



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, April 17, 2002**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1400)

[English]

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

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

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### NATIONAL HORSE OF CANADA

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as you know, the House is reviewing a bill that aims to recognize the Canadian Horse as Canada's national horse.

The Canadian Horse is a perfect symbol for Canadians. It is tough. It has infinite stamina for its small size but is very gentle by nature. Like all immigrants to this great land, throughout its long history in Canada it has adapted to Canadian conditions.

I understand that many of our colleagues have not had the opportunity to meet an example of this little iron breed of horse. I am pleased to announce that outside Centre Block this afternoon Canadian Horse carriage rides are being offered to all interested parliamentarians and their staff. All are welcome to join me for “Canadiens on the Hill” and come out and see this fine breed of Canadian horse.

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### TOURISM INDUSTRY

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, for many years now Canada has been experiencing a growth in its economy and an increase in the number of working Canadians. Much of this success is a direct result of the significant work of the Canadian tourism industry and its 159,000 businesses.

Currently 99% of tourism businesses meet the Statistics Canada definition of a small or medium sized enterprise. A full 97% of these

are small companies. The Canadian tourism industry is a major pillar of the national economy, outperforming the general economy both in terms of revenue generated and employment growth over the past decade, an impressive record.

I congratulate the tourism industry on its contribution to the Canadian economy and commend the tourism representatives present here in the House today for their dedication to the viability and sustainability of this dynamic industry.

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[Translation]

### GRANDS PRIX DU TOURISME

**Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Shefford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week marked the Grands Prix du tourisme de la Montérégie, and the city of Rougemont in my riding of Shefford did very well for itself. The Cidrerie Michel Jodoin and the Théâtre de Rougemont both came away with awards in the tourist attraction category.

The cider makers, Cidrerie Michel Jodoin, added one more award to the many they have collected over the years for their work, their quality products and the touristic visibility they bring to the region.

As for the Théâtre de Rougemont, they have brought us six years of entertainment with the top quality plays they stage, and their audiences are constantly growing.

I would suggest a trip to our area along the cider route, with a visit to the Cidrerie to taste their delicious nectar, followed by one of the productions of the Théâtre de Rougemont.

In closing, my sincere congratulations to the award winners. I also wish them good luck in Hull on May 10, when they will be competing in the Grands Prix du tourisme for all of Quebec.

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[English]

### TOURISM INDUSTRY

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry has a significant impact on the Canadian economy. Last year tourism spending, despite having the worst quarterly decline in 15 years due to the tragic events of September 11, continued to grow from the previous year and totalled \$54.6 billion.

The tourism industry employs more than 500,000 Canadians directly. In fact, from a government perspective the tourism industry produces estimated revenues of almost \$17 billion in taxes.

*S. O. 31*

Today the Tourism Industry Association of Canada is hosting a Talking Tourism Symposium whereby tourism representatives from coast to coast have come to Ottawa to discuss their dynamic industry. As a member of parliament who recognizes the positive effects of tourism in my riding of Hamilton West and across the whole country, I welcome the tourism industry to Ottawa and encourage it to keep up the great work.

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●(1405)

**GRANTHAM LIONS CLUB**

**Mr. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House of Commons today to acknowledge the Grantham Lions Club of St. Catharines which will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding on Saturday, May 4, 2002.

The Grantham Lions Club has always accepted the challenge of turning concern for others into active assistance. Since its inception in 1952 hundreds of volunteer members of the Lions Club have given unselfishly of their time and talents to such worthwhile programs as Camp Trillium for children with cancer, Camp Dorset for dialysis patients, Lake Joseph Camp for the blind as well as numerous sports programs at the Grantham Lions Sports Park.

On behalf of all members of the House I congratulate the Grantham Lions on their 50 years of tremendous work within the St. Catharines community, and may their spirit of caring and commitment continue for another 50 years.

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**NORM OVENDEN**

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the *Edmonton Journal's* long serving Ottawa scribe, Norm Ovenden, bids us farewell.

Fifteen years lathering in the *Journal's* editorial harness, still unbroken of spirit, back yet unswayed and relatively unscathed by the ravages of the shrill Hill drill, now the seaways of our nation beckon as Norm Ovenden slips the surly bonds of Parliament Hill.

Unfettered, newly unbuckled of a media mogul's tack, embarking on a new voyage of discovery and conquest, trading national broadsheet news for fisheries and oceans muse, Norm now sets sail for an oceanic career, ready to reel in new whoppers, board new challenges, plug new lines and set new barbs, all to troll for Canada's aquatic gain.

I say bon voyage to Norm. May the seas be calm, the winds be true and the rewards be bountiful. Maybe now at long last I will get some decent ink in Edmonton.

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[Translation]

**CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks the anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The last two decades have been an exciting time for Canada; it has come of age.

The charter, which is displayed on the walls of our homes, schools and offices, sets out our rights and our freedoms, our responsibilities and our democracy. It has contributed to defining who we Canadians are, and is the means for expressing our identity, our shared convictions and the values we hold dear.

Every day, parliament and the various legislative assemblies and courts fine tune its meaning and its effects on us as individuals and as members of society.

As we mark these 20 years under the charter's protection, we need to pause a moment, reflect on its influence and celebrate together one of the greatest of Canadian achievements.

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**THE CONSTITUTION**

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on April 17, 1982, the Government of Canada patriated the Canadian Constitution unilaterally, excluding Quebec.

Twenty years later, the consequences of this patriation, and particularly Quebec's exclusion, are still being felt. What is worse is that based on this constitution, Canada—mostly the Liberal government—has since disregarded Quebec consensus on numerous occasions.

Canada has decided to build itself by ignoring the aspirations of the Quebec nation, by creating a strong central government and by refusing to recognize Quebec as a nation.

This is why no political party recognized in the National Assembly, no Quebec government, regardless of its political stripes, has wanted to sign this constitution.

Quebec is a nation. It respects other nations and their citizens. We would ask for the mutual respect of Canadians in turn.

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[English]

**CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

**Ms. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks a very significant anniversary. Twenty years ago the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a piece of paper that enshrined our fundamental rights as Canadians, became a reality but not many Canadians realize the battle women and men of our nation had to fight in order to ensure equality for all.

After one long week of negotiations with provincial leaders, women's organizations and Canadians, section 28 guaranteeing that rights and freedoms apply equally to male and female persons was included in the charter in 1982. It took three years, thousands of petitions from Canadian women and a group of female politicians who crossed party lines to ensure these rights were guaranteed to all Canadians regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, mental or physical disability, or sex.

It is because of this battle that the Government of Canada remains committed to the principles stated in the charter relating to equality for women. Canadians should celebrate not only the inclusion of this section in the charter but also the power of all Canadians to make an impact on their nation in a very positive way.

•(1410)

### CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last night some 30 members of parliament from across party lines met with representatives of law enforcement. The reason was to discuss the fallout from the recent B.C. Supreme Court decision which acquitted John Robin Sharpe of possession of child pornography. The court found that Sharpe's writings of violent sexual fantasies involving children, although repugnant, did not counsel offences against children and had some artistic merit.

Participants in the roundtable discussion were shown a very short but extremely graphic slide show of young children including infants being subjected to the most degrading acts of perversion imaginable. Experts in the field maintained that writings such as Sharpe's, far from being artistic, actually contribute to the sexual abuse of children.

Many of us in this place anticipated this decision immediately following the initial ruling in January, 1999 and have fought since then for change. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice attended last night. Perhaps he can convince his boss that Canada's children need our protection now.

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### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks a rather remarkable historic convergence. It is the 54th anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel and the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Each have generated their own revolutions: the founding of the state of Israel as a revolutionary event in Jewish and human history with the reconstitution of the ancient Jewish people in their aboriginal homeland; and the Canadian charter of rights with its revolutionary impact on the promotion and protection of human rights in this country and its rayonnement internationally.

Indeed, there is one generic right in the charter, article 7 which speaks of the right to life, liberty and security of the person, that also underpins the right of the Jewish people to self determination, a foundational international human right, and to individual and collective security. It underpins the corresponding right of the state of Israel to live within secure and recognized boundaries free from any threats or acts of force, at peace with her neighbours.

In Hebrew numerology the number 18, *chai*, means life. The number 54, connoting the 54th anniversary of the state of Israel, means life as a threefold blessing. May the right to life, liberty and human security in charter law and international human rights law resonate as a blessing for Canada, Israel and peoples everywhere, and may the prayer for peace so urgently yearned for be realized.

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### CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Throughout this period of reflection around the 20th anniversary much will be said about former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and rightly so.

*S. O. 31*

As he himself was not unwilling to acknowledge, one of his formative influences was Frank Scott, a McGill University law professor and one of the founding members of the CCF, the predecessor of the NDP. Indeed, a constitutional charter of rights was a continuing demand of the CCF and the NDP in the decades leading up to the adoption of the charter.

As one who was in parliament 20 years ago and who was privy to much of the dialogue between the NDP and the Liberals at that time as the charter proceeded from draft to reality, I give credit to my leader at that time, Ed Broadbent, and to the NDP caucus of that parliament.

The political fact of the matter, as you may recall, Mr. Speaker, was that Prime Minister Trudeau wanted our support and was prepared to make changes in his proposals to get that support and keep it. As I remember it, the NDP among other things wanted changes to the charter including stronger language with respect to equality of women and recognition of aboriginal rights.

In any event, the charter is with us and the supreme court has delivered an interesting variety of judgments on it. Canadians it seems are attached to the charter.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### THE CONSTITUTION

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while the federal government is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, for most Quebecers, April 17 is the sad anniversary of the unilateral patriation of the Canadian constitution.

This patriation struck a blow to Quebec, weakening its rights and sapping the powers of its government and its National Assembly, and propelling it into a constitutional system to which it never agreed, nor will it ever agree.

The federal government knows all this and that is why it is omitting any mention of the unilateral patriation of the Constitution without Quebec's consent during the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the charter. This is a black mark on the history of Canada.

From two founding peoples, Canada became one Canadian nation, based on the principle of equality of the provinces, yet Quebec has never been a province like the others, but a nation with its own unique cultural, economic, and political heritage.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### THE PRIME MINISTER

**Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last night the Prime Minister was awarded the 2002 Statesman of the Year Award by the prestigious East-West Institute.

### Oral Questions

•(1415)

[Translation]

From time to time, we realize that the international community holds Canada and Canadian values in great respect. The Prime Minister provided us with a fine example.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said “By honouring me tonight you are really honouring Canada. [I have used] my office to put forward on the international stage values that are profoundly held by all Canadians: tolerance, democracy, internationalism, peace-building, respect for human rights and the rule of law”.

[English]

All Canadians can feel justifiably proud about the progressive role that we play internationally. I congratulate the Prime Minister for projecting our unique voice and values on the world stage.

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#### SOFTWOOD LUMBER

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian lumber industry has been given a window of opportunity to take action against a 29% countervail duty and anti-dumping charges by the United States on Canadian softwood lumber exports.

For many months we have called on the Minister for International Trade to establish a national bargaining position but he has resisted this strategy from the very beginning. Now that Canada has been given this window of opportunity it is amazing that it is not the Canadian government but the British Columbia government that is calling for a national strategy meeting on softwood lumber stakeholders.

It is time the Canadian government showed leadership. It is time for the minister to bring the stakeholders together, listen to them and finally develop and follow a national strategy on softwood lumber.

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#### INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Colleen Beaumier (Brampton West—Mississauga, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise and draw the attention of the House to an essential initiative supported by Canada.

With support from the DFAIT human security program, Alternatives, a Montreal based NGO, hosted a series of public, civil society and government consultations from April 6 to 9 in Montreal and Ottawa. The discussions engaged over 700 civil society and government representatives as well as interested members of the public on the difficult topic of the role played by energy politics in the conflict in Afghanistan.

Alternatives has been supporting peace building efforts in south Asia for over a decade by working with various civil society organizations in the region. This necessary dialogue has helped promote a better understanding of the social and political conditions in south and central Asia through a discussion of the risks and outcomes of the conflict in Afghanistan, particularly the issue of oil and economic development. The participants welcomed new perspectives on how to deal with this many sided crisis, with the

aim of assisting the people of Afghanistan in the complex task of reconstruction and peace building.

Issues critical to conflict and peace building in central Asia, such as the role energy politics play in conflict and how to preserve the independence and economic viability of the central Asian republics without triggering economic and political upheaval, are crucial to human security. By continuing to work together we can build lasting peace and stability in a volatile region.

I congratulate Alternatives on this successful conference.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, this morning U.S. secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, announced that the United States is forming a northern command for the U.S. military. The command will have responsibility for the defence of the United States, Alaska, the Caribbean and Canada.

What consultations did Canada have with the United States prior to this announcement?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been ongoing discussions since last fall. Initially we wanted to ensure the preservation of our bi-national command, Norad. That has been preserved in terms of this announcement.

In addition to that, we have engaged in discussions with our counterparts in United States with respect to how we can further co-operate in practical ways dealing with terrorist threats. These are all things that are in the exploration stage.

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I want the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister of National Defence to be very clear to the House. This is crucially important to Canadian sovereignty.

What input did the Government of Canada have into the decision announced today by Secretary Rumsfeld in the United States? What part did we take in that decision? Did we know about it? Are we part of this whole North American security?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, not all the details have been worked out on this plan. Essentially, it is a change with respect to the United States military command structure. We wanted to make sure that we had input into that matter inasmuch as there are common issues of concern in the defence of our respective countries. We wanted to make sure that Norad's high level as a bi-national command was maintained. It has been maintained with this announcement today.

We will continue to explore ways that we can co-operate together in terms of our mutual interests in defence of the people of our country as they work in defence of the people of their country.

*Oral Questions*

•(1420)

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it sounds like the Minister of National Defence read that in the *New York Times*.

Let me quote from a story in the Toronto *Star* dated January 12, 1991 about the gulf war and Canada's involvement. It quoted the then Liberal leader of the opposition as saying:

Mulroney has committed our troops there because he likes to be friends with George Bush...I don't want to be friends with George Bush.

Will the Prime Minister assure us that he is friendly with this George Bush Jr. and that Canada will work with the United States to make sure that North America has one command working together, not separate from the United States?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are two sovereign countries. We will continue to act in ways that are in our mutual interests.

The command of Canadian forces will be under the command of the government, under the command of the chain of command, but we will work together in a co-ordinated fashion for what is in our mutual interests for the safety and security of our citizens in Canada, their citizens in the United States and in our shared continent.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Canada has been left out of this unprecedented military command structure that affects our country as well as the entire continent. I want to ask the minister this. Was Canada ever invited to participate in the northern command and, if not, why not?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the northern command is a United States military command. The same person will be double hatted as the commander of Norad. That is the same as it is now except that person has another command, the space command, under his or her control. This is a very similar kind of situation. Norad will continue to be a bi-national command reporting to both countries.

When I saw Mr. Rumsfeld last fall I indicated to him that we should continue to have that arrangement. That arrangement in fact is in the plan today that has been unveiled.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if the government had cleaned up its act and made a serious investment in our military we would have been offered a role in the northern command instead of having the U.S. in our backyard doing it for us.

We have heard continuous warnings from the U.S. ambassador, the NATO secretary general and countless Canadians that our military is in crisis.

I ask the minister this. Does not the real threat to Canadian sovereignty come from the erosion of our military because of what the government has not provided them?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only crisis around here is in the Alliance Party. It is certainly not the case with this government or its forces.

We have sent a team of people to work and to talk with them about ways we can best co-ordinate our efforts in terms of defence of our

respective countries. We can do that while maintaining all of the sovereignty that is important to be maintained by Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE CONSTITUTION**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for most Quebecers, April 17 is the sad anniversary of the unilateral patriation of the constitution, a constitution which was imposed on Quebec and which all Quebec governments have refused to sign. And this will continue to be the case, because no Quebec government will ever deny the existence of the Quebec nation.

Given this state of affairs, will the Prime Minister admit that he is the head of a country in which almost one-quarter of the population will not allow their government, the government of Quebec, to sign the Canadian constitution?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian constitution is a Canadian law which used to be a British law.

I am very proud that we are no longer legally a colony of Great Britain and that we are here, in Canada, in a country which has its own constitution, which was approved by the Parliament of Canada and which serves all Canadian citizens, myself as a citizen of Quebec included.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec is a nation and, in this connection, I would like to offer the opinion of a Quebec politician who proposed as a solution to Canada's ills that the constitution be drawn up anew, not among ten provinces, but between two nations. This proposal was made by the current Prime Minister during his first nomination meeting in 1963.

Since the Canadian constitution recognizes the existence of one nation only, the Canadian nation, will the Prime Minister admit that, since the unilateral patriation, he has deviated from the task he assigned himself in 1963?

•(1425)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when I ran for parliament, it was because I wanted us, francophones from Quebec, and the other francophones throughout Canada, to have a place in the Canadian government.

I left the province of Quebec at the age of 29 to work for and represent the people of the riding of Saint-Maurice, to make sure that all citizens in my riding were well represented in the Parliament of Canada. I think that they are not sorry I did so.

I am very proud of the fact that I am a francophone, that I come from the province of Quebec, and I am very proud to be a Canadian.

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister may well harbour illusions, shut his eyes and claim that the 1982 unilateral patriation does not pose any problem.

How does he explain the fact then that no political party in Quebec signed the 1982 Constitution and that even the very federalist Quebec Liberal Party maintained this morning again that it would not sign it?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois may well be living in the past, but Quebecers are looking to the future.

And for the future, Quebecers realize how the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which we owe to the current Prime Minister and to former Prime Minister Trudeau, is an achievement of which they, along with all Canadians, can be proud. The charter will protect their rights in the future, as it has for the past 20 years. This is what Quebecers are celebrating today.

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the future indeed.

Do the Prime Minister and the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs realize that if all Quebec premiers since 1982 have refused and continue to refuse to sign the constitution, it is because in time we are realizing that the building of Canada is increasingly, and at an ever faster rate, being achieved at the expense of Quebec's specificity? This is what the future holds.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Bloc Québécois to find a single supreme court judgment that goes against Quebecers' interests.

Over the past 20 years, Quebecers have made progress within the context of a federation with other Canadians, because their rights were strengthened. And they are proud of that.

This is undoubtedly one of the reasons why more of them vote for the Liberal Party of Canada than for the Bloc Québécois.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona.

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[English]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I can say that I was here 20 years ago and I remember 74 out of 75 Quebec MPs voting for the charter. It did not look to me like there was no support in Quebec for the charter of rights and freedoms.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Hon. members can relax. I was not even going to ask a question about that. Quiet.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I can say that I agree with the hon. member in this case. We must be able to hear the hon. member's question.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister and it has to do with the announcement by the United States of the setting up of the northern command. It seems to me that obviously there are a number of concerns here which even the government may have about the implications of this northern command.

I wonder whether the Prime Minister would commit in a timely fashion, as the Minister of Health likes to say, that he or the Minister

of Foreign Affairs will come before the House and make a full statement as to the Canadian government's position on the northern command.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say very categorically that the decision the American administration made about its own defence is its own business. The defence of Canada will be assured by the Canadian government and not by the American government.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, nothing the Americans do, being so large and being our neighbour, is just their business. Obviously it has implications for us.

Will the Prime Minister commit, for example, to parliamentary hearings as to what the Canadian response should be to the northern command and how we can act appropriately in the circumstances?

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right. We have a lot of communal interests with them. They are our neighbours and we have to work with them. It is why we are part of Norad where we have a joint command to address these problems. We have to do that but the sovereignty of Canada cannot be taken away by a decision made by the administration of the United States.

If the foreign affairs committee wants to look into the question, fine. We have committees for that and part of their mandate is to look at problems that might affect Canada. If the committee wants to look into that I have no objection.

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**GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES**

**Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the finance minister.

A report to the chief of defence staff concerning the Challengers recommended "that remedial action such as fleet modernization or replacement is not warranted".

Why did the finance minister, as the Liberal's pasha of prudence, not pull the \$100 million flying carpets out from under the sultan of Shawinigan? Why did the Prime Minister's old challenger not just say no to the Prime Minister's new Challengers?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as has been said many times before, these are more efficient aircraft. They can go longer distances. They can go on shorter runways. They are more fuel efficient. They are not luxurious. They have the same appointments as the current Challengers.

We are replacing two older Challengers with two newer Challengers to ensure that the government has the ability to travel as expeditiously as possible to deal with the government's business.

**Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC):** Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago the Prime Minister said that he would rip up the EH-101 contract and write zero helicopters. He did, and today the Canadian armed forces are flying in old, decrepit helicopters while the old, decrepit cabinet wants to be flying in new jets.



*Oral Questions*

Will the finance minister tell the Prime Minister to rip up the Challenger contract and write zero new flying Taj Mahals for cabinet?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the EH-101, which that party put in place, was a bad deal for Canada. What we are doing right now will save over \$1 billion and we will get a helicopter that is more suitable for today's needs.

Meanwhile, we have in fact invested some \$50 million into the current Sea Kings. They are performing extremely well in the Arabian Gulf in support of the campaign against terrorism.

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have squandered \$101 million for luxury jets. They claim that \$8.2 million of that is earmarked for pilot certification. The actual cost of pilot certification is \$570,000.

Why did the Liberals fudge the figures for pilot training on these luxury Gucci jets?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to table a detailed list of what makes up the training and miscellaneous accounts. It is approximately \$1 million for training. There are some 16 pilots involved. There are various other details involved in the program as well.

However, as I said, at the end of the day we will get a product that is more efficient and more effective in helping the government do its job.

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, our 16 pilots are top gun military pilots and they have experience on planes that are very similar. Bombardier let me know that to certify a pilot costs \$47,800. We get four certified for nothing in the purchase. That does not add up to \$8.2 million.

Where are they hiding the rest of that money?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no hiding. I am happy to table this. The \$8.2 million makes up more than training. There are other costs such as ground support equipment and satellite communication systems that go in each aircraft which are equivalent to what already exists in current aircraft. They are all part of the \$8.2 million. I am happy to table the figures so the hon. member can study them and find out that we are being quite efficient in how taxpayer money will spent.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### THE CONSTITUTION

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the building of Canada, dating back to the unilateral patriation of the constitution in 1982, is in total contradiction to the very vision of Quebec.

Will the Prime Minister admit that the millennium scholarships, the social union and the young offenders legislation are all initiatives that run contrary to the consensus in Quebec and clearly illustrate that Canada is building itself without any respect for the vision of Quebec?

• (1435)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will answer this question because Quebecers are very pleased to receive the benefits of these programs.

At this time, I am very surprised that the Bloc Québécois would want to reopen the constitutional issue. Quebecers are so happy that this government has decided to say no more about the constitution and to address instead the real problems affecting the people.

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in order to assuage his conscience and remedy his 1982 error as far as Quebec is concerned, the Prime Minister had a resolution, the distinct society resolution, passed here in this House.

How can the Prime Minister explain today that he has never made use of that resolution in order to have Quebec's point of view respected, particularly in connection with millennium scholarships, young offenders and the social union?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal Party and the government introduced the distinct society resolution in the House of Commons, the Bloc Québécois voted against it en masse. Now they have the gall to stand up in this House and fault us for not using something they themselves were against. What a disgrace.

