that so few Canadians know the history and the heroism of Raoul Wallenberg. Had his honorary citizenship been subject to parliamentary discussion and decision as I suggest, perhaps millions more Canadians would know and honour the memory of Raoul Wallenberg today.

Today we are talking about informing Canadians about the great achievements of Mr. Mandela. If we are going to honour our world's heroes, let us do it out in the sunshine so all Canadians can share in the tribute and knowledge.

I would like to conclude by saying that Nelson Mandela has already taken his place among the world's historic figures. He is as deserving of praise and high honours as any individual who has ever graced the pages of our history books.

[Translation]

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased, as the Bloc Québécois critic for citizenship and immigration, to speak today to Motion No. 379 tabled by the member for Markham to award honorary Canadian citizenship to a great hero of democracy, Nelson Mandela.

To date, only one person has been given this honour: Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of people from Nazi death camps during the second world war.

I cannot ignore the symbolism of this motion a few hours before passage at third reading of Bill C-11, an act respecting immigration to Canada and the granting of refugee protection to persons who are displaced, persecuted or in danger.

Nelson Mandela is an example for those who lead the fight for democracy in the world.

In 1944, he joined the African National Congress, the ANC. In 1948, the National Party won the election in South Africa. Its platform was unequivocal "The Black man in his place". From then on, the policy of apartheid got tougher and introduced one of the most racist and undemocratic regimes in modern history.

Nelson Mandela was once asked when he decided to fight for freedom. He replied:

I cannot say exactly when I became politically active, when I knew that I would spend my life fighting for freedom. Being an African in South Africa means that we are politically active from the moment we are born, whether we know it or not. African children are born in hospitals reserved for Africans; they go home in buses reserved for Africans; they live in neighbourhoods reserved for Africans and they go to schools reserved for Africans, that is if they go at all. When they grow up, they can only get jobs that are reserved for Africans, rent houses in townships reserved for Africans, travel in trains reserved for Africans—

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—I never had a defining moment, a revelation, a moment of truth. It was the accumulation of thousands of insults, humiliations and forgotten moments that led me to revolt, that gave me the desire to fight a regime that held my people captive.

In June 1955, the ANC adopted the charter of freedom which, in addition to criticizing apartheid, proposed the creation of a democratic and non-racial South Africa. At the end of that same year, Nelson Mandela was arrested for high treason, an offence punishable by death. He and 91 other ANC members were put on trial, a trial that was to end with their acquittal in 1961.

In June 1961, the ANC decided to take up arms to fight apartheid by setting up an organization known as the "spear of the nation" and led by Nelson Mandela.

In August 1963, Nelson Mandela was again arrested and charged with treason, conspiracy and sabotage. He was to come out of prison only 27 years later.

• (1540)

In 1991, Nelson Mandela became president of the ANC. His negotiations with the president of South Africa ended the racist system of apartheid. In South Africa's first free election in 1994, Nelson Mandela was elected president, a position he held until 1999.

By making him an honorary citizen, parliament is paying tribute to the exceptional contribution this man has made to democracy and, through him, to the rightful struggle of those throughout the world who are fighting for democracy and equality.

However how can we ignore the paradox of Motion No. 379 and Bill C-11? Tomorrow, the act respecting immigration to Canada will make a future Nelson Mandela an undesirable citizen in Canada. If Bill C-11 had been in effect 40 years ago and Nelson Mandela had sought asylum in Canada, as a member of an organization for the subversion by force of any government, to use the wording of clause 34, he would have been inadmissible. He would have been sent back to South Africa and accordingly to prison.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I thank the member for Markham for his initiative. Democracy and the equality of all citizens are the paramount values in our society, but democracy is all the more precious for being fragile. We are all responsible for keeping it alive. Many have given their lives for this ideal. Charles de Montesquieu, an 18th century philosopher, wrote "To love democracy is to love equality".

Nelson Mandela will remain one of the strongest symbols of democracy in the 20th century. May his life be an inspiration for our democracy.

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a very great honour for me to take part in this historic debate

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today. I would like to thank the hon. member for Markham for his leadership in introducing this motion.

Last week, I had the honour of seconding the motion when it was made but unfortunately not passed.

[English]

It is a great honour to be here today to join with the leader of my party in paying tribute to an extraordinary citizen, not just a citizen of South Africa, but a citizen of the world and hopefully soon to be an honorary citizen of Canada. Canada would indeed be the first nation to recognize Nelson Mandela as an honorary citizen. I think it is appropriate that we take that historic step.

I am proud that my colleagues in the New Democratic Party in this and previous parliaments, and indeed before the founding of the NDP in the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, worked tirelessly along with people in the church movement, the labour movement, social movements and in many other movements in solidarity with the struggle against apartheid.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution made by the former prime minister, Prime Minister Mulroney, as well as Prime Minister Diefenbaker, in helping to free Nelson Mandela.

I recall, as I am sure all members who witnessed it would, watching television on the 11th of February in 1990 as Nelson Mandela took those historic steps out of prison. I also had the privilege, along with the Deputy Prime Minister and others, of meeting Nelson Mandela when he came to Canada later that year. He has dedicated his life to justice and to ending the scourge of racism and institutionalized racism. His biography *A Long Walk to Freedom* tells his incredible story.

I had the privilege in 1994 of joining in the official Canadian delegation to witness the first free and democratic elections in South Africa. What an extraordinary experience it was. I was with the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore.

I will never forget one occasion as we witnessed the voting in a small village outside East London. A young man came up to the voting station with an elderly woman in a wheelbarrow. He indicated that he had been pushing this woman, his mother, for many kilometres. They had come down from the mountains. I asked him what drove him to take this incredible step. She pulled out a rumpled piece of paper, and it was a photograph of Nelson Mandela. She said "I've waited my whole life to vote for this man".

• (1545)

That is the kind of inspiration that he provided not only to his own people but to people around the world. Indeed, last August my partner Max and I had the privilege of travelling to South Africa and visiting the prison just outside Cape Town on Robben Island,

where Nelson Mandela was in prison for 27 long years. We saw the rock quarry where he was forced to break rocks and we saw his tiny prison cell.

We had the opportunity to meet with some of his fellow prisoners. What an incredible story they had to tell, a story of courage and of vision. What an inspiration to people around the world, that spirit of reconciliation, the spirit of forgiveness and healing, as my leader said, after 27 years.

Last week Nelson Mandela was described by the member for Calgary West and indeed by the House leader for the official opposition as a communist and a terrorist. As for communists, Nelson Mandela himself has acknowledged that the South African Communist Party played an extraordinary role in the struggle against apartheid as indeed did the government and people of Cuba and Fidel Castro, so we take no lessons on that at all.

[Translation]

In closing, I would also like to point out the irony to which my hon. colleague from the Bloc Québécois referred, that there are provisions in Bill C-11 which would have kept Nelson Mandela out of Canada. This is unacceptable.

[English]

In closing, I want to say again on behalf of all of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party what an honour it is to recognize this outstanding citizen of South Africa, of the world and, hopefully soon, of Canada with the highest honour our country can bestow, the honorary citizenship of Canada.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to speak on this motion today. It was very much an honour for me to be one of the seconders of the motion and it is certainly an honour to support it. I compliment the member for Markham for bringing it forward.

It is interesting to listen to all the members. Many of us here have met Nelson Mandela. It seems that we all remember that first meeting very clearly. I am one of those very fortunate people who has met Nelson Mandela and I remember exactly the day that I met him. I remember the circumstances. He had just been released from 27 years in prison. He came to Canada at Canada's invitation to speak to all of us in a joint session of the House of Commons and the Senate to encourage us to support his opposition to apartheid and to support democracy in his country.

At the time I met him it struck me that this man had just come out of jail after 27 years. I was 45 at the time and would have been 17 when he went into jail. I thought of all the things that I experienced in that time between the age of 17 and the age of 45 years, and I thought of all of that part of his life that he missed while he was breaking rocks in the prison on Robben Island.

It was an incredible experience. We met him at the airport and he treated us like the heroes. He treated us with the respect. It was an awesome experience which I will never forget. He exuded confidence. He came across as the most humble person and he treated us like the honourable people, when it should have been the reverse. It was truly an experience. As we can see, every person here who has met Nelson Mandela will never forget that visit.

During that visit Mr. Mandela went to Toronto, where tens of thousands of Canadians went out in the streets to meet him, just to say hi, show respect to him and listen to his words. He was given a hero's welcome in Toronto. Here in the House he addressed a joint session of the Commons and the Senate, an honour usually reserved for heads of state, and of course at that time he was not a head of state. He would be later on, but in 1990 he was not, having just come out of prison. Apartheid was still in place. Even with all the things he was put through, in the House he showed the same humility and urged us to continue the battle to help him eliminate apartheid in his country.

He had an outstanding career, a career of outstanding accomplishments.

• (1550)

One of the members who spoke before me referred to courage and vision and those are good words to describe Nelson Mandela. He was and is a man of courage and vision, which has certainly led to his stature and reputation around the world as one of the world's citizens who has set an example for all of us.

Nelson Mandela has done an incredible job of creating firsts. He established the first black law firm in South Africa. He was the first democratically elected president of South Africa. He was one of the very first student activists in South Africa. From the time he was a very young person he was outspoken and committed and a very effective activist, so effective that he was even expelled from school, which started a long and interesting career in activism for him. Nelson Mandela has received 50 international university honorary degrees as well as being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Nelson Mandela raises the bar for all of us. He raises the bar for all humanity. We totally support this motion and we will welcome Mr. Mandela as an honorary citizen of Canada.

Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and pleasure for me to join in this debate and support the motion.

As one involved in the anti-apartheid movement for 20 years and who served as Canadian counsel for Nelson Mandela, I would like to pay tribute to the historical contribution of Nelson Mandela to Canadians and people the world over. The conferral of this honorary citizenship will have enduring resonance and inspiration as Raoul Wallenberg has had in being our first honorary citizen.

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I would like to briefly summarize what I mean by this historic resonance and inspiration that this conferral of honorary citizenship will have.

First, Nelson Mandela is the metaphor and message of the struggle for human rights and human dignity in our time. If apartheid was the ultimate assault on human rights and human dignity, if South Africa was the first post-World War II, post-Nazi country to institutionalize racism as a matter of law and to seek to do so under the cover of being a western democracy, then Nelson Mandela's struggle was the ultimate in the struggle for human rights and for human dignity and against racism and against bigotry.

Second, Nelson Mandela is the metaphor and message of the long march toward freedom, of the struggle for equality, of the struggle for democracy. The three great struggles of the 20th century are symbolized and anchored in his personal struggle in South Africa.

Third, Nelson Mandela is a metaphor for nation building, for building a rainbow coalition, for taking diverse peoples, even antagonistic peoples, races and identities, and welding them into a rainbow coalition for nation building.

Fourth, he is a metaphor for hope, how one person could endure 27 years in a South African prison and emerge not only to preside over the dismantling of apartheid but to become president of South Africa and to build that nation. I do not know of any other example in the 20th century that can serve as such a source of inspiration and hope, particularly for the young people of our time, those who are imbued with cynicism, those who believe that this kind of inspiration does not exist any more.

Fifth, he is a metaphor, as in his Soweto speech, of education as a linchpin for peace, of education as a precondition to a culture of peace and against a culture of contempt.

Sixth, he is a metaphor for tolerance, for healing, for reconciliation.

If one looks at the entire historical record, what we have is a person who is one of the great humanitarians of the 20th century and whose contribution to the struggle for human rights, for democracy, for peace and for equality will endure and inspire all in this country and the world beyond.

The Speaker: Pursuant to the order adopted the other day, it is my duty to put the question to the House. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

(Motion agreed to)

Supply

• (1555)

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Dr. Frene Ginwala, Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my friend from Elk Island on his normal loquaciousness and eloquence on the subject of empowering individual members through the private member's bill process.

If we were to have a vote for parliamentarian of the year, I am sure that the member for Elk Island would rank in the top two or three. I am sure members opposite would agree that he is one of the most diligent, thoughtful and hardworking and one of the most present of parliamentarians. He is always here and always participating in debate.

For that reason, it is really quite disturbing to learn, as the hon. member just instructed us, that in his several years in this place he has not once had an opportunity to have a private member's bill come forward and be deemed votable, or even debatable as I understand it, because of the absurd arbitrariness of the luck of the draw system we have here.

I would ask the hon. member if he could expound on that. Has he in fact brought forward private members' bills on the order paper? If so, why have they not been allowed to be debated in the House?

Second, I had an experience where I had a private member's bill on the non-controversial subject of opening the national archives for research purposes for access to the census records of 1901. Unfortunately, a government member, I am sure on the instruction of the minister responsible, moved an amendment to my motion that essentially gutted it and rendered it effectively meaningless. All of the work I had done, dozens of hours of work, and all of the tens of thousands of letters, phone calls, faxes and e-mails from Canadians expressing concern about the issue and support for the

bill, was vitiated by a dilatory motion introduced by a government member and passed by the government, which had the effect of completely gutting and undermining my private member's motion.

I wonder if my colleague from Elk Island would also reflect on whether he believes that private members' bills, should they be deemed votable, should be protected from such dilatory legislative manoeuvrings on the part of the government.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his very kind statements at the beginning of his remarks. I do not know, perhaps I have some pathological problem, but I actually do enjoy debates. I always have. One of the greatest regrets I have is that too often in the House we are debating with empty chairs. It is really difficult to change hon. members' minds when we do not even know what their views are in the first place.

I would like to say just a few things about this matter. First, I have had a private member's bill on the list. Of course as the hon. member knows, if one has even just one bill, his or her name is on the list. My name has never been drawn.

I have had two private members' bills. One is urgent and it has never been drawn. It deals with the issue of dates. If we use only numbers for expressing dates, what does 2/3/1 mean? Is it February 3? Is it the 2nd of March? Is it the year 1? Is it the year 2002? Is it the year 2003? My bill is a very important bill and simply provides for removal of the ambiguity if people use numbers only. My second bill is a very important one, and that is the one that states Canadian taxpayers should not have to pay income tax on money they earn for the sole purpose of paying taxes. That has to do with exempting from income money people earn in order to pay their property taxes.

They are two very important bills. I have never had the opportunity to even debate them let alone get them voted on.

• (1600)

I would like to comment on his statement regarding amendments. I have often thought about this, not only on private members' business but also on supply day motions. One thing we started to do was split our time for our first speaker so our second speaker could make an amendment of little consequence to prevent the other side from making one.

I remember in our first term here there was an occasion that just blew my mind. We put a motion and the government made an amendment that stated "all the words after the word "that" be deleted and replaced by", then it put in its own motion. It was our supply day motion but the government totally gutted it by deleting the whole thing.

Sometimes private members' motions have errors so it is necessary to make technical amendments. I would like to see a

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change so that the only amendments permitted for private members' business would be those that would be put by permission of the movers. In other words, if the mover can be persuaded that the motion will not pass, unless it is amended, because of a technical problem, then obviously that member would go along with the amendment and it would be in order. However, if the mover did not approve of it, then the amendment would be out of order and the original motion would stand.

I thank the hon. member for giving me the opportunity to speak about those two issues.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I believe very strongly that this is one of the most important motions that has come before the House since I have been here. I believe this one measure, more than any other element of parliamentary reform, would empower individual MPs and hence their constituents.

Why do I say that? Because the whip, the Prime Minister's Office or the leader's office cannot control the private members' legislation or motions that members bring before this place. It is precisely those motions which can reflect issues that the political class and the centre of authority in the PMO on that side refuses to have brought forward for debate.

Many sensible bills come before this place, but many deal with issues which are not on the political agenda of the government or for whatever reason, on the political agenda of party strategists on the opposition side. No single step would do more to empower us than to give every MP at least one votable private member's bill. There is no good reason this ought not to happen because if each of the 300 MPs had a votable motion or bill that could easily be contained within the period of time for debate.

Here we are leaving the House two weeks before the parliamentary schedule indicates. There is plenty of time. We could extend hours, sit earlier, sit later or sit longer to debate issues which are of importance to Canadians and to this parliament, which are not brought forward on government orders.

I just want it on the record in questions and comments, and my colleague may want to reply, that on behalf of my constituents I firmly support this motion and I would hope that members opposite, as private members not as partisans, would accept this as a sensible incremental reform.

In closing, I understand that the so-called modernization committee had given near unanimous approval for this, except for one House leader for a minor party. That is unfortunate. I understand that even the government was commendably prepared to give support to a step of this nature to empower members through more votable private members' bills. Therefore, we are almost there. I

would appeal to the House leader of that minor party to reconsider why it is that he is being a roadblock to major parliamentary reform in this measure.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I concur with what the member for Calgary Southeast has just said.

I think back during my years here and I had the questionable privilege for a time of being on that infamous subcommittee of private members. I always felt ill at ease because of the very subjective criteria that were used. There was really no way of properly evaluating bills that should be votable or should not. I understand that the criteria are now somewhat different but still very subjective.

• (1605)

I remember with fondness the leadership of the member for Mississauga Centre who at that time was chairperson of that committee. We were able, through some sleepiness on the part of the Liberals, to bring through some amendments to the way private members' business was conducted. One of the very significant ones of course was that the voting would begin in the back rows so that the members in the front row—

Mr. Jason Kenney: With unanimous consent.

Mr. Ken Epp: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was with unanimous consent when there were no Liberals in the House and we were able to sneak that through. It was a coup of major proportions.

The members in the back no longer had the luxury of waiting for the members in the front to vote to see how they should vote, so they actually had to think about it.

Recently we dealt with the issue of pay raises for members of parliament. In my speech on that topic I said that I had a motion to amend that particular bill. I suggested that all Liberal members should be eligible for a raise in pay if they could say what it was they voted against when they voted against my amendment.

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am always delighted to be received with such enthusiasm by my colleagues across the way. It is particularly interesting today how we are all just getting along so wonderfully well.

The debate we just listened to would have to be considered a pretty historic debate in this place and in this country. I would not even call it a debate. Perhaps it was a coronation, a very justifiable and proud moment for all Canadians. This place, which is the representative body for all Canadians, and the government have made the decision to confer our citizenship, something that we all believe in so deeply, to Nelson Mandela.

It is particularly interesting to see the carryover. I will try not to spoil the glow of euphoria which seems to be here because it is

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close to the break in session. However, there are some things I feel I must point out in relationship to this motion.

Let me also say right at the outset that I am delighted to vote in favour of the motion. I made that decision, contrary perhaps to the beliefs of some members opposite, before I discussed it with anybody in my caucus or in my government. I looked at it and said that it made sense.

I had one private member's bill in four years drawn out of the lottery, which is very frustrating. That one was drawn in the first three years of the parliamentary session, and I have yet to have another one drawn in the first year of the new session. In four years I have submitted eight or so for consideration. It is a lottery and I have never been very lucky at those kinds of things like gambling or buying lottery tickets, so it carries over to getting my private member's bill brought to the front.

When my name was drawn, the private member's bill I picked was one that would have created national standards for apprenticeship training from sea to sea to sea, in every province and in every territory. It seemed to make a lot of sense.

In fact we do have a program called the red seal program, which recognizes apprenticeship programs across the country. However it does not recognize the different categories of apprenticeship or provinces and the territories. People may be qualified to work in a particular trade in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, but they are not qualified to work in that same trade with that same training in Ontario or Quebec.

There are numerous examples of that. It just seemed to me to be awfully silly when one of the roles of the national parliament was to fund post-secondary education. Where we have perhaps gone off base is that we do not look at apprenticeship training as post-secondary education, and we should.

• (1610)

A ticket to practise as a carpenter, an electrician, a plumber, a pipefitter or any of those is as equally important and valuable, and in many cases more so, as a university degree. When people need a plumber, they do not care if that person has a university degree as long as he or she is capable of fixing whatever the problem happens to be.

It was astounding to find out that our standards were all over the map. I thought the best way to address this would be through a private member's bill, so I drafted the bill and put it forward. I waited patiently for my name to be drawn from the lottery and after three years it finally was.

I was then told that I had a five minute opportunity to go before a committee, which would then make a decision, after hearing from me, on whether my motion would be votable in the House of

Commons. There was never a question about having a debate. As we know, a member is given the opportunity in private members' hour to come here and line up speakers.

By the way, I had support in just about every corner of this place, with the exception of the official opposition, because it transcended provincial boundaries. This is one of the fundamental problems when dealing with private members' bills.

The basic policy during the selection of private members' bills to be votable is that priority is given based on the fact that they should transcend purely local interest, not be couched in partisan terms and cannot be addressed by the House in other ways. They also should not be part of the government business or the normal, ongoing routine that the government might be undertaking.

In my case it was not. In fact I attempted to have the government adopt my private member's bill as government legislation. There were problems in the bureaucracy. Why? Even the bureaucracy thought that I was transcending provincial boundaries and interfering in the jurisdiction of the provincial governments.

Think about that. It is extremely frustrating. My private member's bill was a bill which, if this motion were in place, would have come on the floor of the House of Commons for a vote. In my opinion, notwithstanding opposition from the official opposition, I think it would have carried.

I am not asking that we take over apprenticeship training. I recognize that in the province of Ontario, for example, apprenticeship training works extremely well with our community colleges. It is a very successful and fundamental program. I believe more and more people should be, and I hope are, encouraging their sons and daughters to look at this as an opportunity for a different career.

Lord knows, we do not need more lawyers. We have plenty. We also know that only a certain segment of our society perhaps will be doctors. However we have a terrible shortage of skilled tradespeople within the construction industry across the country.

For the foreseeable future, the boom appears to be very lively for construction, whether it is something as fundamental as new housing or whether it is in infrastructure and trying to repair the damage which has occurred in our large communities as a result of the neglect in funding infrastructure over the last several years, as we all worship at the altar of tax cuts and reduced government. We have seen a deterioration in the quality of life as a result of all levels of government. The federal government, I admit, and provincial governments have cut back on the things that are fundamental and necessary to build good communities.

If my motion had been allowed to come here perhaps we would be seeing more people entering the trades and more qualified people. We would have had an opportunity to increase this priority and provide information to young people on their opportunities.

The red seal program works to a certain degree and national building trades across the nation have instituted some good educational programs. However even they are having difficulty in getting their message across.

• (1615)

By the way, my private member's bill had the support in writing of many unions across the country that thought it was about time the national government established national standards.

Why would something as seemingly sensible as national standards for apprenticeship training fail to survive? It failed to survive because of the attitude, perhaps not partisan but certainly parochial, taken by members of the committee. I cannot, will not and would not name names because the process has been internal and I respect the fact that those people work on the committee. However the committee interfered in provincial jurisdiction.

I hope that by passing the opposition day motion we can move away from the attitude which permeates the caucus, what is left of it, of the official opposition. It has an attitude that if it is federal it is bad and that if it is Ottawa it is too big and interferes with what it wants to see happen in Alberta or British Columbia.

We all know that the weekly caucus meetings of the Alliance, the official opposition, are modelled after the show *The Weakest Link*. We understand that they are having a problem. We understand also that *The Weakest Link* appears to be their leader. I do not want to be unfair but I want to talk about the fact that the members have become very myopic.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is the hon. member splitting his time? I think his time is up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): No. We are still on a 20 minute speech and 10 minutes questions and comments. The hon. member has another 10 minutes.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry you must put up with us for another 10 minutes but I will try to be gentle. One of the things that underlies the differences we have in this place is the constant criticism of the role of MPs. It is almost like a sport. It is done to try to denigrate the role of MPs.

It is my submission that we have spent too much time over the past several months dealing with certain faux pas on all sides. If we turn on *Canada AM* at six o'clock in the morning all we hear about is the latest group to leave the opposition caucus or perhaps the latest member on the government side who has said something he or she regrets or wishes to apologize for.

Supply

We as a body politic are being distracted on all sides of this place by the nonsense that is going on internally within our own caucuses and undermining our ability to represent our communities. I say that in a spirit of non-partisanship which I am not normally prone to do.

Mr. James Moore: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In a show of non-partisanship with the member from Mississauga, this is his opportunity. My point of order is this. Given that the supply motion will pass with the seemingly unanimous consent of all parties, I ask for unanimous consent of the House to make private members' Motions Nos. 293 and 361 votable.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, it should be obvious to anyone watching, if there is anyone watching, that the strategy of the opposition is to try to distract me. However let me assure opposition members that they have failed for four years and will continue to fail.

I have a point to make that they apparently do not want to hear. When people stand in this place and continually assail members of parliament and say, to quote many of them, that we are trained seals or that we vote mindlessly, they know it is not the case.

• (1620)

There are many examples of opposition members being expelled from their own caucus for rebellious attitudes. We have seen more discipline invoked on that side of the House in the last couple of months than we have seen on this side of the House in the last seven or eight years. Free votes are the standard within the Liberal government.

The problem with the private member's issue is not so much the government. The current process is pretty standard. We have a former cabinet minister in the Manitoba legislature with us. I am sure he would agree that legislature had a similar process, although maybe not a lottery. We had a different one in Ontario. However, private members' business was never taken seriously unless it was some kind of spectacular motion, outrageous bill or wonderful solution.

I had a private member's bill when I was an MPP in Ontario. I had found out, quite to my surprise, that kids were spending their lunch money on lottery tickets for professional sports games. I found out quite by accident. I was lining up to make a purchase in a store in my community and a youngster in front of me was asking what the odds were on Monday night football. When I asked what in the world that was about I was stunned to find out there was no age restriction on the purchase of lottery tickets to bet on professional sports.

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I therefore put forward a private member's bill. I asked the premier at the time to support it. It passed in three sessional days with unanimous support from all parties in the Ontario legislature. In a record vote, in record time and with record numbers, we put an age restriction on the buying of lottery tickets to gamble on professional sports.

Every once in a while an issue comes along that makes sense. Everyone was shocked by it, including Bob Rae, the premier of the day. If I had gone the normal route and had not been able to seek unanimous consent it would have taken weeks, months, perhaps never, to get my private member's bill approved.

There is absolute good sense, I hate to use the word common sense because it has been wrenched away from some of us in Ontario, in putting forth a motion like the one here today.

I will share some statistics. It is interesting that the opposition party talks about democracy in this place, allowing free votes, not using closure and all those things. I see the former leader of the current opposition party, the old Reform Party, is with us today and it is nice to see him here. When he was leader of that party five of his MPs were suspended and several others demoted from their caucus positions.

During the current leadership of course we all know of the gang of eight. It may have swollen to 12; I missed the press conference today that I was so anxious to see. Eight members have been booted out of caucus because they dared to speak out against their leader. How can they or any one representing that party stand in their places, demand openness and accountability and accuse our government of using discipline too much while that party boots out eight members?

There may be as many as 12 members if the discipline reaches some of the higher profile members who spoke out, such as the member for Edmonton North, the first Reform member elected here. The minute she spoke out in opposition to the leadership there was a pretty loud pause as party members said that maybe they should not kick the mother of the Reform Party out of caucus. They backed off but now others have joined in. In many ways it is a sad thing to see.

• (1625)

Opposition members might not believe that I think it is sad. However I spent five years in opposition in Ontario. I happen to think the role of Her Majesty's loyal opposition is critical and very important to the functioning of any parliamentary democracy.

The opposition spends its time setting up a firing squad, getting in a circle and shooting inwardly. I do not know what it thinks it can possibly accomplish by that. It then comes here and tell us it has the solution. It says it will allow free votes and release all its

members from any kind of party discipline. It then turns around the next day and boots half them out of caucus. Obviously the Canadian people would see, shall we say, inconsistencies in that regard.

Mr. David Anderson: Don't embarrass yourself.

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Time will wind down, I am sure, and it is in the control of the Speaker. He will let me know when my time is up and the hon. members will have their opportunity if they so choose.

I will also share that between 1990 and the year 2000 in the Alberta legislature, with the obvious involvement of the current Leader of the Opposition, closure was used 36 times to cut short debate. The current Alliance leader admitted that at one point closure was invoked after one hour of debate. It was done not in response to filibustering on the part of the opposition but to prevent the possibility of delay. That is astounding.

Alliance members then have the nerve to come into this place and be obstreperous in an attempt to stop good legislation from going through. They stand and cry foul because the government has put in place a plan to ensure the legislation passes and carries the day. It is mind boggling. It is curious beyond belief to think they can stand there with any credibility whatsoever.

Having said that, I will try to be non-partisan and not get too excited. I congratulate the member on his motion. I support it and hope it passes. I am confident it will. I think it will make the lives of all members on all sides much better.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I heard the member across the way saying something. He was going in all directions and discussing all kinds of things, so it took me a while to figure out what he was trying to say. I picked up a couple of points and will ask him to clarify them.

The hon. member alluded to his own private member's bill in the Ontario legislature and how it was, he said, passed in three days. However I am sure it was less than the pay increase the government moved through the House.

