



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 138 • NUMBER 006 • 2nd SESSION • 37th PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Monday, October 7, 2002**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

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

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

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 7, 2002

The House met at 11 a.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1105)

[English]

### COMMITTEE BUSINESS AND REINSTATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

MOTION THAT DEBATE BE NOT FURTHER ADJOURNED

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to government order, government business Nos. 2A and 2B, I move:

That debate be not further adjourned.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, now there will be a 30-minute question period.

I would ask my colleagues, given there are only 30 minutes, to limit questions or comments to approximately one minute in order to accommodate anyone who would like to ask the minister a question.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address this motion today.

We have heard a lot of talk from the government side about the need to address the democratic deficit in this place. What we are seeing today I think is just gross hypocrisy. We have a situation where the government is proposing to bring in time allocation, which of course is very, very anti-democratic, on an omnibus bill which is democratically suspect, at a time when the government is also enjoying the fruits of a throne speech and all the wonderful media hype that goes with it but at the same time undermining the tradition which says that the slate is supposed to be wiped clean when a throne speech is brought in. The government is trying to reverse all of that, and that is a democratic safeguard.

The government is doing it in particular on two bills that have enjoyed tremendous scrutiny by the public and which the public is very concerned about: Bills C-5 and C-15B. My question is this: How can the government say it is concerned about democracy when it is employing all these anti-democratic weapons to undermine democracy itself?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, there are so many things wrong with those allegations one barely knows where to start.

The hon. member says I have moved time allocation. I have not. I have moved closure, as a matter of fact.

He talks about an omnibus bill. There is no omnibus bill before the House at all. This is an enabling motion to permit the government not to create any new bill but to reintroduce that which has already been discussed at the stage completed prior to where we concluded the debate when we adjourned in June, so it is entirely inaccurate to say that.

The other thing is the member let the cat out of the bag in his allegation because he recognized himself that the opposition had moved a phony dilatory motion with the pretext of removing the possibility from the government to reintroduce two very important measures supported by a large number of Canadians, namely Bill C-5, the species at risk bill, which everybody wants us to move ahead with, and it is the same thing with Bill C-15B.

Those arguments are not very genuine.

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, what is really wrong is a minister of the Crown standing up in this place and attacking the opposition for trying to raise the level of democracy in this place after the government itself has been trying to fool the Canadian public about its desire to bring about some much-needed democratic reform to this institution.

I want to ask the minister about the democratic deficit as well, which his future boss, the former finance minister, has belatedly been musing about. The government has invoked closure and time allocation a total of 78 times: 70 time allocation motions and 8 closure motions, including the closure motion today. During the debate on parliamentary reform in 1991, 11 years ago, the former minister of public works, friend of the present minister answering these questions, Mr. Gagliano, an ethical Liberal guru, I would suggest, said in the House:

The government claims that the proposed changes [to the Standing Orders] will make the proceedings more relevant and increase the efficiency of the House. First of all, we must realize that this is being proposed by the very government that applied closure 13 times and time allocation...eight times—

The Liberals were opposed to it when they were in opposition. What has changed?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I remember well the 1991 changes proposed by the Conservative government to the Standing Orders. The Conservative government in 1991—and, Mr. Speaker, you, being the objective person that you are, will remember how challenged these folks were in that regard—moved to change the Standing Orders and at that time did so even without the consent of the other parties in the House of Commons.

*S. O. 57*

**Mr. Jay Hill:** What are you doing today?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, actually not. The hon. member says we have changed the Standing Orders today. That is nonsense. The last changes made in the Standing Orders were in the modernization committee report at which the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast and a number of others and I participated and unanimously recommended to the House. The House unanimously adopted the changes we proposed. One of these changes was the procedure that exists this morning, whereby when closure or time allocation is required, which it is today, there is a half-hour debate in the House. That is what we are doing.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to hear the government House leader talk about the need to bring back all this legislation. Really, the question that is raised as a result of this is, why did the government prorogue to begin with? If all the same legislation is coming back, what was the reason to prorogue the House?

We know that there are two pieces of legislation that have been of considerable controversy, not just last summer, but for years prior to that. In fact, the Liberals have tried several times to bring forward the endangered species legislation, the species at risk bill, Bill C-15. I know from travelling my constituency all summer that there is still a tremendous amount of debate about this issue. Most of the people I have talked to are very much against it and would like to see this issue debated further in the House before it passes. Why prorogue the House if the government is going to bring back the same kind of legislation?

I would like to ask the House leader of the government if he will at least take Bills C-15B and C-5, the two controversial bills, out of this omnibus legislation he is trying to bring back, separate them and let us move on with the other issues that the government wants to proceed with?

•(1110)

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, there is no omnibus legislation. There is nothing before us of that nature. What is before us is an enabling motion that enables the government then to reintroduce the legislation at the conclusion of the step that was previously adopted by the House, not the Senate.

The other question the hon. member asks is, why did we prorogue? Obviously, to have a new session and to have a throne speech wherein we could announce all of the new things that the government intends to do for the betterment of Canadians. For our program for the next 15 to 18 months, just as it was an excellent initiative in the last 15 to 18 months, we want to do the same and even better in the future. The concept of doing things better and to improve the lot of Canadians perhaps will elude the hon. member and his colleagues but it is a worthwhile objective.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the House leader opposite is defeating his own argument. If the government prorogues to bring in a throne speech to give the government new direction but then brings in all the old bills, that is not right. There are two bills in particular we are worried about, Bills C-5 and C-15B. Why will the government not consider pulling these two out of this and dealing with them separately?

The fact is that there was a throne speech, a new direction and all of this for the country, and then here we come with all these old bills and legislation. It does not make sense.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, of course it makes sense. The opposite would not make sense. What sense would it make to start back on legislation which is three-quarters completed, two-thirds completed, seven-eighths completed, whatever, in the case of every piece of legislation? The only thing that the hon. member wants is to cause delay in those two pieces of legislation because he does not happen to like them. That has nothing to do with the fact that the House has already voted on them.

He is asking us why we have had a throne speech. Let me outline the excellent initiatives our Prime Minister is suggesting to us: health protection; family care; child protection; family law; Kyoto; species at risk, which of course we are going to reintroduce; public service modernization, improving the Lobbyists Registration Act; political financing; ethics counsellor; code of conduct; and first nations governance. These are all excellent initiatives that our Prime Minister is suggesting to the House. We have just voted on the throne speech and, Mr. Speaker, the House democratically voted in favour of the throne speech and we are going to implement it.

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that the government has had the species at risk bill on its table for nine years. Now all of a sudden it is bringing in closure and ramming this thing through. It is a disgrace. The government has had nine years to deal with this matter. To break parliamentary rules and traditions with closure to deal with this sort of thing is astounding.

I want to raise another question on the cruelty to animals legislation. The House leader says it is popular. It is not popular among farmers. We are introducing American-style tort law into our criminal law. I have visions of the American style of trial lawyers, well financed by animal rights groups, challenging every practice existing in western Canadian farming today. These people cannot afford to deal with this matter. They are fighting for their survival right now. I would ask the House leader to explain what specific protections are in that legislation to protect our farmers from harassment by the American trial-lawyer style of people.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, that bill is not before us this morning. At the risk of—

•(1115)

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick:** It's in the motion.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** It is not included or excluded in anything.

As I said before, this is an enabling motion to permit the government to bring bills back at the stage that they were. This makes no new law. This particular measure has existed, and let me quote from my own speech on Friday in the unlikely event that the hon. member was not here to listen to it. I said that these kinds of motions to reintroduce bills at the break of a parliamentary session were brought forward in 1970, 1972, 1974, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 1999.

As a matter of fact, so common is this procedure that we even put it in the Standing Orders for the purpose of private members' bills, so that private members' bills, possibly under the hon. member's own name or those of his colleagues, can be reintroduced by the same kind of feature. It is even included in the rules.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this is the 75th time that closure or time allocation has been applied; whoever is in power, government always acts the same way.

This government reminds me of a student driver. Sometimes, it steps on the wrong pedal; sometimes, it speeds up or brakes for no good reason.

We have to wonder whether the government wanted to continue with the legislation it had introduced. The House was due back on September 16. Again, for no good reason, the opening of Parliament was delayed until September 30, and we had this throne speech, which told us absolutely nothing we did not know already about the government's intentions. And now, having debated for barely one hour, we are already under yet another gag order.

The government has not even shown the need for such a motion, the justification for which we would like to get.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know what math school the hon. member has attended but he said "having debated for barely one hour". The fact is we debated Monday morning, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and Tuesday, from noon until 2:30 p.m.; that makes 3.5 hours, as far as I can tell. What is worse, a dilatory motion was introduced, not by his party but by the Canadian Alliance Party, to prevent the motion to reinstate, as is customary, bills from the previous session from being adopted.

On the one hand, the hon. member's math is wrong. And on the other hand, the purpose of the motion is to reinstate bills at the same stage.

[*English*]

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, there are two abuses of Parliament here. One is that the government, for its own partisan reasons, stopped the House from coming back to do its work when it should have come back. That was done because the Liberal Party exploded through the summer. It had no agenda to present to the House of Commons. It is now trying to rush through a motion that will mean that its decision to shut down Parliament has no consequences to it. You cannot break rules without consequences, Mr. Speaker.

The second abuse is that clearly the government has cold feet on some of the measures it was bringing through and that it had introduced. So it will bring forward some. The suspicion is that it will use this device not to bring forward measures that should be brought before the House.

My question for the minister is this. He argues that this is enabling legislation. I assume that it is part of a plan. It is to enable something. Is it to enable the presentation in the House of each bill that was on the Order Paper before the government shut down the House of Commons, or is there going to be cherry picking? Will some of the bills that Canadians had a right to expect would be debated by Parliament before the House of Commons was shut down for

*S. O. 57*

partisan reasons in September not see the light of day? Will this enabling legislation therefore be enacted to ensure that every piece of legislation that was on the Order Paper when the government shut down the House will be reintroduced by the relevant minister, every one of them?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, first, there is no legislation. This is an enabling motion, as the right hon. member will know. Obviously if it is enabling, it enables to do or not to do. Otherwise it would not be enabling. That is the feature of being enabling. That is the definition. I did not invent it, but that is what enabling means.

He spoke of this so-called abuse, at least in his mind that is what it is. This is interesting, because we had the MP from Saint John and his own party telling us we just had to have Her Majesty to read the throne speech. His colleague from Central Nova sent me a letter in which he asked me to promise not to have his majesty read the throne speech. Those are the two messages and those two people are sitting side by side in the House of Commons. There must be all of 18 inches between where those two people sit.

• (1120)

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Who is the member from Central Nova and who is his majesty?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The government House leader, if he wants to respond.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt as to who Her Majesty is. There is no doubt also about the letter that I received from the hon. member from Central Nova. As a matter of fact he made it an open letter. I could always table one because the right hon. member likes to table all kinds of stuff in this House. He asks for it all the time.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it seems that the government is probably headed toward establishing a centenary record. The government is at 78 closures and, who knows, it may get the 100. I do not think that is very complimentary to any government. I know when it was in the opposition, it certainly criticized the government in power at the time.

I sat for many hours in the environment committee on Bill C-5. However my concern is that for Bill C-15B a promise was made to the backbench agricultural people in the your own caucus that the Senate would guarantee that all the things for which we were asking would be put in the bill. We learned in December that the Senate said that nobody would tell it anything. Those promises, which were made, will not be kept. Now the bill will come back to the House and we will have no assurance that you will not shut down an entire industry and leave it up to those outside the House to decide what cruelty is. We are in a drastic situation.