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[English]

### AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the auditor general blew the whistle yesterday that there are so many foundations out there and more money in secret bank accounts than what the government even knows is there. It sounds like slush funds gone mad to me.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Could he tell us how many foundations there actually are? How much is sitting in secret bank accounts waiting for the Liberals to buy votes at the next election?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the number of foundations is a matter of public record. There are no secret bank accounts. All the foundations provide annual public reports that are available. Every time one of the foundations makes a grant, it is a matter of public record. The fact is the whole operation of foundations is done in a very open and very transparent way.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I only wish that were true but the auditor general says it is not. There is over \$7 billion sitting in bank accounts and we do not know what the government intends to do with it. That is \$5,000 per Canadian family that has been socked away out of sight of the auditor general, out of sight of parliament and out of sight of everybody but the Liberal Party.

My question for the Minister of Finance is this. Will he make a commitment today to get that money back on behalf of taxpayers, pay down the debt and use it for something other than buying Liberal votes?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, not only does each of these foundations provide an annual report, but if parliamentary committees desire to have representatives of these foundations appear in front of them, they can.

I will give the member one example. The Canadian Foundation for Innovation was set up five years ago in 1997. Representatives of that foundation have appeared 11 times before diverse parliamentary committees of the House and are prepared to do so in the future.

If the hon. member is saying that investing in the future of Canada, investing in research and development, investing in the future of our children and investing in our universities is not worthwhile, that certainly says where they stand on Canada's future.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**YOUNG OFFENDERS**

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in 1982, the Prime Minister and his colleagues set the tone for the future by giving themselves the right to change fundamental things without Quebec's consent. The same thing happened again 20 years later regarding young offenders, when the federal government imposed its repressive approach on Quebec, ignoring the Quebec consensus.

Will the Prime Minister admit that the approach that prevailed in 1982 with the unilateral patriation of the constitution is the same one that forced Quebec to abandon a rehabilitation approach that had proven successful with young offenders?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate to see that, once again, the Bloc Québécois is continuing its misinformation campaign in Quebec.

Bill C-7 on young offenders meets the aspirations of Quebec and reflects the techniques and approach developed in Quebec.

As for the constitution, it includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which has been widely used across the country and in a flexible manner. The charter has proven very useful to Quebec regarding many issues, including language and signs.

• (1440)

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if the minister had come to Quebec before the bill was passed, he would have seen that the Canadian approach with young offenders does not reflect the reality in our province. Worse still, it denies this reality by not allowing Quebec to do things differently.

While Quebec recognizes—and accepts—the different Canadian approach with young offenders, Canada just cannot live with such diversity and imposes its centralizing views on Quebecers.

Is this the legacy of 1982?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the problem with the Bloc Québécois, ever since it first came here, is that it refuses to work here

**Some hon. members:** You sold out!

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Mr. Speaker, people are saying I sold out. The Bloc Québécois refuses to work here in a constructive and positive fashion. Look at the impact of the charter—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is impossible to hear the hon. minister, and we have to be able to hear him. The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Mr. Speaker, they talk about democracy on the other side, but they are saying I sold out. I find it unfortunate that, in a democratic country, I am described as having sold out when I try to exercise my freedom of expression and my right to speak. These are fellow Quebecers. This is a disgrace.

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is impossible to hear what is being said today. The hon. member for Calgary West.

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[English]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, since the government was first elected our military has lost twice as many troops as it has brought in. National defence has lost 31,500 troops and only gained 14,700. That is a scary number. That is a lot of engineers, a lot of pilots and a lot of doctors. The problem will only get worse.

My question is for the Minister of National Defence. Why has the government lost twice as many troops as it has brought in?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had a hard time hearing all the question. We have had a very solid recruitment program in the last year. We have reached about 50% higher numbers than the year before, successfully recruiting some 10,000 people.

We are working on certain occupation groups, such as engineers, to attract more of them into the system; more flexible terms of reference and various other means of attracting people that we need, as well as retention. Our retention is working quite well because our attrition rate has substantially lowered some 20% in the last year.

We are on our way to resolving the problem.

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, actually the truth speaks something else. The auditor general has reported that these problems go all the way back to 1990. What has happened? More Liberal cuts and Liberal mismanagement.

The truth is in the numbers, and the auditor general reported that even the recruiting centres were short of recruiters, which is probably why they missed their goal of 4,800 new soldiers by almost 25%. These shortages are a direct result of the government cuts in the mid-nineties and it will take 30 years to recover.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

Why has the minister not given the department the resources it needs to do the job?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has given the resources to the Canadian forces on recruitment. The auditor general went in last fall to do the audit before the recruitment year. Since then we have recruited a considerable number of people and have bettered the target in many different occupations. We still have more to do in terms of engineers, doctors and various other trades. We are working on those areas.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The people of Somalia are most anxious for peace and stability in the Horn of Africa. What is our government doing to support the peace process in Somalia and how can the large Somali diaspora in Canada contribute to this dialogue?

●(1445)

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are obviously tremendous problems in Somalia but we can take some comfort in the fact that there have been positive results in Eritrea and Ethiopia next door. We would like to replicate that. We are working with the Somalis on this.

We have been providing substantial humanitarian aid to enable a better environment to deal with the drought and to deal with the humanitarian crisis and we urge our Somalian-Canadian citizens of whom many are represented here in the House to do their work, the diaspora, and to tell their colleagues in Somalia to work for a peaceful solution to this.

We can do this if we work together, and I thank the member because I know that he has many constituents who want to be helpful in this area of the world.

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**AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT**

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Back to the Minister of Finance and the auditor general's report, Mr. Speaker. The government has transferred some \$7.1 billion to foundations with no parliamentary scrutiny, no accountability and they bypass parliament. In other words, it is a benevolent dictatorship that has gone too far.

Would the Minister of Finance agree to allow the auditor general to audit each of these individual foundations and would he make it mandatory that the foundations be subject to parliamentary scrutiny?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said in response to an earlier question, if any parliamentary committee wants to ask the heads or the representatives of one of these foundations to appear in front of it, it can do so. Every one of those foundations produces an annual report. Then I said that the Canadian Foundation for Innovation in the last five years alone had appeared 11 times in front of various parliamentary committees.

The answer to the hon. member's question is; it is happening. He should go to committee occasionally.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, another glaring example of Health Canada's failure to protect Canadians has come to light. For years Health Canada has failed to warn Canadians of dangerous levels of lead in certain imported raisins or to stop product sales. It chose, consciously chose, not to warn Canadian parents that they could be feeding their children a devastating neuro-toxin instead of a nourishing substitute for candy.

When will the Health Minister stop defending the indefensible with calls of fearmongering and get to work cleaning up a department that is itself feared by many Canadians?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yet again the hon. member does not have the facts right. A risk assessment was undertaken by the Department of Health in relation to raisins beginning in 1992. The conclusion of that risk assessment was that there was no unreasonable risk to health. That is why no consumer alert was issued.

Let me reassure the hon. member, as of 1995, a very strict level for lead in raisins has been established and there have been no raisins imported into this country since November 1995 that exceeded that established level.

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**FISHERIES AND OCEANS**

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has only one surveillance vessel to cover the nose and tail of the Grand Banks and the Flemish Cap. No wonder so many abuses are taking place.

In light of the fact that \$100 million is being wasted on Challengers we do not need, has the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans requested some of that money for new surveillance vessels that are really needed?

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member makes light of what I think is a very serious matter. Surveillance of our 200 mile limit is very important to the government. We do not do it with ministerial aircraft. We do it with the military Aurora. We do it with contracted aircraft with other companies. We do it with our surveillance vessel as well as with observers on all the vessels. That is what we do within NAFO. We work on a diplomatic international solution to an international problem.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister as well as I know all of this has been a complete and total flop. When the Minister for International Trade dropped the ball on the softwood lumber file, the Prime Minister stepped in.

### Oral Questions

Will the Prime Minister now step into this very important issue and exert his power to convince international countries to live by the rules or else declare custodial management over the total continental shelf?

• (1450)

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not a flop. It had been at one time. When we took over government in the early nineties it was not governed at all, not regulated. In 1995 we took serious action.

We would have thought it would have been resolved because the member, who has been a member from Atlantic Canada and whose party leader was Minister of Foreign Affairs, had ample chances to solve all the international problems on the nose and the tail and he failed to do so. Now we are taking charge.

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### HEALTH

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, mismanagement continues to flourish at Health Canada. Yesterday the auditor general found that contracting rules were ignored for \$25 million spent on a new website. Expensive high tech equipment now sits unused in a warehouse. The money would have been much better spent on MRIs or frontline nurses.

What is the minister doing to discipline those responsible for this debacle?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed, the auditor general identified contracting problems around the Canada Health Network. Let me reassure the hon. member that, working with the auditor general, those problems have been dealt with. We are now managing the CHN in-house. Much of the equipment that was identified is now being used.

Let me reassure the hon. member that this website receives five million hits a month, which speaks to the desire on the part of Canadians to have access to credible information about their health.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, management problems at Health Canada are nothing new. There is the Virginia Fontaine. There is the purchase of CIPRO. There is drug safety. Today we learn that Health Canada has failed to take action on raisins covered in lead, putting the lives of children at risk.

Could the minister assure Canadians that Health Canada is not the danger to their health?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** In fact, Mr. Speaker, as I have encouraged other members in the House, I think it is irresponsible to irrationally raise the fears of Canadians in relation to their safety and health.

Let me reassure the hon. member, as it relates to raisins, we took action. As it relates to the Canadian Health Network, we took action.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### TAXATION

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, by unilaterally imposing its constitution after the 1982 power

grab, the federal government gave itself the first political tool needed to impose its will on Quebec.

Is the government not in the process of giving itself a second tool, fiscal imbalance, which it needed to impose, yet again, its economic and social vision on Quebec?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well that according to the conference board projections used by the Séguin commission, there is no fiscal imbalance. The projections demonstrate quite clearly that there will not be an exorbitant surplus in the next five years. If we look at the basic assumptions for the next 15 years, they still support the position of the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since 1982, the Canadian federalist approach has not changed. Political decisions are made in Ottawa and the provinces merely carry them out like slaves.

Will the Prime Minister admit that by maintaining this fiscal imbalance, the federal government has giving itself the economic power that it lacked, and that with this power, it will be able to limit as it pleases Quebec's ability to act?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, spending on Government of Canada programs is around 12% of the GDP. This is the lowest level since 1948. Canada is one of the most decentralized federations in the world, and it is even more decentralized than in 1982.

Quebecers will remember, particularly today, when we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the charter, the shameful behaviour of the Bloc Québécois in parliament. The way the member insulted the Minister of Justice is not worthy of Quebecers.

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[English]

### HEALTH

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the auditor general reported that Health Canada accepted a \$300,000 bid to supply telecommunications training. The contract, which was signed on March 31, 1998, stipulated that the training must be completed the very same day. Despite the fact that Health Canada could never explain how this training could be accomplished in one day, public works paid the bill.

How can the minister of public works justify this outrageous abuse of taxpayers' money?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there has been no so-called outrageous abuse of taxpayers' money.

The department of public works followed very closely the rules in this regard both in relation to contracting and the processing of the payments and the final payments made in regard to these invoices.

*Oral Questions*

●(1455)

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the auditor general sees it a little differently. She says this Health Canada program “does not address the requirement to properly control and manage government assets”.

Again I ask the minister of public works, does he have any proof that this March madness training was ever delivered?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is not going to try here to make allegations that are incorrect. In regard to the contract in question, policies have been followed very closely. My department has followed the approved policy using the advanced contract award notices. In fact, in addition, and perhaps this is the most important, there has been no overpayment in this regard.

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, given that United States senator Frank Murkowski has just added an amendment to the energy bill that would allow drilling in ANWAR, given that the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada have fought against this for years, given that the Ministers of the Environment and Foreign Affairs have fought to protect the Gwich'in people of northern Canada, and given that the Porcupine caribou herd is threatened, could the Minister of the Environment guarantee to us that Canada will keep up this fight until the vote in the U.S. senate tomorrow?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Certainly, Mr. Speaker, and I should add that the Government of Canada expects that tomorrow we will have a clear rejection by the United States senate of the proposal to drill on the 1002 lands of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The protection of the Porcupine River caribou herd is critical to the culture of the Gwich'in people and drilling in the calving grounds of this herd would pose risks to that herd and would be a serious mistake. I should add that this position had been made to the government of the United States and to individual legislatures of the United States by members of the government, the member for Yukon and many others at every possible occasion.

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**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in her third interim report, Ms. Debra Ward, the government's adviser on airline restructuring, said:

Much has been said recently about the “hidden” costs of flying—user fees that are piled on passengers. The most recent, the security fee, is being seen by some as the last straw and could negatively affect people's decisions to fly. To stimulate travel, government could consider reducing or eliminating some of the fees and taxes it is currently imposing on the airline sector.

Given that the government's own independent adviser is calling for a tax cut on flying, will the minister please listen for once?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I never cease to be amazed at the Alliance. These are the

people who believe in a balanced budget. Guess who delivered a balanced budget? It was this government.

The fact is, the user charges in the airline industry have been accepted by all parties in the House. The system has worked extremely well in covering all of the various expenditures. I believe the travelling public supports the government's policy.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to save the minister more time. He could write our campaign commercials for us.

Air Alma has just died, CanJet is trying to fly again, Tango is struggling, WestJet is trying to expand and regionals are struggling to survive under the might of the taxes of the government.

Given that he knows this tax is going to bring in a huge surplus, why will the transport minister not move up the date when he is going to cut the tax to before the summer? If air carriers do not make a profit in the summer they do not make it at all. Will he move up the tax cut, cut the tax right now, so that the air carriers can fly? Will he do it?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I always point out that the hon. member does not do his homework. I know he has been otherwise engaged in the last few weeks, but perhaps he missed it yesterday that I.M.P. has announced that CanJet will resume flying this summer. Perhaps he has missed the fact that Skyservice has hooked up with the largest charter operation in the country.

What he obviously does not understand is that the policy of the government, which was working before September 11 and was adversely affected by the events of September 11, is now working once again. Why will he not recognize that?

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●(1500)

[*Translation*]**THE CONSTITUTION**

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the message sent back in 1982 was that from now on the federal government can act without Quebec's consent. For example, with the parental leave, instead of giving back to Quebec the taxes collected from its people, the federal government continues to want to impose a single vision, namely its own.

Can the Prime Minister deny that the attitude which prevailed toward Quebec in 1982 when the constitution was unilaterally patriated continues to prevail today as far as finances are concerned, and that this approach consists in keeping the money in Ottawa while imposing Ottawa's views on Quebec?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is getting all in an uproar over nothing. As far as parental leave is concerned, the province of Quebec can very easily add its program to ours. In a decentralized federation, that is how things are done.

*Routine Proceedings*

Since they insist on bringing up the past, however, must I remind them that, in March 1982, 48% of Quebecers disapproved of the Lévesque government's attitude to the constitutional agreement, and only 32% approved. As well, 49% of them considered the Constitution Act a good thing and only 16% thought the contrary. The Quebecers of 1982 were right.

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[English]

**TRADE**

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister for International Trade will be leading a trade mission to India from April 22 to April 26. Economic growth in India during the past decade has been robust, making the world's largest democracy an ideal market for Canadian exports.

Given the large number of constituents in my riding of Etobicoke North who are keenly interested in this project, would the parliamentary secretary give us an update on the status of this trade mission?

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, India has the twelfth largest economy in the world. It has had a 30% growth in its GDP over the past five years, so obviously it is a very important market for Canada.

A hundred companies are part of this trip, with some 130 delegates, which makes it the largest ministerial trade trip ever. We will be highlighting such Canadian sectors as agri-food, building products and services, education, environment, financial services and IT, to mention some of them.

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**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of a famous Canadian hockey player, Mr. Paul Henderson.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to section 552 of the Canada Elections Act, I have the honour to lay upon the table the political party financial transactions return form prepared by the chief electoral officer.

[Translation]

This document is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

**ORDER IN COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, in both official languages, a number of order in council appointments made recently by the government.

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**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 17 petitions.

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**CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to mark, with all hon. members, the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

A few hours ago I had the pleasure of attending a special anniversary celebration of the charter, which featured a group of students who were not even born when the charter was proclaimed on April 17, 1982, who have never known a Canada without a charter, who have no memory of the great drama and debate that surrounded its creation. For someone who was very much involved, as I was, that is very hard to believe.

As I reflected on this, I was reminded of some words of the Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau. In a speech in 1968 he said that law making is a way "to improve the lot of flesh and blood human beings".

● (1505)

[Translation]

For someone who has been celebrated more for his intellect and sophistication than for his common touch, these words showed a very down-to-earth understanding of his role as a legislator. And ours. Everything that we do in this place is about people.

And in the almost 40 years that it has been my privilege to be a member of parliament, I can think of no act or legislation that has better served the interests of the Canadian people than the charter.

The charter is, first and foremost, a profoundly empowering document. It places the fundamental rights of all Canadians above governments. And it gives them the tools to protect their rights against the arbitrary acts of those governments.

The charter is also a profoundly Canadian document. It acknowledges that the freedom and equality of all citizens is the brick and mortar of our society. But it also affords protection to unique aspects of our national identity and story: English and French minority language communities; aboriginal peoples; multicultural communities; and the principle of sharing prosperity and opportunity.

Since being entrenched 20 years ago today, the charter has also become a Canadian trademark in the world. In countries who are moving toward principles of good governance, our experience in formulating the charter has given us much sought after expertise.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

The benchmark of the charter as a document for the people is the way that the people of Canada have embraced and made use of it. Without their collective will to take ownership of the charter, to make it their own, it would surely have faded into obscurity.

I am indeed fortunate to have had a role in achieving this landmark in Canadian history. We had, as the member from Winnipeg mentioned earlier in the House, a fabulous debate in the House that lasted for months and months. It was approved by a very big majority of members of parliament including, and he was right, 74 out of 75 members elected by Quebecers to this parliament.

The charter has worked because it is about people. As we celebrate its 20 years and look to the future let us continue, in the words of Pierre Trudeau, “—to put our faith, first and foremost, in the people of Canada who will breathe life into it”.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Many Canadians can trace their origins to groups of refugees and immigrants who came to this country over the past hundreds of years. Many came to escape religious and political persecution by oppressive authorities, including my own family who came to Canada to escape the injustices of the brutal Soviet regime of the 1920s. These experiences are not easily forgotten by the collective memory of their descendants.

However, even in Canada the descendants of these immigrants and refugees learned through bitter experience that such matters as education and religion were not always guaranteed. Indeed aboriginal Canadians as well know that the government has sometimes hindered their development as equal partners in Canadian society.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has proven to be a powerful check on the power of government to unreasonably intrude on our rights and freedoms. Canadians today give their overwhelming support to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. What Canadians from all regions say they like most of all about the charter are the aspects that promote unity, such as the protection of minority rights and the promotion of equality rights.

However, the charter is not a cure all for all the injustices of our society. Canadians have often disagreed with some of the changes the charter has affected in our society as a result of certain court decisions. These include, for example, the case of John Robin Sharpe and the court's conclusion that freedom of expression and artistic merit include the production of material glorifying the violent sexual exploitation of children by adults.

Indeed the charter is not a perfect document. Certain fundamental rights such as property rights are not entrenched in the charter. As a result, under such legislation as the species at risk act the federal government would be able to legally expropriate land and resources from Canadians without full, just and timely compensation.

Since the advent of the charter there is a growing reluctance on the part of politicians to advance legitimate political initiatives or substitute their political opinions for those of the courts.

While the charter of rights does allow parliament to temporarily overrule the decisions of the courts by the use of the notwithstanding clause, the hesitation of politicians to use this clause arises out of a concern that to do so would be seen as a failure to respect the constitution. As a result, politicians are simply accepting judgments that prefer the narrow interest of individuals even where these decisions are contrary to the interest of society as a whole. As parliamentarians we must continue to be watchful that the charter does not become a device that limits the effectiveness of democratic institutions including parliament.

As a nation we need to be mindful of the concern that in protecting our individual rights and freedoms we do not destroy our responsibility to nurture and protect broader societal values. Our ability to live together in a civilized society demands our continued vigilance.

• (1510)

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for most Quebecers, April 17 is the sad anniversary of the unilateral patriation of the Canadian constitution.

This patriation is the result of Canada's will to build itself based on its own values and its own priorities; Quebecers recognize the right of all nations to build themselves as they wish, while respecting neighbouring nations. This approach is the basis for harmonious and constructive relations between nations.

Unfortunately, since 1982, Canada has been carrying out its nation building while disregarding the hopes of the Quebec nation.

Since 1982, no Quebec government, regardless of political stripe, has agreed to sign this constitution that was imposed on Quebec. This situation will not change. Quebec will not sign the 1982 constitution; no Quebec government will ever deny the existence of the Quebec nation.

Like Canadians, Quebecers want to build their nation as they wish. On numerous occasions, they have tried to do this within the Canadian federation, but without success.

In fact, far from benefiting from it, Quebec has had to cope with policies designed to create a strong central government. Quebec stands nothing to gain from this, because it is not a province like the others, it is a nation that wants its own tools for development, like any other nation.

Quebec's historic refusal to sign the 1982 constitution reflects the bad feelings that the unilateral patriation of the constitution still stirs up today.

As a result of these bad feelings, the federal government has deliberately chosen to emphasize the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Of course the existence of a charter of rights is important in a democratic society. It is so important that Quebec passed a Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms back in 1975, well before Ottawa, seven years ahead of the federal government.

*Routine Proceedings*

But beyond the charter, the consequences of the unilateral patriation of the constitution are still being felt today, as Canada builds itself at an ever faster pace.

With a legal framework that makes it virtually impossible to make constitutional changes that would give more powers to Quebec, the Canadian nation has, in recent years, disregarded Quebec consensus on political and social issues on numerous occasions.

This legal framework is supported by a philosophy that determines the political direction taken by this government. This has created intense dissatisfaction among Quebecers.

Let us mention, for example, the issue of young offenders. While Canadians want a punitive approach, Quebecers prefer a preventive approach. With millennium scholarships, Canadians wish to favour the elite, while Quebecers are more interested in accessibility. As for parental leave, Quebec would like to offer such leave to all young parents, because it recognizes that the work reality has changed for young people.

Similarly, Quebec, which wants to manage its social programs based on its own needs, did not want a social union that advocates the establishment of Canada-wide standards.

Because it is going increasingly further in its desire to give itself the tools to implement its policies, the federal government now has much greater financial leverage to support its vision of Canada's development, this thanks to the fiscal imbalance.

All these Canadian nation building policies do not take into account Quebec's aspirations and they isolate it. This situation does not benefit anyone, because Quebec's isolation has constantly undermined both the Quebec and Canadian societies.

Twenty years after the unilateral patriation of the Canadian constitution, it has become obvious that Quebec's aspirations can no longer be fulfilled within Canada. Everyone can see that attempts to correct the situation, including the Meech Lake accord, have failed.

Finally, regardless of what the Prime Minister may say, history shows that the presence of a federalist or sovereignist government in Quebec City does not change anything about the fact that Quebecers are no longer considered as a founding nation by Canada. Rather, they are seen as belonging to a province like any other, a province that can be ignored, if necessary.