He said how great his bill was. The hon. member has been on the government side and could have easily worked hard to make sure the private member's bill was improved here. I would ask him if it is the practice of the Ontario legislature to have every private member's bill votable. If it is, I commend Ontario for having a good democracy. Perhaps the member can tell us about that. Are all private members' bills in the Ontario legislature votable?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I must admit I am not 100% sure. Let me tell hon. members why. As I recall the private member's motion I passed was supported unanimously. Certainly other private members' bills came forward. The Ontario legislature

does not have a lottery. I can tell the House that. Members do not have to sit and wait forever to get on the docket.

There are substantially smaller numbers in terms of the members of the legislature. The Ontario legislature has 103 members versus our 301, so it is a bit easier to manage. However all votes are votable on Thursday morning if members can get their items through the process.

What members of the Ontario legislature do not need to do is go before a committee of all members of the house and argue that their motions should be votable. Members must make sure their motions fall in line with the law, so they go through the legal department. The lawyers check it over to make sure it is in proper form and it can be put forward. I would honestly have to check as to whether or not it is a standard procedure to have them all votable. My memory, which fades as I grow older, tells me that most of them were voted on, and I think it is a standard procedure.

• (1630)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, what a disappointment. A mind is a terrible thing to waste and so is a seat in the House and 20 minutes of parliamentary time. The member stood up and started and closed his remarks by saying that he would be non-partisan on a motion. I had just commended the government for supporting this initiative, as had the member for Elk Island, and what did we get? It was like a Texas bull; a point here, a point there and a whole lot of bull in between.

The member cannot even answer a simple question about his own legislature. I do not know if he even showed up there. Whether or not private members' bills are votable, does he not agree that this ought not to be a partisan issue?

Members opposite talk all the time about the need for parliamentary reform. We know that in the shadows and in the corridors they talk about their frustration with the great concentration of power in the Prime Minister's Office. This is not a partisan comment. It is a systemic problem that applies to governments generally, not just this one.

When we finally get the opportunity to actually take back some power from the executive and put it back into the hands of the legislators, like the member from Mississauga, we get instead this kind of partisan rhetoric.

Does the member not think it would be more constructive and helpful if all members were to treat these questions in as non-partisan a fashion as humanly possible and if we work together to improve the practices of the House? Does he not believe that it would be a significant improvement in parliamentary democracy and would empower us to better represent our constituents if we had votable private members' bills?

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Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the after dinner speaker. Compared to my normal approach, I thought I was very non-partisan. I do not know what they are upset about. I thought I was quite gentle and balanced in saying that I support the motion and I congratulated the member. It is just so hard not to fall into the trap, and I am sorry I did, of pointing out to Canadians the differences that occur between what members opposite say and what they actually do.

The fact is that they have a caucus that is imploding before the very eyes of all Canadians and the infighting is detracting them from doing their job in this place, which is to support motions like this. I say to the member who just asked the question that if members of his party could show me just once in one speech where they were non-partisan, maybe it would rub off and they would see a little more of it from me.

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to hear the hon. member speak in the House. I stumble when I say that at times.

The hon. member spoke about discipline in parties, particularly our party, the opposition, and he claimed that we wrangle in our dissidence and so on and so forth.

• (1635)

The truth speaks volumes on the other side when we actually see what takes place on the government benches. When there is a votable private members' business item in the House, all the members on the other side vote with the government regardless of how they feel. Discipline speaks volumes on that side and very rarely do we see those hon. members stand in this place.

If they feel that a private member's bill from this side or any side is worth supporting, do they actually put their money where their mouths are and stand? How many times has the hon. member actually voted in favour of an item of private members' business during the time that he has been here?

Mr. Steve Mahoney: Mr. Speaker, I always find it curious that people get upset when someone comes to Ottawa under a particular banner, in their case Reform, now Alliance and in our case Liberal. I am a member of the Liberal team and people should never be shocked that I support my team. It is most interesting to use the analogy of someone playing on my hockey team and shooting the puck into my net on purpose. I do not want that player on the ice any more.

It is pretty fundamental in our system that the vast majority of us, perhaps with the exception of the member for Wild Rose who wins 90% of the votes, come to this place as a result of the allegiance to the party for which we run. In fact individual members will influence between 5% and 8% of the vote.

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It should come as no shock to any member that we wind up supporting the particular party for which we were elected in this place. I object to the criticism that we would not support things that are unusual or different. Many of my members over here have voted for private members' bills against the government.

The point is that the motion today would eliminate that issue and should eliminate it so that we can all stand and vote on what are private members' bills. That is why they are called private members' bills. We on all sides of the House should be able to make up our own minds on how we vote.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak to the motion dealing with private members' business. I would also like to indicate that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Provencher.

It was quite interesting to listen to my friend on the other side speaking about partisan politics and saying that they do not talk partisan politics. The problem is that when he starts on the rhetoric it is necessary for us to set the record straight.

Talking about setting the record straight, I would like to say that the motion we are debating was introduced and brought in by my hon. colleague sitting next to me. I commend him for doing so. I know he was on the committee and was extremely frustrated with the way things were going so he introduced this motion.

Despite what my friend on the other side said about all the problems or little turbulences my party is going through, I would like to tell Canadians that we have been elected to represent them in parliament and to hold the government accountable and that is exactly what we are doing.

The introduction of the motion dealing with private members' business is to ensure that members of parliament from all parties have the right to stand in parliament to speak on behalf of their constituents.

When my colleague from Edmonton—Strathcona asked the member a question about how many times he had voted independently, he gave us a great analogy of playing on a hockey team. As Canadians have said time after time, and if he goes back to his riding and polls his constituents perhaps they will tell him, they want him to speak on their behalf. That is what he has been sent here for, not this team business. There are no goals to be scored here. We have to stand up and represent our ridings, and that is what my colleague from Edmonton—Strathcona was asking of my friend on the other side.

• (1640)

I return to the issue of private members' business. This is my second term in the House. I am very grateful to my constituents of Calgary East that sent me here to debate issues they feel are

important. Based on that we try very hard to introduce private members' bills. It is one of our vehicles as members of parliament who are not in government or who are not ministers to bring the concerns of Canadians to the floor of the House. It was brought in over the years so that members of parliament could democratically represent their ridings.

During my first term as a rookie MP I submitted a lot of private members' bills. Lo and behold not one was chosen. For four years I have stood on this side of the House and I could not address those issues. When I was returned to the 37th parliament I reintroduced the same bills and two of my private members' bills were selected in the lottery system. I thank God for having my bills selected because it is only through His hand that these bills were selected.

When I was preparing my private member's bill I consulted Canadians across the country and received their input. Those Canadians who felt these were important issues got excited. One of my bills dealt with emancipation day to recognize Canada's contribution to the abolition of slavery. Members of the black community were extremely excited and happy. They gave me full support. They even came here from Toronto to recognize this important day.

I also had a private member's bill dealing with a minimum sentence of two years for repeat break and enter offenders. Over the last parliament I went across Canada. I spoke on radio talk shows. I received the support of Canadians, including the chiefs of police of Toronto, Saskatoon and Calgary, the police association of Calgary and the Canadian Police Association. There was a huge amount of support from all those groups. When I brought my bill forward I thought it would be a non-partisan event and that it would be debated in the House of Commons so that Canadians would know on which side of the issue the government would be.

The subcommittee that was set up to select private members' bills said that my bill would not be votable. Suddenly all the hard work and excitement and all the associations that provided support meant nothing. With it saying no, all I could do was stand in the House to speak to the bill for 10 minutes. I spoke for 10 minutes on the bill. I might as well have gone home and spoken in front of a mirror because there was nothing I could do about it. I was angry. I spoke, sat down and said goodbye to all the effort that was put into the bill.

I reintroduced that bill in the House today. Unless we change the system the same thing will happen. All the groups that work hard to bring issues to parliament will not have their voices heard because the government has a different agenda. The government's agenda is not to represent every Canadian. It is running the country and it has a different agenda, but as members of parliament we can bring issues forward through private members' bills. We spend a lot of time getting support. Then we come to the House, and why is it

that three or four people decide whether or not a bill will be votable?

• (1645)

My friend on that committee felt frustration arising out of it and brought forward the motion we are debating today. I was very pleased, in one degree, when I listened to the government House leader say he will support the bill. All the other parties have said they will support the bill, so let me say that I am literally looking forward to returning to parliament in September when private members' bills are votable.

Now I can go out there and work hard as I can to bring a bill here and I can tell Canadians, yes, it will be brought to the House, it will be put to a vote and we will vote on it. If the members over there on the government side and other members feel this is an important bill and vote for it without following party lines and not playing at teamwork, this will become a House that will gain the respect of Canadians.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague speak in regard to private members' bills and I have to agree 100%. I also agree with my colleague who brought forward the motion.

I too had the misfortune of sitting on the private members' committee. I sat there and saw good bills from all parties in the House brought forward. I watched the committee members bargaining away and heard them saying that bills could not come forward because they were too controversial. I myself had the same frustrations with some of my own bills. As a matter of fact I sat there in front of the committee on a bill regarding separation and had the committee tell me that the bill was too political to bring forward in the House of Commons. The committee said it was too political. This is supposed to be the most political House in the land and yet my bill was too political to be brought forward for debate in the House of Commons.

I have to agree with the hon. member when he says that if this comes forward tonight—and it should pass—finally we will have a House that will truly represent the people, the constituents and the wishes of all parties in the House to see some good legislation come forward.

Why does the hon. member think it has taken so long for the frustration level to build up in members from all sides of the House? This is the hon. member's second term and my third term. Why has it taken so long for this to come forward in the House? Does the hon. member have any answer for that?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, I can speculate. It served the purpose of the government. As I said, the government has a different agenda and the government controls this whole situation.

Supply

By not allowing bills to become votable, by going through the committee, the government could control what is going on. We have seen that happen all year. It was one way for the government to have total control of parliament.

My ex-leader, the MP from Calgary Southwest who is in the chamber today, has stated on many occasions that the House has become dysfunctional. As a matter of fact he has indicated his desire to leave politics because, as he has said, the House has become dysfunctional. He is a member whom Canadians highly respect, a member who has worked tirelessly for the country, and who, as the Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, has firsthand knowledge of how dysfunctional the House has been.

To answer my colleague, that is why Canadians were losing respect for the chamber, because it was dysfunctional and everything was controlled by the government, by a small government and a concentration of power in the PMO.

This is the first step. I can speculate that the reason it is the first step and the government has agreed to this is that because finally even Canadians outside have spoken out and have said they need some substance out of the House. They have said "We have given them a pay raise. They had better deliver". I am glad that we have been given this opportunity to work for that.

• (1650)

Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about this place being dysfunctional. Would he agree with me that it is because we have been spending all our time at our jobs in Ottawa dealing with the issues that surround individual MPs or all of the problems that are occurring within the caucus of the hon. member's party? Would he agree with me that this dysfunction just might be what is causing Canadians to lose respect for MPs and for this institution?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question and I thank the hon. member for asking it. Today this motion, this hard work, was put through by my colleague working as the official opposition. That is what we are doing over here. That is what our job is as the opposition and we are doing it. That is why today we are debating the motion. I remind the member that the motion came from the Alliance, not the Liberals.

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the supply motion because I believe private members' business is a vital tradition in parliament and I believe that we need to revive the spirit of the tradition in order to maintain the confidence we have in our democracy and in our parliamentary system. Despite some of the cynicism we hear, people are still convinced that it is through parliament that true democratic reforms come, and we need to ensure that we revitalize our democracy.

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I would like to begin my remarks by citing a 1985 report of the McGrath committee, which was established to make recommendations in the House in respect of House reform. I will quote from page 2 of the report:

If the private member is to count for anything, there must be a relationship between what the private member and the institution of Parliament can do and what the electorate thinks or expects can be done.

There is a connection among the member, the institution and the electorate. This is a fundamental point of what we are trying to do here, I think. The people of Canada elect us their representatives to the House of Commons and they have the expectation that each of us will be permitted to be productive and useful members with ideas and initiatives of our own.

When members are authorized to be little more than voting machines or seat warmers, it not only feeds into our own cynicism about what we are doing here but more significantly it fosters public cynicism, pessimism and mistrust in parliament and in politicians in general.

I have been a member of parliament for about six months and, if one does not guard against it, I think cynicism can overwhelm one. Except for minor variations with government bills, we know exactly what will happen time and again. The government introduces a bill, we debate it, we sit through committee testimony and we propose amendments, which are usually shot down. We debate it some more and then we vote and the government bill passes. This is a fact of life when we have a majority government.

I served in a provincial legislature. I understand the need for majority governments to control the agenda, to move certain issues through. I understand and respect it, but the realities of a majority government to me present all the more reason to revisit the procedural aspects of private members' business.

• (1655)

I do not think the two are inconsistent. The agenda of a government is a legitimate thing, but there is also the agenda of private members. Private members are the backbone of the House. The executive is here to serve the private members, but in our modern age parliament has been stood on its head. In order to at least regain some balance, this initiative by my colleague from the Canadian Alliance is crucial. I think Canadians expect it of us.

Private members' bills and motions now are not effective. Yet they are really the only way that a member outside of cabinet, whether on the government side of the House or on the opposition side, can advance his or her own proposals and initiatives. Government business is government business and that is fine, but private members' business should not be dictated by government, directly or indirectly.

Right now the process is that we have a subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which includes just six members in the House who determine what private members' bills will be heard. All initiatives of members outside of cabinet are governed by only six individuals, and the consent of those six individuals must be unanimous to make it votable. Six individuals control the entire private members' agenda.

Since the beginning of the 37th parliament, Alliance MPs have had 24 items drawn to be placed on the order of precedence, but only 2 items have been deemed votable. In the second session of the 36th parliament, there was a total of 772 bills and motions introduced. Only 70 of those were drawn and of those only 21 were made votable, only 21 private members' bills out of 772.

Yet we continue to go back to our constituents and tell them "I want to represent you and I want to represent the concerns in my constituency". Yet six members in the House, unless we acquire unanimous consent, will shut down the voice of my constituents each and every time, only six members.

Why does this happen? Let us say I get an idea in my head. The member from Mississauga might not think it is a good idea but it is an idea nonetheless. I get an idea in my head, I call legislative counsel to draft the bill, the bill goes on the order paper, it is drawn to be placed in the order of precedence, it is debated, it is dropped from the order paper, and we never hear about it again if this six person subcommittee has not already decided that we ought to vote on it.

What are the criteria for the votable items? I do not know. I am just a private member. I am only here to represent my constituents. I do not know what criteria this secret committee applies. Who influences these criteria? Who tells these six members how this is done? I do not know and I also do not know if the House will ever find out. We can draw up all kinds of lists and say this is what we will do, but who influences the agenda? Because if that agenda does not come before the House, we know that the government influences that agenda. As long as the government does not think it too controversial or too divisive or too embarrassing, it might allow it.

• (1700)

Even if I am wrong on the six members, as some members from the Liberal Party are saying, the subcommittee gives the perception of a star chamber where decisions are made in secret, away from the public, away from the eyes of the electorate who have a right to know.

An hon. member: There is somebody from your own party on that committee.

Mr. Vic Toews: They say even a member of my own party is on that committee. Yes, and we are not allowed to say in the House

why certain things are not made votable. Can I stand up today and say in the House why a certain thing was not made votable? We cannot say it in the House. Those are the rules and the Liberal members know that. I cannot say it was a New Democrat who shut down a matter that was non-votable. I am not allowed to say it to the members. I am not allowed to say it here in the House. We all know that, so let us not pretend.

I believe the best way to reflect the democratic nature of our parliament is to make all private members' bills and motions votable. I think we could reduce the number of bills, but I say we should let them all be votable.

I have to stand in support of this motion and I would ask all of you to support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I ask the hon. member to address his comments to the Chair.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the member has such a cynical view of what happens. In fact some of the information he has presented has cast a light on this that quite frankly is not a fair reflection. For instance, he gave the example that only 21 private members' items in the second session of the 36th parliament out of 772 were actually votable.

First, the second session of the 36th parliament had private members' business on every required day. There was only room for that many, for 72. We could have had a million bills put in and it would not have mattered. We could only deal with 72 during the second session of the 36th parliament. In fact, 21 out of the 70 were votable. That is as prescribed by the rules of the House.

The member also asked about the criteria. The criteria are published. He also talked about some secret committee. There are two members of the government and four members of the opposition on the committee. It is not just somebody controlling it. They happen to be our representatives.

The member made one statement that I really disagree with. He said that private members' business is ineffectual. I want him to answer this question. Does he know what Bill C-204 was in the last parliament? Does he know it was never drawn? Does he know that it was never voted on? However, does he know that it was in the last throne speech and that we now have parental leave for a full year because a private member had an idea and put it in a bill?

Mr. Vic Toews: Mr. Speaker, why would I want to get up and do anything but praise the one member who had an idea and who was lucky enough to get it through this maze?

What this member did not tell the people of Canada in his question is that even if the bill meets all the criteria, it still does not

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mean it is votable. There is still a huge element of discretion, the discretion that is influenced by political thought and political correctness, by questions like "Is this divisive? Will this be embarrassing?"

I am not disagreeing with the member. These are my observations after being here for six months. Maybe I am mistaken. Maybe I will grow to be just as cynical as he is.

What I am saying is that the government presently has a very effective means of presenting its agenda and getting it through the House. Every government bill is votable unless the government itself hoists it. However, that is called government business. Why can private members' business not simply be the business of private members? If a private member is lucky enough to get the bill into the House, it should be votable unless that private member deems it not to be votable.

● (1705)

Congratulations to whoever the member was on Bill C-204. I commend that member. That is a shining example of what can be done with many more bills. I would encourage the member to support this bill.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to the words of the hon. member for Provencher, and I must say that he made several points of interest to us in his intervention.

As for his final remark about not knowing the criteria, I would state that, just by chance, I have them here before me. I would like to make a comment and then ask a question.

In April 1999, in a report to the House, the standing committee on private members' business established the new list of criteria for selection of votable private members' business.

There are five points. What is important is that, in the House of Commons, it is his party that ought to inform him on this, or he ought to contact the committee to find out what the criteria are.

Should he not get these directly from the House of Commons or from his party?

[*English*]

Mr. Vic Toews: Mr. Speaker, I think I have already answered that. I do not have any dispute with the criteria, but if the member is saying that these criteria will determine that these items are in fact votable, he is wrong. My understanding is that even if every criterion is met an item is still not votable. There is still that hidden amount of discretion. As hon. members, as private members on both sides of the House, we need to maybe narrow down the

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number of bills but make them all votable so that the exercise is a realistic one.

Mrs. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting here listening for the last couple of hours to three years of my life being bandied about.

The member opposite who introduced this motion and who I respect greatly knows that I spent two years as chair of the committee, in 1996-97, and that I just spent the last year chairing it. Despite what members think, the easiest thing in the world for me would be to vote to make everything votable, tomorrow, tonight, whenever we vote on it, because it would get rid of a very tough job that I am forced to do.

However, I honestly have not made up my mind how I will vote because I do not believe it will help the private members' process to make everything votable. I sincerely believe it will diminish the process. It will make it partisan. It will make it irrelevant. I have to learn to get over that.

Mr. Speaker, excuse me, but I forgot to say that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mississauga South.

The process has developed and improved since the 1980s. Several people have referred to the McGrath report. We brought in modifications in 1997-98. Although the party opposite takes credit for slipping that through the House, some of those modifications sprung full blown from my head, one of which was voting from the back rows down because it took the obligation away from the back rows of both sides of the House to follow the front rows.

We streamlined the criteria so that members can bring in private members' bills that do focus on one province or one area. Before it was not allowed. We brought in and tested the one hundred signature rule because people were very frustrated with the lottery. We brought in another one that no one has referred to all day, which is an obligation for a committee to report back within six months so an item could not be deep-sixed at a committee. Otherwise it is deemed brought back in its entirety.

We have made amazing progress and I would like to take some credit for that. That is why I am not sure. It is like the old adage "Be careful what you ask for because you might get it". We may find out that it is not what we really wanted.

In regard to the lottery, I think we will be dropping it because of the confusion. People do not realize when they sign in the hundred signature rule whether they are supporting the concept of the bill or signing to get it to go through without the lottery or signing it because they think an item should be votable. We have had some confusion on that, as members know.

• (1710)

The criteria, as I mentioned, have been diminished. They are down to five simple criteria, one of them an improvement that says if the member is from out west the member can bring in an issue that is strictly for the west and the member's item will not be thrown out because it does not apply to the whole country.

I have a concern that a lot of the private members' bills we see now are reruns of government bills that passed through the House. Gun control has come up many times in the lottery. I do not know how many times the House could take another run at a bill like that. We would be opening ourselves to a lot of that.

Members would need to filter the bills no matter what is decided. If the House decides that they should all be votable, they will still have to be looked at using some criteria that we have talked about.

The idea of making everything votable has been the subject of two surveys, one in 1998 and one in 2001. What has been consistent in those surveys is that people are disaffected. People do not like the system. In 1998, 71% were unhappy with the system. This year 77% are unhappy. In 1998, 48% wanted everything votable and this time we have 62%.

However, I think it is also important to note that only 109 people out of 301 responded from the House. Seventy-five of those people have tabled bills. Fifty-six have had them drawn and 36 have had them made votable. I do not know where the statistics I have been hearing bandied about came from, but fully 33% of those bills have been votable, which is exactly what we were asked to do.

Only two-thirds, two or maybe three bills before 1993, ever became law in this country. One was the Prime Minister's, which named Air Canada. Another in 1993 was my opponent's, whose bill banning hookah pipes was passed, which I am sure has had a devastating effect on the country.

We have had a dozen passed and made into law since 1993. So despite the bleating to the contrary that the Liberal government has been restricting democracy, I think we have done very well.

If I sound like I am taking this personally, I am. I have spent a lot of time on this.

I think members will be very concerned when they see that with the 312 hours allocated we could get 104 bills and motions through in three and a half to four years. How would members choose those bills? We would have to go back to the nasty old lottery. The opportunity for whipped votes would increase because there is far too much for people to pay attention to in the House. If everything is made votable, I think the adage after a while will be "if it is proposed by the opposition we will vote against it".

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It would reduce the significance of the bills because anything could get through. As for the ones that do get through now in this nasty process that has been described, everybody pays attention to them because they have already come through one hurdle.

Many members choose to introduce motions and bills, as the member for Mississauga South mentioned. They never make it into votability, but the concept gets introduced. Somebody pays attention to it. Even though it was not votable it got an hour in the House and sometimes the government pays attention to a good idea even if it was not votable.

I am very concerned that we would get into the old U.S. style system whereby paid lobbyists and huge corporations will be forcing members to put bills into the House as their private members' bills with threats or with the rewards offered by companies that have a lot of money. I think we can see that happening in the States.

As I mentioned members would need a screening process, because I cannot understand after living this for three out of the last seven and a half to eight years how it would be done.

Some members would also have an obligation to put bills forward which would reflect small, noisy, highly skilled lobby groups in their ridings. Members might not agree with them. Members can see that when they put in petitions. Some of the petitions members put in they agree with. Some petitions members have hard time putting in, but it has to be done. Members might also be subjected to intense lobbying by single issue groups in the ridings that say they know there is one bill that is votable and they have one they want put in.

Despite the fact we have been royally dissed today, I would like to thank everybody who has served on the committee. It is not an easy task. I actually had one of my own members of my own government kick my door and leave marks all over it because he was angry that we did not make his bill votable and he thought I had something to do with it.

It is a tough job. I compliment the members of the opposition because it is not always unanimous, but it is by consensus, and it is based on criteria and, yes, it is subjective. However, I think we function well and I am very proud of everybody who sits on that committee.

• (1715)

According to the process already ongoing, we have a survey and the results. We have the Kilger committee looking at parliamentary reform. I really believe the motion itself is redundant because it asks that all private members' bills be made votable, and we have heard from the government side that it is ready to do that.

In summary, I care very much about private members' business. That is why I have been cautious since we started the review in 1997. If I did not care about it I would say that we should just let it go because it does not matter. I am very concerned that members will get a package that they do not really understand. They will not know what happened to them. They will not understand how difficult it will be to fight off the lobbyists, the heavy groups in their ridings that will try to force them to do this or that and stand up in the House of Commons and sometimes fight for things they do not understand or believe in.

I really believe each bill will become less and less important as more bills are introduced without any screening process.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have to take exception to a couple of things the hon. member said, and I respect very much the work she has done. However I believe we can make it work. If it works in other jurisdictions, why can it not work here?

We heard an example given by her own colleague who had experience in the Ontario legislature, where all bills and motions that went through were deemed votable. If it can work there, why can it not work here? Are we somehow that much different that it cannot work here?

She expressed the concern that there would be too many whipped votes. I maintain it must continue to be a free vote in order for it to be meaningful and that we must take more of an interest in the issues that are before the House. This has the potential to revitalize parliament. Therefore, we should try to make it work, and we can make it work.

Why are the bills or motions not deemed votable even when all the criteria are met? Obviously, they are not and that is a concern.

Last, if an issue arises that the government has had in the House, would that not indicate that Canadians still had a concern about that issue and that we should still listen to those concerns? I do not think that is an argument for not bringing an issue to parliament.

Mrs. Carolyn Parrish: Mr. Speaker, I have a huge respect for the member who just asked the question, but I will correct him anyway.

I think the member for Mississauga West was not absolutely sure if all the bills are votable in the Ontario legislature. Since I have never been a member there I am not sure either. Therefore, I do not think we can use that as an example of something that works because we are not absolutely sure if it does turn out that way.

The whipped votes are a serious concern of mine. It is not because we are whipped on this side of the House on private members' bills at all. We are not.

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As a perfect example, I would cite the bill put forward by the member for Davenport, which is very difficult for the government to cope with right now. I am sure when we selected that as a votable bill we were less than popular with our side of the House. However the labelling of genetically modified foods was an issue of significance to the whole country. The committee, in a non-partisan way, made that votable.

Therefore, I am not concerned that it is going to be whipped that way. I am concerned that we will have a volume of material come through that will be a little bewildering. If it is assumed that we will be able to force 301 members to pay close attention to every bill, I cite the fact that we had 109 responses out of 301 on a survey that was very carefully worded, very carefully put together and hand delivered to every office. We will have a really hard time ensuring that. I am not just being pessimistic, I am legitimately concerned.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the member for Mississauga Centre. She has done a pretty good job in a very difficult position. I had the opportunity to serve with her when she was chairperson. It was an interesting challenge and very frustrating, yet at all times she managed to sort of keep her head and keep us moving forward.

• (1720)

With respect to the actual choices, basically our motion today would take away from her and her committee the right to scuttle a bill before it comes to the House. In other words, we are saying that all private members' business should be votable and it would be then the duty of the member to make sure the criteria was met so it would have a reasonable chance of passing.

Does she agree with that? Does she support the motion we have today?

Mrs. Carolyn Parrish: Mr. Speaker, as I already have mentioned, I am having trouble with it because I am more pessimistic than the member is. I legitimately believe a year or two from now we will look at this and say oops. It is like the 100 signature rule. I am not optimistic about it.

Whether or not I will support it will be one of those moments when just before the vote comes to me, I will make up my mind in a non-partisan way.

As the member for Elk Island mentioned, he also sat on the committee under my tutelage. I was very pleased he was there. He is a very mathematical person and liked to give things points. It was a very subjective committee, so I admire him for not killing me in the process.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion today.

Private members' business has been a big part of my career as a parliamentarian. Since 1993 I have had the honour of having over 20 bills and motions presented and tabled in the House. I also had about eight items selected in the lottery. Half of them turned out to be votable. I have had some success, and it was very rewarding. However the best outcome one could have for a private member's item is not going through the whole gyration and cycle and having the government adopt the item and implement it. That is what is most important.

In fact that is exactly what happened in the last parliament with Bill C-204 extending parental leave to a full year from six months. My bill was sat there for six months and never got drawn in the lottery. However the government decided to proceed on it and included it in the throne speech and the very next budget. It has now been implemented and is a very important and valued program for Canadians. The bill itself never got a moment of debate in the House other than on the budget. There are many ways to look at this.

Since we will support the motion, one of the things I would like to do is open the envelope a bit and propose to the House another way to do this. I do not believe that everyone can have a votable item. It is just not practical. I do not believe that everyone is interested in having a votable item either. Our history shows us that a very small percentage of House members even care to participate in private members' business. They have other responsibilities and are not prepared to do the work that is involved.

All members who wish to participate should submit their names. I do not know how many that would turn out to be. Then we could have one lottery only to determine the order in which the members would bring forward their items. All we establish is their placement on the list so members can plan for when their items will come up. I think that is the best way to ensure we include members who want to participate, and to establish an order, which has to be done somehow. A lottery seems to be as fair as anything.

Regarding the issue of the private members' committee business, the credibility issue is something that will be very difficult to deal with. I believe the committee should continue to exist but it should be there to ensure that items meet the published criteria. The committee should say yea or nay. If it says nay a communication should be passed on to the member proposing the bill or motion that the criteria has not been met. That is its job.