I think that bill—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Please address your comments to the Chair.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, in terms of the use of time allocation, in the U.K. house actually every bill is allocated to the same date it is read. In other words, at the end of every day, whatever is being debated, there is a vote.

*S. O. 57*

The hon. member is complaining about free votes. I know that there is a problem in his party in that regard. I wish he and his caucus the best of luck to sort those things out. We do not have that problem on our side of the House, but if he does, I have some sympathy for his problem.

On the issue of Bill C-15B, and this is a more serious part of what the member says, I represent a very large agricultural constituency, as does the hon. member—

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** So you ought to know better.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** I believe I represent my agricultural constituents as well as the hon. member for Wild Rose, who I believe is doing a good job representing his constituents.

Bill C-15B is a good bill. The minister has been quite clear in saying how he would not object to further clarification. Obviously we have the Senate and whatever the Senate feels is appropriate will be done. However the minister has been quite clear.

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, certainly the question of closure has come up a number of times with the government. It is rather disappointing for Canadians to see this being implemented once again. Many of us will recognize that over the summer a poll came out indicating that democracy in government was now a major issue with Canadians. That is a sad legacy for any government to leave a country at any point in time. Certainly it is an issue.

I have a key point that I want to ask the hon. House leader about, and that is in regard to the corporate liability legislation which the government promised to bring forth. Nowhere was it mentioned in the throne speech. Something as important to Canadians, and to all members in the House who supported that legislation, has not been mentioned.

If the government really is committed to doing what has been requested of it, it would be nice to have seen it brought forth. I would like his comments.

• (1125)

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I have no news about this legislation. This is a very important question raised by the hon. member. I certainly would not mind verifying whether the introduction is scheduled. I do not think introduction of that bill is scheduled before the adjournment at Christmas.

With regard to the agenda for the new year, I will gladly verify that for the hon. member.

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in a constructive vein in terms of these questions, I would like the Canadian public to know just exactly what the Alliance's disquiet is with Bill C-5 and Bill C-15. I would like the House leader to explain why these two simple things could not be done.

Bill C-5 talks about reasonable compensation. That is subject to a very broad discretion. The Alliance would be very pleased with this bill if fair market value compensation was in the bill. My question to the House leader on that bill is this. Why would the government not put in fair market value compensation for landowners whose land is withdrawn because of society's broad goal?

On Bill C-15 our concern is that farmers and ranchers will have their operations impacted by frivolous animal rights activists. My question to the House leader is this. Why would the government not exclude in the bill normal agricultural practices?

These are two straightforward questions.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, both those bills have been voted on by the House. Some amendments were proposed at various stages in committee and elsewhere. Members on all sides of the House considered those amendments. The minister considered those amendments in the case of both bills. Accommodations were made on a whole number of amendments to Bill C-5. Everyone recognizes that. As a matter of fact, the hon. member's colleague a few moments ago talked about the fact that we studied the bill for too long. I think he said something like nine years. Obviously, many points of view were considered at that time.

As to why the House voted a particular way or a committee voted a particular way on a particular amendment, obviously that is not for me to say as government House leader.

On the issue of Bill C-15B, I said before that the government very much wants the procedures to occur in a way that do not adversely affect the agricultural community. That has been said. The minister has said it in speeches in the House and elsewhere. Everyone knows that is the case. Of course, the bill will go before the Senate and the Senate can propose at that point amendments that it deems necessary, if it deems any amendments to be necessary.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the House leader on the opposite side has tried to avoid answering the questions on Bill C-15B and Bill C-5 that my colleague addressed to him, which are very straightforward. It goes to the root problem of why we are sitting in this place. It is because we are here to make good legislation that applies appropriately across the board to all citizens.

The problem that we have right now and that we have been discussing for half an hour is a democratic problem. When I go into my riding people tell me all the time that this place is dysfunctional and that they feel they have no voice here. That is why 40% of them checked out of the last election. The government is going for a legacy, a legacy of invoking closure or time allocation 78 times. The last government did it 72 times.

Why would the government want to continue that legacy?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I am not avoiding anything. I participated in the committee that created the instrument being utilized right now so we could answer questions on particular issues, not to spend half an hour asking ridiculous questions. The hon. member was not part of that committee. Someone else represented his party. He and his colleagues voted in favour of having this instrument.

There is nothing democratic about obstructionism on the part of opposition. That is not democracy. It is the denial of it. There are instruments that say we can move to limit time. Every bill in the U.K. House is limited to one day. The motion that we are proposing now carried without any debate just a couple of years ago. It is an abuse of the time of the House to want us to restart every bill. That is the kind of thing the opposition wants us to do, and it is not democratic. It has nothing to do with democracy at all.

• (1130)

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is beyond hilarious to hear the government House leader calling following the rules an abuse of process, rules that he himself participated in putting in place not a year ago. However, I digress.

My direct question for the hon. House leader deals with legislation pertaining to the Indian Act, Bill C-61. I note with interest that the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard, who is now heading up the sixth party in the House of Commons, is musing publicly about the need for further consultation with the aboriginal Canadian community on that bill, yet the government is prepared to reintroduce it without any further consultation. Why does it want to reintroduce Bill C-61 unchanged, given the discontent expressed by members of his own party? I am assuming they are still members of his party.

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I will forget the last part about the assumption of who belongs to whatever party. The hon. member's caucus grew by 40% and shrunk by roughly the same amount in the space of a few weeks.

Bill C-61, which is a more serious issue without the added insults, had been referred to committee before second reading, if I remember correctly. When that process is utilized, it is utilized in a way to permit the widest possible amendments whereby the concept beyond the scope of the bill, which usually prevents amendments to a bill, does not apply so that good comments made by Liberal MPs possibly, and of course there will be some of those we know because they do their job so well, and members across the way, if there happens to be some of those too, can be incorporated in the bill if that is the wish of the committee. That is why Bill C-61 has the same feature.

I can tell the hon. member that it would be referred to committee before second reading, the same as before, to accommodate that which he wishes.

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is on the same bill, Bill C-61. It is a question I was asked last week by the first nations veterans who came to Ottawa and sat in the gallery for question period. They had a press conference on the Hill. They wonder whether they will be included in Bill C-61 when it comes back before the House.

They were discriminated against after the second world war and the Korean war. Non-first nations people fell under Veterans Affairs and got all kinds of benefits, while first nations people fell under the Indian Act and got virtually no benefits whatsoever. This is a wrong that must be righted. They have made the case for many years. They are now wondering whether, when the bill comes back before the House, there will be clauses included to apologize to them, to provide them adequate compensation and to do justice to the

aboriginal and first nations people because of what went wrong many years ago.

They want an answer as to whether that be in the bill?

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has read the motion that is before the House, it is to permit the government to reinstate the bill and the minister to stand in this place and affirm that the bill, as reintroduced, is identical to the bill where it was left off. Obviously, it would not have amendments before we start. That is prevented by the scope of the motion that we will be voting on later this day.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I guess there is one thing that really has not been cleared up, not from any of the comments I have heard from the member.

The idea of a prorogue is to prepare for a new session to bring in a new set of initiatives through a throne speech. We all know, even the Liberals know, that the throne speech was not new. There were no new initiatives. It was the same old stuff. Now we know that everything that was on the table prior to prorogation will now be brought back exactly the same as it was. Therefore, we had two weeks of everybody earning a big, fat salary doing nothing when we should have been here dealing with some serious problems like agriculture. This minister knows how serious the agricultural problem is in so many areas. He ought to know because I know his own farmers are doing a very good job of educating him about that.

My question once more, just to try to get it straight in my mind, is this. Why did the government prorogue? There was no reason to.

• (1135)

**Hon. Don Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the situation involving the drought in western Canada, I want to take the occasion to thank the member for the good relationship that he and I have worked under this summer to ensure the aid offered by my constituents and several others. The initiative of Hay West started as a result of a phone call made to me by two constituents through their municipal councillor, for which I congratulate them, by the way. We have been working together in that regard.

The hon. member refers to a two week delay. There is something wrong with that question. Perhaps the hon. member is unaware that there is an alleged two week delay. The hon. member said that we should be getting started to work sooner, yet over a week after we have started we still cannot get the committee membership list from the opposition to do the work. There are still delays going on. Having said that I do hope the opposition produces its lists.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

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

*S. O. 57*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Bélair):** Call in the members.

• (1215)

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

*(Division No. 3)*

**YEAS**

Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Barnes (London West)	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brown	Bryden
Bulte	Caccia
Calder	Caplan
Carignan	Carroll
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Charbonneau
Coderre	Collenette
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Easter
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrah	Folco
Galloway	Godfrey
Goodale	Grose
Guarnieri	Harb
Harvey	Hubbard
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keys	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Lastewka
LeBlanc	Lee
Longfield	MacAulay
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marcil	Marleau
Matthews	McCallum
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
Minna	Mitchell
Myers	Nault
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Reilly
Paradis	Patry
Peric	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pillitteri	Pratt
Price	Proulx
Redman	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Robillard

Rock	Saada
Savoy	Scherrer
Scott	Sgro
Shepherd	Simard
St. Denis	Stewart
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibault (West Nova)	Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Tonks	Torsney
Valeri	Vanclicf
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood— 115	

**NAYS**

Members

Ablonczy	Anders
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Bailey
Blaikie	Borotsik
Brien	Brisson
Burton	Cardin
Casson	Clark
Comartin	Crête
Desjarlais	Desrochers
Doyle	Duceppe
Epp	Fitzpatrick
Fournier	Godin
Goldring	Grey
Hanger	Harper
Hearn	Herron
Hill (Macleod)	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hilstrom	Jaffer
Johnston	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lalonde	Lanctôt
Lebel	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Marceau	Mark
Mayfield	Merrifield
Nystrom	Obhrai
Pallister	Penson
Picard (Drummond)	Rajotte
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)	Ritz
Roy	Schmidt
Skelton	Solberg
Sorenson	Stinson
Stoffèr	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Toews	Wasylcia-Leis— 60

**PAIRED**

Members

Allard	Asselin
Bagnell	Bergeron
Bigras	Bourgeois
Cannis	Copps
Dalphond-Guiral	Dhaliwal
Dion	Discepolo
Dubé	Efford
Fry	Gagnon (Québec)
Gagnon (Champlain)	Gauthier
Graham	Guay
Guimond	Harvard
Laframboise	Laliberte
Loubier	McTeague
Ménard	Neville
Pagtakhan	Paquette
Parrish	Perron
Pettigrew	Plamondon
Speller	St-Hilaire— 36

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I wish to inform the House that there were two omissions in today's order paper, namely Government Business No. 3 and the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Copies of these motions are available at the table. I regret any inconvenience this may have caused hon. members.



*Government Orders*

●(1220)

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS MOTIONS NOS. 2A AND 2B

The House resumed from October 4 consideration of Government Business Motion No. 2A and of the amendment, and resumed consideration of Government Business Motion No. 2B.

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am addressing my remarks on the motion to reinstate the proposed species at risk bill, which was passed in the House of Commons this past June.

It is important that we remember the success of the House in bringing together this effective piece of legislation. It is also important that we remember the thorough work done by the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development that went into this piece of legislation.

The government has worked to develop legislation on species at risk for no less than nine years. There is an overwhelming amount of public support in Canada for national legislation to protect endangered species, and Canadians firmly believe that no species should become extinct because of human activity.