• (1515)

Today, the government proposes to mark the 20th anniversary of the charter of rights. I propose that we also mark the 20th anniversary of the unilateral patriation of the Canadian constitution.

We must do so, because Quebecers still remember April 17, 1982, as the time in history when Canadians chose to give themselves a country that resembles them. Canadians have the right to do so. I hope, and I am working to that end with my Bloc Quebecois colleagues, that some day Quebecers will be able to do the same.

• (1520)

[English]

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The charter, added to our constitution when

the British North America Act was patriated from Britain in 1982, is an essential tool for the protection of the individual against an unjust government and the protection of minorities against an unjust majority.

Throughout this period of reflection around the 20th anniversary of the charter, much will be said about former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and rightly so. But as Trudeau himself was not unwilling to acknowledge, one of his formative influences was Frank Scott, McGill University law professor, poet, social activist and one of the founding members of the CCF, the predecessor party to the NDP. Frank Scott fought throughout his academic and political career for the rights of individuals and minorities and was a strong advocate for a charter of rights.

Indeed a constitutional charter of rights was a continuing demand of the CCF and the NDP in the decades leading up to the adoption of the charter. A charter entrenched in the constitution was correctly seen to be a huge qualitative advance over the largely symbolic bill of rights adopted by parliament under Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, although credit is due to Mr. Diefenbaker for helping the idea along.

As one who was in parliament 20 years ago and who was privy to much of the dialogue between my party, the NDP, and the Liberal government of the day as the charter proceeded from draft to reality, I want to give credit to my leader at that time, Ed Broadbent, and to the NDP caucus of that parliament.

As you may recall, Mr. Speaker, and as the Prime Minister may recall, the political fact of the matter was that Prime Minister Trudeau wanted NDP support and was prepared to make changes in his constitutional proposals to get that support and to keep it. As I remember it, the NDP among other things wanted changes to the charter, including stronger language with respect to the equality of women and a recognition of aboriginal rights. Both of these were achieved, although the language on aboriginal rights was watered down during the final negotiations with the premiers.

Of course the charter itself was changed at the last moment with the adoption of the notwithstanding clause. Debate continues to this day about that clause, whether it is an unacceptable violation of the charter ideal or an appropriate parliamentary check on judicial power.

In any event, the charter is with us and the supreme court has delivered an interesting variety of judgments based on it. Canadians it seems are attached to the charter, even though they may not like some of the rulings based on it. They see it for what it was intended to be: a friend of the powerless, of minority rights, of equality, of the rule of law, of democracy, of mobility rights and of fundamental freedoms.

People who worry about the erosion of parliament's power by the courts would be better off protecting the democratic power of parliament from the undemocratic nature of various trade agreements. At least the supreme court is a Canadian institution interpreting Canadian law.



*Routine Proceedings*

The 20th anniversary of the charter is certainly worth celebrating and the NDP joins with others in doing so. We also look forward to the day when we will have something like a charter of social, economic and environmental responsibilities for the guidance of business, government and citizens, so that not only rights and freedoms might prevail, but also social justice and sustainability.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, let me begin by acknowledging the central role of the current Prime Minister in achieving the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is fair to say that no other minister, including the late Mr. Trudeau, played a more vigorous role.

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

It is appropriate that the Prime Minister, in turn, has acknowledged the impact of parliament on the charter—not just in the extensive hearings and debate, which he mentioned, but in forcing upon the government amendments respecting the equality of men and women, and aboriginal rights.

The manner in which the patriation and other constitutional changes, including the charter, were achieved, was profoundly divisive. Je me souviens.

The supreme court found that the government broke the constitutional conventions of the country. The imposition of those changes fuelled the sentiment of independence in Quebec. That, too, is part of the legacy of April 17.

[*English*]

The charter was a landmark in our law. For many Canadians it is part of the definition of our country.

It is important to remember that the principles of the charter run much deeper than the law passed in 1982. However imperfectly we have achieved the goal, Canada is a society that has always aimed to respect both the rights of individuals and the reality of our communities. They are unquestionably part of the promise and the aspiration that drew people here from around the world in search of freedom and respect.

The charter reflects that tradition, as did Mr. Diefenbaker's bill of rights before it. The test for us today is to step beyond celebrating anniversaries and ensure that respect for the defining values of Canadian democracy is reflected in our actions.

We should address the tension between the role of parliament in passing laws and the role of the courts in interpreting the charter. The most recent instance is the Sharpe decision in British Columbia.

[*Translation*]

One way to do that, as we have proposed, is to require parliament, before it passes legislation, to receive independent legal advice on the impact of the charter on that legislation.

Another reform would be to provide that, if a law is struck down by the courts, it should be referred immediately to a parliamentary committee that would recommend what action, if any, parliament should take.

[*English*]

The most significant change in a time when unquestionably the power of the courts is increasing would be to also increase the power of parliament to act independently of the government and to hold the government accountable here in this place.

The rights guaranteed by the charter itself could also be extended to protect the right to privacy and to protect the right to property. These are issues that fell by the wayside in 1982. Parliament should consider them unfinished business.

These would not be easy changes, but neither was it easy to introduce the charter or to amend and improve it 20 years ago. Governments can initiate as well as celebrate. The best way to commemorate the rights and freedoms of Canadians would be to extend them.

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Pursuant to its order of reference dated Monday, February 18, 2002, your committee has considered Bill S-22, an act to provide for the recognition of the Canadian horse as the national horse of Canada, and agreed on Wednesday, April 10, 2002 to report it without amendment.

• (1530)

**Mr. John Bryden:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is probably appropriate on this 20th anniversary of the charter of rights and freedoms to seek unanimous consent to make Bill C-391 votable, which the Speaker will remember would amend the oath of citizenship to reflect the principles of the charter.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just read what the new oath would say so that the members can—

**The Speaker:** I am sure we would all be enlightened and illumined but we had better put the question to the House first. Is there unanimous consent to make this bill votable?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

## PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 51st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of some committees. If the House gives its consent, I move that the report be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings*

(Motion agreed to)

## NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the House leaders and I believe if you were to seek it, you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That the Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs be authorized to travel to Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue on April 18, 2002 and Toronto on May 1 and 2, 2002 in relation to its study on long term care for veterans, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, along the same lines, there have been discussions among the parties and I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That in relation to its study on aquaculture, the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans be authorized to travel in one group to Vancouver and Port McNeill, B.C. from April 20 to 26, 2002 and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

## CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again if you would seek it, I think you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, in relation to its study on the Canadian broadcasting system, the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage be authorized to travel to Iqaluit, Whitehorse and Yellowknife from May 26 to 31, 2002 and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

## NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the third report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, presented to the House on Wednesday, November 7, 2001, be concurred in.

It is a great day to have this motion concurred in because it would seem that the Americans have announced a continental defence plan without the knowledge of the Canadian government. Canada was not mentioned at all in any of their releases and yet mention was made in one of their release about how they were dealing with the Russians now and one of their generals.

The Liberals say that they know a little about it and that they have been talking about it but it is quite obvious they do not know what the Americans are planning and they do not know what is going on.

The defence report being tabled today is the November 2001 report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. The report was produced by the committee in advance of the December federal budget with a view to influencing government policy in the budget. The majority report had the support of every Liberal member of the committee, every NDP member, every Tory member and every member of the Bloc Quebecois.

The Canadian Alliance issued a minority report in an effort to make the recommendations stronger. The reports states:

As we confront the war against terrorism, the Canadian Forces face a crisis in capability. Decades of neglect have created a situation in which resources are inadequate to meet commitments and defend the security of Canadians.

For nearly nine months, the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence has heard from witness after witness about glaring deficiencies in military capability. While the men and women of the Canadian Forces have been doing a fantastic job with scarce resources, they have had inadequate support from both Government and Parliament.

As the recent report of the Conference of Defence Associations stated: "All members of the Canadian Forces may at any time and at no notice, be placed in harm's way and as a result forfeit their lives or suffer incapacitating injury or illness... The unlimited liability of the soldier, sailor or airman must... be matched by an unlimited responsibility on the part of the government to ensure that members of the CF, if placed in harm's way, can achieve their mission at as low a risk possible. This demands the right tools in terms of modern equipment and high levels of training to carry out justifiable missions directed by the Canadian political authorities".

It is clear that over the past several decades we have badly let down our serving soldiers. It is good that the Majority Report generally acknowledges this failure. nevertheless, there are at least three aspects of the Report and its drafting with which we must take issue.

The first issue is the treatment of parliament:

The report was drafted in secret by a committee of officials working under the direction of the Chairman. The first opposition members learned of the report's existence was when a Committee meeting was called for November 5 to discuss a report none of them had even heard was being drafted. Committee members were not permitted to see the report until 7 pm on the evening of November 5. They were then given less than an hour to read the report and agree or disagree with specific clauses and recommendations. No consultations were permitted with respective caucuses and members of the committee were told that whether they supported the recommendations or not, the report would be immediately adopted and referred to the House of Commons finance committee. It was simply impossible for the official opposition to unreservedly endorse the majority report in the time that we were given.

This whole process of being given a few hours notice, being called in the evening to read the report and endorse it is so unparliamentary but not unusual of this government that has become extremely arrogant. Its arrogance is beyond anything I have witnessed in my 30 years in politics.

The defence policy of Canada exists to protect the security of all Canadians.

• (1535)

The greatest possible effort must be made to ensure that defence policy reflects the consensus of parties in the House of Commons. This must include adequate consultation between all political parties, as well as an opportunity for real discussion and debate. Only in this way can we ensure that consistent and credible policies will be adopted which reflect and real and long term national consensus.

*Routine Proceedings*

Using parliament simply to rubber stamp decisions that have already been made should not be acceptable in this time of crisis that we have had over the last few months.

We can certainly tell by the rubber stamping ideals of the government why the auditor general has issued two reports in a row that are extremely critical not only in areas of defence but in other areas of this government. Too many things are done without proper investigation.

I forget the exact amount but I think about \$174 million was invested in a satellite system that never came out of the box. For the average Canadian it is unbelievable to think about \$174 million. When one says it quickly it does not sound like much money but it is a tremendous amount of money. The minister had the nerve to stand in the House yesterday and say that the government brought in another system temporarily which worked out to be better so it never had to use the \$174 million system.

Imagine how the soldier in Afghanistan feels when he eventually reads a copy of *Hansard* or is lucky enough to be sitting next to a satellite dish in the evening watching question period and sees the minister who is in charge of our forces stand up and make an excuse like that when soldiers cannot even get a porta-potty delivered to their army base. It will be even worse when that soldier hears that the defence department bought the government new jets costing \$101 million when the military could not even get new helicopters. These new jets have nice toilets with gold faucets and soldiers cannot even get a porta-potty. This government is arrogant.

What we need is a clear and specific commitment to increased defence spending. It is not only my party that has been asking for that but the auditor general, someone every Canadian and every member respects as an officer of the House and who reports to parliament, said yesterday that it could take 30 years for the military to recover. That is just too long. It is too long for our children, our grandchildren and for the security of Canada.

This is why we are being ignored by our American friends to the south. It is shameful to me to see ministers stand up and talk about Canadian sovereignty and say that they will do their thing. They forget that 80% of the trade in this country is done with our American friends across the border. They should be our friends not just in trade but in defence and how we secure our borders in North America. However they are not calling on us because this government has chosen to ignore them. I am sure President Bush remembers the comments our Prime Minister made about his father when he was the leader of the opposition here in Canada, shameful comments about not wanting to deal with the Americans. Now we will have to live with those comments.

The majority report makes important references to the serious underfunding of the Canadian forces. This reflects what witnesses repeatedly told us about the steady erosion of capability due to consistently scarce resources. Even so, the majority report makes no specific recommendation with regard to increasing defence spending. Instead it alludes to the \$750 million to \$1.2 billion annual shortfall in the operations and maintenance budget described by several witnesses and an additional \$5 billion to \$6 billion deficit in the equipment budget noted by the auditor general, without actually recommending any specific increase in spending.

● (1540)

**The Speaker:** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. Leader of the Opposition but I have to break some news to the Chamber, which is that because of the ministerial statement government orders will be extended by 24 minutes. I thought he would want to know that.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, I could probably use that 24 minutes very well to inform the Canadian people of the weaknesses of the defence system in Canada. I hope some of the people who sit in your chair over the afternoon will be enlightened by some of the great work that has been done by the research people in my party and my staff.

Unless the necessary resources are provided, the Canadian military commitment to the war against terrorism will not be sustainable. It may not be any way beyond the next rotation since the shortfalls in both the O and M as well as the equipment budgets have been clearly spelled out. The need for a minimum and immediate \$2 billion increase in the budget based on the Department of National Defence should have been made clear.

It has been made clear by the auditor general who said that we need another \$2 billion in the military. It has been made clear by the official opposition in the House that we need another \$2 billion.

Indeed even this modest increase may now be inadequate since representatives of the Conference of Defence Associations have informed the committee that at least \$1 billion in additional money should be added to the defence budget based in each of the next five years. When we listened to the auditor general's report today, it talked about 30 years if we do not come up with the proper funding for our military.

The crisis confronting the Canadian forces is now so serious that we can no longer expect that half measures will suffice.

Let us address the issue of demilitarization. On May 8, 2001, one of Canada's foremost soldiers, General Lewis MacKenzie, told the standing committee:

—if I were an enemy force commander, I would much prefer to fight the Canadian army of today than the Canadian army of 10 years ago...I have no doubt that the individual soldiers are up to the task in spite of declining standards in physical fitness and discipline at the alter of individual rights and political correctness...If [the Gulf War] happened today we couldn't send a brigade. It doesn't exist...You can't just throw a few bits and pieces of new high-tech equipment together and say 'We're more operationally capable'. Fighting, as outlined in your own direction for this Committee, at the combat level requires more than just a day's worth of equipment. There has to be some sustainability

This is a scathing indictment of the consequences of political interference in the Canadian forces. General MacKenzie is well respected. He is a great Canadian. He does not make statements like this lightly and we should listen to him.

*Routine Proceedings*

The committee heard from numerous witnesses who addressed the steady erosion of training standards and the resulting collapse in the esprit de corps and morale in the Canadian forces. Some have referred to this as a demilitarization of the Canadian forces from within, yet apart from one big reference to political correctness, this issue is not seriously addressed in the majority report.

In the crisis that we now face, we simply cannot tolerate unjustified political interference in the military which is gradually lowering our combat effectiveness. Indeed, one of the principal reasons that we now have an inadequate ability to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging threats is that crass politics resulted in the disbanding of the airborne regiment in 1995.

The committee has responded by recommending substantial enhancements in the capability of JTF2. The political conditions that led to the loss of this capability are ignored in the majority report. If they are not addressed, politicalization of the armed forces will remain a problem and our forces may well be unable to rebuild their cohesion and effectiveness.

The conclusion of part of that majority report was that the present crisis demands a resolute and united response from parliament. The majority report represents a step in the right direction but if we are to effectively rebuild our national defence we must be prepared to go still further. This requires both open and honest discussion as well forthrightly addressing all relevant issues, no matter how politically painful they may be.

• (1545)

The Canadian Alliance will be seeking to do just that as we work toward a full operational readiness report early in the new year. We know that the Canadian people will demand no less. This is the substance of what we said in the minority report.

What was the government's response to our minority report and to the unanimous recommendation of every other opposition and government member in the majority report? The reaction was to ignore what it had been told by the parliamentarians on both sides of the House.

The December budget was totally inadequate to address the crisis of the Canadian forces. Again, I keep on repeating, we only have to look at the report of the auditor general of yesterday, and the one previous. They make these points as well, if not stronger than the opposition because at least she has the chance to review the books and look into the details which opposition does not.

The commander of the army, General Mike Jeffery, told the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs a few months later that the December budget fell short of the expectation of the Canadian forces.

How would anyone like to be the person in charge of those forces, fighting in so many locations and peacekeeping in other locations and our soldiers, the brave Canadian men and women working for us, having to listen to their boss being told by the political heads that no, there is no money for them, but that they have money for \$101 million for jets for cabinet ministers to fly around in? They can put a \$174 million satellite dish in a warehouse because the replacement they bought worked so well they did not need the other one. This goes on and on. I will mention a few more of these later as I go

along. It has to be pretty frustrating to be a soldier in this country with a government that so ignores the military.

The money provided is barely enough to keep the forces on life-support. The auditor general reported in December that the forces still faces an annual deficit of \$1.3 billion. There are further shortfalls in the equipment budget.

Canada is at war, yet the government is ignoring the needs of the Canadian forces. It prefers to rely on the Americans when it is convenient. As a result, Canada's international reputation continues to slip.

The government has no money to meet our military needs, but it has that \$101 million which it looted from the defence budget to pay for two new Challenger aircraft to fly the Prime Minister and cabinet ministers all around this country and on vacations. This project, approved in only 10 days, is an absolute disgrace.

The military itself said there was no need to replace the existing Challenger aircraft. That is not the opposition which takes that position. That is the military personnel, the people who fly these airplanes.

However it took 10 short days. In this place we cannot get things through in 10 years, positive things that need to happen in this parliament do not get through that quickly. However, when it comes to the comfort of the people who sit on the government side, things can happen very quickly. I remember a few short years ago, when they were in opposition, all the hues and cries about the Taj Mahals and the Guccis in the closet.

Our military men and women know that they have to fly around in Hercules transport planes that are more than 35 years old. They have to fly in Sea King helicopters that are nearly 40 years old, so old they require 40 hours of maintenance for every hour they spend in the air.

By the way, do members know how long the project office for the Sea King replacement has been open? It opened in 1981. Yet the Challenger decision was made in 10 days. That is an absolute disgrace.

**An hon. member:** Twenty years to ten days.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** One of my colleagues says 20 years and the military still has not got what it wants, but in 10 days the government got those jets. The management of defence policy is obviously a mess.

• (1550)

Where do we go from here? I want to outline what the Canadian Alliance wants to see included in the final operational readiness report that will be produced by the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs next month. I want to reference the submission made by our senior defence critic, the hon. member for Lakeland, to the defence committee. He made some great suggestions.

He has suggested that the following recommendations be made by the standing committee on national defence and they are.

*Routine Proceedings*

First, the committee should condemn the government for its mismanagement and neglect of Canada's national defence. Why? The December budget and the government's responses about the committee's interim report in November and last year's report on procurement are a slap in the face to every committee and Canadian forces member.

The committee must recommend a minimum increase to the defence budget of \$2.1 billion per year to address the critical shortfalls identified in the operations and equipment budgets and even more, to rebuild our military. Why is that necessary? It is necessary because the committee's majority report released earlier this year alluded to the \$750 million to \$1.2 billion annual shortfall in the operations and maintenance budget described by several witnesses but without actually recommending any specific increase in spending.

We must be clear in what we are recommending. Vague references to increases are not enough. The latest auditor general's report should be enough to let us know that. Promises are not good enough. We have to get behind our military.

Defence spending totalled \$9.7 billion, which is \$1.6 billion or 14% less than the \$11.3 billion in the 1993 budget. This is not my figure. It comes right out of public accounts. Yet we have heard the minister I do not know how many times in the House talk about what the government puts into the military, how that is improving, how things are just great.

Let us just go back to 1993. Members of the House were probably making about \$45,000 a year. We now make \$135,000 a year. Yet in defence, one of the most important elements of our country, especially since the terrorism activity, we have a budget that is 14% less than it was in 1993 or \$1.6 billion less.

Can we blame the soldiers in our military when they say that we look after ourselves first? Not at all. We do not ask ourselves to fly in 40 year old airplanes or 40 year old helicopters. We take our 16 year old Challengers and upgrade them with brand new ones with all the luxuries. That is shameful. Every member of the House has to be ashamed, even though we do not have a say in what the government has done. I have talked to many members in the military and they are not very happy about how the government is looking after them.

The defence budget would have to increase to \$12.6 billion just to bring inflation adjusted defence spending up to the 1993 level. That is a major increase. We might say, where is the money going to come from. If we look at the reports of the auditor general, she has about \$16 billion in the last two in waste. I am sure we can find that money and make sure that in the future our American friends will realize we are serious about what we are spending on defence and serious about working with them in a North American secure perimeter. However it is a shame that now they make announcements without even talking to us, without even being side by side to say that we are working together.

Unless the necessary resources are provided, the Canadian military commitment to the war against terrorism will not be sustainable. It may not be anyway beyond the next rotation.

This is entirely justified on the basis of what the auditor general has told parliament. These are not my figures. They are the auditor

general's figures. The auditor general said in her 2001 report that the Canadian forces needed a minimum of \$1.3 billion added to the budget yearly just to make up for the current shortfalls and that to meet equipment replacement requirements over the next five years, the capital budget alone would actually have to be doubled in that period, from \$6.5 billion to \$11 billion or \$11.9 billion per year.

• (1555)

We must replace this shortfall immediately to maintain the military at its current levels and replace the additional equipment.

Additionally, \$1 billion per year must be added to the budget base of the Department of National Defence to improve and strengthen the military. In fact the Liberal dominated Senate defence committee has actually called for a \$4 billion increase in defence spending. We agree that this is the direction in which we must go, and we do not often agree with the Senate about too many things. Those independent senators are as frustrated as the opposition is in Canada about what the government is doing with defence spending.

The Liberals claim that they have already increased the defence budget. We hear this continually from the Minister of National Defence. What is the real truth? The truth is that the Liberal budget is at least \$1 billion per year short of what is needed. In the December budget the Liberals announced \$1.2 billion for the DND budget, but only \$500 million of that is allocated to our military spending over the next five years. Even if it were a genuine increase, it is well short of the \$1.3 billion minimum that the auditor general's 2001 report stated was required just to maintain the Canadian forces.

In reality the majority of December's budget has nothing to do with actual military spending. In fact more and more non-military spending is being applied to the defence budget. For context, keep in mind that the government has not significantly increased defence spending by adding \$1.2 billion over five years, but in fact is spending most of it in the first two years on Afghanistan's Operation Apollo, for example. By spending nothing at all in the following years, the government will do nothing to stem the long term decline of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Let us compare what Canada is doing in national defence to what our allies are doing. The consequence of drastic Liberal military cutbacks is that Canada now spends half the NATO average of 2.1% of GDP. This points to the need to add at least \$2 billion immediately to the budget base of DND, or \$10 billion over five years, and to provide additional temporary funding to support deployments necessary to help fight the war on terrorism.

*Routine Proceedings*

It is embarrassing to think that with all the benefits we have in Canada, the great resources, the great spirit of Canadians, the support that we gave this world in the first and second world wars, that our military is dwindling like this. To see that we are spending less than half of what our NATO partners spend on defence, is shameful. The government should be embarrassed, but it is not doing anything about it so I can only assume that it is not.

The Canadian Alliance has long called on the Liberals to add at least \$2 billion per year immediately to the budget base of national defence or \$10 billion over five years. Additional money is also required to support our deployments to fight the war on terror. Such increases however, would just be enough to stop the erosion in military capability. Canada must increase funding from the current level of 1.2% of GDP to the NATO average, which is currently 2.1% of GDP, as suggested by the Senate defence report.