How do we determine votability? Members who have been to the private members' business committee and have done their three minute dog and pony show know that there very few questions are asked. In fact, very few substantive questions are asked because the members are dealing with dozens of items. They cannot be

prepared themselves. They cannot do the job. It really is not doing anyone's bill justice quite frankly.

• (1725)

Most members know that private members' items cannot be complex animals. They have to be quite focused and quite specific because we do not have a lot of time to grasp the attention or the interest of the House to support it. It has to be somewhat focused. We can see by those that have been successful over the last few years in the parliaments that many of them are quite straightforward.

The one I remember and thought was excellent had to do with employment insurance benefits and what happened to someone who was called on jury duty. The old law said people would lose their EI benefits because they were being paid for jury duty. It did not make sense because jury duty paid \$10 a day and employment insurance paid something different. I thought it was an important bill. It was a small one but an important one because it was an inequity situation. I think those are good, solid types of bills.

With regard to the votability, I like the process that we went through recently. We operated under a committee of the whole procedure whereby members who were interested assembled around the Chair in somewhat informal fashion. I would like to see members whose bills or motions have met the criteria and have been approved by the committee come to the House, do their five minutes and give their best reasons and arguments why their item should be votable. They would then be subject to questions and comments from anyone who wanted to participate. A record and transcript would be available for people who were interested.

Members could ask questions if they did not understand something, or if they thought the motion was off base or thought it was a great idea. There would be some feedback, which we have never had. We would then have a process. Members would determine whether an item was worthy of taking up any more of the House's time and whether, was worthy of additional hours of debate.

We could take that committee responsibility and put it as part of a committee of the whole. We could let members stand in front of their peers, make their best case and ask their peers to consider it. I think in one evening, with a five minute question and comment on a five minute or three minute presentation, we could probably do six bills and motions in one evening. We could then have a vote on a scheduled day of votes to determine the items with which we would proceed. It would be open, transparent and fair. Members would have to do their work to earn the support of their colleagues for this.

Private members' business should have the same status as government bills. The process we go through has a subsidiary role in terms of importance in how it is dealt with in the House. Once this Chamber decides an item should be votable, it should be accorded all the attention that any other government bill should

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have. That would mean if members wanted to debate it for more than two hours or three hours they could.

Also, when a bill goes to committee then comes back, it should not have to go to the bottom of the list and wait 30 sitting days before it can be brought up again. It should depend on when the item should be called and there can be rules there.

I agree with many members that private members' business ought to be accorded the same weight of importance in this place because it is important not just for the members proposing it, it is also important to the people of Canada because their representatives are here.

That kind of process basically puts the challenge to members. It is an important challenge not to be frivolous, not to abuse the process, because if we come forward here and put items in front of our peers which are not meritorious of taking up the House's time people will develop a reputation. We know that to get a private member's item or anything passed in this place a member must earn the respect of colleagues on all sides. Members pay a price when they play partisan and petty politics in this place and do things that they should not. When they embarrass this place, they should not expect to earn the respect of the House for their bills or their motions.

The challenge is to us all. I think we are looking for transparency, but I do not think we should try for a panacea whereby everyone gets everything they want. That is just not possible. Let us be reasonable and professional. Let us be members of parliament and make decisions based on merit. Those who do good work and earn respect and credibility within this place are the ones who will be successful in parliament.

• (1730)

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the member has participated very enthusiastically in private members' business, not only in the process but also in promoting his own private members' bills.

With respect to votability he said that some members did not want to participate and never prepare private members' bills or motions. That would certainly reduce the number.

It was proposed earlier today during debate that we might increase the number of hours allotted per week to private members' business by adding an hour first thing in the morning and another in the evening. Another suggestion was to have all day Friday devoted to private members' business.

If Friday were devoted to private members' business, would that not make it very difficult to ever promote the idea? Most members would take Friday as a day to go back to their riding as many of them do that now for legitimate reasons. It would mean that we would be trying to promote the idea of private members' business without members being present to hear the debate. When it would

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come time to vote it would be very difficult. Could the member respond to that idea and how we would handle it?

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, the principle that I would prefer to follow would be that private members' business be accorded the same attention as government bills. I would not want to ostracize or somehow categorize private members' business as something bunched together and brought forward on a day when somebody might not be here.

If private members' bills are to be given the credibility and the respect they deserve, they should be built into the calendar so that they get regular attention in the scheduling of parliamentary business. I would have some difficulty in suggesting that we do this on Fridays. It would be contrary to the spirit of equality between the status of bills.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I had a funny idea. We talked a bit about MPs getting a raise in salary. There is no doubt in my mind that increasing the authenticity of private members' business by making things votable would do something to justify paying a member of parliament an executive level salary.

This is my hare-brained idea. What would happen if we were to tell members that a random roll call would be taken at some time every month during private members' business and receipt of one's salary for that month would be dependent on the member being in the House during private members' business? It is a hare-brained idea but maybe it would work.

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I think the member speaks for himself. I would like to take the last moment that I have to reinforce the basic principle that although I would like to have all members have everything they want, good bills require special attention, research and a lot of work. I do not believe that all bills and motions introduced in this place meet that standard.

If we are to earn respect for the work we do on our private members' bills and motions, there must be a mechanism which demands excellence in the work done. It would be reflected in the quality of the bills and motions brought forward if the standard were set high enough to warrant private members' business having the same status as government bills.

● (1735)

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Yellowhead. It is a great pleasure to rise today to address the motion put forward by my hon. colleague from Yorkton—Melville. I wish to unequivocally state my 100% support for the motion.

For the benefit of the vast audience out there in TV land watching the debate, I will begin by explaining what private

members' business is and why it is so vital to our democratic process that the mechanism be strengthened from its current form.

In our parliamentary system the vast majority of time, resources and attention is devoted to government legislation. Bills introduced by ministers of the crown further the political agenda of the government of the day. However we as members of parliament are elected by our constituents to represent them here, rather than to represent this place to them, and to raise their issues of concern. As most of parliament's time is devoted to government legislation, our opportunity to act in a legislative capacity on behalf of the people we represent falls to the one hour of debate each day that is allotted to private members' business.

To give our audience an appreciation of the frustration that MPs feel over private members' business and the process through which it is chosen, I will briefly review it.

Hundreds of bills and motions are introduced in the House of Commons. Each one represents hours upon hours or in some cases days and weeks of research and work, but most never see the light of day. In order for a bill to actually be debated in the House, an MP's name must first be drawn from a lottery. The competition is fierce. There are 301 MPs with just one hour a day, one item per day, and approximately 135 sitting days per year. The math should be evident to everyone, particularly to my hon. colleague from Elk Island.

When and if a member's name is finally drawn, he or she can put forward a bill for debate and then the real challenge begins. Having beaten the odds and come this far, the bill in question is still not even eligible for a vote in the House of Commons. This means that we end up using the precious little time we have available to debate motions and bills which simply disappear upon the expiry of their one hour debate. Such non-votable bills and motions have absolutely no chance whatsoever of becoming law. It is debate for debate's sake and in my opinion it is a waste of valuable time.

If we as members of parliament want our issues to come to a vote, we must appear as witnesses before a special subcommittee to plead our case and argue why our bill or motion should be granted one of ten designations of votable status. The rules of the House explicitly ensure that most private members' business, if debated, does not get to a vote.

To make matters worse for opposition members, many of whom naively look to private members' business as their sole source of parliamentary effectiveness, the government maintains a majority of members on the subcommittee that decides which precious few bills become votable and which ones get to be a waste of valuable time. The government can use this majority to ensure that issues which run too contrary to the government's own vision have no chance of being subject to a vote in the House of Commons and therefore becoming law.

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The very lucky items which, against all odds, are drafted, tabled, drawn, argued and finally awarded votable status go through a slightly different process. They get three hours of debate, one hour at a time, separated by about 30 sitting days, which means that in reality it takes about half the year just to get through the first stage of debate and come to an initial vote.

In the very exceptional circumstances when the government cannot force its own MPs to vote to kill a private member's bill, it has other levers to kill private members' bills more quietly.

First, if a bill passes second reading and is referred to a committee for further review, the government uses its numerical dominance of the committee to simply see to it that the item on the agenda mysteriously never comes up for consideration before the House has prorogued. The bill is thus buried in committee and never seen again.

Second, another famous tactic, one which the government employed against one of its own members in the last parliament, is strong arming its committee members to debate every clause of the bill and report the bill back to the House as a blank piece of paper. This actually happened, as the member for Mississauga East can attest. It is one of the greatest affronts to representative democracy that we have seen.

Third, failing even such draconian measures, if a private member's bill hypothetically manages to pass all stages of debate in the House of Commons, it must be brought forth for debate in the Senate. The Senate is faced with the same issue of whether or not it is to be given votable status in the other place. Our colleague from Scarborough Southwest has fallen victim to this sort of game in the previous parliament.

Finally, these measures are not even necessary. The whole private members' process is so drawn out that most bills and motions end up dying somewhere on the order paper when an election is called. I hope this summary serves to illustrate the absolute futility of the current private members' process. A mechanism which should be the greatest tool of parliamentarians becomes a joke.

• (1740)

The process is designed to be merely a show and to maintain absolute government control over what happens in the federal legislative sphere. Individual representatives of the citizens of Canada do not have the means to overcome government partisanship and to effect real legislative measures that matter to their constituents.

Private members' business has evolved dramatically since Confederation. We have tried models ranging from entire private members' days to the current system of one hour per day every day of the week.

Our current structure originates with the McGrath report of 1985 which established the votability rules and the lottery system that created the order of precedence for debate. The McGrath report summarized the state of private members' business when it stated:

The House does not attach any great importance to private members' business as it is now organized. Our proposals are designed to achieve a number of improvements in the way private members' business is dealt with. They would tighten the conditions of the ballot, widen the scope of private members' legislation, and ensure that some private members' bills and motions come to a vote.

It is evident that the democratic bar was already so low that a major objective of the single and greatest private members' business reform had to be to ensure that some private members' bills and motions came to a vote. The low bar has meant that the reformed system, with some minor subsequent reforms, has led to the mediocrity with which we operate today.

The single greatest impediment to the effectiveness of private members' business is votability. While other matters of procedure also require attention, I would argue that by the very act of making all private members' legislation votable we would be forcing the House to take private members' business seriously. Members would attend the debates and consult their constituents over the issues put forth.

Among the defenders of the status quo the same arguments tend to resurface. I will recount just a few. First, non-votable bills are useful because they raise awareness of issues. This argument is uneconomical. Why not raise awareness of important issues and give the House the power to pronounce upon them without having to repeat the process at a later time? Private members' business is scarce enough as it is.

Second, if all bills were votable, fewer bills would be considered because of the differential in debate time between votable and non-votable items. This argument is also an obfuscation. I believe that all members of this place would gladly see a reduction in the debatable time to a standard one hour if it meant their bills would have a hope of actually coming to a vote. This solution would increase the number of bills considered in the current structure.

Third, a democratically elected majority government should have control of the legislative agenda and not cede it to opposition members. Such an argument is an insult to opposition members and government backbenchers alike. The regional cleavages in Canada dictate that if private members' business is shut down then certain regions are effectively shut out of the legislative process.

Furthermore I would argue that if a government is scared of ideas and of free votes in the Commons it is no longer deserving of the right to govern. How much more legitimate can a government be than if it allows absolute freedom to debate and freedom to vote while still maintaining the confidence of members of the House?

Does general votability work? I want to point to a few examples. The Quebec standing orders state that apart from being referred to a

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committee before second reading “the general rules pertaining to bills shall apply to private bills”. The Alberta standing orders state that “the standing orders relating to public bills apply to private bills”. The Ontario rules state that the speaker is to put the question at 12 noon each Thursday for all private members’ bills considered that week. They all get a vote.

I urge all members of the House to look upon today’s debate as a golden opportunity to restore an important pillar of democracy to our assembly. In an age where power is increasingly concentrated in the Prime Minister’s Office, and where party whips dangle carrots of travel or promotion in exchange for obedience, we must stand guard against allowing our House of Commons to become a technical afterthought to elite decision making.

We as individual members have the power today to support the motion and take back a part of the democratic power that has been bestowed upon us by our constituents and is a vital institution of the Westminster parliamentary system of which we are proud to be a part.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I hesitated for a moment to ask questions or make comments because I wanted to give others an opportunity to participate in the debate.

I enjoyed the speech from our rookie member and congratulate him on having such insight into private members’ business. Does he have any comment with respect to what people in his riding are saying are the issues and what they would like him to bring forward? Does he think that if the motion passes today, as we anticipate it will, it will enhance his ability to represent his constituents?

● (1745)

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, of course the answer is yes. I came here with fewer illusions than some members because I had worked as an adviser on the Hill before being elected. I realized that private members had limited influence on the major agenda of the day. It struck me that it therefore made sense to try to be as good a constituency representative as possible.

There are any number of local issues that might not come to the attention of ministers and the ministry. It is only natural that issues which are important locally would not emerge at the national level.

I will cite a couple of issues of interest. I will bring before the House, among other things, the issue of one of the highways that goes through my riding, Highway 7. It has come to be known as the killer strip due to the large number of fatal accidents that occur on it. It is a two lane highway with a very high traffic volume.

The issue of level crossings is an area of federal jurisdiction because rails are within federal jurisdiction. Every town in the

Ottawa valley has level crossings. The funding formula for providing warning signs is arcane and hard to work with. In my home town of Carleton Place the street I live on has low traffic volume and uses wig-wags. The major street in town uses only lights to warn of a coming train. This sort of thing has recently led to a fatality in the Ottawa valley.

There are other issues of importance on a different level. Religious freedom in China is of great importance to me and to some of my constituents who are practitioners of Falun Gong. Some of them have friends or relatives in China who have been arrested for practising their faith. These are some of the issues it would be nice to put before the House and see come to a vote.

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be able to speak to the motion. It alarms and amazes me. I have only been here six months. When I talk to my constituents back home and explain to them that we can come into this place, discuss private members’ business or any business and not be able to vote on it freely or even at all, it is absolutely unbelievable in their minds. It is very difficult to explain it to them. What I have seen and witnessed in this place since I have been here has increasingly impressed upon me how dysfunctional it can become.

We need to think a bit outside the box. We think we are taking a large step today by saying private members’ bills should be votable, but how radical is that? We should go a little further and say private members’ bills should not only be votable but freely votable. If something very specific and of importance comes before the House that we can debate and vote on, we should be able to vote on it in the best interest of Canadians. That is who we are truly representing.

That would be the first step toward parliamentary reform, and parliamentary reform is something this place cries out for. Canadians cry out for it as well.

I am pleased to represent a party that believes in democracy, free votes and the ability to debate openly. Sometimes that causes trouble and is a bit messy, but that is fine. We admit we do not have all the answers. However Canadians need to be able to vote freely for the government and be represented freely. This opportunity is very important.

The supply day motion is a very important step in the process. Canadians will learn to recognize and understand that. I sense that there is support. As a new member I am alarmed that we did not get here sooner. It amazes me.

Another thing we do in this place, as I discern from what is happening in the seats around me, is forget whose chairs we are sitting in when we come into this place to speak, debate, talk or put forward motions such as private members’ bills.

• (1750)

Members forget that while a seat may have their name on it, it should not. I think this one does. Yes, my name is right here, but this is not my seat. It is not the seat of the Canadian Alliance people who voted for me. It is not the seat of people from whatever side, Canadian Alliance members or anyone else, who voted for me. It is definitely not the seat of the Prime Minister, and we see how much power is in that seat. It is the seat of the 100,000 residents of my constituency. That is whose seat this is and that is who sits here. It is not I. We forget that so easily in this place.

As I discern what happens around this place, I would suggest we change those signs because so easily we forget exactly what we are doing here and who we are representing. As a newcomer here that is my first take as to what is going on.

It is wonderful that we have the opportunity to put forward private members' bills because the government does not have a monopoly on insight, good ideas or brainpower. Private members have an obligation to represent the people who send them here. Putting forward legislation on behalf of those people is an absolute right of representative democracy.

The motion would in some ways clearly rectify the oversight of the current system. Why it has not been here up to this point is something I must ask myself. Is it that the government is fearful that members from the other side of the House might upstage it with quality legislation? Is it that the government does not trust the public to bring forth worthwhile legislation? Perhaps it is that the government is fearful that when good legislation comes forward it will not have time to steal the ideas for itself and introduce them on its own time. This is, as we have heard from a previous speaker, exactly what has happened.

Voting on private members' business is a minor change on the road to parliamentary reform because so much needs to be reformed in this place. I think Canadians are crying out for reform in many ways. We sense that when we see the number of people who failed to exercise their right to vote in the last election.

The fact that we can put forward bills is a bit of a fail-safe to the government's claim to ultimate power. However the government should not be alarmed at that. It can vote down private member's bills any time it wants. Private members' bills are not a threat to a government in power but they give Canadians an opportunity to speak in an effective and fruitful way.

I hope this is just one step toward many reforms that will take place in the country. We should recognize that one of the things we should be doing here is realizing whose seat we are in. We should be able to vote freely not only on private members' business but on all business in the House. I am dreaming, and I think Canadians are

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dreaming, of the day that will take place. Perhaps it will come sooner than some of us might imagine.

Private members' business over the years has been an important mechanism in the federation. It is not something new. The fight over private members' business has been happening for 130 years. As a government comes to power, backbenchers seem to duel about whether private members' business can come forward. The government at times pushes back private members' business only to have the pendulum swing again in the other direction.

This is one of those times when we have an opportunity to push back the agenda because the pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction. What a golden opportunity it is for the House to represent Canadians in a more effective way. The time has come to push back. I believe there is an appetite for it in the House. I am certainly pleased at what I hear colleagues in all parties in the House saying about the bill. I look forward to what that will mean to this place. It is one small step in a journey we all need to take together.

• (1755)

MPs are frustrated with merely rubber stamping government legislation by the majority. Opposition MPs lack an outlet for their ideas. The motion would go a long way to facilitating that.

I support the motion. I congratulate my colleague for introducing it and congratulate every member who will vote for it in the House. It is one step in a journey that is long overdue.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to stand in the House and say how insightful it is to hear from what we like to classify in the House as a rookie.

It is my third term and sometimes we lose sight of why we are here. When the member mentioned that his seat belonged to his constituents, all 100,000 of them and not just those who voted for his party, it brings back the reason all of us from all parties of the House came here.

Why is it necessary to make private members' business votable? It is in many cases the only opportunity backbenchers ever get to put forward their ideas. We know that. The member asked why it has not been done before. He asked what happened and why it had taken so long. He mentioned that the government might be fearful it would be unable to take some of the ideas.

Unfortunately, I think he was right. That is one of the reasons. I can honestly say that I hope the government takes all the ideas. I do not think there is any such thing as stealing, borrowing or anything else in this Chamber. I know we joke about sending brown envelopes over. I would gladly send the government brown envelopes every night if it would adopt the ideas.

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My big fear is that private members' bills would not truly be independently voted on but would be guided by partisan interests. Could the member say whether that is a fear of his too?

Mr. Rob Merrifield: Mr. Speaker, the member's question begs another question: Why is all business in the House not voted on by the people we truly represent, the 100,000 people in our constituencies?

That is a question Canadians are having a difficult time getting their minds around. If something is put forward in the House and it is a good idea, it must garner the support of 50% plus one of 301 members. If it is good for Canada it is good for Canada. If not, it will not achieve the consensus of the House.

We hurt ourselves badly by the process in place now. Surely we can start on private members' business, which is very funnelled and focused on specific ideas, and open it up to an open vote in this place. If it is good for Canadians it is good for Canadians. It is not about party politics. It is about leading the country. Our job here, as I discern it, is to be leaders in the country. I would challenge hon. members to do that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to split my time with the member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

I am glad to see today's motion and delighted at the enthusiasm shown by Canadian Alliance members at the possibility of improving the rules and procedures of the House of Commons.

I listened to several speeches and I really appreciate the comments by members of the other political parties.

With respect to private members' business, I am one of the lucky ones. My name gets drawn rather often because it is true that I present a lot of motions, but that is not the issue, since our name stands only once for the draw.

One day, just to explain how it works, I had spoken for an hour here in the House on a motion to pay a salary to women who stay at home.

• (1800)

When my hour was up around noon, I immediately went to the clerk's office and I again presented my motion. It was a Tuesday and, the next day, during the afternoon, the motion I had brought forward had a new number. There was a draw and again I won; I chose this same motion. Recently I have been lucky and my name has been drawn twice.

I support the motion because solutions must be found. It is true that some members have presented motions for four years and their motions have never been drawn. A solution must be found.

What I have trouble with is the way the decision is made about whether a motion or bill is votable or not. We must go before a committee made up of members from all political parties. At the very end, we have five minutes to explain what our bill is all about.

Then a decision is made, but it all depends on how the discussions went: outside the House we are all friends, but inside it is like a hockey game, and it is not easy. In committee, if just one member is opposed to the bill, it cannot be a votable item.

I experienced that recently. I presented a bill concerning the posting of the gross price of a litre of gas before taxes. When I look at the criteria set in April 1999, this bill, which reflected the public's wish—because we always serve our constituents and all Canadians—was perfectly in keeping with what the public was asking for with respect to the price of gas.

What I find troublesome is the fact that decisions are made by friends or colleagues, members who are against us within the House. We should testify before an independent committee made up of three people who have experience in the House of Commons and to whom we would explain for five minutes what our bill is all about.

Once a decision is made, the reasons why it is or is not a votable item should be put into writing, specifying under which criteria. We never get a written decision, as it is all done verbally, as to why our item is votable or not, and we are never told why. All of a sudden, we are out of luck.

This is rather troublesome, because all the members of this House work very hard. They put a great deal of effort into finding solutions to everything that affects Canada. This is why I am saying that we must find solutions.

I am pleased by the motion put forward today by the Canadian Alliance member, because it calls on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs to use its great expertise in this area, precisely to find solutions.

Even you, Mr. Speaker, have examined reports and tried to find solutions. Today, we are back at it again.

I will vote in favour of this motion this evening and I truly appreciated the comments made today.

[*English*]

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member with regard to his comments. I too have been lucky on the order of the draw, but I also know the frustrations of having just five minutes to

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go before a committee to justify why my bill should be deemed votable.

I have had the opportunity to work on both sides. I sat on the committee on private members' business. I know full well the frustration of seeing people come to the committee who have spent months putting their private members' bills together. Then we drew five or six bills which should have been made votable, but we only had a time slot for one. Therefore we had to say that five would be non-votable.

I strongly feel the motion we will be voting on today will answer all of these problems. Does the member concur that these problems can be addressed through the simple measure we put forward today?

• (1805)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy St-Julien: Mr. Speaker, it is true that we will not resolve all the problems here by November. There will always be something somewhere that needs improving, but this evening, with the motion brought forward earlier today, we will improve things. That is what counts.

We must find a solution together to improve things so we can say to the other members "Go on, introduce bills, bring forward motions, you will have a chance". Today, many members are no longer bringing forward motions or introducing bills. I was not bitter following the committee's decision because the members of the committee do good work.

In conclusion, the second time I appeared before the committee I was in good humour and said "I do not want my motion to be votable. I wish you a good day and will let you continue your work". I was not in a bad mood. However, it is true there are always things to improve. The member is right. There will always be something to improve. Perhaps this will happen even next December. I appreciated the member's question.

[*English*]

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity to participate in the debate today. Some weeks ago it would have seemed strange that we would have an opportunity to spend time debating an issue like this in the House. I congratulate the official opposition for putting it on the table so we may exchange views on making some improvements in the way we do our business here.

It is worth noting that the opposition day motion, which is the format we are following today, is one of approximately six opposition motions which have been adopted since we came back to the House from the last election. It seems a rather high number

to me but it is a tribute to both the quality of the motions and perhaps the reduction in partisanship applied in considering them.

I do not know what colleagues will do with this particular motion, but it certainly is an attempt to improve the role of private members' business in parliament.

I have had the opportunity and privilege of chairing the procedure and House affairs committee, which in a bit of an arm's length way looks after some of the private members' business procedure, and the infamous private members' business subcommittee which up until now selected private members' business for votability. The particular task of chairing or even serving on that committee is a mission of real dedication. It is not an easy task because inevitably a few members are pleased with the results and a larger number are displeased.

We try to circulate our colleagues on both sides of the House through the subcommittee as quickly as possible so they are not too bruised and battered. It is an exercise in politics and in trying to make the procedures work. The motion today suggests that there may be another way to do it.

After listening to some of the opposition speeches today, I suggest we should be careful. We really should be careful about stereotyping members on both sides of the House. Not every person on this side of the House thinks the same way, acts the same way or deals with policy issues the same way. The same is true among the membership on the other side of the House.

When a member opposite looks at the government's side and sees all the government members voting together, as so often is the case on a government bill, I understand why they would tend to stereotype us as being one huge group of MPs that simply gets up and votes en masse for a bill. However in many cases it is never 100% clear before we all come into the House how our members will vote. There is always a lot of political pushing and shoving in our caucuses before we come in to vote, as we all try to convince each other to vote in particular ways. This is not strange to politics. It is very much part of the job we have here.

• (1810)

The motion today properly reflects the important historic role of private members' business. The member for Yorkton—Melville who moved the motion has pointed out that private members' business was actually the main stock of business of earlier parliaments. We do not have to go back too far. It was a few generations ago. It was out of private members' business that all bills tended to evolve.

Over time the government agenda dominated and the private members' business portion was squeezed into smaller procedural portions of the day, the week or month, as the case may be. I suppose that is the bad news for a private member. However, the good news is that as an element of parliamentary business, private members' business has never been lost. It is still alive and there.

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When I first came to this House in 1988, it was my perception that private members' business, as a living entity, was virtually on life support. I recall a private member's bill, involving tobacco use, quite extraordinarily being passed. There might have been another one passed one a year later.

However, the House and the government since those days have actually accorded a wider berth to private members' business. I am sure someone is keeping track of the fact that there are now quite a few private members' bills and motions that have been adopted by the House, as have opposition day motions, as I pointed out. There seems to be a modest freeing up of partisanship, time and procedure for private members' business and the whole envelope of non-government business.

This has been very healthy. I see members in the House who have had private members' business adopted. I was fortunate in that regard at one point in time. I was very proud of the item that was adopted by the House, and the thumbprint of that work exists to this day.

The member for Elk Island indicated that he had counted some 4,000 pieces of private members' business since 1993. That is huge. That bundle of work by members of parliament on both sides of the House is actually a breeding ground for creative, fresh public policy. Yes, the government does cherry-pick from that pool of creative work. However, of those ideas put forward by members to the House as part of the public record, not all but a lot become part of public policy debate or actual public policy that is adopted in one way or another. That is positive.

Also government votes on private members' business these days are not whipped. It is a free vote that has created some interesting voting patterns, but it has been healthy. The Prime Minister made that commitment and has kept to it. It is a very interesting evolution.

The proposal is that all private members' business items become votable. As I mentioned, with 4,000 pieces of private members' business since 1993, there would be a need to ration the volume in terms of House time. We could not have fit in 4,000 items over the last seven or eight years. It is just too much. For that purpose we have been using a lottery. It is not very pretty, it is not very rational, but members seem to accept it. Perhaps that is not the proper tool. Maybe we should change that.

We also have found it necessary to ration for quality or relevance. That is why the subcommittee reviews the bill.

• (1815)

The suggestion is that we do not need to scrutinize for quality or relevance as we can let the House do that. There are a number of

private members' business items that members do not believe will go too far. Is it appropriate to accord House time to a private member's business item that a member happens to like but knows will not go anywhere?

With regard to the rationing mechanism that we are searching for, I would point out that the 22nd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs is before the House and gets rid of the 100 signature rule. We are looking for a replacement. The opposition day motion, if adopted by the House, would undoubtedly trigger an exercise that would produce a mechanism to treat private members' business appropriately.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskeewin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise on the particular item today. I will be splitting my time with my Canadian Alliance colleague from Wild Rose who will be wrapping it up at the end of the hour. I would like to read the text of the motion into the record again. It states:

That the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be instructed to draft, and report to this House no later than November 1, 2001, changes to the Standing Orders improving procedures for the consideration of Private Members' Business, including a workable proposal allowing for all items to be votable.

For our viewing audience and those looking in, the important part of the motion is to come up with a workable proposal allowing for all private members' business items, meaning the motions and the bills introduced by individual MPs, to be votable.

I commend my Canadian Alliance colleague, the member for Yorkton—Melville, for bringing forward the motion. We should not be surprised as he has brought forward many other fine things on agriculture, opposition to the gun bill and so on. I commend him on the common sense proposal he brought forward that hopefully will have the support of members on all sides of the House when the vote is taken. I also commend the members for Scarborough—Rouge River and Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik on their comments. They made some thoughtful and supportive remarks as well.

Private members' business for those of us in this place is indisputably valuable because it ought not to be on party lines. MPs have a greater latitude to vote freely, which is not generally the case with government business. There is that sense that if we do not vote a government bill forward then it is a lack of confidence. I believe that is a myth, a problem, and hopefully we will bring that down some day. As it stands, private members' business is not a perceived threat to the government. It is not perceived as a vote of non-confidence in the government of the day.