The species at risk bill has a broad base of support. That support includes environmental organizations, the agricultural as well as resource sectors, and the aboriginal peoples of Canada. These are not always traditional partners. When we see support from so many diverse groups and individuals we know we have done it right.

I remind hon. members that there were more than 150 consultative sessions that went into this piece of legislation. There were many motions and several drafts. Through it all we listened, we revised, we studied and then we refined.

We now have a policy that is based on what we heard. It is a proposal that makes sense. More important than anything else, not only is it good legislation, but it is doable legislation. It fits in with other laws and commitments on behalf of the government. We should be looking to move forward on this successful venture.

We must remember that this proposal is designed not only to ensure species at risk and their critical habitat are protected, but also to aid in the recovery of the habitat in the species.

This proposal is one of an overall strategy for the protection of species at risk. It is a strategy that is already a success. The reason we have species at risk in Canada is because the people on the land, the farmers, ranchers, fishers, the big resource users such as the forestry industry, are practising good management practices which are allowing species to continue to exist.

In addition to the legislation, the strategy includes stewardship, and the accord for the protection of species at risk. That accord is an agreement between the federal government, the provinces and territories.

This proposal helps to fulfil the promises that we have made under that accord, just as many of the provinces and territories have fulfilled theirs. We must not, and we will not, take less or ask less of ourselves than we did of our provincial and territorial partners.

The legislation is designed to meet the federal responsibilities under the accord. Other jurisdictions are doing their part. We have here a vital complementary component to do the work being done by other levels of government.

Canada's first peoples place a great deal of importance on this proposed act. They have made good suggestions which were incorporated into the legislation. We need their ongoing involvement, their significant commitment, as well as their knowledge to be successful. That is why the proposed species at risk bill would establish a national aboriginal council concerning species at risk.

This proposal builds on the partnership approach. It reinforces a made in Canada approach. It is strong, balanced and appropriate legislation for Canada. It emphasizes, first and foremost, a cooperative approach that respects the constitutional spirit of our country.

●(1225)

The proposed law is flexible enough to meet the needs of any endangered species, be it a bird, fish, animal or plant. It is flexible enough to enlist the participation of farmers, fishermen, trappers, mining companies, private landowners and each of the provinces and territories. Finally, the law ensures that each species at risk would receive the government's attention and that decisions would be made in a transparent and accountable way.

It is important to get the legislative framework in place and get on with the job. It is important to recognize our responsibilities and establish legislation. Just last week the newspapers carried a story of the spotted owls and the fact that some of them were going to be sequestered in cages over the winter because we did not have the legislation in place to help contribute to protect the species. Yet there were still forestry practices continuing on and some of the very habitat that they depend on was being cut down.

We must remember there are strong provisions in the law for protection, for sound science and for the cooperation of landowners, territories, aboriginal peoples, the resource sector and conservation organizations. Clearly we need all parties involved to make the legislation work.

The House of Commons and the standing committee have spent nearly 60 sessions on the bill. There has been much attention and much debate. Members of Parliament have spent 200 hours on the formal consideration of the bill's contents. Report stage debate took 10 separate days. Every reasonable effort has been made to accommodate diverse views.

We have the best legislation that we can design and it meets the needs of a wide variety of interests. It is time to move forward and get to work to meet our federal obligations to use our balanced approach on the ground where it can make a difference.

*Government Orders*

Part of the legislation that we are considering before the House to reinstate previous legislation also deals with Bill C-19, which is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. This is an important tool that has gone through lengthy consultations and has received consideration by the committee. The Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development is ready to deal with it. By supporting this act before Parliament we will be able to get on with that important work, to continue to refine an already important tool in the basket available to the Government of Canada. It will help ensure that environmental assessments are done in a timely fashion to ensure that we are protecting one of our most precious resources, which is our environment.

I support reinstating the proposed species at risk act as well as the environmental assessment act, and I urge all members of the House to support this important motion as we move forward in issues that matter to Canadians.

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the amendment tabled by my colleague. I would also wish to indicate that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Dauphin—Swan River.

I sat patiently and listened to the eloquence and passion of the previous speaker from the government side. The only question that comes out of that last dissertation is that perhaps prorogation would not have been required in the first place if the hon. member had spoken so passionately and eloquently then. If the time and energy had been spent on Bill C-5 to which the hon. member referred to, then we would not be here today debating this motion and amendment.

Canadians recognize there was no real need or reason to prorogue the House. Canadians come to me and ask what does prorogation mean and why was there a change in what was happening in the legislative agenda of the House of Commons. They do not understand, nor should they, because it is an issue that we deal with in the House and not something that is on the lips of every Canadian from coast to coast when we talk with them.

My answer to them is that the Prime Minister did not want to deal with the business that was then before us on the floor of the House of Commons. He had the right to prorogue, effectively stopping Parliament, and when that is done the rules are very specific. When it stops, everything stops. The legislative agenda before the House dies. It goes away and the House starts fresh. That was the whole rationale for prorogation. The government was going to start fresh. It was going to put forward a throne speech that would indicate to Canadians a fresh direction that the government was going to follow.

Let me say two things. First, the government wants to bring back its old tired, worn out legislative agenda at the same stages it had left them at prorogation, which means it can stop the House at any point in time and suffer no consequence for it. It is a total manipulation of the House where the government would like to be able to stop the business and bring issues back that it feels are the important issues facing Canadians right now.

The motion before us allows ministers, within 30 days, to have the ability to come forward and make a request to have legislation come forward at the same stage at which it was left. The amendment, and we agree with the amendment, is that there are a couple of pieces of

intrusive legislation that we recognize and know that Canadians do not necessarily want to have as part of the ongoing business of their lives. These two pieces should be excluded from any types of motions coming forward to allow ministers to choose which legislation they would like to come forward. We agree with the amendment that there should not be an opportunity for the ministers to bring back what they wish.

We had a throne speech after prorogation that said the government was going to change the direction in which the government and country were going to follow. I had the opportunity to read the throne speech and listen to it on the occasion of the Governor General reading it to the Canadian public. In looking at this throne speech and the previous ones in 2001 and 1999, nothing has changed. The same issues are brought forward in this throne speech as were in the other throne speeches.

The government talked about reinforcing and rebuilding the Canadian military. It has not happened in the past. I see no reason to believe that the government will allow it to happen in the future.

The government talked about additional abilities for first nations to be able to govern themselves. It talked about more resources for first nations. Let me say that the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard, at a meeting just recently, indicated that this was the case. However I should also say that it is difficult for me to understand how the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard can suggest that there should be more consultation and thought process put in to the first nations self-government legislation.

● (1230)

I should say that the member for LaSalle—Émard has said that this needs more consultation. Now we understand today from the House leader of the government that in fact that legislation will come forward with no more consultation, with no more ability to have the first nations' put their beliefs and thoughts into that legislation. How do we have that contradiction? Does that mean that the member for LaSalle—Émard will come into the House when it is time to vote on this motion and stand in support of the motion to bring back that legislation without having it put aside and in fact perhaps even redraft it or consult with individuals of the first nations individuals?

There is a lot of difficulty with not only the motion in the first place. There is more difficulty with the need for prorogation. There is even more difficulty right now with bringing back legislation at the whim of the ministers, even though we recognize that Canadians as a whole do not wish to have these intrusive pieces of legislation coming back to the House.

I really appreciate the comments from the previous speaker but, again I repeat, it would have been much better had that passion been passed on to her Prime Minister and cabinet to suggest that this was not necessary. Prorogation in the first place was not necessary and this motion is not necessary.

*Government Orders*

What has the government done? It has prorogued unnecessarily, has brought back legislation with no consequences at all and has now put closure in so we cannot talk about it. Not only can we not talk about a very valid amendment that has been put forward by the official opposition, but now it will close debate so we cannot even talk to the Canadian public as to why it was necessary that it put us in this position in the first place. Why did we not come back on September 18 like we were supposed to do? Why did the Prime Minister feel it was necessary to put forward what I believe to be a rehashed, recycled throne speech with no thinking put into it at all?

I hope Canadians are listening and watching the manipulation of the House today. I hope they are saying to themselves that this really was not necessary and, by the way, if it is going to go through the exercise it should do so the way it was meant to be. It should start now with a fresh legislative agenda, bring back to the House the pieces of legislation that are on the table right now from square one and let us debate them honestly, openly and let us consult with Canadians the way it was meant to be. The government cannot have it both ways. It cannot manipulate the House and bring back the legislation that should be dead on the floor right now.

At this time I will turn over the rest of my time to the member for Dauphin—Swan River.

● (1235)

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on the government's amendment to shut down debate in the House, which is called closure. Should I be surprised? Not really. Nothing has really changed in the House since the Liberal government came to power in 1993. In fact, we heard this morning from other members of the opposition that the Liberals have already established a record of closing debate in this democratic House. I believe it has been over 70 times

I would like to talk about the democratic deficit of the government and the whole issue of prorogation as well as some of the bills that the government wants to bring back to the House.

It is rather ironic that throughout the summer we read newspaper articles on comments made by Liberal members about the democratic deficit in Parliament. Here again we have, in the second week of Parliament, another example of why this place is in deficit when it comes to practising democratic values.

It is also unfortunate that the government House leader could not come to an agreement with the opposition House parties that would have avoided the situation that obviously led the government side to bring in a motion to shut down debate again.

The first thing on which members of the Liberal Party need to be reminded is that they rarely listen to Canadians. They do a lot of talking about consulting and listening but when it comes to putting their beliefs into practice usually it does not work out very well.

On the whole issue of proroguing the House and returning two weeks later, I had no complaints because I am always busy at home doing constituency work. However, in terms of delaying the House business for two weeks and then coming back here today with the government asking to almost reverse the process of prorogation, in other words, bringing the legislation that died on the order paper back into the House at this point in time, is rather a mockery.

It tells me that the throne speech, this whole business of going through the motions at the beginning of last week, was really all for show and for nothing else. I have been told that when we have a throne speech the government is supposed to put in place a new agenda, a new set of legislation that it wants to put through the House. Obviously, there is nothing new. We see the request of the government to bring back into the House old pieces of legislation which leads me to believe that we really did not need to prorogue the House in the first place.

I would like to comment on some of the bills that the government wants to bring back which are very contentious. It seems to be in the order of the day for the government to divide Canadians along the lines of urban and rural. We know for a fact that 80% of Canadians live in urban centres. That is probably the reason they would rather support the urban type legislation and many times forget about the effect they have in the rural communities.

Bill C-5 is a good example, the cruelty to animals legislation. My riding of Dauphin—Swan River is a very agricultural based riding. It is truly the backbone of our economy, the way our economic health is determined by the health of the agriculture industry. This bill really could be called a pet bill if someone did not know what it was. It is about the protection of pets. I do not think there is a Canadian who would disagree with the principal premise of this bill, of cruelty to animals, not only pets but also animals that we raise for food.

● (1240)

I believe farmers throughout the country agree that we need to treat all animals in the right manner. We live in the 21st century. We do not believe in beating animals, beating our children or beating our pets. The problem is that the way the legislation is written it could have a huge impact on people raising animals for the purpose of producing food for Canadians.

That leads me to make another statement which is that the government really does not value the whole food production industry. With that kind of bill it certainly does not respect or have any value for the people putting food on the table with reference to the raising of animals.

Another very contentious bill and one that was mentioned this morning is Bill C-15B, the species at risk bill. It would have a huge impact. Canadians have a great interest in our environment. In our nature as Canadians, we are environmentalists. The problem is we need to also look at the pitfalls of bills such as Bill C-15B and the impact they would have on people who live in the rural parts of the country. Farmers already are very aware of species that are at risk and do their utmost. They leave land untilled and leave an environment that is conducive to helping the species survive. We see that throughout this country. However, if it is legislated into law the demands on lands, and with absolutely no reasonable approach to compensation, it would create a conflict between rural Canadians and urban Canadians.