The crisis confronting the Canadian forces is now so serious that we can no longer expect that half measures will suffice. Yet I do not see any action on the other side to start solving this problem. We see the waste and the arrogance, but no assistance for our military.

• (1600)

What else will the Canadian Alliance be recommending? We have said that the joint task force or JTF2 commandos who are doing a superb job should be retained as an elite, relatively small force. JTF2 should not be expanded past 400 members, and even this should be considered in the context of a comprehensive defence review that addresses other serious problems in the Canadian forces. Canada requires a real and rapid reaction capability similar to the airborne which the Liberals disbanded in 1995. Such a rapid response capability should be added to the Canadian forces.

Prior to the defence committee's interim report being tabled only one witness recommended Joint Task Force Two be increased in size. He did so with a caveat. He said it was important that in a larger mandate there must be doctrinal changes for the use of troops as well as greater oversight over special operations and their activities.

The witness made it clear that there are generally two classes of special forces: those tasked primarily with VIP protection, hostage rescue and other duties that would fall primarily to a reactive force; and those tasked with conducting deep penetrations into enemy territory for scouting, apprehension and potentially combat operations. As Canada has only one group of personnel trained for special operations, the witness recommended rewriting JTF2's mandate to perform more long range penetration style missions. In this context he said more manpower would be needed and he recommended an increase in troop numbers.

Yet the majority report of the defence committee in November recommended that JTF2 be increased to nearly 1,000 members. Why is that? We believe JTF2 should not grow to more than 400 members. As JTF2 is accountable only to the defence minister the unit is capable of carrying out foreign missions which must be subject to careful public and parliamentary scrutiny. That is one of the keys here, parliamentary public scrutiny.

A force which operates under a veil of secrecy under certain conditions is necessary. However the JTF2 should not be expanded beyond 400 members. Under its current mandate an increase in size

would be dangerous. Without a comprehensive defence review in the context of a clear foreign affairs policy Canada should not commit to increasing the size of this highly secretive force beyond 400.

JTF2 is similar to the British special air service, so we would be competitive with Britain. Again, what Canada needs is a rapid reaction force similar to the British or Dutch marines or the Belgian paracommando brigade, able to perform many of the operations the airborne did.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs recently talked about the need for a defence and foreign policy review. This is clearly necessary. Our influence internationally has slipped so badly under the Liberal government that we can do little else. The defence portion of the review would have to address a great many issues, but we in our party believe it should especially examine what it would take in terms of resources, training and equipment procurement to establish a brigade size special force for Canada. Until 1995 Canada maintained a special service force which was equipped as a light brigade, about 5,000 troops, with mostly light equipment. We need to look at re-establishing such a force and providing it with the air and sea transport required to respond to emergencies in Canada and overseas.

The need for light mobile forces has been recognized in Canada since at least the 1964 defence white paper. Since that time the government has gone part of the way toward establishing and maintaining such a force. However the resources to acquire the transport that would be required have always been lacking, mainly because of the government's lack of interest when it comes to national defence.

The government's pending defence review should examine what it would take in terms of resources, training, equipment and procurement to establish a brigade size special force for Canada. The government should then come to parliament with its proposals and work to secure the endorsement of every political party represented in the House of Commons for the policy.

• (1605)

For a white paper to be meaningful we need the signatures of the finance minister and the Prime Minister on the document. Unified parliamentary support is the only way to ensure defence policy is approached in a non-partisan way with guaranteed funding. That is missing in the House. The opposition has been offering support to the government but there is no communication or working together. We would like there to be.

Parliamentarians on the defence committee have shown themselves willing to support a sound defence policy. The government should be prepared to seriously engage them in the policy process. We in the Canadian Alliance believe the defence committee's pending report must emphasize that every independent witness who has appeared before the committee since April, 2001 has lamented the state of readiness of the Canadian forces.

I will quote what a few of the experts have said. On May 10, 2001 Lieutenant General Roméo Dallaire said:

I would contend that right now we have limited abilities to sustain any war-footing capability without mobilizing. This does put a squeeze on the ability or desire of this nation's government and its people to be able to be a participant in a war, even as Strategy 2020 articulates a niche position in those wars....This in itself is a complex problem to face when we look at the responsibilities and the risks our nation faces in its own defence, and in its participation in alliances like NATO and NORAD, and/or under alliances of a single-led nation like the United States in the Gulf War.

General Dallaire went on to say:

It presents a problem too for us to actually be a player in the world security dimension of classic war or overt warfare.

If we wonder why the Americans are making announcements today without Canadians at their side it is because of what General Dallaire has pointed out. However we have not listened to him. Is it not a shame that we are not standing shoulder to shoulder with our American allies, our top trading partners, neighbours and friends, for a major announcement like this concerning the security of North America?

General Dallaire also stated:

I would contend that we would even have problems in meeting the upper scale of conflict resolution—some would call the Gulf War the upper scale of conflict resolution, not a real war where the nation is at risk or the nation is at war.

He went on to say:

We just spent ten years burning out the forces, particularly the army. We've sucked dry the reserves. We now have reservists going over twice or three times. My contention is that the troops have been committed, have gone through the risks—some have been casualties—and have gained skills in conflict resolution, but they're tired because there's not enough of them to sustain it.

Is that not a damning statement? Yet In the House yesterday the minister said the government was meeting its commitments. The auditor general said it was not. Today the minister is still trying to tell our critic the government is meeting its commitments. It is not true. It is a big sham.

When we get people of the quality of General Dallaire saying these things I sometimes wonder. I see what the media chases after. This is becoming a major issue for our country. I hope that what the Americans have done today in announcing this new security measure will shake up Canadians and the media.

● (1610)

Canada is not standing beside its biggest trading partner, neighbour, ally and friend. It is because the government has not put up the money necessary to maintain our forces. As Leader of the Opposition I should be saying this. Instead generals and people in the forces are saying it. The only ones who do not seem to understand it are members of the government. The government has millions of dollars to waste on big objects like jets, security systems hidden away in lockers, and other things. It has generated tens of billions of dollars in waste as the auditor general has pointed out.

### *Routine Proceedings*

The government should get its act straight. Some of that money should be going into our military. The rest should go into MRIs. The \$101 million would probably have bought 50 MRIs across the country and shortened the list for a lot of people who have to wait months to get into hospital for medical treatment. I am sure they are thrilled to know the Prime Minister and his crowd have golden knobs on their toilets and can fly anywhere in the country.

On May 8, 2001 Major Gen. Lewis MacKenzie said if he were an enemy force commander he would much prefer to fight the Canadian army of today than the Canadian army of 10 years ago with all the bits and pieces, high tech equipment and small numbers that have been introduced into the Canadian forces, particularly the navy and air force, over the last 10 years. I mentioned this before but it was so shocking I had to cite it again.

**An hon. member:** We have good people in the military.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** The people in the military are excellent. However we are reading about things like a meeting a few months ago in Cornwall where the general told reservists and personnel from across Canada that the truth had to start getting out to the Canadian people. We are getting apologetic letters from military people saying they do not like to get involved and make political comments but they have to because they are suffering. It is time to act. That is why we are moving the motion today.

The government wants to debate the species at risk act which would allow it to seize property without giving compensation. We would rather be talking about this because we think it is more important, especially in relation to what happened today with the United States and over the past few days with the government purchase of jets.

On April 26, 2001 the Conference of Defence Associations said:

—we have become concerned over the perception that the Canadian forces are able to meet all their commitments, and are more combat capable than they were ten years ago.

We are at about two-thirds of what the strength used to be. When I read what the association is saying I understand that the Liberal government is probably number one in the history of our country at spin doctoring. It spins out the message and Canadians believe it.

**An hon. member:** They are the best at that.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** I have never seen anyone as good as the Liberal government at spinning messages. However the facts are coming home to roost in terms of the arrogant way the government spends money. It is not good for Canada but in the next election it might be very good for Canadians.

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The Conference of Defence Associations appeared again at the committee on November 5. It said “We conclude that because of insufficient funds in the Department of National Defence budget, the Canadian forces cannot fulfill their commitments beyond a marginal level within the resource stipulations and the time limits specified in current plans.”

Another expert, Dr. Douglas Bland, told the committee on April 3, 2001 that:

I want to conclude by questioning the assertion made by some senior officers—and by the minister at times, I believe—that the Canadian Forces today is more combat-capable than it has been at any time in the last 10 or 20 years. This is a very important and critical assertion, and it may be true, but I have seen no evidence of it in reports, studies, or recommendations from the headquarters and staff on whom such an assertion is based. I'm sure, or at least I hope, that those kinds of documents are available someplace within the defence establishment. But I think it would be a dangerous idea to make those assertions without a detailed assessment of what our capabilities were ten years ago, how they've changed and improved, and what they are now...I know of no experienced military officers or experts who can stand by that remark.

I will repeat the last sentence: “I know of no experienced military officers or experts who could stand by that remark”.

● (1615)

Other experts are telling us the sad story of the government's underfunding and lack of support for the military. On April 5, 2001, the auditor general's office said that in the year 2000 it had found that the force structure had been cut significantly. We have been told by the minister it keeps on going up, but this is the auditor general telling us the facts.

At that point the department had gone to ministers to say it was out of manoeuvring room and that it was under severe pressure. Our belief is that force structure, modernization and current readiness are still not being balanced. There is a discrepancy across the various pillars and hard choices still need to be made. One has to make a reduction someplace or add more funds to balance out the current set of objectives. This was a year ago, yet those funds have not been made available and another report, which I will quote later in this discussion, condemns the government even more.

When asked on October 25, 2001, if Canada could handle replacing the U.S. in Afghanistan and continue its Balkan commitments John Thompson answered:

We're scrapping the bottom of the barrel right now. For example, if we were presented with an Oka-style crisis again, we couldn't respond to it.

Is that not a scary thought? If we were to have a serious problem, because of our commitments around the world, we could not handle that responsibility at home. Is it any wonder the Americans today announced a major program with no mention of Canada? They are moving forward with others because we do not have the money.

I cannot remember when an American ambassador has ever criticized the Canadian government. This one keeps telling us the U. S. wants the Canadian government to spend more on the military. It want us to bring up our average to the rest of the NATO countries and for us to get our act in gear. He has not had much success but we will keep cheering him on.

We will keep having discussions like this one in the House of Commons and doing everything we can to force the government's hand so our military men and women will know that at least the

opposition parties in the House support what they are doing. We are trying to get them more money and better equipment.

**An hon. member:** Got new Challengers.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Madam Speaker, someone mentioned the Challengers. I have mentioned that a few times. I thought today that was why the government had ordered those two Challengers. With the North American defence system the Americans did not want us to support, the government members wanted a couple of faster planes so they could get into a few more places where they could hide. They can get into 55 new locations with the jets.

David Rudd said on November 20, 2001:

I'd like to suggest that the events of September 11 have actually not revealed shortcomings in the operational capabilities of the Canadian Forces, because these shortcomings existed prior to the attacks.

Professor Jack Granatstein said on November 22, 2001:

It's long past time for Canadians to act like a nation. That means having a real military, with good, well-trained people, modern, high-tech equipment, and the necessary funds allocated to defence to guarantee these things...You pay now in dollars for an efficient, professional military and a well-trained reserve, or you pay later in dollars and in your sons and your daughters.

Retired Colonel Brian MacDonald said on November 27, 2001, that between 2010-15:

—we have a very large number of major platforms in the Canadian Forces coming to the end of their service life during that period of time. The question that comes then is whether or not the capital budget will be adequate to replace the capabilities that will have ended their service life at that point. It is my view that the capital budget is inadequate to doing that task. Therefore, the Canadian Forces will be placed in the invidious position of having to somehow attempt to cope with the fact that the money is simply not there to maintain the capabilities stated to be government policy in the 1994 white paper.

● (1620)

Major-General Clive Addy said on February 5, 2002:

Having listened to our Minister of National Defence attempt to define exactly what we could produce, and watching people continue to hustle with great zeal throughout the CF to cobble together for Afghanistan what was in essence a White Paper commitment, is testimony enough as to our under-funded, undermanned, over-taxed, and ill-prepared force.

As to the number of Forces, we do not get as much per defence dollar as most NATO countries. The costs of our infrastructure over our vast and cold country as well as the competitive cost of labour for our volunteer force account for much of this, but we can do better.

In summary, as a member of the G-7 and a nation so dependent on trade, particularly with the US, as a nation that believes and relies on multilateralism for a better world, Canada must be seen to contribute to its own security by its citizens and to do “its share” by its allies and friends. 1.2 % of GDP for defence does not meet this challenge.

I wonder what he would say today reading about \$101 million for Challenger jets and \$174 million for security systems sitting in a warehouse and never used.

**An hon. member:** Your government.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** A member from the other side said my government. I was never in the Tory government, thank God. I was in the Social Credit government in British Columbia. We balanced our books, had no debt and everything was wonderful.



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**An hon. member:** Let's talk about that.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Someone wants me to talk about that. If the Tories of the day had run the country like the Tory governments—

**An hon. member:** Tell us about Peterborough.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Peterborough is a great city. The people in Peterborough will be just as frustrated about our military. When I was a young man of about 20 years of age I worked in Peterborough with Ethicon sutures, a Johnson & Johnson company, that brought a whole bunch of new people to the community and livened it up. In those days our military personnel were quite happy people. We had a good military in those days. I remember my grandfather—

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** I was in the reserves then.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** You have been in the reserves all your life.

My grandfather lived in Barrie, Ontario, in Camp Borden, and fought in the first world war and the second world war. I still have some of his medals in my jewellery case at home. I never heard him complain at all. I used to go out to Camp Borden with him those days and cut the lawns on some Saturdays. I never heard anyone in the military complain. They were always proud people, proud of our country, and proud of what we did for them.

The last two governments, but this one in particular with its major cuts, have really hurt us. Even the members on the other side must be embarrassed today when they see the Americans announce their major security perimeter for North America and they talk about how it includes Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean. We are not even there. They just ignore us. Their ambassador is asking us to put more money into military to do our fair job around the country.

We read about all these wasteful projects in the auditor general's report. Some of those things happen, we have to be realistic about that, but not \$174 million for a security system. That is a little much. Everyone can make mistakes in expense accounts but that is a ridiculous one.

**An hon. member:** The Tories bought it.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** The member says the Tories bought it. If the Tories bought it why did they not get rid of it the first year they were here? They got rid of a lot of other things.

It is literally unbelievable the December budget ignored what every one of these experts said. Canada's security needs and the Canadian sovereignty itself have been placed in a perilous position. Why?

For one, we can no longer pull our weight in international coalitions, thus reducing our influence and our credibility. Nothing was more evident than that today and what happened just before the House sat for question period.

• (1625)

Our navy is unlikely to be able to sustain its task group deployment beyond six months due to personnel shortages and other gaps in naval capability. The navy only has two operational support ships left, making it impossible to sustain a task group in the Indian Ocean and still support our ships in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

What did we hear yesterday? One of our ships is sitting idle in Victoria Harbour. If it were sitting in the harbour in Montreal or somewhere a little closer in central Canada it might be put into use but it is in British Columbia. The Prime Minister has only visited B. C. for 15 days in the last couple of years usually for Liberal fundraising dinners. He had 39 days in Florida, Jamaica or wherever.

**Mr. John O'Reilly:** The Prime Minister did a fundraising dinner for you.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** The then prime minister did do a fundraising event many years ago and we did quite well too. He did not fly out on a government jet either. In those days he flew out on a regular airplane as I still do as Leader of the Opposition and get along quite fine.

The fact is that the ship is probably sitting empty in Victoria Harbour because it has been forgotten. It is in western Canada and Liberals have a tendency to forget about us in western Canada.

**An hon. member:** These eastern Canadians—

**Mr. John Reynolds:** We do not beat up eastern Canadians. I am one of them. I was born in Ontario and raised in Quebec. I am just saying it is the government that has ignored western Canada, the fastest growing area in the country. It really is a shame.

The Sea King helicopters now require 40 hours of maintenance for every hour in the air, seriously impeding the navy's ability to maintain an effective air element to support its ships at sea. Forty hours of maintenance for every hour in the air, which is about what it takes for my friend across the way to get a couple of good hours in the House every week.

The army cannot sustain even 750 soldiers in Afghanistan for a second six month rotation without impairing our ability to maintain our commitment of 1,600 troops in Bosnia. Some of our units face the prospect of spending almost back to back rotations overseas. What does this mean to someone who is in a reserve going overseas for an additional rotation?

I watched an interesting program on *60 Minutes* or *Dateline* a few months ago about a young man who was in the Vietnam War and did the same thing. He did about three rotations and then disappeared. He was discovered 30 years later in Australia leading quite a normal life. The whole program was about how his family thought he had died but because he had received a ticket from police in Australia they found out where he really was. It was all about how messed up his mind was from doing three rotations in the Vietnam War.

What are we doing to young people in the reserves by sending them back two or three times? Do we really know what is happening there? Would it not be better to implement a major program encouraging young people to join the forces? I commend the few ads that are on now but we could be doing a lot more to encourage people in this country to do military service. We should make sure our forces are up to scratch, that they all have uniforms and that people are not having to do unnecessary triple rotations.

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The air force could not air lift our troops overseas because it has no heavy lift aircraft. Its medium lift aircraft are aging and often break down. If it does not have heavy lift aircraft it has to be rented, whether from Federal Express or whoever. I do not know if that company is used for those types of things but the government is chartering from someone or borrowing American airplanes or doing what it does. Yet it can still buy two jets to fly its members around when it has four that the army says work fine. It is a pretty sad commentary.

The deployment of CF-18s overseas, as occurred during the gulf war in 1991 and in Kosovo in 1999, has become increasingly difficult given the decision to run down the number of total CF-18s to just 80 aircraft from 120. We will not be able to defend our own air space and still meet possible international commitments.

We will have serious difficulty simply responding to internal emergencies in Canada. That is another key thing. We need people internally. Do we have them? Most people say no. The air force only has 32 C-130 transport aircraft of which at least 75% are unavailable at any given time.

• (1630)

That is an unbelievable figure. If Avis rent a car had 75% of its fleet unavailable, it would be broke. What kind of encouragement is that to anyone in the forces? It is like an old comedy routine where there are 100 planes on the tarmac, they all run out and only 25 take off. It is just not good enough.

Moreover, since 19 of the 32 C-130s are more than 35 years old, these aircraft are subject to periodic breakdowns. The Challengers were only 16 or 19 years old, babies in comparison. We have no strategic or tactical heavy lift aircraft or helicopters.

During the 1998 ice storm, American aircraft had to lift troops and supplies from western Canada to eastern Canada in order to respond to the emergency. We are lucky that today it is about 30 degrees outside and there will not be an ice storm this year anyway, but it could happen again next year. However we are in Ottawa so we had better watch out because it could happen this weekend.

At the time of the Oka crisis in 1990, the army deployed nearly a full brigade, several thousand troops, to deal with that emergency. Given the fact that the total strength of the army is down to less than 19,000 troops of which only 9,000 or so can be considered front line, it is very difficult for the army to sustain its overseas commitments and simultaneously respond to emergencies, especially multiple ones, internally.

The total strength of the army reserve is now less than 14,000, perhaps as few as 11,000, most of whom are poorly trained and equipped. They can provide little support to the regular army and would not even be able to guard vital points in Canada, such as power plants and pipelines, in an effective manner.

The protection of Canadian sovereignty is increasingly compromised. The flying time for the Aurora aircraft, our main sovereignty protection aircraft, is being reduced to just 8,000 hours per year. That is 3,500 hours below that recommended by the chief of the air staff.

The Prime Minister the other day in an answer to me about flying from Gatineau instead of the Ottawa airport because Gatineau is 10

minutes closer to Sussex Drive, said that he does not make those decisions, that the RCMP makes them for him. The Prime Minister gave that answer in the House and I will accept it as accurate.

If that is the case, when the military recommends 11,500 hours a year and the government reduces it to 8,000 hours a year, why are we interfering with the military? Why is the government interfering with members of the military, reducing what they say is necessary to give us the protection we need in Canada?

The government cannot have it both ways. It cannot say "We are going to spend an extra \$20,000 for the Prime Minister to get on an airplane in Gatineau because of security reasons, but we are not going to give it to the army overseas because we do not think the hours they want are correct". They are correct and we should follow the recommendations.

The recommendations were made by the chief of the air staff, Lieutenant General Campbell, in 1999 when he commanded 1 Canadian Air Division. He gave us the minimum acceptable level to make commitments on the Aurora flights over the Arctic and they dwindled to just about zero. That is shameful.

**An hon. member:** They are needed more than ever up there.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** They are needed more than ever. Today the Americans made their announcement on the security perimeter for North America and we do not have anyone flying over the north. It is absolutely shameful.

Increasingly we are failing to pull our weight in Norad. As noted, the air force is reducing the size of its CF-18 fighter force by one-third. This will necessitate increased reliance on American aircraft to protect Canadian air space.

The government today got a standing ovation from members in the House after saying "We are going to be Canadian first, we are independent", but it has reduced our force by one-third and now we have to rely on American aircraft. I have no problem with that because the Americans have a big force, but we should be working with them. When they make an announcement like the major one they did today, I would like to see our minister standing next to their minister and our Prime Minister standing next to their president.

• (1635)

I found it interesting that just a few weeks ago when the Prime Minister was in Africa, the prime minister of England was in the United States dealing with the war, dealing with the serious issues. Our Prime Minister was trying to build a legacy in Africa with a different story in every country.

*Routine Proceedings*

We are increasingly failing to pull our weight in Norad, as I said. As noted, the air force is reducing the size of its CF-18 fighter force by one-third and this will necessitate increased reliance on American aircraft. We already know that U.S. aircraft played that role in many parts of Canada on September 11.

Our navy has no presence in Canada's third ocean, the Arctic. Our sovereignty claims there, which are not recognized by the United States, are largely unenforced. The continual delays in offering political support to the United States on national missile defence mean that the Americans are moving ahead without Canada in this area. This imperils the future of Norad which is central to monitoring Canadian sovereignty and which is funded by the United States to the tune of 90%.

All these threats to Canadian sovereignty and security will only become more serious in the coming years due to the shortfalls which presently exist in the equipment and operations budgets of the Department of National Defence. Increasingly the armed forces will be unable to maintain even present levels of capability. The result will inevitably be growing dependence on the United States and almost no credibility or influence abroad on security matters. This scenario is the greatest threat to sovereignty.

It is imperative that the government act soon. There is simply too much at stake for the government to continue to sit on its hands.

The following is an excerpt from *Esprit de Corps* magazine of April 17, 2002, volume 9. It is entitled "What can our forces do?". It states:

Our navy provides the main Canadian element committed to the war on terrorism. With upgraded tribal class destroyers, state of the art city class frigates and the ability to operate seamlessly with the United States navy, it has been dispatched to support the U.S. led coalition flotilla. The major weakness of our task force is the fleet of aging Sea King helicopters, which require 40 hours of maintenance per hour of flying time.

Forty hours of service for every hour. We can picture a couple of guys hanging off the back with wrenches in their hands.

The old Sea King has reduced endurance and payload capacity in hot weather.

It cannot be used in a lot of areas.