The motion we have before us in terms of all private members' business being votable would improve private members' business. Without a doubt it would give a backbencher a more meaningful role. Backbenchers from the government side and from opposition

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parties could put forward sane and sensible proposals called for by constituents throughout the country.

These proposals would have a good chance of being adopted on a non-partisan basis. It would be good for members of parliament and backbenchers in the sense that they would be forced to listen to debates carefully since they would be voting freely and not necessarily with their parties. They would have to form an opinion of their own rather than some ministerial department or critic crafting a particular recommendation. It is good from that point of view as members would have to assess, engage and think through the merits and implications of a particular item.

It would also encourage Canadians to vote for a local candidate because of his or her views and not just for a national party. That would be good for democracy in that it would engage more people because the individual who is going forward, be it a nomination within a party and subsequently at election time, would likely be putting the ideas he is a strong proponent of into the form of a private member's bill.

• (1820)

It would in some sense revolutionize the process. That is probably not too strong a word in the sense that it would engage more constituents and more of the public across our country in democracy. Many have grown cynical and apathetic and I think this would be a way of turning that around.

It also respects the democratic rights of constituents because private members' business is currently the only real way that an MP's constituents can have direct input between elections into actual legislation. Some might say if individuals are close to a minister they could have input in that way, but I think it would be fair to say that over the course of the last number of years it is the Prime Minister's Office that controls it. It is even questionable how much influence various ministers around the cabinet table exert.

In a very deep way private members' business would give the opportunity of direct input from constituents via their members of parliament. We must improve it if we can. Making private members' items votable is an obvious improvement because democracy demands that we actually vote on something. It makes sense that if there is something coming forward we should be able to vote on it.

For example, the prime minister of the day could call for an election campaign to run a certain length of time. Individuals throughout the country could simply present their ideas. If, when everyone reached an end point, which would be election day, there were no vote, there would be nothing. In this respect it only makes logical sense that if there are items put forward, debated and so on, they should be voted on.

The follow-up is that the current system is undemocratic. How could there be democracy without any voting? The problem of items not being made votable has worsened in the past while. In the

second session of the 36th parliament 30% of drawn items were made votable, but in this session it is only 20%.

I will not belabour the lack of democracy because it has been mentioned by others. Some even see the subcommittee's decision making as being rather arbitrary. Some go further to say it is an unfair selection process. With regard to the stated selection criteria, there is a grid that we are supposed to fall into line with to make items votable.

It seems that most members following that criteria can make an item such that it would be votable. Yet it comes down to a judgment call by a small subcommittee that operates on a consensus basis. It is incomprehensible. It is ineffable to some of us why some are not made votable. We need something changed in that respect.

My own experience was that I had 100 signatures of members of parliament voting for something that I brought forward. It was a freedom of conscience bill, Bill C-246. I assumed that it would be a matter of a vote at the end of the day. That was the whole point of gathering the signatures. Something went sideways on it and the process was suspended. I did not have the vote as I assumed I would after having collected so much support across the House of Commons. It was only the waste of time and energy that went into it.

People talk about drawbacks but there are ways that we can respond. Some say that there would not be enough time for House business if every item were votable. The time for debate can be reduced on each item. The number of items drawn can be reduced. The time allotted to private members' business can be increased. There are all kinds of ways in which we can respond to that.

If silly items are sometimes introduced, the individual probably pays the price politically. However that has been very rare. The House would obviously vote against those frivolous things. I think any of these things can be addressed. In my view there is no concern that cannot be responded to in terms of making all items votable.

I strongly support the motion the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville put before us today. I encourage my colleagues on all sides of the House to give it due consideration and have it put forward for the fall session.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I do not have the full amount time so I will try to be as fast as I can. There are a couple of things I would like to point out. I am certainly behind the motion and I congratulate my colleague for bringing it forward.

I will talk about some private members' business that has been successfully voted on in this parliament. There was a bill from the member for Winnipeg North Centre regarding labels on alcoholic

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drinks and a warning of the dangers of drinking while pregnant. I believe it was voted on and passed.

In the first session of the last parliament the member for Winnipeg Centre had a private member's bill on the retrofitting of government buildings for energy efficiency, which passed.

• (1825)

In the second session of the last parliament the member for Acadie—Bathurst had a private member's motion pass regarding the study on benefits for seasonal workers.

A long time ago when John Nunziata was sitting on that side of the House he brought forward a private member's bill to eliminate section 745 of the criminal code and it was passed by the House.

The member for Mississauga East brought forward a private member's bill forward proposing consecutive sentencing for certain sexual crimes and it was passed.

The member for Prince George—Bulkley Valley brought forward a very good private member's bill on drunk driving causing death and mandatory sentencing of seven years and it passed.

To my recollection, there have been many more private members' bills that have been voted on in the House of Commons. However, the problem I see is that I do not believe any one of them have ever been implemented.

I know that section 745, which was introduced in 1994, is still in the criminal code. It is still the faint hope clause. Nothing was done after the House accepted it. Members wanted it to pass and to become law but it never did. I was on the justice committee at the time. I saw John Nunziata's private member's bill come to the table of the justice committee and die because it was never brought forward for debate or discussion at the committee level. Even though I was a member of the committee and I asked hundreds of times to get the issue up for discussion and debate so that we could call witnesses and get it into law, it was ignored.

Mr. Stan Keyes: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member but he should know that there were changes to section 745 in the bill and those are on the record. Compromises were made.

Mr. Myron Thompson: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Mr. Nunziata's bill was to eliminate section 745 and it was never eliminated.

There is also consecutive sentencing. The courts have the capability of doing that but the sentencing bill that was passed in the House made it mandatory for the courts to give consecutive

sentencing. Lo and behold, one day I saw consecutive sentencing. It really made me feel good that the courts of the land finally brought it in. It was in the case of a farmer who had two counts against him for selling his wheat across the border. He was sentenced consecutively for each count. I was in the courtroom and saw that. What a disgraceful thing to happen.

All of these good bills, which the highest court of the land agree to and that should come to pass, never come to pass. What kind of an outfit do we have running the show here?

The government gets direction from all members on all sides of the House to bring in some legislation to implement the very things that we all agree should happen. Why does it not happen? What kind of government do we have that would ignore a decision made in the highest court of the land? We already know it ignores the people across the land but for it to ignore very important decisions of the House of Commons blows my mind.

I am sure that at the end of this day government members will vote for the motion. I am pleased about that. It is a great idea, but I wonder how old I will be before it is ever implemented. That scares the daylights out of me. This outfit is very ineffective and is not functional. If it does not start listening to the people across the land and to its own members, who the devil will it listen to?

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 6.30 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

• (1830)

[*English*]

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

VOTE 1—NATIONAL DEFENCE—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised by the hon. member for St. Albert concerning vote 1 under National Defence of the operating expenditures in the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002.

In his argument the hon. member states that the estimate should be ruled out of order because in his view and that of the auditor

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general the expenditures related to the development of the Downsview Park site, approximately \$2 million of the \$4.8 million, are not a valid charge against National Defence vote 1 and that the Department of National Defence should not be funding Downsview Park from its operation expenditures. If the government wants to develop and operate Downsview Park, it should introduce legislation accordingly, then seek the appropriate funding through the estimates rather than through National Defence.

[*Translation*]

Before beginning, I would like to thank the hon. member for raising the matter and I also want to acknowledge the contributions of the hon. Minister of Transport, the hon. House leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the hon. Leader of the Government in the House, the hon. opposition House leader and the hon. member for Athabasca on this point.

[*English*]

In his point the hon. member for St. Albert stated that in the 1994 budget the government announced the closure of Canadian Forces Base Toronto at Downsview and indicated that it was to be held in perpetuity as a unique urban recreational green space. For the project to go ahead, the government issued an order in council authorizing Canada Lands Company Limited to incorporate a new crown corporation, Parc Downsview Park Inc., as a subsidiary of Canada Lands Company Limited pursuant to the Financial Administration Act.

The hon. member also stated that management of the Downsview lands has been transferred from National Defence to the Canada Lands Company and that National Defence still continues to hold the title to the lands.

In addition, initial funding to the Parc Downsview Park Inc. was provided for from an existing National Defence vote. The government issued an order in council authorizing the transfer of the first parcel of land to Parc Downsview Park Inc. pursuant to the Federal Real Property Act.

[*Translation*]

The parties to this complaint, that is, the hon. member for St. Albert, the Minister of Transport (formerly the Minister of National Defence), and the auditor general, are in agreement on several key elements.

First, as all three have noted, the Department of National Defence continues to hold title to the lands in question.

Second, in its 1994 budget, approved by the House, the government announced its intention to close certain Canadian forces bases, and referred to the National Defence budget impact paper tabled with the budget, which spoke of the intention to hold the

Downsview site “in perpetuity and in trust primarily as a unique urban recreational green space for the enjoyment of future generations”.

Third, as the auditor general has noted “each step in the founding and development of Downsview Park was completed in accordance with the relevant governing legislation”.

Finally, the House has previously, in 1999-2000, given its approval for the allocation of funds to operations and development of Downsview park.

[*English*]

These facts are not in dispute. The minister has informed the House that in addition to retaining title to the lands, the Department of National Defence maintains ongoing activities on the Downsview property.

• (1835)

The auditor general in his report takes the position in paragraph 17.73 that:

—if the Government of Canada wishes to set up an urban park and invest. . . public funds therein, it should have. . . approval from parliament to do so.

The government takes the position that it has the necessary approval, having received parliamentary approval first on its budgetary policy of 1994 and second on its allocation of funds in 1999-2000. I note the observation in the auditor general's report:

The mandate and purposes of Parc Downsview Park Inc. are fully consistent with those of the parent corporation, the Canada Lands Company Limited, and the other current and past subsidiary corporations of the parent, for example, the CN Tower and the Old Port of Montreal.

That is, there is no departure here from previous government practice.

There is a disagreement between the government and the auditor general with respect to the extent of the existing authority of the Department of National Defence to allocate funds to Downsview Park. However, on the basis of the evidence submitted by the hon. Minister of Transport, it seems that the House has up to this point sided with the government.

For example, when the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs met on March 13 of this year to consider the main estimates, my understanding is that no questions were raised pertaining to Downsview Park and the committee elected not to present a report in the House. In this regard, therefore, the Speaker can find nothing out of order.

It also seems evident that the government and the auditor general are not in agreement concerning certain of the government's accounting practices. If this is indeed the case and if it is something hon. members wish to investigate further, that would be for the House or its committees to pursue. It is not a matter for the Speaker to decide.

Speaker's Ruling

To conclude, I see no clear evidence that any procedural irregularity has occurred, and accordingly I rule that there is no point of order here. I thank the hon. member for St. Albert as well as those who contributed to the discussion.

BILL S-15—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised by the hon. Leader of the Government in the House on May 30, 2001, concerning the procedural acceptability of Bill S-15, an act to enable and assist the Canadian tobacco industry in attaining its objective of preventing the use of tobacco products by young people in Canada.

[Translation]

I wish to thank the hon. government House leader, the hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, the hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine and the hon. member for Calgary West, as well as the hon. opposition House leader and the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough for their interventions.

I would also like to thank hon. members for the additional material they submitted for my consideration.

Let me first set the stage for this ruling. As your Speaker, it is my duty to examine each case on which I must rule in light of our practice and procedure and to make my decision, mindful that each ruling adds to that body of precedent.

Marleau and Montpetit, in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, at page 261, phrase this simply, stating:

It is the responsibility of the Speaker to act as the guardian of the rights and privileges of members and of the House as an institution.

[English]

Chapter 18 of Marleau and Montpetit provides a comprehensive history of our financial procedures and I would commend to hon. members reading pages 701 to 714, if they have not read the whole book already, as being particularly helpful.

• (1840)

Before I address the arguments presented for and against Bill S-15 proceeding in the House, I want to provide the procedural context against which I have to consider this point of order. I ask hon. members to bear with me as I present the following extracts from pages 701 to 703 of Marleau and Montpetit so as to situate the issues raised by Bill S-15 in the larger context:

The manner in which Canada deals with public finance derives from British parliamentary procedure, as practised at the time of Confederation—

That is on page 701. It continues:

The whole law of finance, and consequently the whole British constitution is grounded upon one fundamental principle, laid down at the very outset of English parliamentary history and secured by three hundred years of mingled conflict with the Crown and peaceful growth. All taxes and public burdens imposed upon the nation for purposes of state, whatsoever their nature, must be granted by the representatives of the citizens and taxpayers—

That is on pages 701 to 702. It continues:

Initially, the Commons were content simply to have grants of Supply originate in their House. However, over time the Lords began "tacking on" additional legislative provisions to Commons "money bills", by way of amendments. This was viewed by the House as a breach of its prerogative to originate all legislation which imposed a charge either on the public or the public purse, and led the Commons in 1678, to resolve that:

All aids and supplies and aids to his Majesty in Parliament, are the sole gift of the Commons; and all Bills for the granting of any such aids and supplies ought to begin with the Commons; and that it is the undoubted and sole right of the Commons to direct, limit, and appoint, in such Bills, the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations, and qualifications of such grants; which ought not to be changed or altered by the House of Lords.

It is striking that over 300 years later a virtually identical formulation is found in our own House of Commons Standing Order 80(1) which reads:

All aids and supplies granted to the Sovereign by the parliament of Canada are the sole gift of the House of Commons, and all bills for granting such aids and supplies ought to begin with the House, as it is the undoubted right of the House to direct, limit and appoint in all such bills, the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations and qualifications of such grants, which are not alterable by the Senate.

[Translation]

This same principle is captured in an early source on Canadian procedure, Bourinot 4th ed., at page 491, which states, and this is a translation:

As a general rule, public bills may originate in either house; but whenever they grant supplies of any kind, or involve directly or indirectly the levying or appropriation of any tax upon the people, they must be initiated in the popular branch, in accordance with law and English constitutional practice.

In Canada, the constitution itself enshrines the ancient English practice whereby the elected representatives of those who will be affected by any tax measure should be the first to examine such a measure and accept or reject it.

In matters of taxation, the House is provided with priority over the Senate. The Constitution Act, 1867 provides, in section 53: "Bills for appropriating any Part of the Public Revenue, or for imposing any Tax or Impost, shall originate in the House of Commons". The standing orders provide that the House may only consider taxation measures that have been initiated by a minister through the usual ways and means procedures.

*Speaker's Ruling**[English]*

I have judged it necessary to offer this rather lengthy, but by no means comprehensive, review of the history of our financial procedures because I believe that the question of the primacy of the House of Commons in taxation matters lies at the very heart of our parliamentary practice and is, of course, central to a ruling on this point of order.

- (1845)

I fully appreciate the frustration exhibited by passionate proponents of the aims of this bill who want to give the House an opportunity to debate the merits of the bill. They may balk at arguments about procedure, calling them obtuse or arcane, or technicalities irrelevant to debate on public policy in the 21st century.

Whatever sympathy I as a member or a citizen may have for those views, as your Speaker I am bound to be the guardian of the parliamentary rules and precedents that guide our deliberations and it is against that standard that my ruling must be made.

[Translation]

Now let us return to consider the specifics of the matter at hand.

The government House leader's complaint is twofold: first, that Bill S-15 originated in the Senate rather than the House and so violates the priority of the House in matter of taxation; secondly, that Bill S-15 was not preceded by a ways and means motion, an essential preliminary to the introduction of a tax bill.

[English]

Those who spoke in defence of the bill claim that the bill does not in fact seek to impose a tax but rather a levy desired by the tobacco industry for a purpose which the industry considers as beneficial to itself. If this argument is accepted then the major impediment to the bill has been overcome, for as Erskine May, 22nd edition at page 781, states:

Levies upon employers in a particular industry for the purpose of forming a fund used to finance activities beneficial to the industry are not normally regarded as charges—

That is, taxes. It is this issue, the distinction between a levy and a tax, which will provide the key to the ruling.

[Translation]

I have re-examined with care previous cases where levies were imposed. As the House knows, there have been very few bills involving levies, and fewer still which gave rise to procedural discussion. I have studied the examples cited by the hon. member for Lac-St-Louis, namely: the 1997 Act to amend the Copyright Act imposing a levy on blank tapes in favour of performers and recording artists; the 1987 Canada Shipping Act imposing a levy

against shipowners to deal with oil spills caused by tankers and other ships; and the 1985 Canada Petroleum Resources Act imposing a levy to support an environmental studies research fund.

It is true that none of these bills gave rise to any challenge regarding financial procedure, but it is also true that all these bills originated in this House, a point I would ask hon. members to keep in mind.

[English]

A brief review of the history of Bill S-15 may be helpful here since it was mentioned by many hon. members rising to present the case for the bill going forward.

The predecessor to this bill is Bill S-13, introduced in the 36th parliament where much the same objection was raised to that bill. On December 2, 1998, Mr. Speaker Parent ruled that since the bill proposed a tax, did not originate in the House of Commons and was not preceded by a ways and means motion, it was not properly before the House. He declared first reading proceedings null and void and ordered the item withdrawn from the order paper.

Basically the same issue, that is, the establishment through an industry levy of a foundation to prevent the use of tobacco products and actively promote non-smoking by Canadian youth, is now before us, though in significantly modified form.

[Translation]

The original bill has been redrafted with a view to addressing the procedural difficulties identified in Mr. Speaker Parent's ruling and so make the new bill, Bill S-15, conform with House of Commons practice and procedure. Supporters of Bill S-15, led by its Commons sponsor, the hon. member for Lac-St-Louis, argue that the modifications made to the text of the bill are sufficient to ensure that it is now properly before the House and may proceed. Let us now examine the arguments.

- (1850)

It is not my intention to deal with all aspects of the distinction between a tax and a levy, or the various ways in which the two may be confused. For instance, while a levy may not raise funds that find their way into the consolidated revenue fund, that is not an issue in the present case, and we will therefore set it aside.

As well, it is admitted that the bill provides benefits to others besides those in the industry, but benefits of this kind are not prohibited in a bill which imposes a levy, and that question need not detain us here.

[English]

The central issue in the case before us is whether or not the levy contained in Bill S-15 is imposed for purposes beneficial to the tobacco industry.

Speaker's Ruling

In order to make this determination it is necessary to turn to the bill itself. Indeed several members have enjoined the Chair not to go beyond the text of the bill or to engage in speculation concerning matters not dealt with directly in the clauses of the bill. The Chair has accepted this advice in the spirit in which it is given. I intend to confine myself solely and exclusively to a consideration of the procedural issue which is before us.

The bill's supporters contend that the moneys raised to finance the work of the foundation constitute a levy, not a tax, because the creation of this foundation is beneficial to the tobacco industry. Pointing to the preamble of the bill as well as to part III, clause 34, which states the specific industry benefits of the bill, they argue that these declaratory statements constitute compelling evidence of a levy.

If such is the case then there would be no problem with the bill originating in the other place. As Mr. Speaker Parent said in his ruling on Bill S-13, and this applies equally to Bill S-15, the central issue is whether or not the charge imposed is imposed for a purpose beneficial to the tobacco industry.

In Bill S-13 no industry benefits were indicated in the text of the bill as they now are in clause 34 of Bill S-15. However a recitation of benefits in the text of the bill does not necessarily resolve this issue, particularly where it is clear from clause 3 that the bill also has a purpose that is beneficial to the public which would support the view that the charge imposed by the bill is a tax and not a levy. In that case significant impediments would remain, for as Erskine May 22nd edition explains at page 779:

Modern legislation, however, frequently makes provision for the imposition of other types of fees or payment which, although not taxes in a strict sense, have enough of the characteristics of taxation to require to be treated as "charges upon the people".

I think any reader of the terms of Bill S-15 would agree that it serves two purposes. One is a public purpose, that is protecting young persons against possible adverse health effects derived from the use of tobacco products. The other is an industry purpose, namely attracting the benefits indicated in the bill derived from the industry supporting and being seen to support its public purpose.

[Translation]

In ruling on this point of order, the Chair must determine which of these two purposes is the primary purpose of the bill so that it can decide whether the charge imposed by the bill can be seen as a levy or must be considered as having "enough of the characteristics of taxation" to be considered a tax.

The summary that accompanies Bill S-15 reads as follows:

This enactment incorporates the Canadian Tobacco Youth Protection Foundation, a non-profit corporation established on behalf of the tobacco industry, whose mandate is to prevent the use of tobacco products by young persons in Canada. A levy would be

imposed on tobacco manufacturers in order to provide the Foundation with the necessary funds to carry out its objects and activities.

[English]

An examination of the provisions of the bill has satisfied me that this summary is in general an accurate account of the purpose of the bill. This aim is, in the words of the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis, a public policy objective, a conclusion further supported by material submitted by the hon. House leader of the official opposition, that is, advertisements by tobacco manufacturers in support of Bill S-15 which state:

The sole purpose of Bill S-15 is to protect the health of Canadian children.

● (1855)

Based upon my reading of the text of Bill S-15, I am satisfied that the bill seeks primarily to attain a public policy end and only secondarily seeks to attain benefits to the industry. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis has asked:

Is a foundation created by an industry under suspicion because it carries out objectives that are completely different from those of the industry itself?

My reply is that the foundation to be created is in no way suspect, but the fact that legislation is required to establish that body and to provide it with funds remains profoundly troubling if I am to be persuaded that this bill is primarily an initiative that is of benefit to the industry.

The question could be asked: What prevents the industry itself from simply raising prices on its products so that it can fund the work of such a foundation? Why is legislation required to achieve that end?

[Translation]

While it is not my role to comment on such measures one way or the other, I must recognize that there is very broad public support for measures to reduce and even eliminate youth smoking. This is, in my view, germane to the issue of distinguishing between public purpose and industry purpose.

I accept on their face the statements in the preamble and in clause 34 spelling out the benefits to the tobacco industry of the enactment of this bill. Neither am I judging what has been called "the substance of (the bill) or the moral or ethical considerations of why the foundation is being created". Nevertheless, I remain unable to regard Bill S-15 as anything other than a bill which seeks to attain, as its principal aim, a reduction in youth smoking by the imposition of a tax on the tobacco industry.

[English]

The declared benefits to the tobacco industry in Bill S-15 are expressly set out in clause 34 but it still causes the Chair considerable difficulty, for while it states the benefits which the proposed act seeks for the tobacco industry, clause 34 does not actually provide any of those benefits. It is purely declaratory in nature. In

fact I have not been able to identify in the bill any dispositions that provide for the alleged benefits to the industry other than those which provide support exclusively to what is acknowledged as being a public policy objective.

Let me give the House an example of what I mean. Among the declared benefits listed in clause 34 is the claim in section (i) that in the bill:

—the basis is laid for

- (i) a greater tolerance of the industry to the extent that its products are used in a legal market, and
- (ii) reasonable limits on regulation of the industry.

Even accepting at face value that these two items would be beneficial to the tobacco industry, I can find no measures in the bill to promote greater tolerance or to touch in any way the current regulatory regime or limit the government in any manner with respect to the regulation of the industry.

Simply stated, I can find no indication that the declared benefits in clause 34, insofar as they are benefits to the industry, are provided for in the operative clauses of Bill S-15. The use of a levy must be one where the industry benefits sought are, if not direct, at least clear to a reasonable person. I do not speculate on whether or not these benefits would or would not accrue to the industry subsequent to the adoption of this bill, but in my view the bill itself does not provide for them.

[*Translation*]

What I have sought to do in this ruling is not to innovate or set a new standard, but only to make explicit those factors that, in my view, have always formed the basis of our practice when distinguishing levies from taxes.

As your Speaker, I have to be concerned with where the bill originates, for I am charged with defending the privileges of this House, particularly in a case such as Bill S-15 involving the constitutional primacy of this House vis-à-vis the other place in respect of the imposition of taxes.

And, in my judgment, the strict standard for accepting as legitimate a proposed levy has not been met.

• (1900)

[*English*]

As your Speaker, I am not blind to the irony of my position. In judging Bill S-15 to be imposing what amounts to a tax to fund an initiative with a worthy public policy objective, I will, in effect, be blocking that initiative. However to do otherwise, to give Bill S-15 the benefit of the doubt and turn a blind eye to the public purpose for which the levy on the industry is being imposed, would be to

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shirk my duty as Speaker of this House. It would be to leave open the possibility that the primacy of this House in respect of taxation, as well as the financial initiative of the crown in this House, would be compromised to where they had meaning in form only.

Accordingly, I must conclude that the levy provided for in part IV of Bill S-15 constitutes a tax. I am therefore obliged on both procedural and constitutional grounds to order that the first reading proceedings on Bill S-15 be declared null and void and that the bill be withdrawn from the order paper.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I trust the Chair will indulge me in a point of order I would like to lay before the House.

The point of order that I draw to your attention is a rather extraordinary and draconian occurrence that has occurred in the form of a motion that was moved by the government House leader this morning using the provisions of Standing Order 56(1).

Being very well versed in the standing orders, Mr. Speaker, you would know that this pertains to the use of an order which permits the government to, in effect, move a motion that has not received unanimous consent and therefore invoke what is commonly known now as the 25 member standing rule.

I do not use inflammatory language lightly in this regard, but I truly believe, and I urge the Chair to find, that there has been an abuse of process that occurred which is tantamount to a breach of the rules and the intention and interpretation thereof.

First, let me draw your attention to the final paragraph of the motion that was moved by the government House leader. It states:

That, during the consideration of the business of supply this day, if a division is requested on any motion to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates, immediately after the taking of the said division, the questions on all subsequent motions to concur in any item or items in the Main Estimates shall be deemed to have been carried on division.

The germane part of that is “shall be deemed to have been carried on division”.

In French, these final words are “soient réputées adoptées majoritairement”. This translates into “shall be adopted by the majority”. This is the passage that is most offensive and most odious and, I would suggest, shakes the democratic process of the House.

The effect of this is to decide in the alternative all questions related to the estimates, some \$166 billion, no small sum of taxpayer money. This is certainly not a routine matter that is contemplated in Standing Order 56(1). Rather, it is a substantive

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decision of the House to authorize the spending of public money in the amount of \$166 billion.

The resulting offence is such that the House has been denied its right to vote on the expenditure of public money. There has been a coup d'état, a raid on the treasury by the government House leader. He is neutering every member of the House and the people we represent by moving this motion. This is a blatant assault on all members' privilege and, I suggest, as such is tantamount and a motion that has not been moved in a previous parliament since Confederation.

I want to stay focused on the narrow issue of the use of Standing Order 56(1). The minister is entitled to move his motion on matters related to "any routine motion" which is the definition in clause (b) which states:

For the purposes of this Standing Order, "routine motion" shall be understood to mean any motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, which may be required for the observance of the priorities of the House, the maintenance of its authority, the management of its business, the arrangement of its proceedings, the establishing of the powers of its committees, the correctness of its records or the fixing of its sitting days or the times of its meeting or adjournment.

This final clause in the motion moved by the government House leader has the effect, not of applying a previous vote of the House to other questions but of carrying these motions. In other words, it is possible that the House could vote the first item of the estimates but the remainder are deemed to have been carried on division. That decision simply does not fall within the framework of Standing Order 56(1). It has the effect of authorizing the government to enact the supply bill, and this is the key point, without the vote of the House.

• (1905)

The fact that 25 members do not object cannot be used to take the keys to the treasury. Substantive questions in the House are decided by a majority of votes in the House.

The government House leader will be quick to point out that it was a previous government that enacted Standing Order 56(1). Let me pre-empt that feeble argument and that feeble attempt to distract from the real issue here. I will simply state that it was wrong then and it is certainly wrong now, and to use it in this expansive way further exaggerates the harm. It was never intended to be used in such a broad and repressive manner.

The role of the Speaker, as the Speaker well knows, is to protect the rights of the minority. This is central to the success of your office. It is a high office you hold and one in which we place great trust. If this process is allowed to stand then the government can do all its business in one day and dismiss parliament with the back of its hand. The government, in its haste to take the money and run, has crossed the line.

I ask the Speaker to rule that this motion is a nullity because it has been used to bypass the proper procedures of supply and because it decides questions that do not fall under the categories of matters that can be moved under routine proceedings.

In the alternative, I would respectfully request that the Speaker, given the gravity and the effect of such an expansive and abusive use of this form of closure, hold in abeyance his ruling until such time as he might have occasion to review all the details and precedents which support this point of order.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take much time to review this. It is quite obvious, and I think most members would agree, that the member does not have a very legitimate point.

He has identified that Standing Order 56(1) gives the authority to utilize this particular article for the management of the business of the House, the arrangement of its proceedings and so on. Therefore, it is applicable to a very broad range of usage.

The hon. member supports his argument by reading from the French text of a motion that I moved in English, translating it himself back to English and using that definition as being the one that is applicable. The Speaker will know that has absolutely no value in this place.