*Government Orders*

Unfortunately the government has a track record of dividing Canadians along urban-rural lines. I do not need to remind Canadians and certainly the Liberal government how the gun control bill, Bill C-68 has done exactly that. In fact, Bill C-68 is still paramount in the minds of most Canadians. It has absolutely nothing to do with the intent of the bill, which is to reduce violence in our society with which we all agree as Canadians. The problem is that the Liberals do not understand that the use of firearms as a tool is a way of life in rural Canada. Every time we look at a firearm, it is not a dangerous piece of material by itself. It is the person behind it and the person using it. In fact it has created a mess. The firearm registration system for long guns is a disaster. As Canadians know, we have had handgun registration in the country for over 60 years. Unfortunately, with the mixing of the two, even that registration system will be a mess.

On top of that, we talk about the financial deficit of the military. We are wasting over \$1 billion on the long gun registration which easily could have been put into health care or put toward the needs of the military.

Another contentious bill in the eyes of aboriginal Canadians is Bill C-61, the first nations governance bill. The biggest criticism of the bill was that it lacked consultation with the first nations communities. Let me say that not all first nations agree with that comment. The minister has said that he himself consulted with many first nations communities.

I will close by saying that the Liberals as usual do not walk the talk. They tend to do a lot of talking. They have a history of that. Most Canadians agree that the whole political system needs an overhaul. Certainly we should begin in the House. It is really called democracy. If we are really to practise democracy then let us begin in the House.

• (1245)

**Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are debating today a motion that would bring back to the House the legislation that was before the House before the time of prorogation, that is legislation that was before the House in June, and also bring back to the House the evidence that was before the committee at that time.

People should understand that when the House prorogues all these bills and evidence basically collapse and are lost unless Parliament moves a motion that allows them to be brought back. This motion would allow all these bills to be brought back at the same standing as they were in the process they were last June, at the discretion of the minister.

I am in sort of a funny situation. There is an amendment to the motion that was moved by the member for Macleod. He suggested in his amendment that the former bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B, should be exempted from the motion. In other words, the motion could go forward but the two particular bills, one the cruelty to animal bill and the other the species at risk bill, would not be allowed to go forward where they are right now, which is in the Senate. They would have to begin the process all over again.

I find myself in a quandary. Had the member for Macleod simply said that Bill C-15B should be excluded from this motion, I think he would have received a chorus of support on this side of the House. I

myself would have supported that motion. That bill, which is now in the Senate and almost ready to be passed into law, is a terrible bill.

There is no doubt on this side of the House and many of the MPs, particularly from rural Canada, are very much against this piece of legislation. There has been a long battle both in the House and behind the scenes to halt that piece of legislation.

Even though cruelty to animals is a dreadful thing, and we all want to prevent cruelty to animals, that piece of legislation is incredibly and horribly flawed in its definition of animal. Basically that definition says that any creature that has the capacity to feel pain is covered by the legislation. Amoebas, worms, lobsters and so on, all these creatures have a capacity to feel pain because we can see their reaction when they are subject to any sort of physical violence.

Therefore, we have a piece of legislation that is so broad in its reach that we expect that special interest, animal rights lobbies will use this legislation to bring all kinds of cases before the courts which will enable them to do all kinds of fundraising and will create great anguish and unhappiness in the farming community because the farming community and its farming practices will be unfairly the target of this type of litigation as a result of this over broad definition.

If ever there was a bill that is now in the Senate or ever has been in the Senate that I would wish, as one MP, should be restarted or perhaps forgotten altogether, it is the former Bill C-15B.

Unfortunately the amendment includes the former Bill C-5, species at risk and I have a completely opposite attitude to that. The species at risk bill was enormously contentious but which spent years being wrangled upon in committee, negotiated and talked about in the House, behind the scenes, between House leaders and so on. I remember no other bill in my nine years in this Parliament where there has been so much toing and froing, so much struggle to come up with the final version, and I suppose all legislation is a compromise, a version that I think is reasonably acceptable to all Canadians.

It is a very important bill, but unfortunately we are dealing with legislation that has the possibility of interfering with the rights of property owners, which is one of the things about the species at risk bill. It requires the protection of habitat, mostly on public lands indeed, and sets up a regime for the protection of habitat and the protection of endangered species. That was the subject of a lot of controversy. However finally compromise was reached and I believe the species of risk legislation in the Senate now should be passed and it should not be restarted.

• (1250)

I have this dilemma. I find myself with an amendment to the original motion which I would love to support, but cannot because I really do believe that the species at risk bill must go forward as it has taken literally years to get where it is.

*Government Orders*

I would point out, however, that the cruelty to animals legislation has no such history. It was, shall we say, sprung on Parliament and on the Liberal caucus out of the blue. It was the result of behind the scenes lobbying from various animal rights organizations which had a better line into policy-makers than perhaps most members of Parliament sometimes have. It is very unfortunate.

The story goes with the rest of the bills that are being brought back.

For the most part, I have to support the main motion because the other bills that are being brought back are non-controversial and need to go forward quickly, in the public interest. By that I mean the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which is another very important piece of legislation; the Copyright Act, which is in the Senate, and that has been contentious as well, and it is very important that it go forward so that we have security in the whole regime of copyright because there are a lot of problems in copyright legislation right now; the Pest Control Products Act which is in the Senate; and the specific claims resolution act which is in committee. We do not really need to go back to the process with those.

However there are other bills that would be reintroduced at the same level as they were last June that I have reservations about and I would prefer that they be started at the very beginning. One is the assisted human reproduction act, which is in committee. We cannot have too much debate on the subject. This is the whole question of whether embryonic material can be used for research purposes to look for cures for various disease. This is the stem cell debate.

I took part in that debate before second reading. It was one of the most elevated debates I have ever seen in the House of Commons. Both sides were trying to find a way around, a problem that touches the very core of our human values. On the one hand, there are the people who are very afraid that the use of embryonic stem cells will open the door to a disrespect for human life. Then there are the people on the other side of the equation who feel that any type of research or any means that can save lives and who feel that the use of discarded, and I stress discarded, embryonic cells could speed up research that would lead to cures of Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, ALS and all these other diseases is a worthy aim. However that debate is not over.

I would not be opposed to seeing that piece of legislation start again through the process so that we could have a similar debate again because I think it is Parliament at its best, first and foremost, and it is an issue that, because it touches the core values of individual Canadians, really needs to be debated at great depth in the House. I would actually hope that the minister does not reinstate it at the committee stage and that he actually brings it back as a new bill.

The other bill that I would like to see started at the very beginning is the first nations governance act. Again this is very important legislation. If it is reinstated, it will be in committee. We did not have enough debate on that. The message is not going out clearly enough, particularly to the aboriginal community, that this legislation, of all the bills before the House, is tremendously good for Canada's native people. It would require aboriginal organizations to have democratic elections and to open their financial books to scrutiny.

●(1255)

Right now we know, and nobody likes to hear it, that all kinds of money goes to aboriginal communities and never reaches the people. This is federal money that just never gets to the people who need it. Therefore, we have this peculiar situation where the federal government is putting out many billions of dollars to assist Canada's aboriginals and that money is just not getting there. The reason the money is not getting there is that the aboriginal people themselves cannot see how that money is being managed.

I think all Canadians should support transparency and accountability. It is a given. Unfortunately, that bill, particularly because of its timing in the life of the House this past year, did not get the debate it deserves. Therefore, I would like to see it actually restarted.

Again, I am in this quandary. I have to support the main motion because, quite apart from the bills I think need to go forward immediately, what is even more crucial to me and what is key, and I am directing this right at the opposition members who are giving me very good attention and I thank them, is the motion would reinstate evidence before committees.

That has two consequences. It means that the evidence the committee on public accounts, of which I was a member, heard pertaining to the sponsorship files, all this notorious stuff about organizations, businesses in Quebec receiving government money to provide advice to the government on sponsorship, the advertising of or putting forward of the government logo, would be reinstated. There was I think quite a justifiable concern when the Auditor General and others reported that there appeared to be no records kept of these transactions, many hundreds of thousands of dollars, and little evidence that any work was actually done. Public accounts heard evidence on this.

Public accounts tends to work in a very non-partisan way. I think all members of public accounts felt that we had done a good job in hearing evidence. We felt that we had a report that was of great value to the House. However, unless this motion goes forward in allowing the reinstatement of evidence before committees, the House will never hear its report. I think it is so important that the committee hear what we have to say on an issue that caused great discomfort to members on the government side, in the front benches.

The other committee that had evidence before it that we need to see reinstated is the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, which heard a lot of evidence about the need to reform private members' business. It heard from MPs on all sides of the House. This is a terribly important issue to private members. As the situation stands now the whole business of bringing forward private members' legislation is totally flawed. If a member tries to bring forward a bill of value, it may be defeated for partisan and political reasons. That is not acceptable. It is not acceptable that private members' business can be interfered with by the leadership of any party, for example. That is the situation right now.

*Government Orders*

After much debate, the procedures and House affairs committee recommended that all private members' bills be votable, at least one member per session. What it means basically is that each MP will be entitled to put forward, per parliamentary session, one bill and that bill, no matter what it contains, would be votable. It would go before the House to be debated. The system now is a blind lottery. It is a flawed committee process that sees very good initiatives from both opposition and government MPs fail.

What has happened is the Standing Committee on Procedures and House Affairs has tabled the report on that debate, has made that recommendation, and all that needs to happen is for the government to adopt that report and then there will be a change in the Standing Orders that will permit private members' bills to be votable. With prorogation that is lost unless the evidence of committees is reinstated as proposed in this motion. Then of course we would expect the government would reissue the same report that it tabled last June. I can say that if it did not, there would certainly be trouble on this side, not to mention, I am sure, the other side.

There it is. It is a dilemma. The motion is to reinstate bills and evidence before committees to the same status that these bills and evidence were before prorogation last June.

● (1300)

Mr. Speaker, no matter what side of the House, one always finds oneself in the position where one is forced to support a flawed motion or a flawed piece of legislation. I would certainly support this motion, but I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: If this motion goes forward I can assure you that on this side of the House there will be pressure put on the individual ministers to make changes to one or two of those bills, because the thing about the motion is that these bills can only come back at the status they left the House last June if the minister reintroduces them without changes.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps the Minister of Justice make a little change to the cruelty to animals legislation, forcing it to go back to the beginning. Perhaps the Indian Affairs minister could make a little change to the Indian accountability act that would force it to go back to the beginning. Maybe the health minister could do the same thing with the assisted reproduction act.

So even though I would have supported the amendment proposed originally, I cannot support it now because I want to see the species at risk bill go forward, but I do hope that the Minister of Justice will have second thoughts about the cruelty to animals bill because we do not like it over here. A lot of us have a lot of reservations about it. I would love to see it go back to the beginning again because I doubt if it would survive the process a second time.

Having said all of that, let me say that even if this motion goes forward—and the motion will go forward, I am sure it will pass the House—there will be those of us on this side and those on that side, Mr. Speaker, who will be working on the ministers to try to persuade them that certain of those bills should be started at the very beginning and perhaps some of them will come out of the process much better than they certainly are in their current state.

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I thought the member just split his time with another member of the government, but I guess he has not.