The six Canadian ships are equipped with first rate anti-aircraft, anti-ship and submarine weapons as well as anti-missile defences. Unfortunately they have no long range ship to shore weapons and no strike aircraft other than Sea Kings designed specifically to hunt and attack submarines. The poor state of these shipborne helicopters preclude them from being used even in a ship to shore helicopter assault role.

Land-locked Afghanistan has no air force left and no navy. Given that during the height of the gulf war in 1991, Iraq failed to mount a single successful sortie against the U.S. coalition fleet, Canada's naval task force's limited role would therefore be to defend against the unlikely threat of an air or seaborne attack. However, the command and control flag ship, HMCS Iroquois, support ship HMCS Preserver, and four frigates will be standing off at a distance to provide a measure of symbolic support to our U.S. allies. Since the Canadian navy is fully interoperable with the U.S. navy, U.S. warships could be theoretically assigned under the command of the Canadian flotilla as was done during the gulf war.

Search and rescue will be a possible task for shipborne helicopters in the event that a U.S. strike aircraft or helicopter crashes into the sea.

Another possible mission scenario would be protection of supertankers and other merchant ships if the current conflict expands beyond the Arabian Sea.

● (1640)

Keeping this many Canadian ships on station will stretch the navy to its limit. With only four destroyers and one permanently docked, to sustain one in the Arabian Sea, one should be getting ready, one returning, and one deployed. Of the navy's 12 frigates, seven are on reduced readiness. To sustain three or four frigates will require full activation of the entire fleet. Given that the navy is short some 400 technically skilled sailors, this will be very difficult. The navy has two supply ships, so the normal minimum of a two to one deployment ratio is impossible. The extra time required on station will be extremely hard on the crews. In addition, either our west or east coast fleets will be without any support ship at all.

Canada's air force has a lesser role to play as it has less capability. The first problem is deployment: Canada sold off its Boeing 707 air refuelers in 1997, but has five C130 Hercules aircraft configured as tankers. But "Hercs" carry only half the fuel that an Airbus can, and can't fly fast enough or high enough for CF-18s to refuel the required four times during ocean crossings. Canada can no longer rely on the USAF air-to-air refuelers because they've all been earmarked to support U.S. forces. Canada is the only NATO nation without a large tanker aircraft.

It is the only NATO nation. That is shameful.

CF-18 fighter pilots fly a plane that has carrier landing capability, but the pilots do not.

Just read that.

The avionics on board are not interoperable with U.S. strike aircraft.

Yet the Americans are our allies, the people we work with. What great planning.

The lack of deployment capability, interoperability, and carrier landing ability is probably why the U.S. did not specifically request them. The Aurora surveillance aircraft are almost identical to the USN P3 Orion, the type of aircraft (albeit with different avionics) that was rammed by a Chinese fighter jet several months ago. Their primary role is patrolling our coastlines. They will most likely perform the same role in the Persian Gulf or Arabian Sea.

The C130 Hercules tactical transport planes will likely be used as part of the psychological operations by dropping food and other humanitarian aid to the Afghani refugees who previously fled the Taliban regime, and the now swelling ranks of refugees fleeing U.S. air strikes.

The Airbus strategic transporter will likely deliver aid to hard standing airfields once these are available.

The secretive commando unit titled Joint Task Force 2, or JTF2 in the vernacular, is a well-trained and equipped counterterrorist unit. It is capable of carrying out some of the covert tasks required such as reconnaissance or directing aircraft strikes. The one limitation is the unit's size. At approximately 250 men, perhaps a maximum of 64 could be sustained beyond the six month commitment. The army however will probably be unable to make a more meaningful contribution.

At present the army has a 1,500 man battle group deployed to Bosnia based on units from 5 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (5 CMBG). A brigade normally has strength of approximately 5,000. Due to the lack of recruits and continued downsizing, today's brigades consist of little more than 3,000. This means that more than half of the entire brigades combat assets must be cannibalized and augmented by reservists to form one powerful combat ready battle group.

Canada has only three brigades, with one deployed, one just returned from an overseas operation and one training. A powerful battle group based on 1 CMBG could theoretically be sent to the region now, or it could be used to replace American units in Bosnia. This would only be a knee-jerk solution, as in six months' time there would be no units to replace those deployed. Canada's army today can only sustain one deployed fighting force indefinitely.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1645)

Another option would be to use one or all three of the army's "light" battalions. That is, those troops who fight on foot without the benefit of armoured vehicles such as the LAV III, Coyote or Leopard C2 tank. Tactical deployment could be by air assault using the militarized Bell 412 Helicopter dubbed the Griffon.

This would be problematic. Even in terms of the initial deployment of any assets in theater, Canada would either need to ask for US help (unlikely given their current priority is moving their own units), or rent civilian transport aircraft to deploy quickly. The other alternative would be to move by rented ships (like the *GTS Katie*), as our Navy has no sea lift capability.

Secondly, the Griffon has less capability than the aircraft it replaced, the venerable "Twin Huey" (which were sold, and subsequently found their way to the Colombian military), and cannot carry the "light" 105 MM artillery howitzers that are assigned to light infantry battalions. In order to save money, the battalion's integral mortar platoon (with eight 81mm medium mortars) which could be lifted easily by helicopter, has been cut from the order of battle. This severely retards the unit's fire power. The Army's seven Chinook CH 147 medium lift helicopters would have had the range and payload capacity to make up for the Griffon's shortcomings, but all were sold to the Dutch in the early nineties.

The one unit that could have been used on short notice has been gone for many years. The Canadian Airborne Regiment was disbanded on orders of the Liberal government in 1995.

People forget sometimes that we had a very good airborne regiment that was abolished by the government in 1995.

I wonder if we would like to tell the country's military families about the priorities of the government. The new Challenger jets, the luxury planes, twin flying Taj Mahals so the fat cat cabinet can fly faster, higher and farther.

We have retired military pilots who flew the Sea Kings 40 years ago. Today those very helicopters are being flown by those same pilots' children.

**An hon. member:** And grandchildren.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** And grandchildren, as somebody mentions.

These families that serve our country worry about their loved ones. They worry about their safety every day when one of those helicopters goes up in the air. The following is an excerpt from a report prepared by Michel Rossignol from the political and social affairs division of the Parliamentary Research Branch and written on October 19, 1998:

The Sea King helicopters that operate from Canada's new frigates and other warships entered into service in 1963. Designed primarily for anti-submarine warfare (ASW), the Sea Kings also provide Canadian warships with surveillance and transportation capabilities and occasionally participate in search and rescue operations.

The modernization of their ASW electronic sensors kept the helicopters fairly up-to-date in their primary role and routine maintenance and overhauls over the years have kept them in flying condition, despite their extensive use in difficult weather conditions. The older the Sea Kings become, however, the more maintenance they require and the greater the concern about their safety of operation.

If we are concerned about the safety of the aircrafts' operation, we obviously have to be very concerned about the safety of those who are flying them. The report continued:

With this in mind, in the mid-1980s the Department of National Defence began the process of selecting new helicopters to replace the Sea Kings by the late 1990s. The EH-101 helicopter was chosen to replace both the Sea King and the Labrador... Contracts were signed in 1992 with EH Industries for 50 helicopters and with Paramax Canada for the supply of ASW and other electronic equipment for 35 of these aircraft. The total estimated cost of the purchase was some \$5 billion, although only about half of the costs were for the airframes and engines, the ASW electronic sensors accounting for a substantial portion of the rest.

● (1650)

The cost of the new helicopters at a time when the armed forces of NATO and other countries were being cut at the end of the Cold War made the issue very controversial, even after the August 1993 announcement that the number of ASW EH-101s would be reduced to cut costs.

The contracts were cancelled by the Liberal government formed in November 1993, as the Liberal Party had promised during the federal election. However, because of the age of the existing helicopters and growing concerns as a result of a number of accidents, the replacement of the Sea Kings is still considered necessary, albeit at a lower cost than that of the EH-101 project. Moreover, the shipborne helicopter remains an important element of Canada's military capabilities.

If we go back to 1993, we know election promises were made, numerous ones. Getting rid of the GST was another major one. The government never did that. Free trade was another one. It never did that. However, Mulroney ordered the helicopters and the Prime Minister did it for that reason.

He also said he would never fly the big Airbus that Mulroney had made for the Prime Minister. I think they still use it a little bit, but he has stuck to his word most of the time. I think that is more of a legal problem because the airplane is there and it is a good airplane. We did not need to buy two \$101 million Challenger jets. We could have used this other airplane for longer flights. It is certainly good enough for the Governor General. It is good enough for the Prime Minister. It is a shame, that political decision on that day darn near 10 years ago, because our forces today could have had the most modern helicopters and a force that could have offered assistance to our allies in this war against terrorism, but here we are today still debating the issue of helicopters, still wondering why we have two new Challenger jets with gold faucets and the fancy toilets and no new helicopters.

Mr. Rossignol's report continued, stating:

Although the submarine threat has greatly diminished with the end of the Cold War, the helicopter replacing the Sea King would still complement the capabilities of Canadian ships by providing surveillance above and around them, by transporting supplies and personnel, and by carrying out rescue missions when required. Sea Kings were used extensively in the Persian Gulf and the Adriatic Sea, as well as for inspecting cargo ships as part of the enforcement of UN sanctions against Haiti; they were also used to transport supplies for UN peacekeepers in Somalia.

The selection of a replacement for the Sea Kings is also influenced by another factor, the need to replace the Labrador search and rescue helicopters.

Canada operates Labrador helicopters from CFB Comox, British Columbia, CFB Trenton, Ontario, and CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia, as well as from other locations when required, solely for search and rescue operations. Like the Sea Kings, the Labradors entered service with the Canadian military in the early 1960s and the Department of National Defence began searching for a replacement during the mid-1980s. Around 1990, a decision was made to replace the Labradors with 15 transport versions of the EH-101 capable of flying in bad weather conditions. By using the same type of helicopter to replace both the Sea Kings and Labrador helicopters it was hoped to reduce the maintenance and pilot training costs.

With the cancellation of the EH-101 purchase, the Labrador replacement remained an issue. At a time when Air Command is reducing the number of types of aircraft in its fleet to cut operational costs, the expense of maintaining a small fleet of aging rescue helicopters poses problems. As with the Sea Kings, there is also some concern about the effects of aircraft age on flying safety, notably since the April 1992 crash of a Labrador due to engine failure.

On October 31, 1994, the Special Joint Committee on Canada's Defence Policy tabled a report recommending, among other things, quick action on the purchase of new shipborne and rescue helicopters. Following the completion of the parliamentary review, the Minister of National Defence presented the *1994 Defence White Paper* outlining Canada's new defence policy.

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## ● (1655)

The white paper indicated an urgent need for new shipborne helicopters and that the Sea Kings will be replaced by the end of the decade. It stated that the Labrador search and rescue helicopters would be replaced as soon as possible. While the same type of helicopter might be bought for both shipborne and rescue roles, other possibilities were being explored, such as different forms of partnership with the private sector for maintenance and even alternative financing arrangements for the purchase or replacement of aircraft.

The modernization of the existing airframes might appear to be a less expensive option than acquiring brand new aircraft; however, this option is less attractive in the long term because it simply delays the acquisition of new helicopters. The Sea King and Labrador airframes are over 30 years old and, even with extensive modifications, they would have to be replaced in five or ten years, or flown only occasionally.

Old aircraft are sometimes modernized to prolong their use; for example, Australia is modernizing its Sea Kings to keep them in operation until about 2005. The Australian aircraft were built some 10 years later than the Canadian [aircraft], so their modernization is more cost effective. Thus for Canada, the purchase of new helicopters appears to be the best option.

The sooner the better.

Mr. Rossignol's report continued:

Numerous types of medium-sized helicopters are available, including versions of the Eurocopter Super Puma (Cougar or Panther), the Agusta-Westland Cormorant, which has the same airframe and engine as the EH-101, and the Sikorsky S-70 (called the H-60 by the U.S. military). Some of these are already used by many countries in the ASW and maritime surveillance roles. A few types of Russian helicopters are available, but doubts have been raised about the costs of bringing them up to Western standards and about the availability of spare parts.

While smaller helicopters are cheaper and can carry out some maritime surveillance and rescue duties, they may have less range or take a smaller load than medium-sized helicopters and cannot carry as many ASW sensors or passengers. Comparisons of different types of helicopters are tricky because, for example, one type might have less range than another, but could be equipped for air-to-air refuelling. The Air Force has 99 CH-146 Griffons (Bell 412s built in Canada) ordered in 1992 at a cost of \$1 billion to replace almost all its small helicopters, such as the Twin Huey and Kiowa. However, for maritime and rescue operations, medium-sized helicopters are more suitable.

Indeed, because of the difficult Canadian weather conditions, the new helicopters require radar, navigation equipment and de-icing capabilities for the rotor blades. Bad weather capability is necessary to ensure the safety of flight personnel and to enable the aircraft to fulfil their mission. The costs of buying new helicopters with appropriate all-weather capabilities, while less than those for the EH-101, could still be quite significant. However, Canada may have little alternative if it wants to maintain its current rescue capabilities, ensure the surveillance of its territorial waters, and fulfil its international commitments.

In June and July 1995, news reports stated that the Cabinet was considering departmental proposals for the acquisition of new military equipment, including new shipborne and rescue helicopters. Although the department had hoped for quick approval of the four acquisition projects, questions were apparently raised during Cabinet meetings with respect to costs and the necessity for such acquisitions at a time of reduced government spending on social and other programs. There were also reports of concern among Cabinet members about the distribution of regional benefits if contracts were awarded.

As a result, only one of the four acquisition projects won quick Cabinet approval, the purchase of new armoured personnel carriers (APCs) and the modernization of existing ones, announced in August 1995. Final Cabinet approval for the acquisition of new shipborne and rescue helicopters was delayed. The Minister of National Defence suggested that a final decision on both projects would be made before the end of the 1995-1996 fiscal year.

## ● (1700)

Mr. Rossignol's report continued:

As with the shipborne helicopters, the final Cabinet decision on the new search and rescue helicopters was delayed amid speculation that the government wanted a wider distribution of whatever regional benefits the project would generate. On November 8, 1995, however, the Minister of National Defence announced that the government had decided to proceed with the acquisition of new search and rescue helicopters. The acquisition costs were estimated to be \$600 million, but leasing

arrangements and the contracting out of the maintenance were still considered options. Deliveries were expected to begin in 1998.

Following the announcement, the Department of National Defence sent manufacturers a Solicitation of Interest which contained the Statement of Operational Requirements (SOR). The statement confirmed that the Department wanted helicopters with a range of 500 nautical miles and the ability to fly in light icing conditions. It also stated that a rear loading ramp, a glass cockpit (a state of the art instrument panel with video presentation of data) and auto pilot were desirable. The manufacturers were expected to respond by the end of February 1996.

...The government's decision to proceed with the purchase of the new rescue helicopters came at the same time as residual issues from the cancellation of the EH-101 project were being resolved. On 31 March 1995, the government announced that it had reached an agreement with Unisys GSG Canada, formerly known as Paramax and now known as Lockheed Martin Canada, the prime contractor for the electronic equipment on the shipborne version of the EH-101 helicopters Canada had ordered. The government paid the company \$166 million as compensation for the work completed prior to the cancellation of the EH-101 contract.

When we add that to the \$100 million for jets I am quite sure we could have bought some of these planes a long time ago.

Mr. Rossignol's report continued:

On 9 November 1995, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, David Dingwall, stated in the House of Commons that an agreement in principle on these costs had been reached with EH Industries, the Westland-Agusta Consortium. On January 23, 1966, the government announced the final terms of the agreement, which involved the payment of \$157.8 million to EH Industries, made up of \$136.6 million for work completed up to the cancellation and \$21.2 million for termination costs. When added to the \$166 million paid to Unisys GSG Canada and the \$154.5 million for research and development and the costs of administering the project, the total spent on the EH project is about \$478.6 million.

Half a billion dollars has been wasted while we have been looking for helicopters for 10 years. If we take that half billion dollars, add it to the \$100 million for the jets that will fly the cabinet ministers around and add \$174 million to the satellite dish sitting in a warehouse somewhere, it does not take very long to find out that we could buy some helicopters pretty quick if we wanted to support our military. It is pretty sad.

There were more delays and problems, stated Mr. Rossignol:

While the manufacturers were preparing their proposals, the Department of National Defence announced that the Request for Proposals for new search and rescue helicopters would be delayed by six months...the end of 1996...the department announced on 21 August 1996 that there would be two Requests for Proposals, one for the helicopters and one for their maintenance. The latter is to be issued in 1998.

Meanwhile, the Sea Kings and Labradors encountered some problems during the summer. On 23 August 1996, three of Canada's fleet of Sea Kings were grounded for the inspection and repair of cracks found in the tail section of the airframes. Although cracks were also found in the rest of the fleet, in different areas of the airframe, flight operations continued, pending repair at a later date. The three grounded Sea Kings returned to flight operations in early September. Cracks are often found in airframes, even in relatively new aircraft, and inspections are done on a regular basis in order to find them before they cause significant structural problems. In November four more Sea Kings were grounded pending repairs to their airframes.

Questions were also raised in August about the lack of action in dealing with some of the recommendations resulting from the official inquiry into the April 1994 crash of a Sea King. The inquiry had recommended patching a hole in the cabin ceiling to prevent the leakage of fuel into the cabin, and this had been done expeditiously—

Imagine patching a hole and it being done expeditiously.

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—however, other recommendations were rejected by the military or have not been fully implemented. Meanwhile, there were news reports that the crews of Labrador helicopters had been instructed to carry out training flights over open fields rather than forested areas in case of an engine failure.

● (1705)

Is that not a sad commentary when our planes can only fly over nice flat areas with no trees in case their engines fail?

How much confidence would members of the armed forces have if a notice came down saying that they were not to fly over a forest in case their plane goes down? How would they feel about members of parliament, the fat cats in Ottawa, especially today with the new airplanes with their fancy toilets and fancy seats and missing things in warehouses?

It has apparently become more and more common since a Labrador crash-landed in a forest in Nova Scotia in May 1995 as a result of mechanical failure.

The report continues to state:

Labradors and Sea Kings have made a number of emergency landings over the years and every new incident raises questions about the age and maintenance of the aircraft. One Labrador from CFB Greenwood made an emergency landing on 20 October 1996 because of mechanical problems, while another Labrador from the same base made two emergency landings in early December. On 13 January 1997, a Labrador from CFB Comox crash-landed in the Georgia Strait after a fire had broken out on board.

It was terrible. Some of us in that area fish. It is becoming a dangerous occupation to do any sport fishing if the armed forces are going to be up there in those helicopters. We will have to phone over and ask if any helicopters are flying over the Gulf Islands on the weekend in case we want to go out and do a little pleasure boating. It is rather sad that the government this has allowed this to happen.

The report continues to state:

—one Sea King crash-landed on the flight deck of the HMCS *Huron* when one of its engines apparently failed. Two Sea Kings made emergency landings near Halifax, one on 7 November 1996 and another 12 June 1997.

I heard my hon. colleague, the Liberal across the way, say that they are flying in Afghanistan. How would we like to be flying those helicopters in Afghanistan? If they are crashing in the Georgia Strait and in Canada's seas they are not a safe aircraft. That is a fact.

**An hon. member:** Keep scaring the families.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** The member says that we keep scaring the families. Let me say that they are damn scared every day. We have talked to them and they are scared every day because the government is making their husbands and wives fly those rotten helicopters. The government should replace them. It could have done it 10 years ago. It has no shame whatsoever.

The report continues:

While some helicopters have mechanical problems, both the Labradors and the Sea Kings nevertheless continue to play an important role in rescue operations across Canada. Labradors evacuated a number of persons during the 1996 floods in the Saguenay region of Quebec, both Labradors and Sea Kings were used in rescue and support operations during the 1997 floods in the Red River Valley in Manitoba.

Meanwhile, the process to select a replacement for the Labradors continued. The government issued a Request for Proposals from aircraft manufacturers on 27 November 1996, with a deadline of 5 May 1997. Four manufacturers officially presented bids. Agusta-Westland consortium (E.H. Industries) proposed the AW520 Cormorant (a version of the EH-101); Boeing Canada Technology Ltd. proposed the Boeing CH-47D Chinook; Eurocopter proposed the Cougar Mark 2 (a version of the

Aerospatiale Super Puma); and Sikorsky Canada Inc. proposed the Canadian version (Maplehawk) of the Sikorsky's S-70A Black Hawk. There had been speculation that some Canadian companies would offer modified versions of Russian-built helicopters such as the Kamov Ka-32 and the Mi-17 KF Kittiwake; however, these bids were not made, chiefly because these types of helicopters were still awaiting Transport Canada certification.

Most of the manufacturers who presented bids have allied themselves with various Canadian aerospace companies, some of which are already making components for specific helicopters. Other companies will make components or will participate in the assembly of the airframes if their team wins the contract. Pending the final selection, teams are emphasizing the Canadian jobs and the industrial benefits that would result from the selection of their type of helicopter.

● (1710)

Team Cormorant (Agusta-Westland) includes Bombardier Inc. of Montreal, Bristol Aerospace of Winnipeg, CAE Electronics of Saint-Laurent (Quebec), and CHC Helicopter of St. John's. Team Cougar (Eurocopter) includes Spar Aerospace in Mississauga (Ontario), SNC-Lavalin of Montreal, and IMP Group of Halifax. Team Maplehawk (Sikorsky) includes CAE Aviation of Edmonton, Canadian Marconi of Kanata, Litton Systems of Toronto, and General Electric of Mississauga. Boeing has not established a team; however, it emphasizes that if the Chinook is selected it will use components from a number of Canadian companies and that its existing plant in Amnrior, Ontario, will complete the assembly of the airframes. With the exception of Boeing, whose Chinook model is considered too big for Canadian naval vessels, the same manufacturers are expected to present bids for the shipborne helicopter project, if and when this is undertaken.

On 5 January 1998, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Public Works and Government Services announced that the government had selected the AW520 Cormorant helicopter proposed by E.H. Industries to replace the Labradors. The announcement stated that the maximum project cost would be \$790 million for the delivery of 15 search and rescue Cormorants. The project cost includes a maximum of \$593 million to be paid to E.H. Industries and approximately \$200 million for training, spare parts, and logistic support.

To go back to what we were talking about earlier, we blew half a billion dollars and have nothing. Now we are spending just a shade more than that to get what we really need.

**Mr. Rossignol's report continued:**

On 23 April 1998, the Department of National Defence announced that the contract with E.H. Industries had been signed and that the acquisition costs had been reduced to \$580 million from \$593 million. Much of the reduction in costs was due to the decision to take delivery of the new helicopters at the final assembly line in Italy rather than in Canada. For its part, E.H. Industries made a commitment to generate \$629 million in industrial and regional benefits in Canada. The first Cormorant is slated to be delivered in January 2001 and all 15 helicopters should be delivered by October 2002.

The decision in favour of the AW520 Cormorant was controversial because of the similarities between that helicopter and the 15 rescue versions of the EH-101 which had been ordered along with the maritime version in 1992 only to be cancelled in late 1993 by the Liberal government. In fact, even before the announcement, one of the companies bidding for the contract, Sikorsky, had complained about the selection process. Some critics expressed concerns that the 1993 cancellation had only delayed the replacement of the Labradors and the Sea Kings, which, because of their age, required an increasing number of maintenance hours for each hour of flying. There was also some speculation that reductions in the defence budget might lead the government to replace the Sea Kings with a cheaper and less capable helicopter in terms of range, performance, and equipment.