The motion I moved is the one that I moved, not the translation that I provided to colleagues across the way for matters of convenience. I could have moved it in French, of course, and I can move it in English, but there is no rule in the House that says I have to move it in both. I did not. I moved it in one language and the only one that I moved it in on this particular occasion happens to be the one in English.

I know the member across the way is probably still feeling the pressure as a result of question period today, but I will not be provoked by that. I will continue to refer to and respond to what has been raised.

He has referred to the unprecedented usage of the motion. The motion has been used on several occasions in the past. Standing Order 56(1) has been utilized in the management of the House to do such things as pass several readings of a bill in one day. It has been used to introduce a bill and pass it at all stages in one day. It has been used in bills that involve a charge against the crown. It has been used to provide greater compensation, including to members of parliament as early as a few days ago. It has been used on a post office bill to settle a labour dispute, and so on.

• (1910)

It has also been alleged that this could be used to in some way eliminate the opposition and get all bills through in one day.

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I give credit to those who came before me for devising this rule and it was not even the same government. It was the government of which the leader of the member across was a member when this rule was devised. It provides that any 25 members can stop its use, which ensures that the minority will be protected. That is why in a Chamber of 301 members, 25 members can actually prevent the use of this particular device.

Mr. Peter MacKay: It does not help small parties.

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that is not the appropriate threshold or some such. I did not design that rule. This House in its wisdom provided that rule with that number in it. I am not here to question the wisdom of the size. It is there. I am only here to argue that it is appropriate to use the rule as it was designed.

The member is alleging that this device is being utilized to pass supply. That is factually inaccurate. The hon. member knows that this particular device today is a reference to the amendments that were put on supply. I do not know if it makes a major difference but it still makes his point incorrect.

Finally, the motions regulating business of routine proceedings of the House clearly include the management of the House business, debatable motions for instance, such as those in Standing Order 67.

The point I want to make is that the application for the motion was made in consultation with many members in the House and it was moved appropriately. Unanimous consent was sought previously, thereby notifying the entire House of my intent to use it later in the day. Several minutes passed, perhaps 15 or 20. Bills were moved, private members' bills of all and sundry in between, explanations thereof and only then did I move the actual motion pursuant to Standing Order 56(1) under motions. At the time that I did so, the House was certainly fully aware that it was my intention to do just that.

The hon. member cannot claim that he was unaware. I do not think anyone else in the House would claim that they were unaware or unwilling. The usage was done in proper form pursuant to what we have done before. Certainly the allegation that the motion was used in a way that is unprecedented just does not hold water. It was done in a way to manage the business of the House in a quite legitimate and appropriate way.

Mr. Peter MacKay: That is false. The minister is dead wrong.

Hon. Don Boudria: The hon. member can respond, heckle and disagree, and that is his prerogative, I suppose, providing the Speaker wishes to tolerate it, but it does not make what he says factually correct.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that this rule was used quite appropriately today for the management of the business of the House. Heaven forbid, I am not defending Brian Mulroney.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member has raised a legitimate concern. I would ask the Chair to reflect on some of the things that he has raised. Standing Order 56(1) has its limits. Those limits are described in section (b) of the standing orders and in Marleau and Montpetit. They give examples of motions that have been moved.

As all of these have been raised, I will not go through entire arguments, other than to say that Standing Order 56(1) was not intended to usurp the constitutional duty of the opposition. It was not intended to offset the important balance between the government and opposition. It was meant to allow the progress of routine business. The minister's motion is much too important and substantive to get rammed through without debate or amendment.

● (1915)

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough for raising this matter.

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to consider the argument that he made, particularly with respect to whether or not there is something in the nature of the way this standing order was used today that separates it out from the way it has been used in the past, the argument that the hon. member made for instance with respect to the use of this motion in respect of supply.

The government House leader argued that because it is only amendments to supply, it is not supply. However I think that was a very weak argument in itself. If it is amendments to supply, it has to do with supply, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, it merits your judgment as to whether or not the use of this standing order with respect to supply is in fact a new use of this particular standing order and one that is not in keeping either with practice or with your own understanding of that particular standing order.

Having said that, I would certainly want to indicate that I do not consider it consultation that somebody gets up to do something by unanimous consent, fails to do so and then some time later seeks to do it through this particular standing order. It may constitute some kind of notice but it does not constitute consultation.

I think it is clear that again we are meeting a Liberal deadline. There is some kind of cabinet retreat or something on Thursday and Friday, so we are faced with the use of this particular standing order.

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The government has been willing to make its own sacrifices. It dropped Bill C-6. It does not want that any more. It also dropped Bill C-27. This has been one of the more unproductive sessions. Not only did we lose all the things that the government said it was going to do when it called the election, but it did not even get around to the things that were dropped, because now we are dropping them for some other Liberal deadline.

I know you want me to get to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, and I will. It seems to me that what is at stake here is the nature of this particular standing order itself. I remember when it was brought in, I believe in 1991. At that time I remember speaking to this particular change in the standing orders. If I remember correctly, I think I referred to it as a sort of parliamentary uber-menschen clause, and the way in which the government saw itself, as Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, rising above the ordinary moral limits, as Raskolnikov did in *Crime and Punishment*, by killing the old lady just to show that he was not bound by ordinary morality.

Here we have the Liberals doing the same thing as the Tories did in 1991, showing that they are not bound by any kind of ordinary parliamentary morality or notion of what would be proper due process or procedure. They are quite prepared to just use whatever kind of authority they have at their disposal, which is what they did this morning.

You may say that 25 members could have stopped it. Certainly the parties that have 25 members will have to ask themselves why they did not. However this particular standing order was designed in a parliament where all parties had 25 members or more. Here again we see a kind of carryover from a previous parliament, that is to say, the parliament before 1993. I am sure when this was set up it was understood that all parties had at their disposal at least 25 members. The smallest party in the House was the NDP and we had 44 members. To say 25 members at that time was at least leaving open the possibility that if any one party objected, this would not happen.

Today we have a situation that is quite different, and certainly that standing order should have been changed by now. However, there are a number of other things in our standing orders that are still out of kilter because we have standing orders that were written to serve an entirely different parliament and entirely different political circumstances, that is to say, the political circumstances that existed prior to 1993.

I would ask you, to reflect on whether or not there is an opportunity here for you to rule, given the different nature of this parliament and of the previous parliament, that there is not something about this standing order that you might find unacceptable. Clearly it now has an effect on the rights of smaller parties which it did not have at its inception.

• (1920)

You, who are charged with the protection of the rights of minorities in this parliament and the rights of smaller parties, may want to consider whether you could make some ruling or give some advice to the House as to whether this particular standing order should be amended.

In doing so, Mr. Speaker, if your recommendation were to be followed, providing you make such a recommendation, we could remove from the standing orders something which is kind of a blight on our parliamentary life here: The fact that the government has this kind of power which it can use and has used on a number of occasions and which really makes a mockery of a lot of the so-called power that the opposition has.

Imagine a parliament in which no one party had 25 members except the government. Would it then be okay for the government to just deem everything to have been passed on division? I know this is a bit of a reductio ad absurdum argument but nevertheless that exists. That is a possibility within the standing orders if the Canadian public were to elect a parliament in which only the government had more than 25 members.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: It almost happened in 1984.

Mr. Bill Blaikie: As the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle said, it almost happened in 1984. I still want to call him the member for Yorkton—Melville. Twenty-five years is a long time for someone to have the name Yorkton—Melville, but we have to get used to the new one.

In the parliament of 1984 there were 40 Liberals and 30 New Democrats. It could well have been 20 New Democrats and 24 Liberals or something like that and then what would we have had if we had this kind of standing order? It was bad enough that we had that many Tories, I must say. The fact that we had that many Tories led us to the situation that we find ourselves in now. They became so full of themselves that they could not tolerate any kind of minority opinion or criticism so we have this standing order in front of us, a creation of the Conservatives.

We are glad to hear the contrition. We are glad to hear the confession. We are glad to hear that they now realize that this was wrong, but would it not have been wonderful if they had realized that the first time I spoke to this rather than 10 years later?

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I take it that we have had a bit of a fessing up about the genesis of Standing Order 56(1).

I want to bring to the attention of the House for your consideration four points in relation to this item.

Points of Order

This may be the third ruling the Chair will be asked to make today. It has been a busy day for the Chair and our sympathies to you for that.

On the face of this rule, which is really what the Chair has to deal with here, I think what the member opposite is alleging is that in some way the element of the order passed that provides for what we are going to be doing in voting later on tonight does not involve the management of our business, to take the words from the rule. That is the one element of Standing Order 56(1) that I think we are dealing with. We are dealing with the management of the House's business.

The member suggests that the business of supply is special and that it goes beyond the management of our business. The whole business of supply to be sure is special and unique in terms of the things that we do around here, but I suggest that we are not managing all the supply procedure here. What we are doing is managing the stream of voting that would occur in amendments to the supply bill. I point out that the order we have adopted does not prevent a vote at second or third reading of the supply bill tonight. It deals with all of the amendment motions.

• (1925)

What we are actually managing here is the voting. I would like to point out that the context that we are dealing with as we vote these days in the House is actually quite a bit different from the context that existed many years ago when this rule was put in place.

All members will recognize that when the House votes now, as we have been voting for a number of years, there are many applications of votes. Our whips in the House routinely, and I use that word advisedly, apply votes. That is a significant change in context for the House. When we as a House routinely apply votes, I suggest that the management of our business does include the management of the application of these votes. Like it or not we apply votes now.

Just a few days ago I think I noted the government whip actually applying a vote for a member who was not even voting with the government. This business of application of votes is now part of our routine and the motion that we have adopted intends to manage the flow of the application of votes. I suggest that is consistent with Standing Order 56(1) which refers to passing motions for the management of order of business.

The member for Winnipeg—Transcona has suggested that the minister had to consult before he moved the motion. The standing order does not require consultation. The standing order requires the denial of unanimous consent. That is precisely what was denied when the minister moved his motion earlier. He did not have to

consult. He only had to find a denial of unanimous consent. Therefore the precedent for the application of rule 56(1) was certainly there.

The suggestion is that because we now have parties with less than 25 members that is somehow relevant to the interpretation. I suggest it is not. The rule is clear. The number of members required to force a vote or to deny the motion is 25, not 12. The fact that we have parties that have 12, 13 or 14 members is irrelevant. The rule is clear. We are not in the business of rewriting the rule here for the smaller parties. If we wish to do that later we can.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the suggestion that this is out of order is not correct. It certainly raises an issue, but on the face of Standing Order 56(1), for the reasons discussed around the House, I suggest that this motion and this manner of disposition is in order.

The Speaker: I think the Chair has heard enough on this point at this time to deal with the matter before the House for the time being.

As the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough himself, in his remarks at the outset, suggested, this is a matter that the Chair could take under advisement and deal with at some later time and that is exactly what I intend to do.

In so far as today's proceedings are concerned, the Chair is satisfied that the motion was adopted this morning without 25 members rising in their place and without objection at that time as to the procedural acceptability of the motion. The matter has come before the House at this late hour and, in my view, the motion has been adopted and will apply for tonight's proceedings, and we will leave it at that.

The Chair is quite prepared to review the terms of the standing order involved and the interpretation which might be given it in the circumstances because, as the government House leader pointed out in his list of occasions on which this rule has been used, some of the usages might appear at any reasonable glance to go beyond the terms of the standing order itself.

The Chair is prepared to have a look at the standing order, to look at the usage and to also look at the possibility that the modernization committee, which must have studied this matter, might have had something to say on it. I will examine its report again with interest, but I do not believe there was anything in it concerning this particular standing order.

The Chair is always concerned for the fairness of the applicability of rules to all hon. members in the House and of course will want to reflect on the submissions made today. I will take them under consideration and will come back to the House, since we are likely adjourning tomorrow, at some time in the distant future.

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CANADA

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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, June 12, 2001
(Part B)**

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 12, 2001

• (1930)

[English]

MAIN ESTIMATES, 2001-02

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—HEALTH

Hon. Allan Rock (for the President of the Treasury Board)
moved:

Motion No. 1

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$1,268,024,342, under HEALTH— Department— Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to take part in the debate tonight with respect to the main estimates of the government, particularly as they relate to Health Canada.

May I say at the outset that as Minister of Health and speaking on behalf of my colleagues in government and those professionals with whom I work at Health Canada, we never forget that we in our own generation are custodians of an achievement of enormous value, the Canadian health care system.

It is an achievement that is more than simply a government program. It is a national undertaking that reflects the values and priorities of Canadians. We are committed to strengthening, to preserving and to promoting that system. That is the purpose for which we ask for the resources that are included in the main estimates.

As we discuss Health Canada and Canada's health care system, perhaps the most important point of departure and the matter I would first like to mention in addressing this issue in the House tonight is the agreement that was reached among the governments in the country just a few months ago with respect to the present state and the future of Canada's health care system.

[Translation]

A few months ago we negotiated with the governments of the provinces an agreement on the future of our health care system. Last September, the Prime Minister signed an agreement with the

provincial premiers which contained two key elements, the first of these being more money.

We have added considerably to the federal transfer payments to the provinces so that they will have the resources on hand for health care delivery. In fact, we have added 35% over the next five years to the transfer payments to the provinces.

[English]

These considerable amounts will put the provincial governments in a position to meet their responsibilities in the coming years for providing on the ground health services throughout the country.

[Translation]

The second key element was the areas on which we reached agreement in order to improve and strengthen our health care system. Clearly, our system is facing major challenges at this time. As a government, we have agreed on some significant steps in order to face these challenges.

[English]

Whether it is with respect to the shortages of doctors and nurses, whether it is with respect to finding new and innovative ways of providing frontline services to Canadians in communities where they live, whether it is with respect to renewing equipment available in the health care system, or broadening the accessibility of home and community care, or increasing the use of information technology, or promoting health as opposed to simply curing illness, all of these key elements were included in the agreement reached among governments just a few months ago.

• (1935)

I can report to the House that since last September, as Minister of Health I have worked with my counterparts across the country to make sure that we pursue the common ground we have reached, that we act on the agreement of last September and carry forward toward its objectives.

Apart from the cash transfer, apart from the elements of agreement, apart from the work we are now doing in common, there are other aspects of last September's entente that I would like to draw to the House's attention and report upon.

Supply

There were three targeted funds where the Government of Canada committed specific amounts to particular purposes. The first was a targeted fund of \$1 billion for new equipment.

[*Translation*]

We earmarked \$1 billion for this. This amount was made available to the provinces to renew Canada's medical facilities. It was distributed on a per capita basis, and is now in the hands of the provinces.

[*English*]

Since last September \$1 billion has been available to the provinces to purchase MRIs, CT scans, new X-ray equipment, lithotripters, surgical suites, whatever it is in the way of medical equipment that might be needed on the ground.

In Ontario, for example, my own home province, that amounts to almost \$400 million that has been available since last September to be used by provincial governments in buying new equipment. It is ironic that we would have read recently about the shortages of MRIs here in Ottawa or elsewhere in the province when the provincial government has access to almost \$400 million and has had for some months. Naturally we urge our provincial partners to use that money for the purpose for which it was intended and apply it toward the purchase of new medical equipment to meet the needs of Canadians wherever they may live.

The second targeted fund of the three was \$800 million which we made available to fund innovative new practices in making front-line services available. What that means is access to doctors and nurses by Canadian families where they live and when they need those services.

We are used to the system of family physicians practising in private offices on a fee per service basis so that during business hours during the week they are there to see patients. However, we all know that the need for a physician when someone is ill or injured does not end at the close of the business day. We also need to have access for families in the evenings, overnight and on the weekends. It is for that reason that the country has been moving toward different ways of making primary care or frontline services available, such as community health centres, shared practices, looking at new ways of paying doctors, and having teams of doctors and nurse practitioners to respond to community needs.

The Government of Canada wants to encourage provinces to pursue these innovative new approaches. It is for that reason we have set aside \$800 million in the primary care fund which we are providing to provincial governments to fund innovative new ways of meeting these frontline needs.

We have now blocked out the criteria with respect to how that money will be provided to provinces and the objectives we are trying to reach in making it available, and I believe it is going to be a source of improved services in the years ahead.

The third dedicated fund from last September is \$500 million to encourage the adoption of new information and communication technologies in health care. What does this mean? It means two things.

First, it means telemedicine to make the services and the opinions of specialists available to Canadians in remote or rural areas. It means telemedicine so that there can be teleconsultation in psychiatric services. It also means teleradiology, taking an X-ray or an MRI in the northern part of a province and transmitting it digitally to an expert or a specialist in a major urban centre where it can be read.

The second purpose is electronic patient records so that no matter where we travel in the country our medical information is available to health care professionals who need it to provide us with services. If we are ill or injured, God forbid, and arrive at a hospital, information about our case which is taken by the emergency room physician, the admitting doctor, the family doctor, the specialist, the home care worker or the pharmacist can all be shared in one electronic record that is instantly accessible.

• (1940)

That way we would avoid the repetition of tests and the repetition of the history. We would avoid miscommunication between patient and provider. We would make sure that everybody is aware of things such as allergies that the patient might have.

This is the way of modernizing health care, of making it better for Canadians, and these targeted funds will help to do that.

The last element of the September agreement that I want to report to the House on has to do with accountability. I believe we are all in agreement on all sides of the House that we have to be accountable to taxpayers for the moneys we spend. In health care that is no less true, yet in health care there has never been a systemic way of looking at the outcomes in the health care system to assess whether taxpayers are getting their money's worth. It is for that reason that the agreement among all governments provides that starting in September 2002 there will be regular reports to Canadians that measure the performance of the health care system and tell Canadians in plain language on a regular basis how it is doing.

That means that on indicators such as accessibility of frontline services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, accessibility of home and community care, and readmission rates of hospitals to test whether

Supply

they are discharging patients too soon, we will be measuring what happens and reporting to Canadians regularly. That will provide a way for Canadians to know how this health care money is being spent, now at \$100 billion a year in Canada, and it will provide a way for us to determine where the weaknesses are in the system so they can be addressed.

Let me add just one other matter. During the election campaign of last fall the government also undertook to create a citizens' council on quality care, which means taking the quality control function out of the hands of government and putting into the hands of Canadian citizens. It means creating a council to which we will appoint Canadians from across the country who will monitor the regular reports we make to make sure they are objective, complete, accurate, readable and usable by average Canadians in their homes. It means a citizens' council on quality care which will itself report on how the health care system is doing and will monitor quality in health care services. That is an important way in which we will make the health care system accountable to Canadians.

Before I conclude let me touch upon just a few other things we are working on at Health Canada which members will see reflected in the estimates before the House tonight.

Let me first touch upon health research. This is an area where the Government of Canada has long been seen to have a unique responsibility. Since the 1930s when we created the Medical Research Council, research has been a federal domain. Provincial governments are also active but the federal role has been recognized and respected.

Two years ago we replaced the Medical Research Council with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The House adopted Bill C-13 to create the institutes. Since the adoption of that legislation a year ago much has happened. We have appointed the president, Dr. Alan Bernstein of Toronto. Dr. Bernstein and his board of directors have been hard at work. They have named the first 13 institutes, the original slate of institutes. There are now institutes of health research on everything from cancer to mental health to diabetes. These 13 institutes each have appointed scientific directors. Those scientific directors, with their advisory councils of experts, are putting together strategic research plans.

At the same time as we have created these institutes, the Government of Canada has more than doubled the amount of money that we make available each year for health research. It is now over half a billion dollars and I can tell the House that it is on a trajectory upward, so that we can meet our commitment to Canadians to double in the course of the coming years the amount that this country spends on research and development.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research are off to a good start. Around the world they are earning Canada a reputation for

excellence. They are attracting the best and the brightest to stay in Canada or to return to Canada and do their health research here. I believe those institutes hold the promise of advancing the frontiers of medical and health knowledge and of accelerating the discovery of or treatments and cures for diseases and illnesses that afflict Canadians.

• (1945)

I might also report to the House with respect to some of the other initiatives in which we are now engaged.

The Speaker earlier tonight made a ruling with respect to Bill S-15 which has to do with tobacco. I would like to briefly mention what we are doing in that regard because tobacco is the number one public health issue in the country. Every year 45,000 Canadians die prematurely because of tobacco use. That is more Canadians than those who die annually as a result of car accidents, suicides, murder and alcohol combined. It is a tragic toll and we can do something about it.

Recent indications are that smoking rates are coming down in Canada but they are not coming down fast enough. There are troubling numbers about young people, especially young women, who are starting to smoke. We adopted a strategy with many parts.

The Tobacco Act, which the House enacted in 1997, increased taxes. Recently we brought taxes up on cigarettes because that helps, especially among youth who are price sensitive. We are making sure that the public is aware of the dangers of smoking by informing them of the health risks and about the strategies of tobacco companies that try to encourage people to smoke and continue to smoke.

We will continue to with the tobacco issue. Members will see that we are devoting \$480 million in the course of the coming five years to this strategy, including major investments in media campaigns to increase the awareness among Canadians, especially young Canadians, of the dangers of smoking.

I would like to touch upon two or three other areas.

The availability and the quality of health services in rural areas has been a preoccupation of mine for some time. The fact is that almost one-third of our population lives outside the major centres. About nine million people live in communities of 10,000 persons or less. If we look at the demographics in rural and remote Canada, we find that the population generally is older than in urban centres. The health statistics are less encouraging. There are more illnesses and more injuries. Yet at the same time, where the needs are greater, services are often less accessible. Whether it is ambulances or emergency rooms, family physicians, nurse practitioners, specialists or equipment, rural Canadians do not have the same access as urban Canadians.

One of the grave concerns I have about two tier medicine in Canada is not between the rich and the poor, but between the urban

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and the rural Canadian. For that reason, two years ago I opened the office of rural health at Health Canada. Although we can say the delivery of health services is a provincial responsibility, and we respect scrupulously provincial jurisdiction, nonetheless it is a national challenge to ensure that the promise of the Canada Health Act is fulfilled for all Canadians, not just those who live in major urban centres.

We appointed as executive director of the office of rural health a physician who practised in rural Canada and a former member of the executive for the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada. We set about putting together a national strategy to deal with this challenge. We convened a national conference on rural health at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. We set aside \$50 million in budget 2000 to fund pilot projects at the rural level. We brought together people from across the country to work with us to find ways of making the accessibility of services more appropriate in rural Canada.

Part of the answer lies in telemedicine and using modern technology. That will help a great deal, but it is not the only answer. It is also a question of attracting physicians and nurses and keeping them in rural Canada. It is a question of overcoming the sense of professional isolation that often drives doctors away. This is something that we have to work on because we cannot abide a situation in which one-third of the population is denied access to quality care in Canada. Working with my provincial partners, I intend to continue in that regard.

In the few moments remaining I might simply mention the organs and tissues initiative with which members are familiar. The House committee on health made such good recommendations, all which I accepted. We are changing nutritional labelling to provide more information to Canadians about the foods they eat. We are making medical marijuana available on a compassionate basis for those who are ill.

• (1950)

Of course, we have the draft bill with respect to cloning and assisted human reproduction which I put before the health committee on May 3. That committee is working and will return with recommendations in the months ahead.

All of this is important, challenging and exciting work. I turn to it with a sense of obligation to the House and Canadians to make sure that we preserve and strengthen Canada's health care system.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, our population is aging and I see two problems looming. One is that a lot of older people will either choose to be treated at home and to go through an illness in the comfort of their own home or in some cases there are no hospital beds for long term patients because a lot of illnesses suffered by elderly people are long term.

Does the minister have any plan or vision for how these individuals can be realistically treated without simply transferring the burden of their care to the family or having unqualified, or unsuitable or unreliable assistance that really does not meet the needs of the patients and families?

The second question is about patients who do not need to be hospitalized but do need some kind of care. Increasingly there are no facilities to which these patients can be moved, so hospital beds are taken up unnecessarily, and these patients simply have no where to go and no one to care for them. This is not only a problem today but will be an increasing problem.

Could the minister tell the House about his vision, plans and what he is doing about it?

Hon. Allan Rock: Mr. Speaker, the member for Calgary—Nose Hill is right. With an aging population and the differences in the way the practice of medicine is now being carried out, the focus of care is shifting from hospitals to the community. In fact, 25 years ago almost half of all health spending took place in hospitals. Today it is less than a third. We can see it for ourselves. People go in at nine in the morning for surgery and come out at four in the afternoon. We remember in our youth that people used to go into the hospital for a week or two when they had their appendix out, or some other such operation. That is one aspect.

The other aspect is that as people age, more of them want to stay at home. I can speak personally and say that in the last five years both of my parents died of cancer. They chose to die at home. In 1994 and 1995 my sisters and I had to find out about home and community care. We had to look in the yellow pages under H to find out what we could about home care. It was not easy. We found there were gaps in what was covered and what was not.

We have to rationalize this and accept that the Canada Health Act, which covers only services in hospitals and by doctors, was written at a time that was different. Now there is a whole range of home and community care that is unaddressed. The provinces do their best to try to cover it. Some have very elaborate home care programs, like Saskatchewan and British Columbia. With others it is less consistent.

In answer to the member's question, I can say that the Government of Canada has to work with provinces to find a way to make home and community care an integral part of medicare because it is just as medically necessary for aging seniors to get care at home as it is for people to get the care in hospitals. It may not be provided by doctors, but whether it is nurses or home care workers it is just as important.

I want to work with my provincial colleagues and partners to find a way to address this increasing need. I think it can be done. A couple of years ago I suggested a national home care approach which was not well received. Perhaps the atmosphere at the time was not very positive. Since the agreement of last September, I

think the atmosphere has improved enough to continue those discussions.

• (1955)

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have two quick questions for the minister.

He referred to last September's agreement, which was signed here in Ottawa. He neglected to tell us that all the premiers asked him to provide for indexing in the transfer payments. Why did he not agree to this request?

Second, I would also ask him if he could tell us the per diem salary or remuneration of the chair of the task force he set up to review the Canada Health Act, former premier Romanow? Could he tell us what he gets daily?

Hon. Allan Rock: Mr. Speaker, yes, I referred to the agreement we negotiated a few months ago here in Ottawa. I am very proud to have been part of this effort.

In my opinion, it was an important moment in history when all governments, including the government of Quebec, regardless of their affiliation, their ideology, agreed on a single substantial document and on health care priorities.

I remember well when the Premier of Quebec was there with the Prime Minister of Canada. After signing the agreement, Mr. Bouchard said "That was important, and I would like to thank the Prime Minister of Canada for his patience and for the agreement we have just reached". I was very proud and I think it was something important.

As regards Roy Romanow, the chair the commission we set up, I cannot say this evening exactly how much he is being paid, but I can assure the hon. member that his work is vital to the future of our health care system.

He will examine thoroughly our needs for the next ten or fifteen years in the health care system. Mr. Romanow, as the premier of Saskatchewan, managed a system for 10 years. He is well placed to provide valuable advice.

[English]

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister about the follow up to the September 11, 2000 accord. Today is June 12, 2001, nine months since the September accord was approved. If a woman can have a baby in nine months, then surely the government can produce something concrete in terms of promises made at that time. In particular, I would like to ask the minister about the commitment to deal with the critical shortage of health care professionals and nurses that is rampant across the country today.

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The accord promised to ensure that each jurisdiction would have the people with the skills to provide appropriate levels of care and services and commits governments to work together to do just that.

Nothing on that front has happened since September 11, 2000. The government has made a lot of promises, but failed to act on a very fundamental issue for ensuring quality health care. When will we see action?

Hon. Allan Rock: Mr. Speaker, we have seen action on a number of fronts, and I am happy to respond in detail to my hon. friend's question.

First, this year's transfers to the provinces reflect the agreements of last September and the increased amounts. This year Ontario, to use my home province as an example, will receive an additional \$1.2 billion from the Government of Canada in the transfers available for health. It is interesting to note that when the province of Ontario tabled its budget a few weeks ago, an additional amount of \$1.2 billion was made available for health. In other words, the Government of Canada is contributing exactly what the Harris government is increasing for health spending this year.

• (2000)

Second, the member speaks about the availability of doctors and nurses, which is of course the very first thing that the Prime Minister and the premiers listed in the priorities that were identified for government action. I am happy to report that we have made progress there, two things among many.

First, the health ministers agreed and published a national nursing strategy some months ago which reflects the hard work of the nursing profession and the provincial governments in sorting out ways to deal with the shortages in nursing care in Canada: addressing the underlying problems of working conditions; increasing enrolment in the nursing schools; and addressing some of the grievances that the profession has had with respect to its position in the health care system.

In relation to doctors: Three years ago total enrolment in medical schools in this country was about 1,570 places. Next September it will be 2,000. We are going in the right direction. I could go on but I think my friend has the general idea.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister has to do with the fact that he wants to allow those who have AIDS to smoke marijuana.

I heard the minister speak tonight about tobacco and the effect it has on our health. Is the minister looking at legalizing marijuana? I did some research on marijuana. As soon as people smoke one cigarette it goes into their brain cells, stays there for nine days and then continues to build up.