It was interesting to hear some of the comments from the previous speaker about the bills coming back, that the ministers have some prerogative as to at what stage, that they could take them right back to the beginning, that the evidence that was heard would have to be recollected and reheard and that possibly there will be some changes made in some of these bills.

We have tried for the last couple of years to make some changes. Of course we were able to have Bill C-15 split into parts A and B in order to pass the parts we supported. After a lot of negotiation and a lot of work on our behalf that happened. With Bill C-15B there are issues there that we still have problems with, such as the cruelty to animals section and how that would affect animal husbandry practices in the country. We still need to bring those issues to light.

Also, because Bill C-5 does not have a full compensation aspect in it for affected landowners, we cannot accept it. We thought we had some support from the government side of the House on that particular issue, but when it came time for the vote the members on that side of the House who were against it lined up and voted for it so it went forward.

I think the member who spoke before me made a good point about the fact that if we start a bill at the beginning we have to rehear the evidence. That being so, I do not think there is anything wrong with that. In most instances at committee, time is short and witness lists have to be pared back because all who want to appear cannot, and there are all the requests that go forward for people to appear at committee stage who cannot get here to do that. There is the also aspect that some of these bills are so wide-ranging and cumbersome in the legislation they put onto the citizens of Canada that opening them up for debate again is not a concern of mine. The more debate that goes on, the better. It is an opportunity to bring forward witnesses who were not able to appear last time. They could now be heard.

Bill C-5 is one of the two bills that we have some problems with. We opposed it vigorously all through the last stages and actually through the last number of years. I remember when campaigning in 1997 that it was an issue then. It continued to be an issue for the next two Parliaments and finally in this Parliament it was brought forward.

To prorogue the House is to allow the government to start with a throne speech to give a new focus and a new direction for government. Unfortunately that did not happen. As we saw, most of what was in the throne speech had been presented before, and now the government is saying except for what it wants to bring back as it was. If the government is going to have a new direction and a new focus for Canadians, why would it go back to the same old, tired past throne speeches and legislation? Let us do what the throne speech is really intended to do and start afresh.

*Government Orders*

As for some of the issues in Bill C-5, the species at risk act, certainly there is the compensation issue for affected landowners. It is absolutely critical. For us to accept this legislation in any form, it has to be in there. If it is not, we will continue to fight the battles and try to stop it. We feel this is just going to create such havoc in the environmental field that it will actually be a detriment to saving endangered species instead of helping them, particularly the aspect whereby a person could be charged under the act for unknowingly disturbing the habitat of an endangered species. That is not right. People are going to be very cautious about how they approach this. If they do have endangered species on their property, are not aware of it, disturb the habitat and are somehow reported, the fines and penalties are absolutely huge and will be very hard for people to deal with. We feel that this is another aspect of the compensation issue, the fact that someone can be charged unknowingly. The mens rea aspect needs to be in there. Surely criminal intent should have to be established before the book, or this law, can be thrown at anyone.

•(1305)

There is also the fact that this bill deals with other than crown lands. Most of the provinces have endangered species legislation. They do a good job of policing. I know that particularly in our part of world in southern Alberta there are very many mitigation projects in place through a very wide aspect of industry. The farm industries, the irrigation districts and the resource sectors all make special efforts to leave habitat for species at risk and to leave habitat for all species. It is really good to see that this can happen without legislation and that it happens because these industries and people realize and support that things have to be done to protect endangered species.

We still have some problems with these two bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B. Hopefully, as the member from the government side previously indicated, perhaps something could be done with the Minister of Justice to change that bill so that it would be more acceptable to people who deal with animals in their day-to-day lives, in research, in agriculture, and to those who deal with animals in general. Certainly we do not in any way condone cruelty to animals. It is a terrible thing when people go out of their way to purposefully abuse an animal. We do need legislation to protect animals, but we have to make sure that it does not intrude on the animal husbandry practices in existence today.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Yellowhead, and I have a motion I would like to move as I conclude. I move that the amendment be amended by adding the following words: and the 66th Report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs that called for all private members' business to be votable, tabled in the previous session, be deemed presented and adopted in the second session.

Mr. Speaker, before you rule on the admissibility of the subamendment, I point out that the main motion reads:

That, in order to provide for the resumption and continuation of the business of the House begun in the previous Session of Parliament it is ordered—

The issue of private members' business has been mentioned here by many people and its votable status was an important issue in the last session, in the last Parliament and in the Parliament before that. In fact, it has been the subject matter of numerous points of order

and questions of privilege. In the last session, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs finally agreed to make all private members' business votable. Just before the House had a chance to adopt the report, the House adjourned and then the government prorogued. It is essential that this report be brought back and adopted. We can consider it as one of the positive issues Motion No. 2A can bring back from the previous session instead of having to focus on all the negative issues the government was in during the middle of the last session, like Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B.

I present this motion.

•(1310)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair will take the matter under advisement and report to the House as soon as possible.

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to point out as you consider this motion that it is not relevant to the amendment itself and therefore is out of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will certainly take that opinion from the government side as part of the consultation and I will report back to the House.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the amendment and what legislation is going to be brought forward in the next few months, one of the pieces of legislation of concern to me is Bill C-56. We have been dealing with this bill in the health committee for the last 18 months.

I read the Speech from the Throne and I listened to it very carefully. I was particularly struck that there was no reference to this piece of legislation in it whatsoever. It is a very controversial piece of legislation and one that is very important to the ethics of the nation. Whether what it was called was appropriate or not was something that was discussed in the health committee. We dealt with it for a considerable amount of time. We listened to some of the best witnesses when it comes to reproductive technology from across the country and around the world.

Reproductive technology was the name of the bill. At the end of our consultations we said maybe it should not be called reproductive technology because it encompassed so much. It encompassed two aspects. It dealt with reproduction and the true desire of families to reproduce and some of their problems as well as in vitro fertilization and what comes out of that.

On the other side was the ethical dynamic or the related science. This is putting a lot of people in this country in a very uneasy position because of what actually happens when we take life at its earliest and most vulnerable stage and destroy it to create stem cells. The stem cells would potentially be built into another organ and transplanted. That research and its potential is something we have wrestled with.

*Government Orders*

It is very important that this piece of legislation come forward. There has been a void in this kind of legislation and there has been for 10 years, a decade of the government's reign. We have seen this piece of legislation die on the Order Paper before. We need a political resolve to bring this forward and deal with it in an effective way for Canada because of advancements in technologies that are taking place. Researchers across Canada and in other places around the world say reproductive cloning will be done within the next six months or so. We have absolutely nothing on the books to regulate this from happening in Canada, yet it is universal.

The previous health minister at an international convention in Geneva a year ago last spring said that we need an international consensus on this issue. There is an international consensus and that is that reproductive cloning should not take place.

I am very concerned with some of the things that this piece of legislation deals with because of the complexity of the material. There are two sides to it; it is about reproducing families and also about the science. Canadians have a lack of understanding of the exact dynamics of this piece of legislation. We should look at that and weigh it very carefully.

To bring the bill back in its present form would scare me and Canadians. The bill needs to be amended. It was in the health committee prior to prorogation. If it were to be reintroduced it would come back to committee. At that stage we should be open to some of the amendments that Canadians feel are very important for this piece of very delicate legislation.

The Alliance supports some aspects of the bill. Some of the things in it are actually very good. We support the banning of human and therapeutic cloning, chimera, animal-human hybrids, sex selection, germ line alterations, buying and selling of embryos, paid surrogacies. They are all part of this legislation.

One of the things that is not in the legislation and one that is very important for us to consider is the banning of the patenting of human life. This is something the government needs to deal with. I was looking for an indication in the throne speech on that as well. Are we going to ban human life or are we going to allow life at its most vulnerable to be patented?

When we sit back and think about it, why would we want to patent human life? It would be for no other reason than to protect the individual who discovered it because of an economic value. Patentability is usually based on that. If it is all about economics and it is all about dollars and cents and making a commodity of human life, that is something we should be very careful of.

•(1315)

We are very concerned about this legislation in many other areas. One is the accountability of the agency that would be struck which is talked about in the legislation. To be able to go forward in the 21st century we need an agency that will deal with the very delicate things that are in the bill regarding scientific advancements, some of which we cannot even talk about now because we do not know what they will be, but as we go into the 21st century we know that they are going to be there.

We need an agency that is very strong, independent, transparent, and also which is accountable not only to the Minister of Health but

to Parliament. The agency should be an independent agency outside Health Canada. Clause 25 in the legislation is quite disturbing. It allows the minister to give any policy direction that she likes to the agency and the agency has no choice but to follow it. That is not accountability. We need an independent agency that answers to Parliament. That sort of direction would be very difficult for the minister to direct.

The performance of the agency should also be evaluated by the Auditor General, not by itself. The legislation says that the agency will monitor itself. There is nothing in the bill saying that the agency will have to report on an annual basis to the House at all, which is something else that is quite disturbing.

The bill also allows for the creation of advisory panels. We believe that stakeholders in this important area should have been given statutory standing. That statutory standing should be before the agency. We are talking about more than just being driven by scientists. It should be a group that has a broader scope than that.

The users and the children who are born from assisted reproductive technologies should be part of that group. People with disabilities should be part of that group. Scientists and the medical community should be part of it. The faith community, the private providers, research firms, taxpayers and their representatives in the provinces and territories should also have a voice. They should have statutory standing if it is going to have a broad enough scope and if it is going to garner the confidence of the nation as an agency that will move forward in this area.

I was surprised to find that there was no reporting in the bill. As I said before, the agency does not have to report annually to Parliament. That is something that needs to be there for sure.

The agency is going to be called upon to do many things, whether it is to decide upon the number of embryos that are created or destroyed or provide ongoing assisted reproduction procedures. It needs to report on all of those things and it should all be part of that report.

We also have to understand that this agency and this piece of legislation have to work in concert with the provincial governments. Some governments, such as the province of Quebec, are saying that they will not allow embryonic stem cell research in their provinces. What happens under this piece of legislation then? Who calls the shots? Is it the federal government in this piece of legislation, or is it provincial jurisdiction that has the mandate to deal with this area within its facilities?

These are things that concern us about this flawed piece of legislation. When we look at the ethics of this, it is something that is very disturbing to many Canadians.



On one side we have people who will say that embryonic stem cell research is something that could create a cure for their children or for their loved ones. We know that they will stop at nothing to do that. As parents we would lay down our lives easily for our children if we could keep them alive and healthy. It is something that is within us to do.

On the other side of it, there could be embryos created for the purpose of reproduction that would be destroyed. There could be others who would look at that and say “These are my children and I will stand in the way of this legislation to protect those children”.

I understand both sides, and both sides are very right in their dynamics. It is a very explosive piece of legislation and we should think very carefully before we bring it back in its present state.

● (1320)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before proceeding with the debate on the amendment, let me first of all respond to the introduction by the hon. member for Lethbridge of the text of a subamendment. I must rule that it is out of order because it goes beyond the scope of the amendment which is being debated before the House right now.

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the government motions that would allow for the continued business of Parliament in this new session. The motion is very important as it allows for the continuation of committee business and the reinstatement of government bills.

[*Translation*]

Reinstatement of government bills is a common practice when a new parliamentary session begins after prorogation. In 1999, at the beginning of the session, the opposition allowed a vote on a similar motion to be held without debate. The House of Commons adopted this practice informally more than 30 years ago. A similar procedure is used for reinstating private members' bills. The House agreed to entrench this in the standing orders during the last session.

There is a similar practice in use in the British House of Commons, where they are looking into the possibility of integrating it with the standing orders so that it will become standard practice at the start of a new session.