Critics were especially concerned about safety, stated the report:

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—the possible growing risks of accidents in view of the advancing age of the Labradors and Sea Kings, both of which had entered service in the 1960s. The issue again became controversial following the 2 October 1998 crash of a Labrador in the Gaspé Peninsula in which the six military personnel aboard were killed. The remaining 12 Labradors were grounded (except if needed for life or death emergencies), a usual precaution when reasons for the crash of a particular type of aircraft are not immediately clear. Though, two weeks after the crash, investigators had not pinpointed the exact cause, there was speculation that the grounding order would be lifted after extensive inspection of the remaining aircraft. Nevertheless, the loss of six personnel and the complete destruction of the aircraft dealt a significant blow to Canada's search and rescue capabilities.

The effects of the 2 October crash were compounded when the entire Sea King fleet was grounded on 15 October after a fuel leak had been discovered in one of these helicopters prior to a training flight. With the grounding of the Labrador fleet, it had been up to the Sea Kings, which have carried out rescue missions in the past when Labradors were not available, as well as the smaller Griffon helicopters, to carry out rescue missions requiring helicopters. (Hercules transports and other fixed-wing aircraft are also available for rescue missions.) Although by 18 October all but one of the Sea Kings had been inspected and the grounding order was rescinded, the grounding of both the Labradors and the Sea Kings highlighted concerns about their safety and their importance to Canada's rescue capabilities.

● (1715)

Canada is not alone in experiencing difficulties with aging helicopters. The U.S. Marine Corps operates another version of the Labrador called the Sea Knight, which is just as prone to breakdowns. However, the process to replace the Labradors has at least been initiated in Canada and the date when the new helicopters will arrive has been fixed. The situation is more uncertain with respect to the Sea Kings, whose replacement is still many years away. As a result, major modifications, including the replacement of the centre section of the airframe at a cost of \$500,000 per aircraft, are being made to ensure that these helicopters will continue in service until 2005. The T-58 engines are also being upgraded by Acro Aerospace of Canada to improve their reliability as well as their performance. Some new equipment has also been purchased to improve the Sea Kings' ability to carry out surveillance and other military missions.

After a Sea King helicopter crashed on the 28 April 1994, killing two crew members, the Minister of National Defence...was asked during Question Period in the House of Commons if swift action would be taken to replace the aging aircraft. The minister replied on 5 May that well maintained Sea Kings should be able to keep flying until the year 2000. He indicated that, like other defence issues, the replacement of the Sea Kings was being examined as part of the review of defence policy and that a decision would be taken only after the process was completed.

In its report *Security in a Changing World*, issued on October 1, 1994, the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Canada's Defence Policy recommended early action on the purchase of new shipborne and rescue helicopters to replace the Sea Kings and Labradors. In his response to the report, dated 1 December 1994, the Minister of National Defence noted that virtually all the committee's recommendations were reflected in the 1990 Defence White Paper issued the same day. Indeed, the white paper noted that the options available for the replacement of the shipborne and rescue helicopters were currently under consideration.

Here is an interesting chronology. On June 26, 1986, treasury board approval was given for the start of project definition phase for new shipborne aircraft to replace the Sea Kings. On March 15, 1991, the Department of National Defence merged planning for NSA and new search and rescue helicopters. On April 30, 1992, a Labrador crashed in British Columbia during a rescue operation, killing one search and rescue technician. On October 8, 1992, the Canadian government signed contracts with E.H. Industries Ltd. and Paramax Canada for the delivery of 50 EH-101 helicopters to replace Sea Kings and Labradors. On February 27, 1993, a Sea King ditched in the gulf of Mexico after suffering an electrical systems failure.

I will inject here another relevant fact in this timeline. On April 3, 1993, the Toronto *Star* carried a quote from the then leader of the Liberal opposition in the House. He said, with reference to the Mulroney government's announced intention to replace the then already too aged military helicopters, "I am sure when the cabinet

made that decision that day, probably all the ministers, not only Charest, Campbell, were smoking pot. It makes no sense when we see so much poverty in the streets". That was the leader of the opposition of the day, now the Prime Minister.

Well there is still poverty in the streets. There is poverty in the military. Our good soldiers have had to line up at civilian food banks, and over in the Prime Minister's office the air is still cloudy. Probably it is smoke still rising from the machinery of government that went into overdrive when the Prime Minister decided that he and his cabinet needed brand new luxury flying Taj Mahals to get to the golf courses even faster than they did with the jets they had before, which obviously were in perfect flying order according to the military that said the planes were in great shape and did not need to be replaced.

● (1720)

Too bad that their priorities are out of order. That \$100 million would have gone a long way to keep our military safe in new helicopters. It sent a tragic signal to a lot of people that the money they send here is treated a lot like sewage, something we want to get rid of as soon as possible.

I should mention too that we also spent \$120,000 last year on golf balls and \$15,000 on tees. I doubt too many of the solders overseas are getting golf balls and tees.

In November 1993 the new Liberal government announced the cancellation of contracts with E.H. Industries and Paramax Canada for EH-101s. On April 28, 1994, a Sea King crashed in New Brunswick killing two crew members and injuring two others. On August 18, 1994, the Sea King fleet was temporarily grounded for the inspection of fuel leaks.

**Mr. Jim Gouk:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Our leader has gone to a tremendous amount of trouble to put together some very pertinent facts and I think it would be nice if there was a minimum quorum of Liberals in the House.

● (1725)

*And the count having been taken:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** We have quorum. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

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**Mr. John Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, on April 28, 1994, the Sea King fleet was temporarily grounded for the inspection of fuel leaks following an emergency landing by one aircraft. On October 31, 1994, a report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada Defence Policy recommended quick action on the acquisition of new shipborne and rescue helicopters. On December 1, 1994, the white paper on defence policy indicated that the government would go ahead with the replacement of the Sea Kings and Labradors in the near future.

On March 31, 1995, the Canadian government and Unisys GSG Canada, one of the prime contractors for the EH-101 contract, reached an agreement on the payment of \$166 million as compensation for the work done by the company prior to the cancellation of the contract. On May 1, 1995, a Labrador based at CFB Greenwood in Nova Scotia made an emergency landing because of mechanical problems. On September 20, 1995, a Sea King made an emergency landing because of mechanical problems. On November 8, 1995, the government announced its intention to proceed with the acquisition of new search and rescue helicopters.

On November 9, 1995, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services announced an agreement in principle had been reached with EH Industries on the termination costs of the contract for the EH-101 airplanes.

On January 23, 1996, the government announced the termination costs for the contract with EH Industries for the EH-101 airplanes were \$157.8 million. On March 8, 1996, the Minister of National Defence said the decision on the shipborne helicopter project would be deferred for an additional year. On August 23, 1996, three of Canada's fleet of helicopters were grounded, pending the inspection and repair of cracks found in the tail section of the air frame. On November 27, 1996, the government issued the request for proposals from aircraft manufacturers for the rescue helicopter project.

On January 13, 1997, a Labrador made a crash landing in the Georgia Strait after a fire had broken out on board. This was one of the most serious of several emergency landings made by Labradors and Sea Kings in late 1996 and early 1997. On May 5, 1997, four manufacturers met the deadline for proposals for the new rescue helicopter: Agusta-Westland, Boeing Helicopter and Sikorsky.

On January 5, 1998, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Public Works and Government Services announced that EH Industries had been selected to supply 15 Cormorants to replace the Labrador search and rescue helicopters. On April 23, 1998, the Department of National Defence announced the signing of the contract with EH Industries and a cost of delivery of 15 Cormorants at \$580 million. On October 2, 1998, a Labrador helicopter 413 Squadron based at Greenwood, Nova Scotia, crashed in the Gaspé Peninsula, killing all six persons aboard. The remaining 12 Labradors were grounded as a precaution. On October 15, 1998, all 30 Sea Kings were grounded after the discovery of a fuel leak in one of the aircraft. All but one returned to flight operations on October 18.

Let us shift here and talk a little about the latest budget. From the point of view of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian forces, the federal budget is highly unsatisfactory. Although it professes to address the post-September 11 environment,

it largely ignores the urgent requirements of an essential component of national security, namely, the armed forces. There are two main concerns.

Additional funding assigned to general military capabilities and to operational readiness comprises only \$510 million over two years. Whereas annual shortfalls in the DND budget, computed by the auditor general and others, far exceed that sum. The manner in which funding for defence is presented lacks clarity and could be misleading for those interested in defence issues but not well informed on budget procedures.

● (1730)

In raw terms the budget allocates \$1.2 billion to DND and its agencies over a five year period starting in fiscal year 2001-02 to 2006-07. Full details are available on the Department of Finance website, [www.fin.gc.ca](http://www.fin.gc.ca).

Over a five year, plus this year, horizon amounts from the above are assigned as follows: expand anti-terrorist capacity, \$119 million; nuclear biological chemical threats, \$513 million; and contingency, \$100 million. The balance is assigned over two years including this year as follows: supporting Canada's military, \$510 million. That is \$1.2 billion.

Members should note that the budget document, budget plan 2001, also includes \$396 million for emergency preparedness which is on page 92 of the document. In fact this amount will be assigned to and disbursed by other departments and agencies and is not included in this analysis. Much the same applies to the \$513 million for NBC threats although some of it will remain in DND.

The additional funding is useful but only \$510 million is available for application to conventional military capabilities and the commitments assigned under the 1994 white paper on defence.

Moreover the \$510 million is specifically assigned as follows and therefore not available to address the long list of short hauls in the operation readiness of the CFC and these have all been pointed out not only in this speech today but by the Auditor General of Canada.

Operation Apollo anti-terror coalition operations is \$210 million, capital purchases \$300 million. The funds for Operation Apollo have already been spent and will not contribute to stopping the decline of the operational readiness in the Canadian forces as a whole. The \$300 million for capital purchases will be applied mainly to payments for projects already underway. For example, the lease to purchase payments for the new fleet of Victoria class submarines will relieve some pressure in future years in the DND capital program.



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The expanded anti-terrorist capacity noted above refers to raising the strength of joint task force 2, JTF2, as well as providing it with appropriate equipment. Funding this new specific task will not alleviate the general malaise of the forces and in terms of the additional manpower requirements will impose further strains on an organization already pushed to the breaking point.

Recently a number of agencies issued reports and studies in which they analyzed the problems arising from the failure of the government to provide the funds necessary for DND and the Canadian forces to implement the policy set out in the 1994 white paper on defence. They were: the Royal Canadian Military Institute, the Federation of Military and United Services Institutes of Canada, the Conference of Defence Associations, Canadian Defence and Security in the 21st Century, and the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs.

The government ignored what the committee of the House requested the House of Commons to do. I know the defence committee is one of those in which members work closely together because it is such an important issue for Canada. It is probably one of the most non-partisan committees where we work together as Canadians like foreign affairs. It made recommendations which have been ignored by the government. We should all be ashamed of that. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance has also made recommendations.

All of these reports and studies listed serious problems within the Canadian Forces arising inter alia from a lack of trained manpower, insufficient training, rusting out equipment and inadequate logistic support.

On December 7, 2001, the Auditor General of Canada issued her annual report. It verified and supported the findings of other reports listed above. In particular, it noted there was an ongoing deficit in the end operations and maintenance of \$1.3 billion per annum. This meant that over a two year period DND would need \$2.6 billion merely to clear the deficit as shown above. The 2001 federal budget provided only \$510 million over two years. That amount is already spoken for in other areas.

● (1735)

In previous reports the auditor general identified an additional \$6 billion to \$10 billion over the next decade which would be needed for major equipment replacement. Yesterday in her report she talked about taking 30 years to catch up.

To date, DND has managed to survive by reprioritizing and reallocating resources. The so-called rob Peter to pay Paul approach, considering the failure of the 2001 budget to provide significant new funds, is no longer viable. It is therefore likely that a defence policy update scheduled for release in early 2002 will direct further downsizing of the Canadian forces, with associated elimination or reduction of combat capabilities.

The budget plan 2001 lacks clarity in addressing the above situation. For example, it sets out to illustrate incremental defence funding from 1999 to 2001. It provides information in a manner that could mislead the reader. The following statement from page 99 of the budget plan 2001 illustrates the point:

The \$3.9 billion of new funding in the budgets of 1999 and 2000, together with the more than \$1.2 billion of new funding in this budget, means that the government will have increased DND funding by \$5.102 billion over the next five years.

The total of \$5.102 billion is computed as follows: budget 1999, \$550 million; budget 2000, \$3.35 billion; and budget 2001, \$1.202 billion.

It has already been shown in earlier paragraphs from this memo that only \$510 million of the \$1.202 billion allocated to DND budget 2001 would be available to support existing military capabilities of the Canadian forces. Moreover, this amount is designated in advance for specific purposes. The \$550 million from the actions taken in budget 1999 is being applied to quality of life projects. It is very necessary, but not directly applicable to the rehabilitation of military capabilities.

It could also be critiqued in the same vein as illustrated in the next paragraph. It is, however, the totals of \$3.35 billion shown for budget 2000 and the grand total which is 1999, 2000 and 2001 of \$5.102 billion that are most questionable in the manner in which they are represented. The problem lies with confusion over approved rises in the base of the DND budget in a given year versus cumulative totals shown for succeeding years.

The first rise is indeed an increase in funding which raises the level of the budget base. However, the government refers to the ongoing insertion of the rise over a period of years as an investment. This may be correct, but there is also an implication that the level of the base has continued to rise past the first year. When that is not the case there are clear differences in meaning between the two terms, raise the base and total investment. These are explored in detail. Paragraph 2 on page 99 of the budget plan states:

This budget therefore commits substantial funding to enhance emergency response on preparedness. It allocates more than \$1.6 billion over the next five years to improve the government's ability to detect, prevent and respond to threats, and to fund Canada's military participation in the international coalition against terrorism.

In conjunction with this quotation it should be noted that the form of budget 2001 is quite different from previous practice. Instead of making allocations directly to government departments and agencies, it assigns money to the number of agendas. DND and the Canadian forces are included in the security agenda. For this reason, most of the \$1.6 billion would not be available for DND expenditure as already noted above for the emergency preparedness allotment.

*Routine Proceedings*

Moreover, DND allocation funds are assigned to objects of expenditure in advance. Many are outside of the DND, for example, nuclear, chemical, and biological threats. The political intent of the above quotation may be interpreted as follows: to respond to public concerns regarding economic downturn and terrorism, to channel most of the new DND funds into local economies, and to deflect criticism by allies and analysts that the Canadian forces, including elements assigned to Operation Apollo, are not battle ready. Elsewhere the government has recognized this deficiency by stating that Operation Apollo would not be committed to combat operations.

• (1740)

We see that today in the operation announced by the Americans. There was nobody from Canada standing in that room and they were talking about defence for North America. We have no respect. We are losing it because the government has no respect for the military. It has no respect for the traditions of Canada in working with our allies to the south, our best friends and biggest traders. It is very unfortunate.

The results of budget 2001 indicate the operational readiness of the Canadian forces would continue to decline mainly as a result of underfunding. That is not just the opposition complaining which the opposition tends to do. It is the Auditor General of Canada, the one person we must respect who checks the books and keeps us in line. She said our military is in dire straits. We have ships with nobody to man them and officers without uniforms. The government can have fancy toilets in its jets, but Canadian soldiers do not get porta-potties over in Afghanistan.

As a result of underfunding there is a lack of trained manpower, the progressive rusting out of equipment and inadequate logistic support. The government does not intend to raise the defence expenditures above the level of 1.1% of GDP and therefore the policies stated in the 1994 white paper on defence would remain largely unaffordable in the context of government priorities.

We recommend the government initiate at once a broad national security review comprising a comprehensive public and parliamentary examination of Canada's needs in the realm of foreign and defence policy. At the conclusion of the process it should publish a new white paper on defence with a government commitment to adequate long term funding written into it. This process was recently undertaken and implemented in Australia. If we were to have a white paper, we must have the commitment from the government.

There is no sense in starting any studies unless the government says in advance that when this is done and it goes through a committee of the House of Commons that the government would support it with the necessary funds. That would right away improve the morale of our forces. Even if it took us a little while to get that done, at least they would know that we would sit down, put together a white paper that talked about where we would go in these areas and that the government would be committed to fully fund it after a full debate in committee and in the House.

The figures and explanations provided on page 99 of the budget plan document are most contentious in terms of misleading the reader and the public. To analyze them one must understand the basic framework of departmental budgets. The latter should be perceived in two parts: the foundation and a smaller superstructure,

both of which exist for only one year and which must be rebuilt at the start of each new fiscal year.

The foundation is known as the base and the superstructure comprises sums of money added outside the base during the year. The complete structure is described in the annual departmental estimates. Recently, in the case of DND, the so-called fiscal framework budget, it is running about \$9.5 billion per annum, and the estimates at about \$11.5 billion. It is important that the DND budget base be set high enough to fund the commitments assigned to the Canadian forces in the 1994 white paper on defence.

An adequate budget base provides stability, allows coherent forward planning and keeps the Canadian forces in an effective state of operational readiness. If there were no federal budget to provide additional money to DND or if a given budget does not provide an additional allocation, then the central agency should build a base as it did in the previous year and, with approvals from cabinet, Treasury Board, Department of Finance and Privy Council Office, should add the superstructure as required, for example, in supplementary estimates for expenditures approved during the year.

The important point is that the base is made up of individual bricks, most comprising increases approved for the base in previous years. Hence, if a base increase is not approved in a given year, it must be inserted again in each succeeding year. Therefore it is only a real increase in defence funding the first year it appears. In succeeding years it is merely reinserted to keep the base at the approved level. Since the last base increase in budget 2000, this brick has become known as the program, integrity or sustainability.

• (1745)

For fiscal year 2000-01 it was set at \$400 million. Since the additional funds allocated to DND in budget 2000 total \$3.3 billion, including subsequent extrapolations out to fiscal year 2006-07, one may ask why the brick is only worth \$400 million.

Part of the answer is that the \$3.3 billion represents cumulative funding originally plus yearly insertions over that extended period in fiscal year 1999-2000. As well, other funds were designated and applied directly to such objects of expenditure as provincial disaster relief and the war in Kosovo. These and other factors meant that in the end, the brick of real new money applied to the base in the first year was only \$400 million. A similar analysis could be applied to the brick for quality of life added in budget 1999 and amounting to \$140 million.

*Routine Proceedings*

On the other hand, the base raising brick of \$400 million approved in budget 2000 has subsequently received approval to appreciate in a limited amount over the period to fiscal year 2007. This will raise the budget base incrementally during that period by an amount totalling \$300 million. This means that between 2001 and 2007 the DND budget base will rise by \$400 million plus \$300 million for the equivalent of \$700 million.

The government's interpretation of this situation differs from the above analysis. The government adds up all the bricks, the initial one plus the annual reinsertions in a cumulative fashion, and calls it a total investment in defence amounting to \$5.1 billion. This could mislead those unfamiliar with budget procedures into believing that the government has made additions to the DND budget base when it has really only made insertions to the budget.

Using the government's logic, it could be said that the cumulative DND budget allocations for 2001 to 2007 totalling some \$60 billion are also an investment in defence. The annual insertion of bricks serves to preserve the new level of money originally approved in any given budget, but afterwards it is not an increase in funding.

What is not acknowledged in the cabinet situation is the fact that the foundation is not large enough to address the annual ongoing DND deficit of \$1.3 billion per annum identified by the auditor general in her report of December 2, 2001. What is required to resolve the severe underfunding problem within DND is the addition of a new and larger brick to the DND budget base in the order of \$1 billion per annum in each of the next five years to bring the budget base up to a steady rate of some \$14 billion to \$15 billion. Until that happens, to use another analogy, any lesser increase in real funding will only serve to maintain life support systems rather than to cure the patient.

I would like now to quote a comment one of my colleagues, the hon. member for Lakeland, has raised in the House on many occasions:

While our men and women are risking their lives in the name of freedom, justice and democracy, it is incumbent on members of the House to provide support not only in our words and our hearts but more importantly through our actions. We must ask whether the government is doing enough to defend those who defend us. I must answer no to that question.

Canadians have been asking the same question. Not only the Canadian public but the government's own defence committee, military analysts from coast to coast, retired servicemen, the auditor general and even some of our allies have been urging Canada to provide a greater commitment to the military. The answer they all keep getting is no, the government is not committed to the military and is failing the men and women of the armed forces.

The military was virtually ignored in the December budget in spite of the fact it was called a defence and security budget.

The auditor general made it clear this week that we need a minimum of \$2.2 billion a year to sustain the military at the current level and more to rebuild. The government offered less than 5% of that to the military. That is unacceptable. It shows the kind of commitment the government has made to the military. It is unacceptable to the men and women who put their lives on the line every day and who are certainly putting their lives on the line for our country in the mission in Afghanistan.

● (1750)

I will quote the Prime Minister's response to the criticism of people who care about the military. He said over the Christmas break "There is a bunch of guys who are lobbyists who are representing those who sell armaments, who tell you of course they will give you a better lunch if they had more comments".

That was the Prime Minister's response when asked to comment on people who genuinely care about the military. It is shameful that our Prime Minister would point the finger and blame it on people who really care. Their only fault was pointing out what is really happening in the military.

I wonder who lobbied to get those two jets the Prime Minister needed so badly, those new fancy toilets in a jet that goes a little farther. I wonder who lobbied to sell the government the \$174 million satellite dish that is sitting in a warehouse and which nobody is using. I wonder who lobbied to get all those grants that are going out with kickbacks to the Liberal Party.

The government has an absolutely shameful record on the military and is arrogant and corrupt. There are court cases right now with two people convicted in Quebec for doing things the wrong way with grants.

The government wants to knock anybody who talks about the realities of life. We continue to get the assurances of members of the government and the Minister of National Defence that the troops are well equipped for the mission. They say they have all the necessary resources to do their job and they are doing it safely. They say everything has been well planned and thought through and that the government has learned from past mistakes. These are the things we are told by the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence on a regular basis.

The reality is in the auditor general's report. It is too bad I am running out of time because I have a lot of pages from the auditor general's report. There is enough in it to talk for hours about the auditor general's report, about the waste in the government, not only in defence but in other departments. Is it not a shame that it takes the auditor general to tell the government not just last year, but this year it is even worse, what the government is not doing for our military.

It is time for a change in the country. It is time for a new younger vision, a younger leader and he will be sitting on this side after September 13. The country needs a change. It is so obvious by the auditor general's report. It is so obvious from the arrogance on the other side of the House.

**An hon. member:** Be careful of guys with white hair.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, a colleague over there said be careful of guys with white hair. I have white hair but I can say I am anxious because I have a party with young members in it, with ethnic diversity, with a new young leader who will excite the country and make sure our military is well funded.

He will bring us back the respect from our American allies and our friends around the world. The country is losing the respect we have had with our American colleagues. We need to build it back and we will build it back under the Canadian Alliance with Stephen Harper as the leader of our party.