Supply

If the minister is looking at legalizing marijuana, has he done any research on its side effects? Could he assure Canadians that we do not have to worry about it?

Hon. Allan Rock: Mr. Speaker, the member has been good enough to speak succinctly about her concern in this regard.

First, my focus has been on the medical availability of marijuana for compassionate purposes. As hon. members know, we have now published proposed regulations to govern the way in which those who are ill or dying can get access to marijuana if a doctor feels it can help relieve their symptoms.

On the subject of either decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana, as the member knows the House created a special committee by resolution some two or three weeks ago which I believe has now been named and which will soon begin sitting. That special committee has been asked to look at the whole question of Canada's policy toward the non-medical use of drugs. That issue will come before the committee. I think it is important not to prejudice the outcome. We must let the committee do its work and hear the various points of view.

It is a subject on which there are varied opinions, even within the hon. member's party. I think the committee should listen to the evidence, hear the various viewpoints and come back to the House with recommendations that can be debated here so that we can ultimately make a decision based on the facts.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC): Mr. Speaker, from the outset I want to elaborate on the points made by the Minister of Health in his speech. The minister refused, however, to answer a question from the Bloc Québécois member about Mr. Romanow's salary. Even more strange is the fact that, during the some 20 minutes that he spoke, the Minister of Health did not mention the Romanow commission. He did not say anything about it.

He talked about his government's accomplishments, about rural communities, the September agreement, the citizen's council and the non medical use of marijuana. That was fine. I told myself "He is going to talk about the Romanow commission". It is supposed to be the key to the future, the country's vision in the area of health. But nil, not a word.

We know, because we put the question to him several months ago, that the minister is not comfortable. It gives him a rash when we talk about the Romanow commission. He does not like it. I understand. This is a man who seems to have some vision.

They have imposed on him an unemployed premier who is too young to be appointed to the Senate, because the Prime Minister appoints senators whose average age is 72. Mr. Romanow must wait a few more years. So that he does not remain idle, the

government put him in charge of a royal commission of inquiry. His salary is not known. He is on his own, looking after his own business.

• (2005)

In the meantime, the minister is talking about his vision of health care in this country. He seems to have solutions to the problem, yet it is entrusted to a royal commission. That is a waste of money. For 18 months or 2 years, there will be nothing forthcoming from this government in the area of health. What the Romanow commission will manage to do, once the Liberal Party has changed leaders, is to serve as the party's political commission in the next election, at the taxpayer's expense. Otherwise it is pointless.

The minister seems to be struggling with this. While not wishing to put words in his mouth, of course, I am not sure the Minister of Health was in agreement with that. If it had been one of the ideas he had come up with, he would have referred to it this evening. When the minister was talking health with his colleagues, did he mention the royal commission? Not at all, not a word, it must be forgotten if possible. We get the feeling there are little domestic squabbles on the government side. I thought the minister would refer to the commission when he spoke. The fact that he did not speaks volumes.

The minister probably senses a cabinet shuffle coming that will end up with him in Canadian heritage, instead of having to live with a royal commission of which he is not fond.

From the health point of view, we need a vision, but having a vision requires knowledge of what is going on in the field. In Ottawa we have the good fortune to have 301 men and women who have been elected by the voters in their ridings and who are, I hope, at least in this corner of the House, connected with the people in their ridings. If that connection exists, then one knows what the problems are. If one knows what their problems are, and if one is lucky enough to have been gifted with average intelligence, one can find solutions.

There is the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, and there is one in the other place as well. The minister does not seem to be lacking in intelligence; he is capable of identifying the problem. He is someone who does not appear to be afraid of talking to his provincial colleagues, or so it would seem. He was asked about the water issue. He was told "There is a problem with water. Today, in many places in Canada, people cannot drink a glass of water without running the risk of being poisoned and without endangering their health".

He was told "Keep pushing. The House passed a motion on this". He seems to be pushing with his provincial colleagues, and we think it is fine. If the problem is known, let us get on with the solutions.

When the minister mentions the September agreement, he is putting a spin on things. I am sorry to use this expression, but it is very well known here. A spin is a way of presenting reality from a different angle. With the present Minister of Finance, we have got used to hearing that the government will invest \$500 million, \$2 billion, \$300 million over five years and that the tax cut will be \$8 billion or \$5 billion over seven years. The timeframes are always long.

When the Minister of Health tells us that the government is going to invest \$800 million in new equipment, this is not annually. This is what it would take annually to make up the ground lost. It is for the entire duration of the agreement, unindexed, as the NDP member pointed out.

The federal share of the cost of replacing medical equipment over a number of years is \$800 million. We number more than 30 million in this country, so this is not much per capita. In the more remote or rural areas, medical care costs more because additional incentives are required.

This government has been out of new ideas since 1993. With a few exceptions, it does not know what it is going to do the next day. Why? Because the Prime Minister is like that. He has said "Bring me a problem, I will fix it". That is it. Sometimes he fixes it, sometimes he does not. Most of the time it is fixed all wrong, and health is one of these problems. Things have been discussed in Canada for years, but for often political, reasons, they are totally rejected. The government refuses even to discuss them.

● (2010)

As regards the initiatives involving tax points, the government says "Ah, no tax points. We want nothing to do with that. We gave you your cheque. You have your money. Do your bit. When you run out, come back and see me. Knock at my door, and, if you are nice, I will give you some".

We have long talked about tax points across the country, regardless of political stripe. What we are saying as well is that tax points assure the provinces of stable funding. Of course, once again, this does not resolve all the problems. We have to talk about equalization. We agree that it is less to the advantage of the poorest provinces to take tax points than to have an amount of money that is the same for everyone.

Enough of ad hoc funding for the country's health care system. That is what it is. When the provinces want to develop new initiatives, the federal government will tell them "There are five basic principles in the legislation we are thinking of changing. That is perhaps why we appointed a former premier, who could perhaps not be appointed to the Senate but could perhaps come up with solutions. So, wait for the commission to submit its report, that is in at least two years".

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This is not planning. In the meantime, people are tearing out their hair trying to find ways to keep cardiologists in the regions and to attract family doctors in the provinces. We see this in Quebec.

The Minister of Health does not seem to know what is going on in Quebec. The government introduced a policy concerning the principle of family doctors being available seven days a week throughout Quebec, but the Minister of Health said that anything outside normal store hours was perhaps excessive. He should perhaps take a look at initiatives such as those in Quebec.

The legislation should be reviewed and modernized. The government is afraid. It feels that five principles are enough and it would rather interpret. The government is afraid of talking about private sector health care. As far as the private sector is concerned, we will recall that the future former leader of the official opposition had held up a little sign during one of the debates in the last election campaign that read "no two tier health system" because he was not capable of explaining this clearly enough and people did not believe him. He therefore felt obliged to write it down on his little sign, thinking that then he would be believed, but it did not make much difference. The private sector is already a presence. It is a presence in both health and education.

Not very far away from here, to give an example of what is happening with increasing frequency in the health field and will continue to happen, a new school was recently opened in one of the municipalities in the Outaouais region. This happens because of heavy development in a given area. That school was built by the private sector. The school board and the government signed a 25 year lease and will operate the school.

The school's bricks and mortar were put in place with private sector funding, but its soul remains the responsibility of the school board and the department of education. We will be seeing more and more of this, yet the government is afraid to raise these questions and has struck a royal commission to find solutions to all our problems. Even if they are saying over on that side that they have solved a problem, there are still more unsolved.

However, I praise the Minister of Health's handling of the hepatitis C compensation issue. It is not working properly, however. I thank him because I want to give credit where credit is due. He is prepared to act on this but speed is of the essence.

We have a supposed agreement on financial compensation, along with a law practice that is supposed to be handling it, but there are still problems. The payments are delayed; 20% or 40% of them. Very few people have received all their money. The minister has some responsibility in this. The government and parliament have some responsibility in this.

Supply

No one better say the problem is resolved because the people are no longer on Parliament Hill with placards demanding compensation. It is not resolved or it is only partly so.

In this regard, I repeat, when the minister does something good, I tell him. When he does not do what he is supposed to, I tell him, as well, with respect. So it is important to resolve this matter.

There is another matter to be resolved at some point.

• (2015)

My colleague from New Brunswick raised the issue of marijuana. It is not enough to be for it or against it. The government has been talking about this one for years. They will settle it. The minister said “I will make marijuana available for medical purposes”. This is the compassionate element.

However, there is no pot on the market that meets the government’s standards. There is none, and it have no system. It has given no thought to the criminal code. It has given no thought to the problems involving the various laws governing the country, the provinces and the municipalities.

So we have another problem. The government is forced to go to court, and the people it wanted to help are arrested by the police. So that is not resolved.

A committee on the non-medical use of drugs was just set up and I have the honour and the privilege to sit on it. I must say that I hope people will be patient. If we are ready to show compassion for the sick, we will have to show compassion for those who sit on that committee, because its mandate is very broad.

We will also have to target the problems. What is the committee’s mandate? Its members will define it in the fall. We will work hard to ensure that this mandate is as clear as possible so that we can take a stand on the issue and on plausible and easily feasible solutions.

Will we deal with the drug issue by saying we will find solutions? The NDP member for Vancouver East sits on that committee. She represents, the poorest part of Vancouver.

It is the part of Vancouver that is not shown on postal cards. It is her riding. There are problems. We must tackle this and find solutions to the problems of heroin users.

Will this also be included in the committee’s mandate? Maybe yes, maybe no. Some will say “Instead of legalizing other drugs, perhaps we should deal with those who have serious problems with existing drugs”. This is probably what the committee will look at.

This being said, I would like to talk a little bit about what will happen this evening. Unless something out of the ordinary or some miracle happens, this is the last evening of the first session following the election.

After an election, people thought, after all, it had only been re-elected for three and one-half years or I should say three years and five months, that the government would come up with some good ideas.

Once again, things are something like at an auction, going once, going twice, going three times, sold. It takes three times to get a bill passed. The first time, no go, then there is an election. Then there is the second time, and in mid-mandate, there is the throne speech. This puts everything back to square one. Then things start all over again for the third time, but now there is a general election. Going once, going twice, going three times.

How many times has the endangered species legislation come up? It is endless. Then there is the young offenders legislation. Here we go again, changes, modifications, then it gets blocked in the Senate. Then an election comes along. Soon another change will be coming: the Prime Minister. Then there will be another throne speech. We get nowhere.

In the health field, there is even less progress. This evening we in the opposition had the opportunity, with the means currently available to us I must add, to get some important messages across regardless, messages that open up some discussion. Perhaps we should vote for part of the night.

I will say what the public would say to us “At the rate you guys are getting paid now, it won’t hurt you to sit overnight from time to time”. We stop, but at the same time we are getting a message across “The job is not over. Our work on important bills is not over. We would like to get on our way. No problem. I want to get home, but that is not the right idea”. However there are some important points that are not settled. Any MP will be prepared to stay here in order to solve a really important problem.

With that, I will wish you, Madam Speaker, as well as all members, a good summer, and a healthy one. As far as health is concerned, however, we are on our own. Unfortunately, I do not think that the government can help us on that.

• (2020)

We have to count on the provinces, and they have all the trouble in the world delivering services because of a government that hands over money for the health of all Quebecers and Canadians a little bit at a time.

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the clarity of his remarks about the government. I appreciate what he said about the Romanow commission.

Does he share my point of view? I could provide him with a copy of the document, if he likes. I asked the Library of Parliament for information about what the provinces had done in the way of commissions of inquiry or task forces on the future of health care systems.

The House will not be surprised to learn that, between 1993 and the present, seven provinces have themselves formed commissions: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario. So, seven out of ten provinces have already done what the federal government wants to do.

We understand that the provinces are doing this, because they are the ones providing the services. They are responsible for organizing the health care system so that care can be provided.

Does the member agree with me that we do not need a commission such as the one proposed by the federal government, because this is not its primary responsibility; second, because we know where the needs are and how the health care system must be reorganized; and third, because money is a large consideration, but not the only one?

For example, in Ottawa last September, the premiers asked that transfer payments be indexed. Was the government willing to do this? Of course not. Does the hon. member share this point of view?

Mr. André Bachand: Madam Speaker, several provinces are experiencing that problem. They consulted the service providers, namely the doctors, nurses, volunteers, staff members and administrators. These men and women are familiar with the problem.

They must make hard decisions on a daily basis. At the same time, they have to come to Ottawa to beg. They are asking the federal government to restore at least the 1993-94 level. Perhaps tax points or a new equalization system might help some provinces.

The problem is known, and the provinces took their responsibilities. There may be some exceptions in various types of services, but I will talk about one province, mine, Quebec. I am not necessarily a friend of the government in office but the fact remains that regardless of political stripe some things that are done in Quebec deserve our attention. The federal government wants to reinvent the wheel with the Romanow commission.

Ask people on the streets, in Quebec and elsewhere in the country. They do not care at all about the commission. The Bloc Quebecois member is right. Money may not be everything, but the right choices must be made and it is a lot easier to implement them quickly with money. This is why we are asking for a fair redistribution.

That is right, we must talk about the Canada Health Act, but in the meantime, can we help with the financial situation of the

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municipalities? What credibility can the commission have when we do not even know how much Mr. Romanow's is paid to sit on the commission?

We parliamentarians may not have all agreed on our increase, but everyone did agree that the non-taxable part was not right and that it had to be transparent. A royal commission of inquiry is set up and we do not even know how much the commissioner is paid per day or what his expense account is.

The hon. member is absolutely right. At one point, the work was done and what we must do next is to implement the solutions put forward by those who provide the services, namely the provinces.

[*English*]

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to ask a question of the Conservative health critic because we are dealing with a very critical issue, that is the future of medicare, and the appropriate level of expenditure by the federal government for support of our universal public health care system.

• (2025)

In that context it would be remiss of me not to note that the erosion of medicare and the slide to privatization actually began under the Conservatives and under the direction of Brian Mulroney where we were on a path of seeing all cash transfers to the provinces for health care dry up by the year 2001. The Liberals came along and put in a cash floor in terms of transfer payments but really levelled the playing field to the lowest possible denominator.

I would expect that the Conservatives have had a re-thinking around this issue of transfer payments and the need for cash to the provinces. I would like to know what the current position of the Conservative Party is with respect to the level of funding from the federal government to the provinces and whether that party would be prepared to commit some of the \$15 billion in surplus, if it had a chance, to health care to ensure medicare is sustained and to actually move our system toward the revamped, reformed system we are all talking about.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bachand: Madam Speaker, I remind my colleague that Mr. Romanow, who is chairing the commission, was probably one of the worst premiers in terms of cutting health care and creating huge problems for the system in his province, as with labour relations and with other fields. On this I think that regardless of stripe choices were made.

As concerns the public health system, we want to keep a public system with the broad principles of the Canada Health Act. What we said in the election, in 1997 and 2000, is that this had to be

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brought back to the 1993-94 level, which had been agreed on, and then move to stable funding.

This is why we talk of tax points and renegotiating the system of equalization payments, so that the richer provinces, like the poorer ones, may have stable funding within the whole transfer system, be it in health care, education, social assistance or other areas.

Yes, they said they had to increase, but by how much. There is no question of drawing an amount out of a hat. The provinces have already identified criteria. First, there is the question of economic growth that accompanies equalization tax points. That is important. There are richer provinces and there are poorer provinces. This is why one of the elements in the transfer must be the aspect of economic growth.

Population is another important consideration. We are also saying that distances must be taken into account. Urban centres like Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City can afford different quality services. There should be a rating that takes the geographic and demographic dispersal of a region into account.

There is also the question of population aging. In some regions and in some provinces, the rate of aging is much higher, requiring a more targeted inflow of funds.

To these transfers, but first to these transfers in terms of tax points and equalization, these calculations, should be added a different approach understood by all the beneficiaries of the health care system in Canada.

Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank our colleague from Richmond—Arthabaska for sharing his comments with us. I was going to thank him for his suggestions as well, but I did not find any of those in his speech.

There are criticisms of the health system, as he says. He tells us that there are still problems and I think the Minister of Health has said the same himself, that not everything has been said or done in that area.

I thank my colleague because he has provided our viewing audience with an opportunity to make a comparison between the health minister's words and what our government has accomplished, as summarized in a sober yet eloquent manner by the minister, and the inconsistencies of the opposition critic's words.

He tells us we lack vision, yet at the same time he faults us for striking a royal commission to address the problems and come up with a long term vision of the ongoing problems.

● (2030)

This is totally inconsistent. We have indeed taken steps to meet this challenge of providing a long term vision for Canada's health care system. The opposition critic has carefully omitted any reference to research, an area of great success. Our government's

investments in health research will make it possible for there to be a thorough renewal of our country's health services and health care in the years to come. That is vision.

I would like to hear the opposition critic fault us, if he is able, for our investments in research and in health in Canada.

Mr. André Bachand: Very briefly, Madam Speaker, I thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and give him greetings.

It is easy for a government to cut an arm or a leg off the provinces and then offer them an arm or a few toes. This is pretty much what happened with the government.

Since the 1993-94 cuts, the total percentage of federal funding we are seeing today is not huge. The government cut because it wanted to fight the deficit. Perhaps it should have cut somewhere besides health care. Then the government found itself investing much more publicly than in the past.

We do not oppose health care research. We oppose people who waste time looking for solutions that have already been found. This is why we are asking so many questions on the idea of a royal commission of inquiry, when, if I listen to the parliamentary secretary speaking for his minister, I will not criticize him here, he surely has a vision and the tools he needs to find solutions to the health care problems we face. We do not need a royal commission to do so.

[English]

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I would like to advise the Chair that I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Yellowhead.

Believe it or not, we are debating the estimates this evening. The portion of the estimates we are debating is the portion allocated to the health department. The health department budget is \$2.7 billion for the current fiscal year. I am sure it will go up because the department has a lot of work to do.

The estimates of \$2.7 billions were examined by the health committee. There were no suggestions from the committee for a change in the \$2.7 billion allocated to the health department. The accountability for the spending of those moneys of course continues to be a subject of some debate.

The health department has come under scrutiny in two areas: one by the auditor general and the other through a series of fairly well-publicized missteps on the part of the department. I would just like to talk about those briefly.

First, last fall's auditor general's report had five chapters relating to the health department. It had a number of criticisms on how the department operated and a number of suggestions on how the department could be improved.

One of the problems highlighted in the auditor general's report was Health Canada's non-compliance with the Canada Health Act. There was also a problem of information on the federal government's total contribution to health care. The auditor general in fact said that the federal government did not know its exact contribution to health care because it was wrapped up in the health and social transfers. The auditor general recommended that the federal government find some way to identify exactly what the federal government spent on health. I suppose this would at least be helpful in election campaigns when the federal and provincial governments are running competing ads as to who pays what and how much. My hon. colleague who just spoke mentioned some of those issues as well.

• (2035)

The auditor general was also concerned about research and development. The minister suggested, and was very proud of the fact and well we should be, that the funding for research and development was growing and that it was scheduled to double. However the auditor general said that the collection criteria and evaluation for projects to be funded by government research money were not consistently applied and suggested that they needed to be worked on.

The auditor general also looked at first nations' health and found that although he had given a pretty bad report card to the federal government on its handling of first nations' health in 1997, he found that in the year 2000 the department had "not made sufficient progress to correct the deficiencies in any of the programs under review". He recommended again a sustained effort to implement his recommendations. We have not seen a lot of improvement over the last three years.

Of course first nations' health has been a serious concern for our country. All of us feel that the federal government is certainly letting down first nations people in this very critical and important area. We could speak for 20 minutes just on the problems with first nations' health, its mismanagement and the problems there, but time does not permit.

The auditor general also reviewed federal health and safety regulation programs. There were concerns about the need for reliable risk assessment and sufficient allocation of financial and human resources.

With respect to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the auditor general found that it had not properly resourced its food inspection programs based on risk, that actual levels of inspection were lower than expected in some cases and that the department lacked important information on the incidence of food borne illness in humans. This was hardly reassuring in light of the fact that there have been concerns about certain food related illnesses that could affect our population.

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The auditor general also looked at the regulatory regime of biologics. This is something that the committee is studying as we speak, and I believe that study is going ahead well. However the auditor general emphasized the need for the department to develop clear criteria in determining which approach would be appropriate for a given situation as far as regulating and supporting the work of the new biotechnology industry.

It is important that parliamentarians carry out their duty to provide oversight on the spending and administration of a great deal of money. In the case of the health department, that amounts to \$2.7 billion each and every year. That is a lot of money. Since the government's total budget is well over \$150 billion, it is important that parliamentarians do not just sleepwalk their way into approving these estimates.

However, in the nearly eight years that I have sat in the House as a parliamentarian, I have not seen one single line of any estimate changed in any way by the House of Commons.

• (2040)

Either it suggests that the officials of each and every government department, and there are many, are pretty much infallible in their allocation and administration of these billions of dollars, or it suggests that the House is somewhat remiss in not being more involved and more proactive in the oversight of the administration of the spending of these moneys.

I cannot imagine very many democracies where members have this kind of responsibility. For eight years, and I assume it has been even longer although I do not know because I have only been here for eight years, not one budgetary line of a single department has been altered, improved or changed made by 301 members of parliament.

My first response to that observation is that we need to do a better job in overseeing the administration and spending of this money, particularly when we see in practical terms the administration falling short of some requirements that were made clear by the auditor general.

There are deficiencies in our health system. We see it in mercury levels in fish, in approval of drugs, in water safety and a whole bunch of areas where Canadians expect some protection and help. When we see deficiencies we need to look at the allocation of moneys to correct those deficiencies rather than just hoping they will happen.

As we look at the estimates I suggest that we need to do a better job. There are things that we could do to better allocate funds than the way they are allocated today.

Supply

Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member noted that the auditor general had indicated some concern about the amount of moneys transferred to the provinces. The member knows very well some of the mechanics that it goes through.

I am concerned as well that the combination of tax points and cash transfers are relative to specific computations. The provinces do not colour code dollars. They receive a bulk transfer and what they spend it on is in their domain. That is a matter of concern because the federal government has to be the protector of the Canada Health Act which has five principles: universality, accessibility, portability, comprehensiveness and publicly funded.

The member raised a very good point with regard to the estimates process. She indicated that the health committee had reviewed the estimates with officials and that no recommendations were made. Having been on the health committee and having served on other committees, I know how difficult the process is because it is a very specialized area of activity.

Would the member care to comment on a suggestion that has been made as part of the modernization of parliament that the review of estimates process be consolidated into one committee? This committee would be composed of people who were specifically interested and had the background, training and interest to review estimates. The main standing committee could then shift its emphasis to a review of the planning and priorities area which is more generally of interest to members of the Standing Committee on Health.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, with respect to money to the provinces, the auditor general's concern was not that the federal government sent money to the provinces or that the money then became the domain of the provinces, but that the federal government was unable, with any certainty, to indicate the amount of money it actually contributed to the health care program. He felt it was important for that to be quantified, and for obvious reasons, then there could be debates on whether it was sufficient, on how it was being spent or on any of those things.

● (2045)

There also has to be some accountability. If the federal government wants to hold itself out as the guardian of the Canada Health Act, then it needs to have some guarding capability and some accountability measures. An example of that would be the \$1 billion being spent on new equipment, which the minister just mentioned. When asked about whether that money was actually spent on new equipment or whether provinces were simply using it to buy equipment they had already ordered, therefore being of no net advantage to patients or to citizens, all he could say was that the government was working on a report card from the provinces.

A shell game seems to be going on. The government says that it is guarding the act and giving out all the money but when we ask how much and how it is being spent, it passes the buck by saying that the money is going to the provinces. It cannot be both ways. Either there is a guardianship and some actual investment, which means that it can show something for its investment, or it is simply a loose arrangement and nobody knows the results of the investment. We need to be honest and not try to either claim credit or assign blame.

The other item is this idea of a review of estimates committee. I hate to agree with the member opposite, because it goes against the grain a little bit in this place, but on first blush it seems to be a very sensible suggestion for about three reasons.

First, not all of us are bean counter types. I know my hon. colleague is a very well respected and competent chartered accountant, so I use the term bean counter types in the most positive and complimentary sense. It is true that some people have those sorts of skills while others do not. Some people attend Harvard and others attend MIT.

Second, there is some coherence and consistency in attacking the estimates rather than having a kind of hit and miss depending on the time, the commitment and the agenda of a particular committee. All the estimates would presumably be given the same level of scrutiny.

Third, we could then hold someone's feet to the fire. Instead of saying that none of the committees really came up with much, we could look at the review of estimates committee and ask why everything was kind of waved through without so much as a critique.

I concur with my hon. colleague that it would be a very good proposal to look at. Unless someone educates me better, I will be supporting that.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the member for Calgary—Nose Hill makes the important link between the estimates we are debating tonight, which deals with the Department of Health, and various reports by the auditor general relating to activities pursuant to Health Canada.

The question I would like to ask concerns the indepth investigations by the auditor general on the safety of our food supply in Canada today. The member will know that the auditor general has been fairly critical about both the Health Protection Branch and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in not appropriately resourcing their programs to ensure the precautionary principle is applied at all times.

In the last few days we have heard concerns raised about mercury in fish, mad cow disease, salmonella and other major issues. Would the member support the idea of more money being taken from the surplus and being put into the Health Protection Branch to ensure adequate resourcing and an independent science

capacity so that all attempts necessary to protect Canadians at risk in terms of the food supply can be taken?

• (2050)

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, the answer is obviously yes. Canadians trust us and our government departments to protect their interests. They are buying food with confidence because they believe we know what we are doing. If there is a deficiency to any extent in protecting the interests of Canadians, particularly with respect to the safety of the food on their supermarket shelves, then we need to fix it.

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is really a privilege and an honour to be able to speak this evening to the main estimates on health. I have been involved in the health committee since I have been a member, which is a short time, but I have come to understand some of the problems and complexities of the system from being involved in it quite a while before that.

I am really taken by what I am hearing this evening, particularly from the Minister of Health with regard to the state of the health of our country. When I really assess what is going on in health, a very rosy picture is being painted, but clearly all is not well in the state of our health care in Canada.

Almost every day we can pick up a news report that shows disturbing problems that are happening. Some of them were just mentioned by the hon. member: mad cow disease, problems with our food inspection agency and the fears we have about some of our food.

Almost every day we can pick up something that will give us an example of the problems. Yesterday there was a report dealing with orthopedics and arthritis care. The average waiting time for hip and knee replacement surgeries in this country is six months, while some must wait well over a year. In fact I had a lady in my office yesterday, who is well known by many of the members in this place, who has been waiting for a year for knee surgery and now has to wait another 15 months.

All is not well. The reason for some of the shortages is that there is an obvious shortage of manpower in this area. One hundred and fifty orthopedic surgeons are required to supply the need that we have today, and that is without taking into account the demographics of our society. It takes 10 years to train a new orthopedic surgeon, so we can understand the dilemma that we are in and that it has not happened overnight. We are in serious problems with regard to human resources in health care.

I was a little alarmed when the minister suggested that all we needed to do was to put a few more dollars into health research and

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that would attract the best and the brightest minds to our health care system which would sustain the system over the long haul. I do believe that is true and I do not think Canadians are buying that as well.

Increasingly, Canadians are wondering if the medicare system will be there for them when they really need it. These hard questions are being asked about the long term sustainability of the system. We talked about some of the problems: the long waiting lists, the shortage of doctors and nurses and the obsolete equipment. We talked about the numbers of dollars that are going into the equipment, \$500 million up to April 1 and then another \$500 million.

When I talk to radiologists they say that none of this equipment is getting into their hospitals. They are using equipment that has to be taped up with duct tape. I have farmed for many years and I know the value of a good roll of duct tape, but I do not believe that it should be used on our medical equipment. They are telling me that they have to move switches up and down repeatedly before some of the archaic equipment can be turned on. Third world countries will not even accept some of this stuff.

Suggesting that we do not have a problem and that we do not have a crisis is putting our heads in the sand.

Dr. Peter Barrett, the outgoing president of the Canadian Medical Association, stated:

The serious problems facing medicare today can be labelled a health care crisis. For patients waiting for health care services, it is a personal crisis. Doctors and nurses on the front lines know it is a crisis.

It will increasingly become more of a crisis as the weight of the demographic age of the baby boomers hits the system.

As I said earlier, this did not happen overnight. The removal of the dollars in the mid-nineties has caused major problems that are now coming to bear upon a system that has been neglected for far too long. It is time we paid some attention to this because our health care system is about to pay the price for some of that neglect.

• (2055)

The problems with the federal government's overall leadership and the funding of health care in the country are mirrored by a number of problems within Health Canada itself. A more direct subject of debate could be added, as several problems within Health Canada have come to light just in the time that I have been in parliament or as more light has recently been shed on the problems.

Health Canada has mismanaged funding with regard to the Inuit. Aboriginal people are repeatedly highlighted in the auditor general's report. There are problems with the Virginia Fontaine Addic-

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tions Foundation that raise serious questions. We have raised this in the House. There are many problems with overprescription of drugs within our aboriginal communities, overprescriptions from which people have died.