● (1325)

[*English*]

Over the coming days the government will be seeking to reinstate and complete parliamentary consideration of bills from the last session which were highlighted in the Speech from the Throne. They are: the species at risk bill, the Canadian environmental assessment bill, the pest control bill and the first nations governance bill. The government will also reinstate and advance other bills which were not completed last spring, namely, the human reproduction bill, the specific claims bill, the cruelty to animals bill, the public safety bill, the nuclear safety bill, the Canada pension plan amendments, the copyright bill and the sport bill.

The cruelty to animals bill is one that has received a lot of attention in my riding of Etobicoke North. Many of my constituents would like to see that passed without further delay. Likewise, I have a photography group that would like to see amendments to the copyright bill. I have been discussing that with the minister over the last week or so.

### *Government Orders*

Rather than focus on the general theme, I would like to focus my time on the portions of the motion that relate to the Special Committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs. Today's motion would allow for the re-establishment of the special committee so that it can continue its important work.

Drug abuse is a serious problem in my riding of Etobicoke North. We have had close to a dozen murders over the last year and a half or two years that are crime related, drug related and gang related. We have a challenge in Etobicoke North to deal with drugs. This particular initiative is one that is being followed closely by my constituents. The relevant portion of the motion states:

That a special committee of the House be appointed to consider the factors underlying or relating to the non-medical use of drugs in Canada and make recommendations with respect to the ways and means by which the government can act, alone or in its relations with governments at other levels, in the reduction of the dimensions of the problems involved in such use;

That the membership of the committee be the same as the membership of the Special Committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs at the time of prorogation of the First Session of the present Parliament, provided that substitutions may be made from time to time, if required, in the manner provided for in Standing Order 114(2);

That the committee shall have all of the powers granted to Standing Committees in Standing Order 108; and

That the committee shall present its final report no later than November 22, 2002.

Members of this committee have been working diligently and effectively, travelling across Canada and meeting with various stakeholder groups. My colleague, the member for Burlington, has been very active as she is the Chair of this particular committee.

This part of the motion is similar to the motion that established the special committee in the first place, and was passed by the House on May 17, 2001. The motion was moved by the member for Langley—Abbotsford from the Canadian Alliance during an opposition day debate. Therefore, I am struggling to understand why that party would not support the reintroduction of this particular bill.

The committee is a non-partisan body and this part of today's motion should be supported by opposition and government members alike. The misuse of drugs is a non-partisan matter facing all Canadians.

The purpose of the special committee's work, to study and report on Canada's drug policy, is a timely issue. The committee's report in November will be much anticipated by the government and I am sure all members of the House, and I know by the constituents in my riding of Etobicoke North.

● (1330)

Last Monday in the Speech from the Throne the government expressed its openness to changes to Canada's drug policy. The throne speech stated:

The government will also implement a national drug strategy to address addiction while promoting public safety. It will expand the number of drug treatment courts. It will act on the results of parliamentary consultations with Canadians on options for change in our drug laws, including the possibility of the decriminalization of marijuana possession.

*Government Orders*

I know this particular aspect is somewhat contentious. I find it a challenging issue to deal with because in Etobicoke North we have so many problems related to hard drugs: cocaine, crack and heroin. The police are trying to focus its efforts in combating that type of drug abuse and drug crime. If the police was not seized with the responsibility of dealing with simple marijuana possession, it might reallocate more resources to the fight against these more dangerous and heinous drugs.

I understand the argument and the debate which says the move to the decriminalization of marijuana would perhaps send the wrong signals to youth and might create a culture where drugs are fine. I look forward to the continuing debate on this important topic. However it is obvious that the government is looking forward with anticipation to the work of this special committee. It is clear from the Speech from the Throne that the government is looking for the views of parliamentarians on how to modify Canada's drug laws.

Over the last few years I have had the honour and pleasure to work with the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. It has done much research into drugs, the misuse of drugs, and how drugs can create a huge cost societally and economically. We need to be dealing with drugs and combating the misuse of drugs in a serious way. The centre has had some input into the government's thinking about the fight against drugs. I am sure it will be able to contribute in the weeks and months ahead in implementing those strategies and programs that make sense to deal with this important problem.

It is true that the government has already received the report of the Senate committee on drugs, which called for the legalization of marijuana. This may go further than most Canadians wish to go, but it is an important contribution to this debate as well.

It is important that members of the House of Commons are able to express their views to ensure that the government can make an informed decision on the advice of parliamentarians. The special committee has already conducted an extensive amount of work led by the member for Burlington as its chair. Since the special committee was established 56 meetings have taken place to consider Canada's drug laws. The special committee has heard from a broad number of witnesses including officials from Health Canada, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, the pharmaceutical industry, academics, police organizations, health professionals and other non-government organizations.

The special committee considered the subject matter of Bill C-344, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act sponsored last session by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. I spoke in the House on that bill, and while I supported the general thrust of the member's bill, I felt that the bill was flawed for a number of reasons and I stated that at the time. One of the key reasons was that we must deal with not simply marijuana use but we must be particularly tough on marijuana pushers, the people who promote the use of these drugs.

In Australia, for example, tickets similar to automobile traffic violations are handed out. These tickets are issued numerous times. People do not pay them, so they end up clogging up the courts. We must ask if that is the best way to proceed; to clog up the courts with a bunch of tickets that people have no intention of paying.

Members will recall that the other side of the House reacted with feigned outrage when the House voted to refer the bill to the special committee for consideration. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. This was a non-partisan committee of the House and the members spoke with outrage. This was going to be referred for serious study and examination based on the facts and the members on the other side were outraged. This occurred despite the fact that the proposal for this committee came from the member for Langley—Abbotsford, a caucus colleague of the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

We have seen a lot of conflicting positions taken by the opposition party but this was an all time high for it. It had two members of its caucus promoting this idea. The matter was sent to a non-partisan committee of the House, and members opposite, who always argue that we should be engaging parliamentarians more seriously, feign outrage at such a move.

• (1335)

Despite all these antics, it is important to remember two things.

First, the special committee, as I said, was proposed by the member for Langley—Abbotsford, a colleague of the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Sometimes members on the other side of the House forget who their colleagues are. I just wanted to remind them again that these are two of their colleagues who have supported this initiative. It made little sense to refer Bill C-344 to the justice committee, when we already had a non-partisan special committee studying this issue.

Second, the special committee has studied the subject matter of Bill C-344. On April 25 the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca appeared before the special committee to present his bill. The special committee will likely address the bill's proposals in its final report expected next month.

Finally, I would like to conclude with some observations about parliamentary reform. Critics on the other side have alleged that the government ignores the views of parliamentarians on the development of policy and legislation. Of course we know that is not the case. The motion shows that this is clearly not the case.

In this case the government is looking for advice from parliamentarians on how to move forward on Canada's drug laws. This is similar to other initiatives by the government, such as the justice committee's study on same sex marriages. I got into a debate the other day in the House with the member opposite and a member from the NDP. It is very important issue and I agree with the member opposite. It is something that needs our special attention.

I am confident that the government will continue to seek the views of parliamentarians in the development of policy and legislation. It would be an absolute shame if members voted against the motion, as it would effectively put an end to the special committee's work on the non-medical use of drugs. The result of a vote against it would be to act against the very positions of two of their members of caucus, who I acknowledge have had a keen interest in the issue and have done some important work.

I therefore urge all members, not only the members on this side but members opposite, especially members from the official opposition, to support the motion so the government can receive the views of parliamentarians on this key issue. I await with anticipation, as I am sure the government does, the report of the special committee next month.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise again. This is the first chance we have had to speak in the House since the government prorogued. We are speaking about a motion to reinstate a lot of what it left behind when it decided to shut down the House for two weeks and not address the very serious and important issues that we felt should have been brought to bear here almost immediately. I am talking about the agricultural crisis in Western Canada.

We see nothing like that in a reinstatement bill here in this motion because the government has totally ignored that crisis. It has tossed some money here and there and an ad hoc program here and there. It is kind of like putting one's finger in a dike which is leaking all the way across. It is just playing fast and loose with agricultural members out there who are taxpayers. They tend to pay their bills and would love to do that, if the government would allow them to and if it would come up with some programs and long term vision that would see some strength put back into fundamental agriculture. It is basic: the guys own the land.

I will be splitting my time, Mr. Speaker, with the member for Kelowna.

Getting back to agriculture, we see two issues in this motion, and it is an omnibus motion. We see the Liberals again envelope in one little motion a huge cross-section of what they have on their wish list that certainly does not resonate with most Canadians out there.

Agriculture, as I said is in crisis in Saskatchewan and Alberta in the north halves of the provinces where huge amount of agriculture goes on. The Liberals have dedicated \$600 million across the country. They did not even prioritize. They did not even send it where it needed to go. The only action we saw that prioritized the need in those two areas was the Hay West campaign, generated by some terrific citizens in Ontario, moving east from Quebec into the Maritimes. They did a great job.

However, unfortunately the amount of hay that can get through the bureaucratic eye of the needle is maybe 30,000 tonnes. That is not even an appetizer for the cattle herds that we have out west. One RM where my hay land is requires at least 50,000 tonnes all by itself. That is one RM out of 200, 300 or 400 that requires that kind of volume. What goes out from Hay West is equivalent to half of what that RM needs, and there are 300 or 400 more requiring that same sort of commitment.

Did the government do the right thing? No, it did not. Its own Liberal senator said that it was a joke, an absolute travesty, what the government did not do or recognize.

The agriculture minister did show up in Saskatchewan but did he get his boots dusty? No. He landed on both ends of where the problem lies, close to an airport, but he did not get out and see the real world. He did not come out through my riding. Politics aside, I

### *Government Orders*

offered to take him through to have a look. He just, I guess, did not figure it was worth his time so he did not come.

We have two other parts of this omnibus motion that deal with agriculture in a huge, negative way. I am talking about Bill C-5, the species at risk legislation. No one with clear common sense thinking in Canada wants to see a species disappear from this country. However, when we look at legislation like this that is so encompassing and is such a horrendous load on primary producers and others folks who work the land, we have to have some sound science.

I watched a documentary the other night on the spotted owl in British Columbia. There is concern that because some of the lobbying has moved them from an area and so on, they could become an endangered species in Canada. The problem is the vast majority of their nesting grounds is across the line. These owls do not care where the 49th parallel is. We are going to list them as endangered but in some parts across the line they may be a nuisance. That is the problem with legislation like this that is not built or even founded on sound science.

I hear the peanut gallery chipping over there. It is the only time the backbenchers get.

Let us get back to Bill C-5 for just one second. The huge stumbling block for those of us in the Alliance is the lack of the wording in the bill, where we want to see compensation based on fair market value. That is just bedrock. No one would see that as the wrong way to go. If people lose access to land, working it, going across it or whatever, they have to have some compensation. They cannot keep on paying taxes on land of which they no longer have any use.

• (1340)

Fair market value compensation is all we are asking. It is a very simple thing to put in.

A lot of the rural Ontario caucus fell for the line that the government would let the Liberals in the Senate make those changes. It did not happen. It will be now reintroduced, go back over there and it still will not happen because the Liberals do not see that private property rights have to be paramount in any legislation like this. Fair market compensation are three little words that are just a huge stumbling block on that piece of legislation.

Then we get into Bill C-15B which talks about cruelty to animals. Again, no one out there in rural Canada or in the cities for that matter want to see animals treated cruelly. It is just not done. People of good conscience would never accept that.