*Private Members' Business*

I thank members in the House for listening. I hope all the Liberal members will go back to their cabinet colleagues to make sure they listen to what we have said today. Let us look after the people in our military the way they deserve to be looked after.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

**CONTRAVENTIONS ACT**

The House resumed from April 11 consideration of the motion that Bill C-344, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (marijuana), be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** It being 5.44 p.m., pursuant to order made on Wednesday, April 10, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-344 under private members' business.

Call in the members.

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

*(Division No. 272)***YEAS**

## Members

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Adams                  | Alcock                    |
| Anderson (Victoria)    | Assadourian               |
| Bagnell                | Barnes                    |
| Bélanger               | Bertrand                  |
| Bevilacqua             | Binet                     |
| Blondin-Andrew         | Bonin                     |
| Boudria                | Bradshaw                  |
| Brown                  | Bryden                    |
| Bulte                  | Byrne                     |
| Calder                 | Cannis                    |
| Caplan                 | Carroll                   |
| Castonguay             | Catterall                 |
| Cauchon                | Collenette                |
| Comuzzi                | Copps                     |
| Cotler                 | Cullen                    |
| Cuzner                 | DeVillers                 |
| Dion                   | Doyle                     |
| Dromisky               | Drouin                    |
| Duplain                | Easter                    |
| Eggleton               | Eyking                    |
| Finlay                 | Godfrey                   |
| Goodale                | Graham                    |
| Grose                  | Harb                      |
| Hubbard                | Jackson                   |
| Jordan                 | Karetak-Lindell           |
| Keyes                  | Lastewka                  |
| Leung                  | Longfield                 |
| MacAulay               | Macklin                   |
| Malhi                  | Manley                    |
| Marcil                 | Marleau                   |
| Martin (LaSalle—Émard) | Matthews                  |
| McCallum               | McCormick                 |
| McGuire                | McKay (Scarborough East)  |
| McLellan               | Minna                     |
| Mitchell               | Murphy                    |
| Myers                  | Nault                     |
| O'Brien (Labrador)     | O'Brien (London—Fanshawe) |
| O'Reilly               | Patry                     |
| Peric                  | Pescholido                |
| Peterson               | Phinney                   |

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Pillitteri                | Pratt                |
| Proulx                    | Redman               |
| Reed (Halton)             | Regan                |
| Richardson                | Robillard            |
| Rock                      | Saada                |
| Scherrer                  | Scott                |
| Sgro                      | Shepherd             |
| Speller                   | St-Jacques           |
| St-Julien                 | St. Denis            |
| Steckle                   | Stewart              |
| Szabo                     | Thibault (West Nova) |
| Thibeault (Saint-Lambert) | Tirabassi            |
| Tonks                     | Ur                   |
| Valeri                    | Vanclief             |
| Wayne                     | Whelan               |
| Wood — 111                |                      |

**NAYS**

## Members

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Abbott                                 | Anders                           |
| Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)    | Asselin                          |
| Bachand (Saint-Jean)                   | Bailey                           |
| Benoit                                 | Bergeron                         |
| Bigras                                 | Blaikie                          |
| Borotsik                               | Bourgeois                        |
| Brien                                  | Cadman                           |
| Cardin                                 | Casey                            |
| Casson                                 | Chatters                         |
| Clark                                  | Comartin                         |
| Crête                                  | Davies                           |
| Day                                    | Desjarlais                       |
| Desrochers                             | Dubé                             |
| Duceppe                                | Duncan                           |
| Elley                                  | Epp                              |
| Fitzpatrick                            | Gagnon (Champlain)               |
| Gallant                                | Gauthier                         |
| Girard-Bujold                          | Godin                            |
| Goldring                               | Gouk                             |
| Grey                                   | Guay                             |
| Hanger                                 | Hearn                            |
| Herron                                 | Hill (Prince George—Peace River) |
| Hilstrom                               | Ianno                            |
| Jaffer                                 | Johnston                         |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast)             | Kraft Sloan                      |
| Laframboise                            | Lanctôt                          |
| Lebel                                  | Lill                             |
| Lincoln                                | Loubier                          |
| MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough) | Marceau                          |
| Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)        | McDonough                        |
| McTeague                               | Meredith                         |
| Merrifield                             | Mills (Red Deer)                 |
| Moore                                  | Nystrom                          |
| Obhrai                                 | Pallister                        |
| Pankiw                                 | Picard (Drummond)                |
| Proctor                                | Rajotte                          |
| Ritz                                   | Robinson                         |
| Rocheleau                              | Roy                              |
| Schmidt                                | Skelton                          |
| Spencer                                | St-Hilaire                       |
| Stoffler                               | Strahl                           |
| Telegdi                                | Toews                            |
| Vellacott                              | Wappel                           |
| Wasylycia-Leis                         | Williams — 88                    |

**PAIRED**

## Members

|  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Bellehumeur                              | Bellemare                          |
| Bonwick                                  | Charbonneau                        |
| Dalphond-Guiral                          | Dhalwal                            |
| Fontana                                  | Fournier                           |
| Guimond                                  | Jennings                           |
| Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)             | Maloney                            |
| Ménard                                   | Neville                            |
| Owen                                     | Paquette                           |
| Perron                                   | Pettigrew                          |
| Plamondon                                | Sauvageau                          |
| Torsney                                  | Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay) |
| Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis) | Venne — 24                         |

• (1825)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I declare the amendment carried.

The next question is on the main motion as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**An hon. member:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Points of order will be taken after the vote is finished.

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

*(Division No. 273)*

**YEAS**

Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Bagnell  
Bélanger  
Bevilacqua  
Blondin-Andrew  
Boudria  
Brown  
Bulte  
Calder  
Caplan  
Castonguay  
Cauchon  
Comuzzi  
Cotler  
Cuzner  
Dion  
Dromisky  
Duplain  
Eggleton  
Finlay  
Goodale  
Grose  
Hubbard  
Jordan  
Keyes  
Leung  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Marcil  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCallum  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Mitchell  
Myers

Alcock  
Assadourian  
Barnes  
Bertrand  
Binet  
Bonin  
Bradshaw  
Bryden  
Byrne  
Cannis  
Carroll  
Catterall  
Collenette  
Copps  
Cullen  
DeVillers  
Doyle  
Drouin  
Easter  
Eyking  
Godfrey  
Graham  
Harb  
Jackson  
Karetak-Lindell  
Lastewka  
Longfield  
Macklin  
Manley  
Marleau  
Matthews  
McCormick  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault

O'Brien (Labrador)  
O'Reilly  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pillitteri  
Proulx  
Reed (Halton)  
Richardson  
Rock  
Scherrer  
Sgro  
Speller  
St-Julien  
Steckle  
Szabo  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Tonks  
Valeri  
Wayne  
Wood— 111

*Points of Order*

O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Patry  
Peschisolido  
Phinney  
Pratt  
Redman  
Regan  
Robillard  
Saada  
Scott  
Shepherd  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Stewart  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tirabassi  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Whelan

**NAYS**

Members

Wappel— 1

**PAIRED**

Members

Bellehumeur  
Bonwick  
Dalphond-Guiral  
Fontana  
Guimond  
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)  
Ménard  
Owen  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Torsney  
Tremblay (Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis)

Bellemare  
Charbonneau  
Dhalival  
Fournier  
Jennings  
Maloney  
Neville  
Paquette  
Pettigrew  
Sauvageau  
Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)  
Venne— 24

• (1835)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I declare the motion carried.  
(Order discharged, bill withdrawn and subject referred to a committee)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. The hon. member for St. Albert on a point of order.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

VOTING PROCEDURES

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to your attention, and I am sure you noticed, that a large number of members walked out after the first vote. When the bells rang, we came in and voted on the amendment on Bill C-344. After that, you saw, and everybody else saw, a large number of members walking out of this place.

You had an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to ring the bells for half an hour and call the members in before you started to read the motion and to vote on the main motion of Bill C-344. Therefore, I would ask that you rule the last vote null and void and out of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I am sorry to inform my hon. colleague that his point of order is not in order. I will give him the reason. In the rule book the second paragraph of article 93 says:

*Privilege*

Provided that, unless otherwise disposed of, at not later than fifteen minutes before the end of the time provided for the consideration of the said item, any proceedings then before the House shall be interrupted and every question necessary to dispose of the selected motion or of the selected bill at the second reading stage, shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

● (1840)

**Mr. John Williams:** Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the ruling. I am not challenging the Chair's ruling but I think the Chair missed the point that we have a definite rule that the members shall be called to vote.

The bells rang and we came in and voted on the amendment to Bill C-344. As the Chair and everyone saw, a large number of members left the Chamber. Therefore the Chair had, in my opinion, an obligation to call in the members again and to allow the bells to ring for 30 minutes to summon them back. That did not happen, as the Chair knows.

The members who had left the Chamber did not have an opportunity to return because when they left the Chair had not risen to read the main motion. Therefore it can be said that they did not know a vote was to be held and the bells should have been rung for 30 minutes. Since they were not, the vote was out of order. The proceedings were not out of order but the vote was.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I refer here to today's planned order of business. At the bottom of the page is clearly indicated, and I quote, "Voting on the main motion—we voted on the amendment—immediately after the amendment is disposed of, pursuant to Standing Order 93".

I really do not see what they are trying to do procedurally, except make a political statement which seems to me to be completely out of order.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** To come back to the hon. member's point that some members had left the House, the table tells me there were two successive votes and that nothing in any rule book prevents any member from leaving the House in between the two votes.

● (1845)

**Mr. John Williams:** Mr. Speaker, with deference to the Chair, I still think the Chair is missing the point. Of course we can walk out. Of course we can sit in our chairs and not be recognized to vote, as perhaps some of us did in the vote. However that is not part of the issue.

The point is that the Chair knew a large number of members were not present. In order to allow us to exercise the democratic responsibility of voting in the Chamber the Speaker has an obligation to ring the bells for 30 minutes, or 15 minutes if it is a deferred vote.

The point is that the bells should have been rung. That is what I am trying to say. Because the bells did not ring and the members were not called into the Chamber the vote is out of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I am of the opinion that there was agreement among the House leaders that once a deferred recorded division is scheduled for a specific date and everyone

knows in advance that there will be a vote on the amendment followed immediately by a vote on the main motion, there are no bells in between the vote on the amendment and the vote on the main motion.

**Mr. John Williams:** Mr. Speaker, I again apologize for my multiple interventions. We all know many things go on in the House on an informal basis but there are formal procedures and rules to ensure things are done properly, legally and judiciously. The issue here is that members be called for a vote.

The Chair knows a large number of members walked out of the House. They left in protest or for whatever reason. However because a large number had walked out they had to be summoned back because there was another vote that had not started. The motion had not been read. The Chair had not stood to read the motion. It had not been introduced for a vote, therefore the Chair had an obligation to call the members back in. The bells should have been rung, which did not happen. The members were not summoned back or given the opportunity to return to the Chamber.

● (1850)

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. With all due respect to my hon. colleague, it is clear that once members of the House come here to vote they have an opportunity and the responsibility to stay and vote. Hon. members who decided to leave the House this evening in protest or for whatever reason had the opportunity to stay. They all knew there would be a vote after the first one. They decided not to be here for it. That was their choice. If they did not wish to stay for the vote it was their choice.

The hon. member suggests we have to sit here and waste the House's time by ringing the bells for half an hour for no reason other than some members want to play games. That is certainly not a valid objection.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I come back to my previous point for the hon. member for St. Albert. There were two successive votes that had to be taken immediately. If some members of his party decided to walk out, that was their decision. The House still had to proceed with the vote without bells because it was agreed to 10 days ago. Therefore that is it for this point of order.

\* \* \*

**PRIVILEGE**

ATTEMPTED REMOVAL OF MACE

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the last number of minutes the House has witnessed some rather extraordinary behaviour.

*Private Members' Business*

I am pleased the hon. member for St. Albert talked about behaviour that is proper, legal and judicious because earlier this evening we saw behaviour that was exactly the opposite. In an affront to the dignity of the House and an assault on its order and decorum a member of parliament from the opposition attempted to seize and remove the mace from the table. There could be no more serious affront to the dignity, decorum and order of the House than that.

I wish to put on record my strongest possible objection and indicate to the Chair that at the earliest opportunity at the next sitting of the House I will seek the opportunity to elaborate on this point from a legal point of view. I will put the argument before the House that this is a question of privilege that deserves to be dealt with, and I wanted to give notice at the earliest opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Notice has been given, and I am sure given the seriousness of the situation the Speaker himself will look into the matter and report to the House.

Is the hon. member for Ottawa West—Nepean rising on the same question of privilege? The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has been patiently waiting to speak.

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I also rise on the question of privilege.

A question of privilege has been raised with regard to the most serious violation of decorum in the House that can occur, and I would ask that until the question of privilege is resolved the member responsible, the hon. member against whom the question of privilege has been raised, not be allowed to speak in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** No at this point in time I do not agree with the government whip. The Speaker will have to pass judgment on the severity of what the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has done in the House and he will bring in a ruling.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I apologize to you and the House for touching the mace, a symbol of democracy in the House. The government House leader mentioned the issue of proper, legal and judicious affronts to the House. There is only one greater affront: the violation of democracy that took place today with the government's motion.

However I apologize to the House for touching the mace. I did so in the heat of the moment and to try to make the point that democracy was violated, four years of work was destroyed and people's lives were at stake. I did it to make a point. I should not have done it and I apologize to the House.

• (1855)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The member's apology is accepted, except for the fact that I do not know if the Speaker will pursue the matter. However the apology is quite well taken.

**Mr. Dale Johnston:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wanted to reply to the government House leader and the whip. I wanted make the Chair aware, as I am sure he is, that I had approached the table and made arrangements for the hon. member to speak some time prior to this intervention. The Chair is aware of that and I made the table aware of it as well.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** It being 6.55 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

### CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTERS ACT

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ)** moved that Bill C-388, an act to regulate conflict of interest situations for ministers and to provide for a code of ethics for ministers, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to have started by saying that I am happy to speak to this debate on Bill C-388, the result of just over two years of work. However, I can only conclude, after the sad spectacle the government treated us to, that the amount of work and the number of years we spend working on a bill do not count for much here in the House. This is a grievous affront to private members' business and to the rights of parliamentarians to raise in the House issues of concern to their constituents.

That said, I will go through the motions of my presentation because I believe this bill contains provisions that deserve to be heard, even though, unfortunately, we will not have the opportunity to vote on it.

The summary of the bill states that:

The purpose of the bill is to regulate the conduct of ministers with respect to conflicts of interest and post-employment. It is 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.

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.

To that end, 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.

The bill begins with a detailed description of how ministers' assets are to be managed. A clear definition is provided of the difference between exempt assets, which are the assets for private use of the minister and his or her family, and assets which must be divested, such as companies and publicly traded securities, which must be disposed of or administered by a third party, such as a trust. Over and above the question of assets and regulatory statements relating thereto, the bill also defines the pertinent family relationships in order to avoid any confusion.

Part of the information on ministers' assets disclosed under the provisions of this bill would be made public, thus guaranteeing the transparency of the system, a sine qua non which ought to allow the public to regain a degree of trust in our political institutions and the integrity of its key figures, that is the ministers.

*Private Members' Business*

The public's cynicism about public institutions, which is already very much evident from the polls, is translated in election after election by a growing disaffection and a more and more anemic voter turnout. A government can hardly pat itself on the back if it is elected by close to 40% of the 60% of people who bothered to turn out to vote.

A phenomenon such as this is evidence of a sick system, one that must not be accepted with complacency because it suits us, but rather must be a cause of considerable concern.

Major changes concerning ethics and conflict of interest are therefore more indicated than ever, particularly since the muddled affair of Auberge Grand-Mère and the precipitous departure of Alfonso Gagliano for Denmark, after allegations of nepotism and favouritism. These incidents have only further eroded the already shaky confidence our fellow citizens have in politicians.

Incidentally, clause 3 of Bill C-388 clearly describes the purpose of this initiative, and I quote:

The purpose of this Act is to enhance public confidence in the integrity of ministers and in the decision-making process in the federal government:

It is obvious that such a measure can only increase public confidence in the government and change the very negative impression that our fellow citizens have of politicians.

Indeed, the weekly *La voix de L'Est*, reported on February 25 that a survey conducted by Léger Marketing shows that public confidence in politicians has never been so low. The article referred to:

—a historic low of 18%—

The pollster noted that people “trust a car salesman more than a politician”. Indeed, politicians come last in the 20 professions mentioned—

As we can see and feel, public confidence in us is at an all time low. Personally, I think this situation is extremely serious and we should be concerned as parliamentarians, because it is probably the worst threat that our institutions have faced in a long time. This threat is all the more insidious, because it may seem trivial, temporary or cyclical.

As I already mentioned in the House, democracy is a blessing that must never be taken for granted and that must always be cherished.

Therefore, measures that require a bit more transparency on the part of cabinet members, as provides the bill before us this evening, should not only be concerns, but should also be part of the government's legislative agenda, this as quickly as possible. We all know that this government truly needs to improve its image with the public, in terms of integrity and credibility.

● (1900)

By adopting a code of ethics regulating the conduct of ministers while they hold office and post-employment, the House of Commons would acquire a useful tool with respect to public integrity, which could only earn the respect of our fellow citizens. This would always be a good start in winning back their trust.

As members of society, we must take responsibility for our actions, as well as assume the obligations resulting from our choices. As responsible citizens, members of government must act in the public interest, and not with their own personal interests in mind. In

order to ensure that ministers always act in the public interest and with integrity, their responsibilities and obligations should logically be part of Canadian legislation.

In addition to the oath of office which they must swear before taking up their duties, ministers would be formally called upon, under this bill, to file a confidential statement and a statement of divestment.

Finally, Bill C-388 would create the position of commissioner of ethics, a real one. This individual would be appointed by the House and accountable to it. He would be appointed for a term of seven years, renewable once only, and his duties would essentially be, and I quote:

(a) to receive ministers' statements and reports;

(b) to give directives and provide advice to ministers on the actions that must be taken to ensure fulfillment of the ministers' obligations under this Act;

(c) to maintain a public register in which the ministers' public statements are kept;

(d) to make studies and hold inquiries; and

(e) to monitor the operation of this Act.

The commissioner would therefore have a real power of investigation and could launch an investigation on his own initiative or at the suggestion of parliamentarians or even ordinary members of the public, if he felt that the facts uncovered warranted it.

In addition to the annual statutory meeting provided for in this bill, the commissioner of ethics could at any time request a meeting with a minister, and vice versa. At such a meeting, the commissioner would provide advice and issue directives to the minister, who would be required to comply with them or face a penalty.

It is important to point out, for the benefit of those following this debate, that bills and motions introduced in the House of Commons by members are examined by a sub-committee of parliamentarians, the Sub-committee on Private Members' Business of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. It is mandated to decide which items will be votable.

We have had numerous debates on this matter, that is on whether it would be appropriate to have all private members' business votable, but unfortunately the recent mini-renovation, or modernization, of the standing orders will not allow us to go any further in that direction.

For a member to have his or her bill or motion declared a votable item, it must comply with a series of six mandatory criteria, from which I will spare you except for the one that reads:

Bills should concern issues not part of the current legislative agenda of the government or that have not been voted on or otherwise addressed in the current session of parliament.

It would appear that the bill we are debating here has been deemed not to be votable by the Sub-committee on Private Members Business, because it did not meet the above criterion.



*Private Members' Business*

The Canadian Alliance, we are told, moved a motion on the same subject as that raised in Bill C-388. Could I have forgotten, when I was working on the bill, work that took more than two years, incidentally, to check if my bill met all six of the criteria used to determine if it would be deemed votable?

I think not. After numerous inquiries and lengthy research, all that I concluded was that there was no other motion moved by the Canadian Alliance or any other party that proposed establishing a bill to regulate the conduct of ministers, with respect to conflict of interest and post employment.

There was, however, a motion moved by the Alliance, which may have produced this error. This motion, which was moved by the member for Okanagan—Coquihalla on February 8, 2001, and voted down on February 13 by the Liberal majority in the House, read as follows:

That this House adopt the following policy from Liberal Redbook 1 and call for its implementation by the government: "A Liberal Government will appoint an independent Ethics Counsellor to advise both public officials and lobbyists in the day-to-day application of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials. The Ethics Counsellor will be appointed after consultation with the leaders of all parties in the House of Commons and will report directly to Parliament".

●(1905)

It is understandable that, to some people, the terms used in that motion may be confusing, since it includes similar terms such as "code", "counsellor" and "conduct".

The purpose of this Canadian Alliance motion was simply to ask the Liberals to keep one of their own promises and to make good on it. Incidentally, the government amended that motion, to avoid having to vote against its own election promise. Our credibility with the public can only suffer whenever the government resorts to partisan schemes and tries to avoid keeping its promises.

It would be very deceitful to try to convince anyone that Bill C-388 and the Canadian Alliance motion are similar, and to argue that the House has already dealt with this issue in this session. This evening, we had a unique opportunity to meet the expectations of the public, which would love to put its trust in our political institutions, if only we would show some will to ensure greater transparency and integrity in the decision-making process.

Unfortunately, this is a missed opportunity, because once again, the Liberals will have manoeuvred to skirt the issue.

In 1993, the Liberals had made the commitment, before being elected, to increase the level of confidence in our institutions by making integrity and public accountability the cornerstone of their election campaign. In fact, in the spring of 1993, the Prime Minister said, and I quote, "Giving a job to my barber, his wife, the person who took care of the kids when we were not home or my favourite innkeeper, that will not happen again".

This type of behaviour, which favours friends of the government at the expense of other people, can tarnish the reputation of the government itself, that of ministers and that of MPs as a group but, above all, these actions undermine the very foundations of our democracy.

To meet public expectations that were created by these previous comments by the Prime Minister and certain ministers, we must put

in place without delay one or several mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability on the part of this same Prime Minister and his ministers. That is exactly what Bill C-388 proposed to do.

We must prevent embarrassing situations such as the Auberge Grand-Mère scandal, the allegations of patronage still hanging over the former Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Alphonso Gagliano, and having taxpayers pay three times for the same report, as was the case with the Groupaction report, from happening again and again.

It is high time the government acted to save the reputation of ministers and that of their political party for the benefit of all members of this House, the public and our democratic institutions. It must impose a strict and clear code of conduct to legitimize its actions in the eyes of the public.

●(1910)

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak to the bill introduced by the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes on a code of ethics for ministers. I would first like to congratulate him for having raised this important and serious matter of values and ethics in the House.

[English]

This is an important matter for all members of the House. We all have a responsibility to this House and to Canadians for maintaining the highest standards of conduct. The government has made values and ethics a top priority since its 1993 election. In my view the bill before us would have the effect of undermining the progress we have made in restoring values and ethics in the last decade. The summary of the bill states:

It is 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.

On the one hand the bill is based on something we already have in place for ministers in Canada, a code the Prime Minister revised and strengthened in 1994. These revisions clarified existing obligations and added new guidelines for government decision making. Preferential treatment to persons or groups based on the individuals hired to represent them was prohibited. Public office holders now must provide reports on the assets and outside activities of their spouses and dependants. The Prime Minister tabled this code in parliament. We do not need a law to bring this code into effect, it is already part of the way government works.