The health minister talked about drugs. Many problems have also arisen from the diet drug Prepulid. There was the Vanessa Young inquest. Sixty-nine recommendations came out of that inquest. The minister suggested in the House that he would implement all of them. It is definitely an acknowledgement that we have a problem in the system when every one of the recommendations will be looked at or implemented. That is what he said, so obviously there is a problem related to drugs and the process within Health Canada itself.

I could go on with a number of problems but I do not have much time so I will move on to another area of federal incompetence. It has to do with the compensation for hepatitis C victims. We know about the tainted blood. Members mentioned it earlier. We know that it is a major problem. We know that almost 50% of the money is left over and yet there are thousands of patients who were infected and who have not been able to access the funding for hepatitis C victims. They really need that funding.

However, we need to look beyond the problems. The hon. member across the way suggested that there are some problems but that solutions are what is needed. I would like to ask him and the entire House to start thinking outside the box when it comes to health care, because arguably we have some very serious problems. Just the introduction of the Romanow report is an acknowledgement that hopefully we will start to think about some of the solutions.

First let us talk about accountability within the system. If I asked Canadians who they think is looking after the dollars in the health care system now they could not tell me. I am saying to Canadians right now that they could not tell me. It is not the politicians, I can tell Canadians that, and it is not the regional authorities in most of our provinces because I have been there. They deal with the health care dollars within their global budgets, or the funding formulas and access to them.

However, we have some blank cheques in the system and until we address them the system will never be able to sustain itself over the next 40 years because of the baby boomers and the technology that is coming along. I am saying that we need to look at the accountability of both users and providers within the system. We need to stop playing games with the health care dollars that are so precious and dear and that the taxpayers of the country work hard to earn.

It is very important that we acknowledge what we can do about accountability by having users and providers more accountable. I hope I get a question or two on that because I will not have time to explain it as I want to get on to my other idea, which is something

that that I think is very imperative. We have talked about it since the 1970s but have just paid lip service to it. It is the area of health care prevention and promotion, because health is much more than health care. We have been crisis managing health care in the country for so many years that we have to absolutely stop doing it or we will never sustain it.

• (2100)

In the long run we have to think outside the box and start asking ourselves questions. When we have an epidemic of obese students within our educational system, why are we not talking to the educators of this country? Why are we not talking to them with regard to solving some of the problems that are going to hit the system because of that?

This was talked about with regard to the tobacco industry. We know that if we can stop teenagers from smoking, if we can stop them before the age of 20, we will win the battle against tobacco addiction. Why are we not talking to them?

We know that the number one reason we hospitalize people in this country is mental illness. Why are we not talking to industry and thinking outside the box?

In closing, I would like to say that we do have a problem in health care. We can come up with some solutions if we work together. I would offer my assistance in doing that.

Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank the member opposite for outlining a number of points.

The hon. member wanted to be asked a question on accountability. I will ask the question so that the member can elaborate further on the blank cheque to the provinces. In what ways could we make the provinces accountable or have them monitor health care? That is a good question. I would like to hear more of the member's suggestions.

Along with that, what does the member think in regard to the accountability of passing on that spending? Various provinces have passed on expenditures or transfers from the federal government in various amounts. Various provinces spend different proportions on health care. Some of the provinces will be in very good shape soon, such as Alberta, which I think will be out of debt soon.

Last, I am glad the member mentioned the point of recruitment. It is a very important point. I was glad to hear the minister mention some plans in that respect. However, I know the Alliance is interested in taxes and I am curious about something. Does the member think that because we have made the largest tax cut in Canadian history, although of course it could always be more, it will help keep health care professionals in Canada?

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Mr. Rob Merrifield: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his questions. This gives me an opportunity to explain a little more about what I did not have time for in my presentation.

With regard to accountability, I think we miss the boat when we get bogged down by the question of whose jurisdiction it is, of whether it is a federal or provincial jurisdiction and whether the dollars are federal or provincial dollars. We have to understand that they are all taxpayer dollars from taxes paid by Canadians. That is what is so critical about accountability. Accountability does not come with that.

Accountability comes when we move Canadians, the users of the system whose hard earned dollars pay for a system of health care that they are so proud of, closer to the system and give them the opportunity, the education and the understanding to be able to access the system appropriately and to feel accountable to it. I believe that every time they access services they should have an account of what is paid on their behalf. The paradigm would suddenly shift. Instead of thinking that health care is just there and they can use it without any responsibility, they would then have an understanding of who is using it. Something else would happen: doctors will start treating patients a lot differently when they know that the patients know exactly what is being paid on their behalf.

I think that is how we start bringing accountability into the system. That could be a federal jurisdiction because it is a broad plank and a broad idea.

We will not solve health care problems with one silver bullet. If we thought one silver bullet would do it we would have used it a long time ago. We would have fired that bullet.

We have to start with a broad plank and then start building from there. That is how to bring accountability into the system.

In regard to taxes, we absolutely need to lower the taxes to hopefully give ourselves a little more competitiveness so that hard earned dollars go farther in this country. We have put a sign up that Canada is open for business, but will it solve the problem of the brain drain of our professionals going south? It is maybe a step in the right direction, but we have to do a lot more.

We make a fatal error in Canada with our human resources by not negotiating when physicians are going through the educational system. That is when they need our help. That is when they are vulnerable. We should negotiate then as to exactly where they will come out and serve, not after they get a degree. Any head of business will tell us that negotiations happen when both sides need each other, not when one side does things in isolation or afterwards. The brain drain is a big problem. Human resources is one of the major problems and it will not be solved overnight.

• (2105)

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a very quick question for my colleague in the Alliance Party.

Where does his party stand on some of the controversial issues such as deterrent fees and user fees? What role should the federal government take to make sure those things do not happen in Canada? Is he in favour of national standards for health care whereby we are treated the same from coast to coast to coast?

He is from Alberta where there was the experience of bill 11 and all the protests in his province. It would be interesting to know where he stands on some of those issues.

Mr. Rob Merrifield: Madam Speaker, I do not think I can answer that in one minute. It is very important.

I think we get suckered into a false debate in the country when there is a private-public debate. We have been suckered into that debate throughout the country. The member used the example of Alberta and bill 11. That is exactly what Alberta experienced. It ended up being a neutered bill. That is not the solution.

Regarding the absolute phobia about user fees, I do not think we have to go to user fees. I think we need to open up the books and bring Canadians closer to the system. The member mentioned user fees in a glib way and I am a little cautious about that. If user fees or some other incentives become necessary, I think Canadians will tell us. I do not think it is something we should debate right now. We have to go plank by plank initially. Those are short answers and I could go on but my time is up.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Winnipeg North Centre who is the very eloquent spokesperson for the New Democratic Party on all matters concerning health care. I would not want to take more than half the time so that she has a chance to put our position on the record.

This is a very important debate we are having here this evening. I suppose there is nothing that defines us as Canadians in terms of our collective character and differentiates us from the Americans more than our national health care program. Canadians, when asked what they are proud of about Canada, will say many things but many of them point to health care and public health care is a very important part of that.

I want to say at the outset that I am very proud of the role my party historically played in terms of getting health care into the country. I remember the debates when I was a teenager. At that time there was the great doctors' strike in 1961 in Saskatchewan when health care came in. The premier at the time was the CCF

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premier, Woodrow Lloyd. The CCF of course was the predecessor of the New Democratic Party, the NDP. I remember the fear among a lot of people at that time when all the doctors in the province went on strike.

I remember the then leader of the opposition, Ross Thatcher, protesting that the legislature was not called back to deal with the issue. He actually kicked the doors of the legislature. In the political history of our province there is a very famous picture of the Liberal leader, who I would say was a very conservative Liberal leader, kicking the doors of the legislative assembly.

However, that was really the opening of the floodgates for national health care in the country. Not long after that we had the appointment by prime minister John Diefenbaker of the Hall commission under Emmett Hall. It recommended a national health care program based upon the Saskatchewan model, which was a publicly administered, single payer type of system in the province of Saskatchewan.

Under the prime ministership of Lester B. Pearson, and under Paul Martin Sr., who was a minister at that time, and through the pressure of Tommy Douglas and the NDP caucus in the House of Commons at that time, we finally got national medicare in the mid-1960s in Canada.

The Liberal Party first promised national medicare back in 1919. It took from 1919 until the mid-1960s to actually become a reality in the country. That is how slow these Liberals move, at a snail's pace or like molasses in January. It was the prodding and pushing and the role played by Saskatchewan that made this a very popular idea right across the country.

Finally the time came when the political support was there and the public opinion was there. The federal government finally moved, under what was a very progressive Liberal government under Lester B. Pearson, quite the contrary to what we have today. Today we have the most conservative Liberal government in the history of our country. I am sure we would all agree with that if we compare it to the governments of Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Trudeau. In many ways this government is more conservative than Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Conservative government was between 1984 and 1993.

• (2110)

In the mid-1960s we finally got medicare in this country. We finally got a national program. We finally got a single payer system in this country that is now the envy of many people around the world.

What did the Liberal government do in its budget? In February 1995 it took an axe to medicare. It cut medicare and transfers to the provinces. It cut them so radically that every province in the country was suffering.

I am proud to say that the government of Roy Romanow, who is now head of the commission on medicare, was the only provincial government, contrary to what my friend in the Conservative Party said a few minutes ago, that backfilled dollar for dollar the loss of federal dollars from the provincial budget and the provincial caucus to maintain what we had in our province of Saskatchewan.

However, those cutbacks have hurt the system very severely. We had the health care accord of September 11, 2000, right before the election, which injected more federal money into health care, but even under that accord we are still well behind where we would have been if the cutbacks had not come in 1995.

Just three weeks ago we had a economic statement by the Minister of Finance. In that economic statement he announced that we had \$15 billion in unexpected surplus in the country and that every penny of that surplus was applied to the national debt. If we had a system like some of the provinces do, where we had a special fund set up into which this surplus money would go, then those of us in parliament could have a national debate as to where that money should be allocated.

If we had polled the Canadian people as to whether or not they wanted all of that \$15 billion put into the national debt or whether they wanted some of that put into health care, education, the farm crisis, infrastructure or the aboriginal problems in this country, I am sure that the Canadian people would overwhelmingly and massively have told us to spend a huge portion of that on the health care and educational problems the ordinary people of this country face. However, that did not happen. It did not happen because that is not the priority of the government across the way.

When it comes to debating the estimates, debating supply, it is very important for us to remind the government and the ministers across the way that they made a decision, first, to cut back radically on health care, putting many strains on the system and putting many parts of the country into crisis. Now, when we have the funds to do better, when we have this \$15 billion surplus, the government chooses to put every single penny of that surplus to paying down the national debt. That is on top of announcing last fall before the election, in another economic statement, that there would be tax cuts of \$100 billion for the Canadian people, many of those tax cuts helping wealthy people and the big corporations of this country that do not need those cuts.

Again, a large percentage of that money should have been spent in health care and education and on the human deficit in this country. In 1995 when those cutbacks were made, when people fought against the deficit that had been run up, mainly by the Tories, by accepting the cutbacks in the social programs, there was the creation of a human deficit in Canada. Now that we have some fiscal dividends it is the people of this country who should reap some of those benefits through health care programs, education and social services as we fight and combat this human deficit.

The two biggest failures of the government across the way are the environmental record of this country and the gap between the rich and the poor, which is once again growing instead of narrowing. A large part of that is due to the cutbacks in social programs in Canada and health care is a very important one.

Where do we go from here? I think we have a very good system. We have a very important system. We have a system that many Americans would like to see emulated in that country. Some 40 million Americans are not covered by health care or medicare at all. We have a system that is based on the concept of a single payer, that is, the provincial governments, with the help of the federal government, pay the health care bills in the country.

There is the system of public administration. In that system of public administration we know there is some flexibility in terms of some things being private. Hospitals will sometimes privatize or contract out the food service, the catering service, the laundry service or some other services. However, it is important within that context that everything be publicly administered.

● (2115)

Unlike the member from the Canadian Alliance in Alberta, to me this debate is not irrelevant in terms of public versus private. It is extremely important that we keep a public system, a single fare system and have it publicly administered on behalf of every Canadian. If we do not, we will create a chequerboard health care system with the richer provinces having a better system than the poorer provinces. We could end up like some countries in the world, such as the United States, where wealthier people, because of the thickness of their pocketbooks, have access to a better health system than the ordinary citizens.

It is extremely important that we keep that system publicly administered in a single tier system for every Canadian.

We also have to develop a pharmacare program so that the price of pharmaceutical goods and drugs is not a deterrent for people when combating an illness. We also need a good home care program. In both these cases the federal government should provide some leadership.

I conclude by saying we have to maintain national standards for home care, for daycare and pharmaceutical care. Within those national standards we have to have the flexibility of the administration of a system by each province that fits their unique characteristics.

Mr. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle has stood in the House before and talked about this very

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negative option as he sees it, and that is paying down the debt is not a realistic option.

We still have over \$550 billion of debt. In 1995-96 the debt to GDP ratio, that is the debt in relation to the size of the economy, was about 71.2%. It is now around 55%. The norm would be somewhere around 40% or thereabouts.

When we look at investing in social programs, the government last September at the premiers conference invested some \$21.4 billion in health care, post-secondary education and other social programs, which was the largest single investment the government ever made.

The \$15 billion that automatically went toward paying down the debt at the end of the last fiscal year was the surplus. The member for Regina—Qu'Appelle is a member of the finance committee. I am sure he knows the procedure that whatever the surplus is it goes to paying down the debt. That will save taxpayers \$2 billion a year in debt service charges. That will mean more resources are freed up to invest in health care and post-secondary education, to cut taxes and to invest in innovation, training and skills development.

Why has the member such an aversion to paying down the debt? We still have a debt in Canada of about \$550 billion which is far too high? Why is he so negative on paying it down?

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Madam Speaker, my answer will be very short. I have nothing against paying down the debt. The debt has gone down from 71% of GDP to 55% of GDP, as the parliamentary secretary said. It is going down very rapidly.

I am talking about balance. There will be a tax cut of \$100 billion over five years. There will be \$21 or \$22 billion going to health care and social services over five years, and a big hunk of money going to the national debt.

If we look at any poll, Canadians have said overwhelmingly that there is not a balance and that more money should go to health care, education, social services, infrastructure and the farm crisis. In other words, it should go into a people's agenda. That is the only place where I differ from the parliamentary secretary. It is a matter of priorities and balance.

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the member made mention in his address that the government in the mid-nineties took an axe to the health care portfolio. I made mention of that in my remarks as well. I also made mention of some of the repercussions which we are suffering now. I think we concur on that and we have to guard against that ever happening again. That is why we are suggesting we have a long term plan for the finances of health care and that we have a sustainable five year budget so that can never happens again.

Supply

• (2120)

The member suggested that all we really need to save the health care system is to throw more money at it. If that is not the case and I misinterpreted that, exactly what would he see as some of the solutions for health care?

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Madam Speaker, I did not say that the solution was to throw more money at it. We need more funding to sustain the system and make sure it is equalized across the country with national standards.

The Romanow commission is looking at ways of enhancing and making medicare more cost effective and beneficial for the Canadian people. There are efficiencies that I hope we can find to put into the system. However throwing more money into the system is not the answer, but we need enough money to make sure they system is sustainable in terms of the hospitals, salaries for doctors and nurses.

I think any independent analyst would say that the cutbacks were just too severe in 1995. It pushed many of the provinces deeper into debts and deficits. Many provinces closed hospitals and cut back on their systems. I think the government went too far at that particular time.

Part of the problem is extra federal funding, but part of the problem is making sure we are more efficient in terms of delivering a health care system.

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. He made some very good points. I believe he feels as passionately about the health care system and about making sure it is universal, acceptable and accessible for all Canadians.

However, I would like to ask him a question with respect to Roy Romanow, a pre-eminent Canadian who I believe was a brilliant choice on behalf of the government. The Prime Minister of course made that appointment, which I think stands in good stead for all Canadians.

Was the member optimistic or pessimistic on Mr. Romanow's appointment and what he would do in this very important study? It is my understanding that he will cross Canada and consult with stakeholders, Canadians and other interested parties on this very important area. Before he answers I would like to say I am very optimistic.

Hon. Lorne Nystrom: Madam Speaker, Mr. Romanow has been a friend of mine since 1967. I just spoke with him yesterday, and I am sure he will do an excellent job and make a valuable contribution like Mr. Emmett Hall did back in the 1960s.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have been trying to contain my feelings and save up for this opportunity. Now there is only 10 minutes to put over six months of concerns on the record.

I would like to focus on two areas pertaining to Health Canada. There are two pillars of health care in the country today.

The first pillar is our national health insurance system which is the envy of the world and a model that ensures access for all citizens on a universal basis to accessible, quality health care that is now facing serious decline and erosion.

The second pillar is our national health safety system which emerged out of the thalidomide crisis in the 1950s and has served Canadians well over the last several decades. It is also under serious threat from underfunding and lack of leadership by the government.

In both cases these pillars of medicare are crumbling. They are crumbling because of Liberal government neglect, lack of leadership by the present Minister of Health and a failure to ensure that some allocation of funds from this budgetary year, which is showing a \$15 billion surplus, be allocated to those very important cornerstones of Canadian public policy.

We are not only dealing with a lack of adequate resources and a failure of the government to put a pittance of the \$15 billion surplus toward these important areas, we are also dealing with a government that has failed to show leadership and provide national standards and national direction in two fundamental issues facing Canadians today.

• (2125)

The minister in his comments this evening was quick to point out with some pride the \$21.1 billion contribution by the federal government following the September 11, 2000 accord for health care. However, the minister failed to point out that we are talking about \$21.1 billion spread out over five years to cover health, education and social services. We are talking about a restoration of funds by the federal government to bring us up to 1994 levels which ensures that the federal government is involved to the tune of 15%, a long way from the 50:50 division that existed in the past for medicare.

Not only is the government failing to ensure our medicare model is sustained and supported, it is contributing to the erosion of that system and allowing, through its passive response and inaction, the slide toward privatization and yes, two tier health care.

The minister this evening stood in the House and tried to suggest he was making great progress by announcing a performance report, which would come into effect in the year 2002, and a citizens council on quality health care. These are two ideas which we will not sneeze at. They are important contributions to the debate, but

they do not address the need for action. They do not address the concerns raised by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions when this organization pointed out the government promised, with the September accord, to deal with the nursing shortage.

The government promised to deal with the drug pricing problems. It promised to deal with home care, and there has been no action. It has failed to address the Canadian Nurses Association recommendation for some contribution toward a recruitment strategy to deal with the crisis that is looming for all Canadians and the fact that at this rate we are in all likelihood going to face a shortage of 113,000 nurses by the year 2011.

The government has failed to deal with the suggestions from the Canadian Health Care Association that called upon the government in March of this year to allocate significant new resources to ensure we dealt with the shortfall of health care professionals and help provide the kind of quality care Canadians needed and deserved.

The government has not deal with the recommendations of the Canadian Medical Association that presented to the government a comprehensive document entitled "Looking at the Future of Health, Health Care and Medicine".

The government has not dealt with the serious problems facing Canadians in terms of accessing necessary medications. It has not dealt with the recent report in March of this year by the Canadian Institute for Health Information which pointed out that almost six million Canadians had inadequate insurance for prescription drugs, or that 10% of the population had no drug insurance at all and another 10% were under insured.

The minister has not dealt with the concerns that are at the root of our erosion of medicare and will not commit to fulfilling promises made long ago to have a national home care plan, a national pharmacare plan and a major reform at the primary care level.

We need resources now to ensure that we can sustain medicare and reform it in terms of the community based preventative health care model we are talking about.

The second pillar pertains to health protection. We raised serious questions about mad cow disease in the House this week. The answer from the minister was appalling and needs to be addressed.

I would like to point out that on April 4, we asked questions of Health Canada officials pertaining to mad cow disease. Specifically, I asked if it was possible that deer and elk killed on our highways were slaughtered, rendered and entered into the feed that went to live animals? Dr. André Gravel said there was a remote chance. I also asked if it was possible, under present regulations, for cow blood to actually get into the feed that went to live animals. Dr. Gravel said yes.

Supply

The minister appeared before the health committee on April 26 and pretended or claimed that he knew nothing about that and said that they were taking all necessary precautions. Yesterday in the House, the minister stood and said to all Canadians that Canada was BSE free and that they were taking all precautions.

That is not the case. The minister has not put all the facts before the Canadian public. He is not taking the necessary precautionary steps to ensure Canadians are protected from the very serious threat of mad cow disease or, if I can refer also to issues raised previously, mercury in fish, or salmonella poisoning or the uncertainty around genetically modified organisms in our food supply today.

● (2130)

The government has hacked and slashed our health protection branch starting in 1997 under the present Minister of Health. It has not fully restored our scientific capacity. It has not ensured that we have independent research. It has not taken steps to protect Canadians in all instances in terms of our food supply, the drugs Canadians need or any other area for that matter.

I raise all this not to engage in fearmongering as the government is so wont to classify it. I raise it because if we do not take steps now to deal with these threats we will pay a price down the road. We will pay a price in terms of human health and in terms of our agricultural industry. This is about protecting our farmers and the health of consumers. It is about trying to convince the government to act now before it is too late.

It is reprehensible for the Minister of Health to stand whenever he is posed a question and suggest that the opposition does not know what it is talking about, that it does not have all the facts and that everything is just A-okay. We know from many reports, especially the 3,000 page report just released by the minister's own departmental officials, about the problems of BSE and the potential threat of mad cow disease.

This is a serious, comprehensive study which suggests we do not know the incubation period for transmission of the pathogen and do not know the source of the problem. We do not know that cow's blood, gelatine or other animal products which are put into feed and then fed to live animals will not transmit the disease to human beings.

We are asking the government to look at this serious issue, take all precautionary steps and ensure we have regulations in place that protect Canadians at all costs. We are asking the minister to look beyond the inadequate advice he is getting from his own departmental officials and look to the world, to the European Union and to other countries that are now realizing the importance of taking all necessary steps to protect the food supply. We must ensure the health of Canadians is not threatened.

Supply

The two pillars of Canada's health care system, universal health insurance and our nationally acclaimed health safety system, have held the country in good stead. They have ensured Canadians have access to quality care and have protected Canadians against the worst threats in terms of tainted food, problematic drugs or unsafe water.

Surely that is the most basic thing the government can do. Surely this is the time and the opportunity for the government to invest a portion, just a portion, of the \$15 billion surplus into quality health care and into the health, well-being and future of our citizens.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I would like to make a comment, if hon. members will indulge me. We are dealing with estimates today.

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I understand your point, but an evening debate like this is a time when members can express themselves quite broadly and eloquently and can be more thoughtful than is often the case in the hurly-burly of normal debate.

I listened with great interest to what my colleague had to say and what her colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle had to say. It seems to me we live in a confederation. The strength of a confederation is that we have jurisdictions where all sorts of things can be tried. If they are no good, others can learn and do not need to repeat the experiment. If they are good they can be applied by the whole country.

The member for Regina—Qu'Appelle gave the rightly famous example of Saskatchewan developing a health care system which proved to be good for the whole country. Similarly the federal government, in addition to taking ideas from the jurisdictions, can have ideas of its own and hopefully persuade the provinces to go along.

It seems to me the thing works well when it is clearly federal jurisdiction and the federal government has the wherewithal and the jurisdiction to do something. For example, it was this government that put every school, every kindergarten, on the Internet through the SchoolNet program. The provinces essentially were not involved.

In the case of Saskatchewan and health care, the province developed something and the Liberal government of the day saw it was possible. The other provinces realized it was possible and that they could implement it.

• (2135)

I will give some other examples. I think the member would agree that the child tax benefit is a remarkable program of the government and yet it has been clawed back, for example in my own province of Ontario, from the poorest children and families. The federal government appears able to do nothing about it.

The 2000 research chairs is an extraordinary program. No jurisdiction has a fraction of the number of research chairs we have. We discovered that universities sometimes cannot afford the research chairs because they are not getting the funds through the CHST or from the provinces to support them.

The Canada student loan program has been greatly improved. The millennium scholarship program is 95% income related and deals directly with student loans, yet most provinces with the exception of two are raising tuition fees.

Could my colleague comment on that? Where jurisdiction is clearly provincial or federal, things are very simple. In the most common cases jurisdiction is less simple. What are her thoughts with respect to that and health care which is the main topic of her remarks?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I would like to indicate that I was not trying to steer the debate in any direction. Members are free to express themselves freely.

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis: Madam Speaker, I know that. I know that you know I was talking about estimates and the budget and the fact that the government should have considered allocating a portion of the \$15 billion surplus to health care to meet some of the critical issues I outlined in my remarks today.

I appreciate the very important question from the Liberal member across the way about innovations by the federal government that should be supported. I want him to know that the Liberal government has come forward with good ideas in a number of instances. I have indicated tonight that we do not quarrel with the idea of performance reports or a citizens' council dealing with quality health care. These are important ideas that should be advanced.

However I am concerned about where the government stops in terms of concrete action to deal with serious problems. I am concerned about its failure to keep promises pertaining to such basic issues as access to reasonably priced drugs, a universally accessible home care program and major reforms to primary health care. These are all issues the government said it would be innovative on but has failed to address.

The member raised the important issue of split jurisdiction and the problem of trying to advance these issues in the context of different agendas at the federal-provincial level. I recognize that point. However in terms of health care we are dealing with a willingness on the part of many provincial governments to make progress in the areas of pharmacare and home care. That is the case with my home province of Manitoba.

There has been a tremendous resistance or lack of courage by the federal government to take up and advance these issues in collaboration with provinces that are willing to co-operate. The example of

Supply

innovation is relevant to the debate because Manitoba offers, and the Minister of Health knows this, model programs in the areas of pharmacare and home care.

Manitoba pioneered those ideas many years ago and they ought to be replicated across Canada. However that would take federal leadership and it would take money. Yes, it would take some of the budgetary surplus available to us today. It would also take a minister who is prepared to do battle if necessary with less than co-operative provinces. There is an interest that the present Minister of Health could tap into. He could move expeditiously on some of the key issues pertaining to the reform and renewal of medicare.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jeannot Castonguay (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first point out that I am sharing my time with the member for Mississauga South. I am happy to contribute to the debate this evening.

Having worked for over 25 years as a surgeon in a rural community in New Brunswick, having worked in a hospital setting and with community health services for all those years, having had the privilege of sitting on the Standing Committee on Health with government and opposition colleagues, whom I got to know and appreciate, I must say I have the health of all Canadians at heart.

• (2140)

This is why I am opposed to Motion No. 1, which questions Health Canada's Vote 5 on the department's subsidies and contributions.

Is this opposition to the motion a way of saying that the approach to achieving the government's objective regarding health is not laudable? Nothing could be further from the truth.

Some members in this House like to claim that the Government of Canada is out of touch with the public that it serves. They like to suggest that the government is disconnected from the real needs of Canadians. This is far from the reality, and in more ways than one.

One of the most appropriate ways to demonstrate that we care about the health of Canadians is to look at the subsidies and contributions that Health Canada gives to community organizations and to its partners, the provincial and territorial governments. These funds meet real needs in the health sector and they allow us to explore new avenues to strengthen our health system. Currently, subsidies and contributions are given to partners that do productive work in this country.

The basic principle is that our government is taking measures regarding a large number of priorities in health, priorities that Canadians feel are important.

Our government is taking measures to provide to first nations and Inuit communities sustainable programs and health services that take into account the disparities and the threat of disease, so

they can enjoy a level of health that is comparable to that of other Canadians.

Our government is taking measures to improve prenatal health and ensure that young children have the best possible start in life.

Our government is taking measures to help older children and teenagers who are pressured by their peers to smoke or to use drugs or alcohol.

Our government is taking measures regarding a number of priorities in community health that impact on people of all ages.

Our government is working to meet the needs of seniors.

However, our government knows that all these concerns need not be tackled strictly within government. The fact is that there are many groups already working in these areas. There are ways that we can work with the provincial and territorial governments. There are many organizations which are very familiar with their communities and which have the necessary expertise to deliver effective programs and services.

Our grants and contributions are investments in partnerships and success. I will, if I may, give a few examples of what I am saying.

First, there is the alcohol and drug treatment and rehabilitation program, or ADTR. This is a longstanding program designed to reduce the harm caused, as we all know, by alcohol and other drug abuse to individuals, to families and to communities.

Through this program, Health Canada provides funding to the provinces and territories in order to help them improve accessibility to effective alcohol and drug treatment and rehab programs. These governments use these funds to support direct treatment and rehab programs for persons with substance abuse problems, and to provide training to health professionals, as well as services in schools, rapid screening, and counselling.

Naturally, if we accept this opposition to the motion, the provinces and territories will no longer receive support for ADTR. The funding will no longer be there.

Then there are the programs in support of science, which is essential to an understanding of health risks. It is crucial to policy choices that will enhance Canadians' health. All of these are supported by research funding.