All we are looking for is a couple of little words in the legislation so that proper, acceptable husbandry rules and regulations, which we already have, will be maintained. We cannot get that. Dehorning a cow, or castrating a bull or snipping the tail on a hog has been accepted for years. However the Liberals cannot understand that we have to entrench the basic premise that accepted husbandry practices will continue. It leads to all sorts of nuisance liability suits and everything.

*Government Orders*

There are good, free thinking members on the other side. However they are falling for the line that they can support this and some amendments will go through at the Senate. That will not happen because the Senate is not accountable to anybody. Senators are not accountable to the people who never have a chance to elect them. They are accountable to the Prime Minister, just like the ethics counsellor. That leads us into another part.

Where is the ethics package? Where are the priorities of the government? Rather than reintroducing the flawed, failed legislation of the last session, where is the new stuff? Where is the fresh thinking. Where is the outline, the impact assessment on Kyoto? Where the heck is that? The Liberals have not even thought about that, yet they will ratify it by the end of this year. That is another huge hit to my particular area where any farm that is still open and viable is because of an off farm job relating to the oil patch.

The Liberals will be hammering these poor folks again just because they will not start to address the bedrock principles of free market. What will the impact be? How many jobs will we lose? How high will the cost of home heating, power and gasoline at the pump go? The Liberals say that we all have to do that for future generations. Certainly, we have to slow down the train when it is running away, but that is being done now. We have already got environmental assessments on every drill site in western Canada and they are doing a great job.

When we look at everything that is not in the bill, it just screams out to the electorate there that we need a change of government. There are absolutely no fresh ideas in the throne speech. It is a rehash, a mishmash, a reintroduction of a lot of failed initiatives from the last nine years. The Liberals are trying to build a legacy for a Prime Minister whom nobody wants or likes any more. It cannot be done. He is tired out and there is nothing left. There is no direction there.

Last week there was another huge example of a tremendous lack of ethical conduct by a minister of the Crown. Will he be sanctioned? No, he will be covered. He will be covered by the blanket of the ethics counsellor, who reports to the Prime Minister whom the minister supports, one of the last few on the front bench. Will he be given blanket amnesty? Certainly, for hiding behind the fact that it was a company, not the individual. The individual signed it and a partnership says that money that comes into the partnership in which he takes part.

I have not had time to concentrate on a lot of the things that are mentioned in there. The member who spoke before me from Etobicoke has talked about the drug committee and the wonderful work it is doing. Certainly it is doing wonderful work. Then we have the Senate coming through saying to legalize marijuana. That will not go to the committee.

He talked about the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca who had his private member's bill hoisted, hijacked in this very House. Private members' business has been hijacked by the government and sent to a committee where it will not be votable. As a private member's bill it was to be votable. It would have come before all of us so that we could represent our constituents. It is gone, hoisted, hijacked and sent to a committee that is still stacked with a number

of Liberal members. It is a totally democratic deficit. That is what is wrong in the House, and we will continue to raise those issues.

• (1345)

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Saskatchewan who speaks from the heart. He is a true blue kind of Saskatchewan person. We have a whole bunch of them here. We have one fellow here from Grande Prairie and another one from Medicine Hat. These are gentlemen of the soil. These are men who know what it is like to win. These are people who understand.

The hon. member should have said that out loud but he did not. For those who are listening, I will not repeat what he said because I do not think people really want to know.

The big issue here this afternoon is the whole matter of closure. I do not know how many people have raised the issue but over the weekend I saw that this was going to be another closure motion. In fact, last fall we had an indication that Bill C-15 probably would be subject to closure and indeed here it is. It came under the rubric of bringing together all the legislation that was on the table before the House was prorogued and now it will be brought back holus-bolus at the stage that it left the House.

The government knows full well that it is in difficulty with both of those pieces of legislation. On this side of the House we have a lot of really sober, well-thinking, well-meaning, honest people who understand what people in Canada are thinking. We would have supported bringing forward the motion of reinstating bills and motions but what did the government do? It included, as it usually does, in this omnibus bill, two pieces of legislation that it knows full well do not have the support of many of their backbench members and do not have the support of many of the people who voted Liberal in the last election. Hopefully in the next election Canadians will know better and they will vote for the Canadian Alliance. We have to look very carefully at these.

Mr. Speaker, I guess you and the House should be reminded that this is now the 78th motion of closure. That is too long and too many.

**An hon. member:** More than Mulroney.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Yes, it is many more than Mulroney. In fact, I dare say that it is about 50% more than Mulroney did in total.

I am wondering what it is that the government is trying to do with this. Is it really trying to defy or deny the democratic process? The hon. member for Medicine Hat suggested that we have a democratic deficit. Well, we have a democratic deficit, a financial deficit and a deficit of new ideas.

There was an excellent opportunity to rectify some of the errors and shortcomings in both Bill C-5 and Bill C-15 but nothing happened. The government will bring them forward just as they were before.

I cannot help but draw attention to a particular issue that really bothered me with regard to Bill C-15, which is the cruelty to animals bill. I met with some dairy people this summer. When we first entered the debate some time ago I read into the record at that time about a group by the name of PETA and what they were doing. This summer I had the occasion to meet with the people at PETA and to ask them whether this was really true, whether this had really happened. Let me tell the House exactly what it was that had happened at that time.

There was a group known as PETA, People For the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Guess what this group did? When I read what they did I could not believe it had happened. I thought it was some kind of misinterpretation or mis-statement. However I found out this summer that it was absolutely correct. PETA launched an anti-dairy campaign targeting school children. It essentially told them that if children drank milk they would be responsible for the torture of cows. Why would anyone do that?

My colleagues and I in the Canadian Alliance, including my party's agriculture critic, are concerned that groups such as PETA are about to be armed with a powerful new weapon against farmers. I hope you, Mr. Speaker, and all the other members opposite recognize the door that has been opened for groups like this. We have to say to ourselves that it will never happen again, but it did just happen.

• (1350)

We had another indication earlier that told us that very clearly. On Bill C-5 a group told us that if the legislation was not tested in the courts it would have no value. We hear all this talk about there not being any frivolous litigation launched on the basis of cruelty to animals. Liz White, I believe it was, said clearly that not only would there be contests, but it was essential that litigation like that take place to prove in fact that this legislation was real.

Can anyone imagine a government putting legislation on the table that has already indicated that it will be tested in the courts? To prove what? To prove that it can be read in a variety of different ways? We do not have to go to the courts for that. We already know that.

No less a person than the attorney general for the Province of British Columbia wrote a book. His name is Alex Macdonald. You probably know him, Mr. Speaker. This gentleman said that in Canada we do not have a system of justice, we have a legal system. He goes through the book to illustrate case after case where the principle was one of legality, where the principle was one of how much money do the litigants have and then proceeded to carry on until the resources were exhausted. That is not justice. That means that the justice system is being abused, and much more than being abused, it is being misused when that happens. I know that is not true in all cases but why would the government introduce legislation that permits this kind of thing to happen?

We are now at the point where some people have said that what we have in Canada today is judicial imperialism. What does that really mean? It means rule by judges. How do they do this? They do something they call "write in". They write into legislation what they think that legislation should be saying if it is not saying exactly what it is they want it to say. The legislation is written in such an ambiguous fashion that indeed they can do this and they do it with impunity. However, that is not all. It then has the force of law.

*S. O. 31*

Members here are the lawmakers, not the judges. It should be incumbent upon us, the Prime Minister and every member here to make sure that the intention of the legislation on the books is portrayed clearly and unequivocally. When it becomes so ambiguous that a judge can write into it whatever he wishes, that is an abuse and a misuse of the parliamentary system.

I think it goes even further than that. I am looking over at some of the backbenchers over there and I know some of them very well. I know that when they voted in favour of Bill C-15 they were voting against the wishes of their constituents. Why did they do that? They did it because they were clipped into shape? No. It was because they were whipped into voting against their conscience, against their better knowledge and against the wishes of their constituents. That is a complete abuse of the democratic system and it should never happen again.

**An hon. member:** Not me.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt:** Maybe the hon. member did not do it but I know there are some over there who did. Maybe he did not but that does not make it right.

The issue has to be addressed and it has to be addressed just as soon as we possibly can. We should eliminate and take away from this particular motion Bill C-5 and Bill C-15 and then democracy at least would have the potential of being served.

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1355)

[*English*]

### WORLD HABITAT DAY

**Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has designated October 7 as World Habitat Day. This year's theme is "City to City Cooperation" which encourages more partnerships to address the problems of our urban world.

Canadian cities have long been leaders in sharing their expertise. In 1997 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities was recognized with the Scroll of Honour from the United Nations human settlement program.

The Government of Canada, through CMHC, is working with UN Habitat in areas such as housing finance systems for developing countries. CMHC has also signed historic agreements with 10 provinces and territories to increase the supply of affordable housing in Canada, and negotiations are underway with the other jurisdictions.

CMHC continues to support quality, affordable housing in safe, healthy and sustainable communities.

I encourage members and all Canadians to join the United Nations in observing World Habitat Day.

*S. O. 31*

**PAUL YING PO MAK**

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Paul Ying Po Mak is a Tai Chi master who came to Canada in 1968 at the age of 56. He spent the next thirty years actively teaching Tai Chi in Yorkton, Saskatoon and then, in 1971, Edmonton.

Mr. Mak is recognized as one of the most qualified Tai Chi teachers in the world and he is considered to be one of the most prominent students of famed Chinese master, Tung Ying Kit, who introduced Mr. Mak to Tai Chi in the early 1930s. Mr. Mak has identified four qualities of a successful Tai Chi student. These are also qualities for a successful life generally: determination, humility, practice and patience.

On the occasion of Mr. Mak's 90th birthday, I convey my best wishes and admiration for his great contribution to the discipline of Tai Chi and to the lives of so many.

*Saang yat faai lo.* I wish Mr. Mak a happy birthday.

\* \* \*

• (1400)

**COMMONWEALTH GAMES**

**Mr. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour—Petitcodiac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute today to Canada's Commonwealth Games team.

Canada is very proud of the accomplishments of our Canadian team which participated this past summer at the 17th Commonwealth Games in Manchester, England. This was Canada's best performance at the Commonwealth Games, with a total of 116 medals. Canadians can be very proud of the 281 athletes who have dedicated many years of hard work to compete in these prestigious games.

The athletes are truly great ambassadors for our country, and all Canadians are very appreciative of their efforts.

[*Translation*]

On behalf of all Canadians, I pay tribute our athletes for their impressive performances. We thank them for having represented us so well.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**NATO JET PILOT PROGRAM**

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and ask the House to join me in recognizing the accomplishments of a remarkable young woman from Kitchener Centre, Kareen Mamo. Kareen has recently become the first woman fighter jet pilot to graduate from NATO flying training in Canada.

Kareen grew up and attended school in Kitchener. It was through the Air Cadets that she first developed a love for flying and decided to become a pilot. Her fascination with flying landed her with military jets and she entered the four phase international NATO training program in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

Last week, Kareen, two fellow Canadians, as well as pilots from the U.K., Denmark, Italy and Singapore joined an elite group of military jet pilots with a promotion from officer cadet to captain in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Next, she will move to Cold Lake, Alberta where she will fly an F18 Hornet. Once that course is completed she will be only the fourth Canadian woman in 10 years to qualify as a fighter pilot.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating Kareen Mamo on her successful graduation from this elite NATO jet pilot program.

\* \* \*

**COLIN DAVID GIBSON**

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians were saddened to learn of the passing on July 3, 2002, of a true Canadian renaissance man who, much like his father before him, held a deep sense of civic duty and an uncompromising work ethic.