On the other hand the bill says it is based on the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament of the United Kingdom. In fact the bill only deals with ministers and not all members of parliament. The U. K. code is just that, a code, not an act of parliament. There is nothing in it that is legally enforceable. It derives its authority from resolutions of the house, not statute or common law.

*Private Members' Business*

Bill C-388 would override the Prime Minister's responsibilities for ministerial ethics. All members of this House should be proud of our traditions as a parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary democracy means the Prime Minister and ministers are accountable to parliament, as we see every day during question period. This includes the ethical behaviour of ministers.

In our system of responsible government the Prime Minister is accountable for the conduct of ministers. He sets the standards of conduct and makes sure they are met. As the Prime Minister has said, the buck stops with him. Bill C-388 would take that responsibility away and make the House responsible for the conduct of the ministry, which is not the practice in the U.K. and other countries.

The U.K. parliament has a guide to the rules relating to the conduct of members to accompany its code. This guide states explicitly that additional guidelines and requirements for ministers are given by the prime minister and are not enforced by the British house of commons. That is because in the U.K., as in Canada, the prime minister not the house of commons is responsible for the conduct of his or her ministers as the case may be.

● (1915)

[*Translation*]

Clause 3 refers to the fact that the purpose of this bill is to bolster public confidence. I congratulate the hon. member who, like the government, wants to enhance public trust in elected representatives.

In 1994, the Prime Minister declared before this House that, since the 1993 election, "no goal has been more important to this government, or to me personally as Prime Minister, than restoring the trust of Canadians in their institutions".

[*English*]

The government is accountable to parliament on integrity in government and has taken action. The Prime Minister tabled a revised and strengthened conflict of interest and post-employment code for public office holders, and appointed an independent ethics counsellor to administer the code following consultation with the opposition on the selection of that ethics counsellor.

The role of the ethics counsellor on ministerial conduct is clear. He acts independently and he is the Prime Minister's adviser on matters related to conflict of interest and the ethical conduct of government officials including ministers.

The government brought forward amendments to increase transparency and strengthen the Lobbyists Registration Act. We moved the lobby industry out of the shadows and into the light. We gave the job of ethics counsellor real teeth and strong investigative powers and made sure that his reports under the act were tabled in parliament. The ethics counsellor can also be asked to appear before parliamentary committees and has done so.

Under the leadership and direction of the Prime Minister the government has an excellent record of promoting openness and integrity in government. In fact one of the amendments to the Lobbyists Registration Act when it was before the House was made by an opposition member, the member for Elk Island.

We made it possible for there to be more opportunity for policy debates in the House and have innovated with pre-budget consultations. The auditor general used to report only once a year, as we all know. The government made it possible for there to be four reports in a year. We saw one of those four reports yesterday.

In 1995 we created a special joint committee to establish a code of conduct for members of parliament and senators. Unfortunately, we were unable to get the support of opposition parties to make the code a reality. The government took measures to reform the pension plan for members of parliament and senators and stop double dipping.

[*Translation*]

In 1999, the government established guidelines on donations made by crown corporations to political parties. We improved the Canada Elections Act so that the influence of third parties would not be disproportionately greater than other stakeholders in the electoral process. The guidelines on ministers' dealings with quasi-judicial bodies were strengthened.

[*English*]

Ensuring public confidence in government remains a guiding concern for us today. Now in 2002 the government is developing new guidelines with respect to ministers' dealings with crown corporations. The government has also taken steps to strengthen integrity at all levels of government.

[*Translation*]

Under the leadership of this government, the public service has taken a number of tangible measures, including the following: in 1996, there was a study and a report on public service values and ethics; an Office of Values and Ethics was created in the Treasury Board Secretariat; the deputy ministers, co-champions of values and ethics, undertook a sustained dialogue in order to enlist the co-operation of all public servants; employee training and information modules were developed.

[*English*]

Today consultations are under way on a draft statement of principles for the public service to help set out and enshrine its values and ethics.

The government is committed to restoring integrity and public confidence in government. I am confident that our comprehensive program of initiatives has served and continues to serve Canadians.

We have not forgotten the depth to which public confidence in government sank during the government of the Conservatives.

**Mr. Peter MacKay:** You have taken it to a new low.

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** I hear the House leader for the Conservatives commenting on my comments. We have not forgotten, nor has the public, the depths to which the confidence in government fell when his party was in government some years ago.

*Private Members' Business*

Under this government the Prime Minister and his ministers have been and remain accountable to parliament for their policies and their ethical behaviour. However beyond undermining the Prime Minister's personal responsibility for his ministers, the bill would also undermine accountability and our system of responsible government in general.

● (1920)

[*Translation*]

As I mentioned earlier, we must congratulate the member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes on raising the issue of the integrity of public office holders in the House. As everyone knows, public office is a matter of trust. In 1994, the Prime Minister told the House that “the trust in institutions... is as vital to a democracy as the air we breathe”.

[*English*]

The standards the government has kept since 1993 have raised the bar for ethical conduct and Canadians have placed their continued trust in the government by re-electing it in 1997 and 2000. The bill would work against the progress we have made since 1993 and would undermine the principles of democratic government.

The bill is also contrary to the United Kingdom's approach to ministerial ethics, which is what the bill claims to be based on.

For these reasons I cannot support the bill. I urge all hon. members to do likewise.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to fulfill the wish of the hon. member who spoke previously that I rise and speak to the issue.

I have had a compelling interest in the matter of ethics and trying to restore the belief of Canadians in the integrity of their government. I have had that interest since before I ran for parliament. When I was elected I came here and had an opportunity to serve on, among other things, a joint House of Commons Senate committee on a code of ethics for parliamentarians. We went through a very interesting process.

I must ask the question: What is it that builds trust? I have encountered a number of people in my lifetime whom I trusted implicitly. There have been a number of others whom I did not trust. What is the difference? The difference lies in judging the record.

If I were to think of the individuals I trust, and there are a number of them whom I will not bother to name, I would probably start with my own dear father. He is now 90 years old and I have trusted him implicitly all my life. I have never once observed him treating someone unkindly. Nor have I ever observed him trying to take advantage of or cheat someone. It has been just the opposite. He has always bent over backwards to give people a good deal. I learned from him that to be trustworthy one must simply be trusted. That is what we need in government.

With all due respect to the hon. member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes, having a code is important because it restrains and controls those who are not trustworthy. That is the only reason we need it. For people who are already trustworthy we do not need a code because they will do what is right. It is only for those who are untrustworthy.

When Canadians look at parliament why should they trust it? Why should they trust its members? Unfortunately we wear the coat that is placed on all of us. I heard a very bad joke some time ago. A friend of mine said “Do you know what is wrong with politicians?” People are always poking fun at politicians, but like a total idiot I said “No, what?” I should have passed. He said “The thing that is wrong with politicians is that 95% of them give the other 5% a bad name.”

That is just inaccurate. It is not my observation. When I look around at the members I work with, not only in my party but in all the other parties, I believe in the integrity and trustworthiness of by far the majority of the people here. Unfortunately members of the public keep in their minds breaches of trust and attribute them to all of us and the institution itself.

A number of breaches of trust come to light. For example, I consider it a breach of trust when the auditor general gives a report of the kind that was given here yesterday. It is a breach of trust to Canadian taxpayers who work hard, skimp and save to make ends meet and pay all the bills to find the government has totally mismanaged and wasted their money.

We need to address the issue of financial management in government in a big and real way. It is a huge task. There is no doubt about it. We have heard the minister of HRDC proclaim that the problems in her department are being looked at and say she is trying to improve them. I want to trust in that. I really do.

● (1925)

I do not see the results of it. The auditor general, whose job it is to report, has come up with all these examples of mismanagement, improper accounting, unauthorized payments and foolish things being purchased. We have heard that in some cases the government paid twice for a phantom report. That builds distrust. We need to stop that at all costs.

It also depends on openness. I am appalled when the auditor general, who I do not think has any vested interest in giving a statement or an evaluation to the House and to Canadian people of the mismanagement of the financial affairs, reports that money was misspent or mismanaged. The Minister of Finance answered a question in this regard. Instead of answering yes, that the auditor general had pointed out the problem and that they were going to do what they could to fix it, he flustered and blustered and said that the opposition party was always looking at negative things. No, we just want to get it fixed.

*Private Members' Business*

The main thing I would like to say is that we need an independent ethics counsellor. The parliamentary secretary who just spoke talked about the fact that the government brought in an independent ethics counsellor. It has not. I have met Mr. Wilson. He is a fine man and I really want to trust him. However the government and the Prime Minister have shackled him by not giving him the freedom to report independently like the auditor general does.

He also made a statement which I do not think is accurate. He said that the ethics counsellor tabled reports regularly in the House. I have never seen one. I have been here for eight years and the government has been in power for eight years. In its platform it said there would be an independent ethics counsellor. We have looked for those things. We had a supply day motion that was along the line of the motion today and the government voted it down. It said it would not have an ethics counsellor who would report directly to parliament.

I ask why not? In the event that the Prime Minister and his dealings in Shawinigan are on the up and up and fair and square, I would welcome an independent ethics counsellor who is totally free of any implied control by the Prime Minister. Instead the hands of the ethics counsellor are tied. He can only report to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister puts his spin on it, and we still do not know whether things in that area are right or wrong. When we call for an independent investigation, the Prime Minister has the ultimate call on it. He is the one who calls on his members to vote. They vote against an independent investigation, so it is never done.

If I am innocent, I want an investigation because I will be declared innocent and set free. If I am guilty, then I do not want it because then I will be exposed. When the government in its lack of wisdom, decides that there will not be an independent ethics counsellor, it is actually doing just the opposite of what it wants to achieve, and that is to build the trust of Canadians in our institution and in us as individuals.

I cannot state strongly enough that we need to have an independent ethics counsellor. I urge all members to be the kind of honourable people that our title gives. When we call each other hon. members, let us actually be honourable. Let us have a code that looks after those who unfortunately do not have the built-in level of morality.

● (1930)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes for all the work he has done on this bill.

[*English*]

I could not help but think, as I was preparing some notes on the bill, that there should be some criteria for any conflict of interest and a code of conduct. On my own I made up those that I thought should be in the bill, and the hon. member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes had covered all of them and a number more.

When I thought about how I would address these issues, one has to put the proposed bill in a historical context. The history of some of the abuses that went on in the government that was in power from 1984 to 1993 to a great extent resulted in the election of the current

administration in 1993. Those abuses led to a great feeling of distrust of politicians generally and certainly of a number of cabinet ministers more specifically. That distrust has not waned in the country as a result of the promises that were made by this administration when it was outside of government and which showed up quite forcefully in its first red book. One of those promises has not been met.

The red book was very clear about what the Liberals would do to deal with some of the ethical considerations that had arisen in the prior administration, the one from 1984 to 1993. They breached that trust and broke the promises they made to the Canadian electorate. One can stand in the House, as we have heard tonight from the speaker for the government, and say that they got re-elected. That is not a satisfactory answer.

Did the level of trust in our politicians go up since 1993? It is obvious from the size of the votes we now get, the decreasing number of people who vote and the general cynicism. As the member for Elk Island said in his joke, that level of cynicism has not gone down. If anything, under this administration, it has increased.

When we look at what is contained in the proposed bill, it cries out for support from both sides of the House. It is obvious we will not get it from the government side. It speaks in a number of ways to the point about rehabilitating our reputations as politicians in this country. It goes very directly to that in a number of ways. I want to address some of those specifically.

It sets out very clear guidelines of the conduct that we expect from our ministers, our members of cabinet. It addresses very specifically what they have to do about divesting themselves of certain assets that will put them in a conflict position. It sets out very clearly other members of their family, their family relations and how they have to deal with those. It sets out a code of conduct, and government members in particular should be looking at this part of it, as to what is permissible and what is prohibited conduct vis-à-vis constituents, other members of this country or anybody else and what the minister is allowed to do and what the minister is prohibited from doing. If that conduct had been in legislation, perhaps we would never have had the Grand-Mère affair.

● (1935)

The bill sets out very clearly what has to be disclosed by the minister. It establishes an ethics counsellor who will be appointed independently and it makes it very clear that the ethics counsellor will be independent and will report to parliament not to cabinet nor the Prime Minister.

This was some very good work on the part of the member for Verchères—Les-Patriotes. His bill sets out very clearly the role that the counsellor should play. The counsellor would have the right to consult with individual cabinet ministers and direct them in their course of conduct. It would allow the counsellor to investigate and conduct enquiries. All these points are covered in detail so there is no question as to the role of the ethics counsellor and how extensive it is.

*Private Members' Business*

Bill C-388 would allow the counsellor to make rulings to a cabinet minister on what is prohibited conduct and what is permissible conduct. For example, if a cabinet minister has some question as to whether he or she can sit on a board or be on a committee of a non-profit nature, a charitable group of some kind, the counsellor can make a ruling as to whether it is prohibited or permissible.

The bill provides some guidelines but also provides in a very concrete fashion some ability for the counsellor to be a support for the cabinet member who is uncertain as to what is inappropriate course of conduct.

The bill also deals with the question of gifts and the provision of hospitality for cabinet ministers, such what is permitted and what is prohibited, and it allows the counsellor to rule on them.

A major point that has always bothered me is the role that a cabinet minister can play once he or she leaves cabinet. This bothers me perhaps because I live in Windsor and I have been influenced in many ways by the American experience in politics. Over the years I have seen a number of abuses in this specific area. Cabinet ministers, both at the state and federal level in the U.S., move, in my opinion, at least historically although it has tightened up somewhat, much too easily between their former cabinet positions to the private sector where they are very clearly in conflict. This does not leave a good appearance for the general electorate.

If the bill were ever to become law there must be meaningful and effective penalties for offences. Bill C-388, after all the work the member has done, does address that issue.

I want to praise the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes for the work he has done on the bill. It seems to me that his bill is comprehensive and it covers all the points we have dealt with in terms of abuse over the last two administrations and it does it in a very effective way.

• (1940)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am also very pleased to have the opportunity to take part in this debate. I want to congratulate my colleague from the Bloc Québécois. I think that he has worked very hard on this bill. It is a most important issue for parliament and for the country.

[*English*]

I also want to acknowledge the comments of other members, particularly the previous speaker from Windsor who consistently brings a very thoughtful and insightful approach to the debate at all levels in this place. This is without a doubt subject matter that is very troubling for many, given what has transpired in recent years and what has transpired very recently with respect to the record of the government.

I have to take great umbrage and great offence to the parliamentary secretary who continues to add to the hints, hyperbole, veiled illusions and broad strokes with which he likes to paint the former administration. This is consistent with the pathological pursuit of a former prime minister with respect to something that has never been proved. In fact we have seen probably enough paper used to cause another softwood lumber crisis to try and substantiate

something that simply is not true, which is that the former prime minister was involved in some kind of illegal activity. Yet both the government and unfortunately the Alliance Party like to contribute to this common myth. Stevie Cameron has written much fiction about this as well.

I caution the parliamentary secretary because he is really on thin ice. I take some personal offence to the perpetrating of this myth because my father was part of that administration. Again I take great exception to the broad tarred brush that he and others in his administration would like to use.

I would like to bring it back to some facts when we delve into the issue of ethics. Some of those facts include things like Pierre Corbeil, a Liberal fundraiser in the province of Quebec who was out tollgating. Armed with HRDC lists of grants and contributions he went to potential contributors who were on that list and said "Pony up a little money for the Liberal Party of Canada and we will see that those projects are approved". That is a fact. It is a fact because he was convicted of influence peddling. That is a fact.

There are other facts to which I could allude. I could allude to the admission by the Prime Minister that he went to the president of the Business Development Bank to lobby for money for a friend, colleague and fundraiser in his riding of Shawinigan, an owner of a golf course that he used to own to get money for that project. Is that ethical? Is that legal? That is for Canadians to judge.

The cancellation of the EH-101 helicopter project, on which the hon. member for Saint John has spoken in the House many times, with the stroke of a pen cost \$800 million and thousands of jobs in western Canada. Then the government turned around and on the last day of budget allocation spent \$101 million to buy luxury jets to fly the Prime Minister and the cabinet around. Is that ethical? Those facts are on the record.

There was the cancellation of the Pearson airport deal at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. There was the bold-faced promise to cancel and repeal the GST. We all remember that one. Was that ethical? Was that honest?

The issue with respect to free trade was another dandy. That was a very forthright promise made by the Prime Minister, a promise of course which was reduced to writing in that famous, fabled, fairy book, the red book. It contained one of the very subjects of the private member's bill with respect to the promise to have an ethics counsellor reporting directly to parliament as opposed to the person who could be the subject of unethical behaviour, the Prime Minister himself. It is completely perverse and completely perverts the member's wish that we have ethical behaviour.

There is a legion of other issues. There is the appointment of Mr. Gagliano out of cabinet and sending him off to Denmark to avoid accountability for his actions here in this country. Is that ethical? Was his behaviour in this country prior to his departure ethical? It all remains to be seen.

*Private Members' Business*

•(1945)

It is all done in the hopes that if they deny, ignore and delay, it eventually will go away and they will get re-elected. That is the ultimate purpose. We have heard the Machiavellian intent and the parliamentary secretary has echoed it here again, "Let us just get re-elected". That reaffirms. That cancels everything out. That says "Everything is fine because Canadians have embraced us yet again".

We in opposition have to take some responsibility for that if we are not prepared to give Canadians an alternative, a group, a party, a movement that they can trust. Surely these things should be examined and Canadians should be reminded of the behaviour. That has been the mantra of the Liberal Party forever: repeat it; it does not matter whether it is true or not, just keep repeating it over and over and eventually it will take hold.

Should we have an independent ethics counsellor that could preside over parliament, could examine issues, numerous issues that have arisen under this administration? By all means. I wholly endorse the spirit and the intent of the member's effort in bringing forward Bill C-388 which provides for a code of conduct for ministers.

That would certainly help enhance public opinion and public impression of ministers of the crown, particularly when we now see ministers in the government vying for party leadership and having campaign cheques sent to the wrong office. We would not have to worry about the potential conflicts of interest if we had an independent ethics counsellor that would bring the issue back here, having delved into it in some detail.

What is frightening is the litany of things I have listed is only the tip of the iceberg. Those are only the things we know about. It seems that it is only when somebody slips up and sends a cheque to the wrong office that it comes to light, or when some talented investigative journalist brings it out, or perhaps it is something that the auditor general points out, like the public works minister and his warm welcome to his new administration. It was not his fault. He inherited that problem. The government had paid twice for the same report. It is absolutely shocking and an absolute treacherous waste of money. There was \$7 billion we heard about in the last auditor general's report that does not appear to be too clearly accounted for.

Ministers have been accused of stepping outside the bounds of democracy by illegally voting in byelections. We all remember the occasion where a minister of the crown voted twice.

All of these occasions that I have referenced did not result in ministers resigning. They did not result in the Prime Minister taking any action to have the ministers removed from office. No. Delay is the deadliest form of denial.

What the Prime Minister does is he waits it out. He hunkers down and waits for the blaring headlines to go away. He hopes that those headlines will not occur at all. He simply ushers them off the stage quietly or dispatches them to Denmark. What did the Danes do to deserve that?

Our party's position has been clear on this. We would require that the ethics counsellor report directly to parliament instead of to the

Prime Minister as is currently the case. We have advocated that for some time.

There have to be guidelines. We know the guidelines are very much needed to ensure that conflicts of interest between a minister's job and a leadership race do not occur. Guidelines are needed to ensure that friends of the government do not receive special access to public funds. Guidelines are needed to ensure that ministers will be held accountable to the House before they are sent away to represent Canada abroad, or that ministers who give false information to the House might be held accountable.

When these promises are made pre-election, when these fiction writers and producers decide to put these promises in print, I hope Canadians will look to members such as the sponsor of the bill to look for ideas and ways that we can bring back some form of democracy and accountability to this place.

We saw another blatant example today. We have seen the massive overuse of closure. Today was another new low where the government basically pulled a private member's bill off the table.

It is no wonder that the level of frustration goes up and the level of cynicism bordering on apathy continues to rise. The government has done very little to promote ethics or accountability during its almost 10 years in office.

•(1950)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the members who took part in this debate. I want to thank them for their very positive and very constructive comments. However, I cannot refrain from saying openly that I truly deplore the duplicity shown by the parliamentary secretary who spoke on behalf of the government in this debate tonight.

I say duplicity because he tried to minimize the importance of the objective pursued in the bill by saying that the Prime Minister has already taken several measures to ensure greater transparency and greater integrity in the system; that this bill and what it proposed to do, including creating the position of ethics commissioner, would just take away the Prime Minister's responsibilities, when it is exactly what he himself had proposed in the 1993 red book.

Does it mean that the Prime Minister made false promises to Canadians when he was just the leader of the opposition? He is trying to justify himself today by saying that the people elected his party once and then twice more.

The other side of the House is easily satisfied. As I mentioned in my remarks, they have no reason to boast when they were elected by only 40% of the 60% of admissible voters who did vote. They have been elected by a minority of voters, and they seem to be satisfied with this. It does not take much to satisfy them. This level of support is alarming, but the government uses it to justify its action, and it takes it as a sign that the public is supporting its action. The majority of Canadians voted against this government, which was elected by a minority.

The Liberals have no reason to be proud and to suggest that their action is supported by the public. The government should do its homework and take responsibility for its action before the public and members of parliament.

Did this party, which has already been in power for too long, never realize that citizens are just waiting for a signal to renew their confidence in our political institutions?

As I said previously, Bill C-388 seeks to establish a code of ethics for ministers and provides for the creation of the position of ethics commissioner, this being an independent commissioner reporting directly to the House of Commons. One might argue that the Prime Minister made good on his promises, as I indicated a moment ago, by creating this position of ethics commissioner. But he was very careful to appoint one who reports directly to him and to him alone.

When the ethics commissioner cleared the Prime Minister in the Auberge Grand-Mère affair, it became clear that he was in fact a political advisor to the Prime Minister and the government, and not a guardian of transparency and federal administration, as the Liberal majority on the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology candidly admitted in its fourth report dealing with the Lobbyists Registration Act tabled in the House of Commons in June of last year.

The whole Auberge de Grand-Mère saga, eclipsed by the tragic events of September 11, served to point out the urgency to tighten up the legislative and regulatory framework guaranteeing the integrity which the public is entitled to expect from federal cabinet members.

### *Private Members' Business*

Gilbert Lavoie, an editorial writer for *Le Soleil*, wrote the following on January 26, 2002:

The cleaning-up of politics under René Lévesque was noticed everywhere in Canada. This effort by the Government of Quebec went a long way toward erasing the old Duplessis-style political reputation that Quebec had been dragging for so long. Unfortunately, our representatives in office in Ottawa did not seem to follow Quebec's lead. They did not establish clearly that ethics and transparency were among their priorities, to the point that the government's ethics counsellor has become a joke.

If government members have nothing on their conscience with regard to ethics, they should confidently and openly accept that this bill be made votable.

Therefore, I ask the unanimous consent of the House to make this bill votable.

● (1955)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is there unanimous consent to make this bill votable?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The period provided for consideration of private members' business has now expired. Since the motion has not been selected as a votable item, the item is dropped from the order paper.

It being 7.56 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7.56 p.m.)

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