Let us take, for instance, research into atmospheric pollution in our cities. All of us realize that poor quality air is bad for people, but we need to know which components in air pollution are the most harmful.

• (2145)

We need to know whether this situation presents more risks for certain members of society such as children or seniors. With that information, governments, communities and businesses can make informed choices.

Supply

Health Canada funds research activities at the University of Ottawa in these fields. This budget category is what funds that research. These are areas of research which ought to make it possible to improve the rules and policies that impact on atmospheric pollution and to provide healthier air to the population of our cities.

In many other cases, we are pursuing broad initiatives in which our subsidies and contributions are combined to fulfil major commitments made to Canadians. Allow me to give an example.

Just last week, the government announced new support for eight health initiatives in rural British Columbia. This was a global announcement on subsidies and contributions. For example, some local and regional projects will benefit from funds provided through the HIV/AIDS strategy to target problems such as the care and treatment for people infected with the HIV/AIDS virus, or to prevent the spreading of the HIV/AIDS virus in these communities.

Some projects will benefit from the support provided under the community action program for children. We co-manage this program with the provincial and territorial governments. This is another example of federal-provincial co-operation through subsidies and contributions. And this co-operation will provide support for community programs and services that help children up to six years of age get a good start in life, be ready for school and improve their chances of having a healthy adult life.

There are already close to 450 projects across Canada under the community action program for children. Together, these projects are valued at more than \$50 million. If the House accepts the motion, this will all come to an end.

I will conclude by pointing out that a large number of subsidies and contributions help shape Canada's future health system. The funding provided under that vote will be used for a number of telehealth initiatives across Canada, including in Quebec, Ontario, Atlantic Canada, western Canada and the north.

These projects serve as testing grounds for ideas on such matters as how health care organizations can exchange records on patients securely and effectively and on how to give people in remote regions access to the expertise available in the health care centres of our major cities.

We are even trying ways to link people receiving home care with organizations providing community services to enable them to use these technologies at home.

Allow me to give an example of the outreach project in Ontario. This project, which is being run in London, involves exploring a way to meet the need for psychiatric services in poorly served regions in southwest and northern Ontario. It will be achieved by linking four psychiatric centres to as many as 100 locations in the cities and communities of the first nations, by way of a video

conferencing system. Examples of this sort are popping up all over Canada.

The fact is that subsidies and contributions are an essential part of the government's strategy to improve the health of Canadians. They enable us to support local organizations that share our commitment to a healthy childhood. They enable us to support major research efforts. They enable us to keep up with the new millennium.

This funding deserves the support of the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Madam Speaker, I listened with some interest to the member for Madawaska—Restigouche speak on the merits of the government and what it has done as a health care provider.

Since he is a member of the government I certainly understand that he would want to sing the merits of the government, but I just do not understand how he is able to do that.

• (2150)

Certainly I do not expect that the health care provided in his riding is much better than the health care provided in my riding of South Shore. In the village of New Ross where I live, we are 40 or so kilometres from the nearest doctor. People who cut themselves or get their hand caught in a piece of equipment have to hold it together as best they can until they can get to a doctor. There is certainly none in the community. There was when I grew up there. There was always a doctor there, but there are no doctors in rural Canada.

Members should not stand there and sing the praises of the government and what it has done to help rural Canadians and provide health care because it is just not there.

There is a question that I actually do want to raise now that members have finished singing the praises of the government. Now that they have finished, they can answer a question on a specific item. The item is one that was brought up earlier. It is a serious potential health hazard and I would go so far as to say that it is a serious health hazard now. It is bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE.

This is the hidden health care risk that Canadians face and that the government in particular does not want to recognize. It does not want to recognize the big issues and the real problems that it could face. This is the hidden health care risk. It is out there behind the scenes and we do not know just how quickly it is going to rear its ugly head.

We have chronic wasting disease in deer and elk. We have BSE potentially being spread from blood product, from beef and sheep and animal products that have not been prepared properly. We expect that it will be just as big an issue in Canada as it was in Britain unless the government is willing to be proactive and do

Supply

something about it in a very proactive way, take a risk, spend some money, find out what the problem is and do something about it to protect our health care and protect our agriculture industry in Canada.

What will the government do about it? The government has done nothing so far.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jeannot Castonguay: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for sharing his concerns. They are concerns I have as well, even if I sit on the government side. Furthermore, this is one of the reasons I ran for office. I will answer the second part of the question and come back to the first part later.

With respect to BSE, the human form of which is known as Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease, this is a disease which has been known about for quite some time already. The problem right now is knowing whether so-called mad cow disease is the same as Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. How is this disease transmitted? The answer is still not known.

I am very happy when I see our government investing substantial amounts in research and development to work on this very sort of problem.

As for doctors in the regions, it is true that there is a problem. Sometimes, I have a lot of trouble understanding, when I see that federal transfer payments to my province are not put immediately into health care. We do not know why.

I agree with the earlier speakers who said that the provinces must be truly responsible. The provinces must have the strength of their convictions and tell us what they are doing with the money that the federal government is transferring to them. If they cannot do that, we should look after the health care system for all Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have only a couple of comments after listening to the self-serving drivel put forth by the Minister of Health and the member for Madawaska—Restigouche.

There are two points I want to talk about. He talks about helping with grants and contributions to deal with substance abuse. Let me tell the hon. member about substance abuse. Last week we dealt with the public accounts. A lady by the name of Lorraine Stonechild was at the public accounts committee telling us how her brother died of a drug overdose because he was given 300 prescriptions in one year, all paid for by Health Canada. Each and every one was paid for by Health Canada. It killed him because there is no control on Health Canada in how they distribute drugs, and substance abuse is rampant in the first nations because of it.

• (2155)

The member talked about air quality, but what about ground quality such as the Sydney tar ponds in Nova Scotia? The people are demanding that the government move them out of there because the place is making them sick, and Health Canada is doing next to nothing.

When will the government look after the first nations of the country? When will the government look after the people of Sydney, Nova Scotia? They deserve an answer to what the government and Health Canada are doing because they are killing them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jeannot Castonguay: Madam Speaker, with regard to the issue of drug overdose, I agree that there are problems. We often point a finger at the problem, but there are also many positive things about the health system.

A very important reason to invest in telecommunication technology to allow the various stakeholders in health to share information is precisely to try to prevent such unfortunate incidents.

As for the issue of ambient air, we should invest in this area. I would be dishonest if I commented on the issue of tar ponds, because I do not have any expertise in this area.

I can say that a lot of pressure is being exerted within our government to find solutions to this problem. We will continue to work to that end.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I believe that report of the Department of Health on plans and priorities clearly demonstrates that Health Canada is focusing its efforts and its resources on the health priorities that make sense for the people of Canada. However, to understand these estimates, we must first understand the role the Government of Canada plays in our health care system.

We know that the delivery of health care services is almost completely under the jurisdiction of the provinces. They decide how services are to be organized. They negotiate with physicians and nurses and they set overall provincial funding levels.

The health of Canadians involves far more than just the delivery of health care services. The Government of Canada has a set of distinct roles that reflect its wide perspective. The funding provided in these estimates support the achievement of those roles.

One aspect of the basic operations of Health Canada is our health care policy. This involves many elements of co-operation with the provinces, the territories and the new territories in order to ensure that all Canadians have a health care system that works for them.

Supply

Much of that collaboration will be aided by the implementation of the first ministers agreement on health which was signed by the first ministers last September. By putting \$18.9 billion more into funding over the next five years, we will go a long way toward revitalizing our health care system for the 21st century.

The Government of Canada did far more than just agree to increase health and social transfers. It set up three targeted funds: \$1 billion for medical equipment, \$800 million for innovation and reform, and \$500 million to strengthen information technologies so that we can move ahead in areas such as tele-health programs that will allow people in remote areas to contact medical experts in large cities.

One priority that will be particularly interesting for Canadians, and these estimates will help support it, is the work that will take place with the provinces, territories and outside experts to define common indicators. It will mean that Canadians will be able to look to a consistent set of indicators that cover health status, health outcomes, and the quality of service across Canada.

I also want to note the funding for the new tobacco control strategy of \$480 million over five years.

• (2200)

I also want to mention the investment in improving the health of our first nations and Inuit. This is a basic constitutional responsibility of the Government of Canada and it involves many elements.

I have many other points to make, but let me conclude. Canadians expect the Government of Canada to take a lead role on health issues and to take those responsibilities very seriously. That is precisely what the Government of Canada does.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): It being 10 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*English*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Call in the members.

• (2230)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on Motion No. 1, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 134*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Bagnell
Baker	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bennett	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Carignan	Carroll
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Charbonneau	Coderre
Collenette	Comuzzi
Copps	Cotler
Cullen	Cuzner
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Dromisky
Drouin	Duhamel
Duplain	Easter
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrah	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Galloway	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guarnieri	Harb
Harvard	Harvey
Hubbard	Ianno
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keyes	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laliberte	Lastewka
Lavigne	LeBlanc
Lee	Leung
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Marcil	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCallum	McCormick
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
Neville	Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Owen
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pillitteri	Pratt
Price	Proulx
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Richardson

Supply

Robillard
Saada
Scott
Shepherd
St. Denis
St-Julien
Stewart
Telegdi
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Tobin
Torsney
Valeri
Volpe
Whelan
Wood—157

Rock
Scherrer
Sgro
Speller
St-Jacques
Steckle
Szabo
Thibault (West Nova)
Tirabassi
Tonks
Ur
Vanclief
Wappel
Wilfert

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to order made earlier today, Motions Nos. 2 through 190 relating to the main estimates and standing in the name of the Hon. President of Treasury Board are deemed moved and seconded, the questions are deemed to have been put, and the motions agreed to on division.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—HEALTH

NAYS

Members

Abbott
Anders
Asselin
Bellehumeur
Bigras
Borotsik
Breitkreuz
Brison
Cadman
Casson
Clark
Crête
Dalphond-Guiral
Desjarlais
Doyle
Duceppe
Epp
Fournier
Gagnon (Québec)
Gauthier
Godin
Gouk
Grey (Edmonton North)
Guimond
Harris
Herron
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hinton
Keddy (South Shore)
Laframboise
Lancôt
Lill
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marceau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McNally
Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)
Nystrom
Paquette
Picard (Drummond)
Proctor
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Ritz
Rocheleau
Schmidt
Sorenson
St-Hilaire
Stoffer
Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)
Vellacott
Wasylcia-Leis
White (Langley—Abbotsford)
Yelich —111

Ablonczy
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bergeron
Blaikie
Bourgeois
Brien
Burton
Cardin
Chatters
Comartin
Cummins
Davies
Desrochers
Dubé
Duncan
Forseth
Gagnon (Champlain)
Gallant
Girard-Bujold
Goldring
Grewal
Guay
Hanger
Hearn
Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom
Jaffer
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lalonde
Lebel
Loubier
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
Manning
Mark
McDonough
Ménard
Merrifield
Moore
Obhrai
Perron
Plamondon
Rajotte
Reynolds
Robinson
Roy
Skelton
Spencer
Stinson
Strahl
Toews
Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis)
Venne
Wayne
Williams

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$954,627,000, under HEALTH—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—HEALTH

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$19,748,000, under HEALTH—Canadian Institutes of Health Research—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—HEALTH

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$408,885,000, under HEALTH—Canadian Institutes of Health Research—Grants, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—HEALTH

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 5

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$2,485,000, under HEALTH—Hazardous Materials Information Review Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—HEALTH

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

PAIRED MEMBERS

Sauvageau

Savoy

Supply

Motion No. 6

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$3,617,000, under HEALTH—Patented Medicine Prices Review Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 7

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$48,836,000, under FINANCE—Auditor General—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—PARLIAMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 8

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$182,882,033, under PARLIAMENT—House of Commons—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 9

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$11,765,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Chief Electoral Officer—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 10

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$474,966,000, under HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 11

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$1,062,797,000, under HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates

for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 12

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$7,935,000, under HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT—Canadian Industrial Relations Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 13

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$1,570,000, under HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT—Canadian Artists and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 14

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$2,255,000, under HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT—Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 15

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$72,901,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 16

Supply

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$272,735,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 17

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$35,800,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 18

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$4,285,133,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L20—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 19

That Vote L20, in the amount of \$32,853,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Loans to native claimants, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L25—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 20

That Vote L25, in the amount of \$37,840,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Loans to First Nations in British Columbia, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L30—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 21

That Vote L30, in the amount of \$400,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Loans to the Council of Yukon First Nations, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 22

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$84,729,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 23

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$53,104,900, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 24

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$15,600,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Department—Payments to Canada Post Corporation, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 25

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$890,000, under INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT—Canadian Polar Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 26

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$393,076,000, under INDUSTRY—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 27

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$703,378,000, under INDUSTRY—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L10—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 28

That Vote L10, in the amount of \$300,000, under INDUSTRY—Department—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L15—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 29

That Vote L15, in the amount of \$500,000, under INDUSTRY—Department—Loans, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 30

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$60,597,000, under INDUSTRY—Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 31

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$277,073,000, under INDUSTRY—Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 32

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$111,687,000, under INDUSTRY—Canadian Space Agency—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 33

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$184,678,000, under INDUSTRY—Canadian Space Agency—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 34

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$49,971,000, under INDUSTRY—Canadian Space Agency—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 35

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$82,460,000, under INDUSTRY—Canadian Tourism Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 36

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$1,375,000, under INDUSTRY—Competition Tribunal—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 55—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 37

That Vote 55, in the amount of \$1,665,000, under INDUSTRY—Copyright Board— Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 60—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 38

That Vote 60, in the amount of \$33,686,000, under INDUSTRY—Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec— Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 65—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 39

That Vote 65, in the amount of \$273,402,000, under INDUSTRY—Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 70—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 40

That Vote 70, in the amount of \$36,574,000, under INDUSTRY—Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 75—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 41

That Vote 75, in the amount of \$287,170,000, under INDUSTRY—National Research Council of Canada—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 80—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 42

That Vote 80, in the amount of \$66,284,000, under INDUSTRY—National Research Council of Canada—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 85—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 43

That Vote 85, in the amount of \$133,614,000, under INDUSTRY—National Research Council of Canada—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 90—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 44

That Vote 90, in the amount of \$28,738,000, under INDUSTRY—Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 95—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 45

That Vote 95, in the amount of \$575,548,000, under INDUSTRY—Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council—Grants, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 100—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 46

That Vote 100, in the amount of \$12,477,000, under INDUSTRY—Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 105—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 47

That Vote 105, in the amount of \$146,883,000, under INDUSTRY—Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council—Grants, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 110—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 48

That Vote 110, in the amount of \$5,402,000, under INDUSTRY—Standards Council of Canada—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 115—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 49

That Vote 115, in the amount of \$485,650,000, under INDUSTRY—Statistics Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 120—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Supply

Motion No. 50

That Vote 120, in the amount of \$38,551,000, under INDUSTRY—Western Economic Diversification—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 125—INDUSTRY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 51

That Vote 125, in the amount of \$223,428,000, under INDUSTRY—Western Economic Diversification—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 52

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$968,452,000, under FISHERIES AND OCEANS—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 53

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$158,092,000, under FISHERIES AND OCEANS—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 54

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$80,620,100, under FISHERIES AND OCEANS—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 55

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$465,725,956, under ENVIRONMENT—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 56

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$32,239,000, under ENVIRONMENT—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 57

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$70,235,294, under ENVIRONMENT—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 58

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$10,363,000, under ENVIRONMENT—Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 59

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$411,978,000, under CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 60

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$27,870,000, under CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

[English]

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 61

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$336,471,517, under CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 62

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$72,659,000, under CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION—Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PARLIAMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Supply

Motion No. 63

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$36,122,300, under PARLIAMENT—Senate—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—PARLIAMENT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 64

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$20,605,000, under PARLIAMENT—Library of Parliament—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 65

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$22,343,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 66

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$61,758,200, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 67

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$192,332,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Canadian Security Intelligence Service—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 68

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$1,092,378,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Correctional Service—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 69

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$148,100,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Correctional Service—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 70

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$24,105,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—National Parole Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 71

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$1,749,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Office of the Correctional Investigator—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 72

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$1,053,168,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Royal Canadian Mounted Police—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 73

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$181,043,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Royal Canadian Mounted Police—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 74

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$758,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—SOLICITOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 75

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$3,463,000, under SOLICITOR GENERAL—Royal Canadian Mounted Police Public Complaints Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 76

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$308,238,000, under JUSTICE—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 77

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$373,205,000, under JUSTICE—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 78

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$15,245,000, under JUSTICE—Canadian Human Rights Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 79

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$2,682,000, under JUSTICE—Canadian Human Rights Tribunal—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 80

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$4,322,000, under JUSTICE—Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 81

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$507,000, under JUSTICE—Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs—Canadian Judicial Council, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 82

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$30,258,000, under JUSTICE—Federal Court of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 83

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$2,870,000, under JUSTICE—Law Commission of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 84

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$3,654,000, under JUSTICE—Offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioners of Canada—Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada Program, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 85

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$9,743,000, under JUSTICE—Offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioners of Canada—Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada Program, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 86

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$12,994,000, under JUSTICE—Supreme Court of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 55—JUSTICE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 87

That Vote 55, in the amount of \$9,738,000, under JUSTICE—Tax Court of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—GOVERNOR GENERAL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 88

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$14,415,000, under GOVERNOR GENERAL—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 89

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$91,469,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Department—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 90

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$12,192,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Canadian Centre for Management Development—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates

for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 91

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$3,392,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 92

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$21,038,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 93

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$9,944,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Commissioner of Official Languages—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 94

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$1,941,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Millennium Bureau of Canada—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 95

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$24,212,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Millennium Bureau of Canada—Contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 96

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$5,052,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 97

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$5,085,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Public Service Staff Relations Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 98

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$2,074,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—Security Intelligence Review Committee—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 55—PRIVY COUNCIL

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 99

That Vote 55, in the amount of \$2,272,000, under PRIVY COUNCIL—The Leadership Network—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 100

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$72,507,000, under FINANCE—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 101

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$326,000,000, under FINANCE—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L10—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 102

That Vote L10, in the amount of \$1, under FINANCE—Department—Payments to the International Development Association, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 103

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$1,579,000,000, under FINANCE—Department—Federal-Provincial Transfers Program, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 104

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$7,554,000, under FINANCE—Canadian International Trade Tribunal—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 105

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$21,232,000, under FINANCE—Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—FINANCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 106

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$1,660,000, under FINANCE—Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 107

Supply

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$131,005,000, under TRANSPORT—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 108

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$97,449,000, under TRANSPORT—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 109

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$203,527,501, under TRANSPORT—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 110

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$116,237,000, under TRANSPORT—Department—Payments to the Jacques Cartier and Champlain Bridges Inc., in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 111

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$247,739,000, under TRANSPORT—Department—Payments to VIA Rail Canada Inc. in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 112

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$21,236,000, under TRANSPORT—Canadian Transportation Agency—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 113

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$891,000, under TRANSPORT—Civil Aviation Tribunal—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 114

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$960,207,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 115

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$108,606,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 116

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$393,378,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 117

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$10,734,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Canadian Commercial Corporation—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L30—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 118

That Vote L30, in the amount of \$1, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Canadian International Development Agency—Contributions to the International Financial Institution Fund Accounts, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L35—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 119

That Vote L35, in the amount of \$4,500,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Canadian International Development Agency—Capital subscriptions in International Financial Institutions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Supply

Motion No. 120

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$88,270,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—International Development Research Centre—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 121

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$7,007,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—International Joint Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 122

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$2,115,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—NAFTA Secretariat, Canadian Section—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 55—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 123

That Vote 55, in the amount of \$238,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Northern Pipeline Agency—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 124

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$2,188,113,000, under CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 125

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$13,727,000, under CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 126

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$110,326,000, under CANADA CUSTOMS AND REVENUE AGENCY—Contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 127

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$423,028,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 128

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$37,467,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 129

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$809,447,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 130

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$1, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Department—Spring Credit Advance Program, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 131

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$2,762,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Canadian Dairy Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 132

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$260,089,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Canadian Food Inspection Agency—Operating expenditures and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 133

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$5,014,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Canadian Food Inspection Agency—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 134

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$18,495,000, under AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD—Canadian Grain Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—TREASURY BOARD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 135

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$97,748,000, under TREASURY BOARD—Secretariat—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 2—TREASURY BOARD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 136

That Vote 2, in the amount of \$22,110,000, under TREASURY BOARD—Secretariat—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—TREASURY BOARD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 137

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$750,000,000, under TREASURY BOARD—Secretariat—Government Contingencies, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—TREASURY BOARD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 138

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$132,627,000, under TREASURY BOARD—Secretariat—Government-Wide Initiatives, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—TREASURY BOARD

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 139

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$1,061,202,000, under TREASURY BOARD—Secretariat—Public Service Insurance, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 140

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$446,089,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 141

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$24,680,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 142

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$110,162,844, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 143

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$121,604,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Atomic Energy of Canada Limited—Operating and Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 144

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$43,774,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 145

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$31,010,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—Cape Breton Development Corporation—Operating and Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 146

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$25,879,000, under NATURAL RESOURCES—National Energy Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 147

Supply

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$549,870,000, under VETERANS AFFAIRS—Program—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 148

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$1,513,848,000, under VETERANS AFFAIRS—Program—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 149

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$8,975,000, under VETERANS AFFAIRS—Veterans Review and Appeal Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 150

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$7,964,877,080, under NATIONAL DEFENCE—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 151

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$2,143,289,000, under NATIONAL DEFENCE—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 152

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$402,138,767, under NATIONAL DEFENCE—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 153

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$8,197,000, under NATIONAL DEFENCE—Canadian Forces Grievance Board—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 154

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$3,653,000, under NATIONAL DEFENCE—Military Police Complaints Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 155

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$1,650,205,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 156

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$281,131,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Department—Capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 10—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 157

That Vote 10, in the amount of \$4,000,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Department—Payment to Queens Quay West Land Corporation, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 158

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$48,665,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Canada Information Office—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 159

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$1,909,387,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 160

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$247,210,000, under PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES—Canada Post Corporation—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 1—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 161

That Vote 1, in the amount of \$147,034,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Department—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 5—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 162

That Vote 5, in the amount of \$787,191,568, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Department—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE L10—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 163

That Vote L10, in the amount of \$10,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Department—Loans to institutions and public authorities, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 15—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 164

That Vote 15, in the amount of \$124,236,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canada Council—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 165

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$795,664,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—Payments for operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 166

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$4,000,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—Payments for working capital, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 30—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 167

That Vote 30, in the amount of \$123,311,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—Payments for capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 35—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 168

That Vote 35, in the amount of \$125,532,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Film Development Corporation—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 45—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 169

That Vote 45, in the amount of \$23,691,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Museum of Nature—Payments for operating and capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 50—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 170

That Vote 50, in the amount of \$3,537,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 55—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 171

That Vote 55, in the amount of \$45,121,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Archives of Canada—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

Supply

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 60—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 172

That Vote 60, in the amount of \$23,930,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Arts Centre Corporation—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 65—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 173

That Vote 65, in the amount of \$6,798,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Battlefields Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 70—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 174

That Vote 70, in the amount of \$44,949,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Capital Commission—Payment for operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 75—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 175

That Vote 75, in the amount of \$25,671,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Capital Commission—Payment to the National Capital Commission for capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 80—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 176

That Vote 80, in the amount of \$14,090,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Capital Commission—Payment for grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 85—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 177

That Vote 85, in the amount of \$60,221,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Film Board—National Film Board Revolving Fund, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 90—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 178

That Vote 90, in the amount of \$33,188,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Gallery of Canada—Payments for operating and capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 95—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 179

That Vote 95, in the amount of \$3,000,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Gallery of Canada—Payment for the purchase of objects for the collection, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 100—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 180

That Vote 100, in the amount of \$32,208,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Library—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 105—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 181

That Vote 105, in the amount of \$22,884,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—National Museum of Science and Technology—Payments for operating and capital expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 110—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 182

That Vote 110, in the amount of \$266,891,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Parks Canada Agency—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 115—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 183

That Vote 115, in the amount of \$6,500,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Parks Canada Agency—Payments to the New Parks and Historic Sites Account, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 120—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 184

That Vote 120, in the amount of \$97,176,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Public Service Commission—Program expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 125—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 185

That Vote 125, in the amount of \$10,101,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Status of Women Office of the Co-ordinator, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 130—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 186

That Vote 130, in the amount of \$10,000,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Status of Women Office of the Co-ordinator—Grants, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—TRANSPORT

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 187

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$36,347,000, under TRANSPORT—Department—Payments to Marine Atlantic Inc., in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 40—CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 188

That Vote 40, in the amount of \$49,745,000, under CANADIAN HERITAGE—Canadian Museum of Civilization—Payments, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 20—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Supply

Motion No. 189

That Vote 20, in the amount of \$138,423,342, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Canadian International Development Agency—Operating expenditures, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

CONCURRENCE IN VOTE 25—FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Lucienne Robillard (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 190

That Vote 25, in the amount of \$1,481,929,000, under FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE—Canadian International Development Agency—Grants and contributions, in the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 (less the amount voted in Interim Supply), be concurred in.

(Motions Nos. 2 to 190 deemed agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Lucienne Robillard moved that Bill C-29, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service of Canada for the financial year ending March 31, 2002, be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

Hon. Lucienne Robillard moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion deemed agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Kilger in the chair)

[*English*]

(On clause 2)

Mr. John Williams: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the President of the Treasury Board could assure us that this bill is in the usual form and in accordance with the same standards of previous years.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Lucienne Robillard: Mr. Speaker, this bill is essentially in the same form as those passed in previous years.

Supply

The Chairman: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to.)

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 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.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 7 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 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.)

(Bill reported)

• (2235)

Hon. Lucienne Robillard moved that the bill be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

*Supply**(Division No. 135)*

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Motion agreed to)

The Speaker: When shall the bill be read the third time? With leave of the House, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Lucienne Robillard moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: 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 yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[*English*]

Ms. Marlene Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I think you would find consent that the vote on the first motion this evening be applied to the vote now before the House.

The Speaker: Is it agreed to apply the earlier vote to this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

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

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Bagnell
Baker	Bakopanos
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bennett	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Cannis	Caplan
Carignan	Carroll
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Charbonneau	Coderre
Collette	Comuzzi
Copps	Cotler
Cullen	Cuzner
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Dromisky
Drouin	Duhamel
Duplain	Easter
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrah	Finlay
Folco	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Galloway	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guarnieri	Harb
Harvard	Harvey
Hubbard	Ianno
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keyes	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laliberte	Lastewka
Lavigne	LeBlanc
Lee	Leung
Longfield	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Malhi	Maloney
Marcil	Marleau
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Matthews
McCallum	McCormick
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
Neville	Normand
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)
O'Reilly	Owen
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peric	Peterson
Pettigrew	Phinney
Pillitteri	Pratt
Price	Proulx
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Richardson
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Scherrer
Scott	Sgro
Shepherd	Speller
St. Denis	St-Jacques
St-Julien	Steckle
Stewart	Szabo
Telegdi	Thibault (West Nova)
Thibault (Saint-Lambert)	Tirabassi
Tobin	Tonks
Torsney	Ur
Valeri	Vanclief
Volpe	Wappel
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood—157	

Supply

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Asselin	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bellehumeur	Bergeron
Bigras	Blaikie
Borotsik	Bourgeois
Breitkreuz	Brien
Brisson	Burton
Cadman	Cardin
Casson	Chatters
Clark	Comartin
Crête	Cummins
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
Desjarlais	Desrochers
Doyle	Dubé
Duceppe	Duncan
Epp	Forseth
Fournier	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Québec)	Gallant
Gauthier	Girard-Bujold
Godin	Goldring
Gouk	Grewal
Grey (Edmonton North)	Guay
Guimond	Hanger
Harris	Hearn
Herron	Hill (Macleod)
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)	Hilstrom
Hinton	Jaffer
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lancôt	Lebel
Lill	Loubier
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Manning
Marceau	Mark
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	McDonough
McNally	Ménard
Meredith	Merrifield
Mills (Red Deer)	Moore
Nystrom	Obhrai
Paquette	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Proctor	Rajotte
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)	Reynolds
Ritz	Robinson
Rocheleau	Roy
Schmidt	Skelton
Sorenson	Spencer
St-Hilaire	Stinson
Stoffer	Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Toews
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis)
Vellacott	Venne
Wasylcia-Leis	Wayne
White (Langley—Abbotsford)	Williams
Yelich —111	

PAIRED MEMBERS

Sauvageau	Savoy
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The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

[*English*]

Before I adjourn the House I might say to hon. members that I will not be here tomorrow. Since the House may adjourn tomorrow night, according to rumours, I want to say how much I hope all hon. members enjoy a very pleasant summer.

[*Translation*]

I hope that, as always, members will work very hard during the summer and return in September full of vigour and enthusiasm for the new session.

[*English*]

It being 10.37 p.m. the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 10.37 p.m.)

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