Colin David Gibson was a decorated veteran of World War II who served in Normandy with honour and distinction as an officer of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry. His dedication to his profession as a respected lawyer later led him to serve as the member of Parliament for Hamilton—Wentworth from 1968 to 1972.

Colin Gibson's devotion to his community and country was rivalled only by his deep love for his family and his unwavering support for his hometown Hamilton Tiger Cats.

I ask the House to join me in extending our deepest sympathies to his family, friends and indeed all Canadians who remember him with affection.

\* \* \*

**NOBEL PEACE PRIZE**

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Craig Kielburger, at the young age of 12, became a defender of the rights of children around the world, especially those who are forced to work in factories in third world countries and are totally deprived of educational opportunities.

The Free the Children organization that Craig founded has grown to now include over 100,000 members. They have built over 300 schools, providing an opportunity for education to almost 20,000 children who otherwise would grow into adulthood with no education at all.

Craig has received a number of international awards and has forcefully given his message on programs like *60 Minutes* and *Oprah*.

Now, at age 19, Craig has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. The fact that he has come this far shows that anyone, even very young people, can be effective in drawing the attention of the world to issues that are important to them. I wish to extend congratulations to Craig and tell him that we are pulling for him.

### HAY WEST CAMPAIGN

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend those in my riding of Peterborough and elsewhere who donated hay for western farmers in need. Not only did they donate the hay, they trucked it to rail depots such as Havelock and, with donated equipment, worked long hours packing it onto trains. In Peterborough they went a step further by raising funds to further subsidize these efforts.

This is a fine example of rural people, notably farmers in eastern Canada, reaching out to help farmers in dire straits in western Canada. It is gestures and efforts like this that make Canada such a great country.

I wish to thank all those involved with the Hay West project, including rail companies and the federal government for cars, fumigation and other assistance.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

[Translation]

### TIMOR LESTE

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste, formerly known as East Timor.

It became the 191th member of the United Nations Organization. In March 1975, Indonesia invaded Timor and began a brutal occupation that would last for close to 25 years and result in the death of over one quarter of a million Timorese.

In August 1999, Timorese displayed exceptional courage when 78% of the population voted in favour of independence, in a referendum held by the UN and in spite of acts of violence.

This poor country, whose infrastructure was devastated by war, needs help. Let us stand by it in the extraordinary reconstruction effort that is about to begin. Compliance with international law is what resulted in this outcome.

In these times of tense international relations, the fact that Timor has joined the UN is a reminder that the rights of individuals and people are fragile, but are fundamental and must be protected. The fight against terrorism must not make us forget that.

I pay tribute the people of Timor Leste!

\* \* \*

### DON CHERRY

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation announced that Ron MacLean and the CBC had reached an agreement for the next season of *Hockey Night in Canada*.

In the course of these negotiations, we learned that sports commentator Don Cherry was being paid \$700,000 by the CBC. I was stunned when I heard that, not just because this is a very high salary, but primarily because of the controversial nature of the comments made by this commentator, who does not hesitate to criticize the presence of foreign players and who indulges in discriminatory comments against francophones.

S. O. 31

Don Cherry was found guilty, by the Quebec press council, of making insulting comments about Jean-Luc Brassard, a freestyle skier and the flag bearer of the Canadian team at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympic Games. Then, in March 2001, Don Cherry spewed his venom on the Francophonie Games that were going to be held in the Ottawa-Hull region, in the summer of 2001.

I welcome the renewal of Ron MacLean's contract and I hope that Mr. MacLean will help keep his partner Don Cherry more in line in his comments, because his behaviour has definitely not been deserving of the forum made available to him by the CBC.

\* \* \*

[English]

### MEMBER FOR OTTAWA SOUTH

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to join millions of Canadians in expressing profound dismay at the rude and thoughtless remarks of the Deputy Prime Minister this weekend.

On the very day that our Queen arrived here to join Canadians in celebrating the Golden Jubilee of her reign, this minister, a member of the Queen's Privy Council, a man who had to take the oath of allegiance in order to assume his office, had the crass bad taste to dismiss the Canadian Crown which the Queen herself personifies.

It is understandable that in a pluralistic democracy there will be differences of opinion on matters such as the monarchy. But the Deputy Prime Minister is not a private citizen. He is a senior representative of Her Majesty's government, and he therefore has a high responsibility to lead Canadians in honouring our sovereign as we thank her for her 50 years of graceful and selfless service to Canadians and members of the Commonwealth throughout the world.

Given the Deputy Prime Minister's public insult, it would be totally inappropriate for him to act as the Queen's escort when she visits us here in Ottawa. Let us hope that he does the right thing and instead joins Canadians in celebrating the Queen's 50 years of proud service.

\* \* \*

### THE ROYAL VISIT

**Mr. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Her Majesty the Queen and his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh begin a new leg of their journey across Canada today. Indeed, on Tuesday, October 8, the royal couple will make their way to friendly Manitoba where they will spend a unique day. Upon their arrival in Winnipeg, they will be greeted by children of all ages at the Forks, a national historic site of Canada. There, a youth multicultural showcase will profile the rich diversity of Canadian society.

*S. O. 31*

Following this event, Her Majesty, accompanied by the Premier of Manitoba, will depart by boat and disembark at Taché Quay in my great riding of Saint Boniface. In the evening, youth from across Manitoba and extraordinary athletes from across the province will attend a dinner inside the legislative building. This special dinner will be preceded by a spectacular outdoor celebration during which Her Majesty will unveil the newly restored Golden Boy, a cherished symbol of our province. The royal couple will also be entertained by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and Ms. Loreena McKennitt.

Their stay in our province promises to be truly memorable.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great distress that I read this weekend that an ecosystem almost five times the size of Prince Edward Island is on the brink of dying. Because of federal government cuts, scientists cannot even tell us why this is occurring to Lake Erie.

Funding cuts to Environment Canada made by the former finance minister have critically compromised research, monitoring and remedial action for the Great Lakes. As well, the Canada-Ontario agreement respecting the Great Lakes basin lapsed for two years. It was only signed about six months ago and nothing has been done to implement it.

Lake Erie is the shallowest of the Great Lakes and serves as the bellwether for all the others. As Lake Erie goes, so do all the Great Lakes. I urge the government to properly fund and implement the COA and revive this vital ecosystem. Or is it just going to stand on the sidelines and let it die?

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[Translation]

**HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, highway 185 continues to take its toll in human lives. Only weeks after the Prime Minister of Canada's announcement that over \$400 million would be invested in one section of a New Brunswick highway, with a statement that Témiscouata would have to wait, the 185 has taken three more lives.

This is an unacceptable situation and the federal government absolutely must announce major investment in highway 185 this very autumn. It is, after all, part of the Trans-Canada Highway.

The Government of Quebec has committed to meeting 50% of the costs of this project. It has, moreover, already undertaken to remedy the most dangerous situations. Over \$20 million has been invested at Notre-Dame-du-Lac and a similar amount will be committed by the Government of Quebec for Dégelis and Saint-Antonin in the coming year, as part of a \$225 million plan.

The entire project, however, requires in excess of \$600 million, and we are still waiting on the federal government's share. This is unacceptable.

My message for the Prime Minister: Invest in the 185. It is urgent and to us it is a priority.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week in West Virginia, the United States Business Council held its annual meeting. The American CEOs assembled there said that a war against Iraq could spell trouble for the fragile U.S. economy. The overall impact would be negative, they predicted, because energy prices would rise sharply and potential travellers would stay home.

The CEO of J.P. Morgan said that the prospect of war is another negative with respect to capital markets and equity markets. Another one said that war would have a depressive impact on the economy and would delay the start of business investment. Another said "I don't think another \$100 billion tax on U.S. citizens is a good thing".

All this negative commentary on the effect of war on the U.S. economy should concern Canadian business persons because Americans are the biggest purchasers of Canadian products. Canadian investors too should be concerned about the effect of war on the equity markets and therefore on their own portfolios.

\* \* \*

**BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, October is breast cancer awareness month. Yesterday, October 6, marked the 11th annual run for the Canadian fundraiser. An estimated 135,000 people in 34 Canadian cities raised more than \$13 million for breast cancer research and treatment.

The unfortunate truth is that almost every one of us knows someone with breast cancer. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation estimates that 20,500 women will develop breast cancer in 2002 and expects about a quarter of these cases to be fatal. Those statistics represent our mothers, sisters, wives, daughters and friends.

May I also highlight today the activities of three women from Saint John, New Brunswick, Pearl Morrell, Kim Chenier and Sharon Randell, who are supporting the cause by collecting and selling autographed teacups from celebrities and public figures.

I wish to say congratulations to all those who took part in yesterday's Run for the Cure.



*Oral Questions***LITERACY**

**Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today to congratulate the National Adult Literacy Database, NALD, for earning the International Reading Association prize conferred by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO.

NALD is a national, New Brunswick-based, not-for-profit organization that provides non-profit literacy organizations in Canada with free website design and maintenance resources.

NALD's executive director, Fredericton's own Charles Ramsey, accepted the award last week at a best practices national workshop on literacy. NALD is the first Internet site to receive such an award from UNESCO.

I ask members to please join me in congratulating NALD for this prestigious recognition of its world-class production quality, content and service to the literacy community of Canada.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA**

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, today the government invoked closure to enable it to reinstate its old bills. One would think that the Liberals would want Canadians to forget this Parliament's first session but here are the top ten reasons why they will not: number ten, voting down an Alliance motion to implement their Liberal red book promise of an independent ethics commissioner; number nine, Alfonso Gagliano; number eight, cross burnings; number seven, cabinet suggesting journalists should come up with a code of ethics for themselves when the cabinet was up to its eyeballs in scandals; number six, Groupaction; number five, Grand-Mère Golf Club and Inn; number four, over 12,000 pages of *Hansard*, in both official languages, proving this government had nothing to say; number three, 1,500 pages from the Auditor General, in both official languages, proving she had a lot to say; number two, dragging a priest into a government cover-up over a holiday stay at a rich guy's place; and, the number one reason why Liberals should be ashamed of the first session—it firmly established their government as the most ethically deficient government in Canadian history and that is saying something.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

•(1415)

[English]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General has done the following: given out a sole source contract contrary to the rules; failed even to respect the sole source rules in extending the contract; given the contract to the firm of his own official agent; given the work to a former bureaucrat not named in the contract; admitted in the House that the work extended beyond the terms of the contract; and established links between the principals of this contract and his own lobbying for a grant application for his brother's college. I

should add that he failed to give straight answers to any of these things either inside or outside the House.

Why is the minister still in the cabinet?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I released a statement last week to clarify the facts of the contract and I stand by that statement. The contract was awarded according to Treasury Board guidelines. We have done important work with this contract.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, apparently the minister is just going to keep reading from his script rather than give anybody in here or outside the House a straight answer.

The only thing transparent in the government is the Prime Minister's obvious double standard. The Solicitor General awarded an untendered sole source contract to his friend and two-time official agent. Everett Roche signed the contract and benefited from it.

Of the former defence minister, the Prime Minister stated, "He helped a friend, and in the guidelines you cannot give favourable treatment to a friend or a family member". The defence minister was fired. When the defence minister was fired, why is the Solicitor General defended?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have a certain declaration of the facts by the Solicitor General. He put out a clear list a couple of days ago of what happened, including the publishing of this contract on the MERX system which gives rise to the possibility of a contract being objected to. Furthermore the ethics counsellor is looking into the situation which is an appropriate step to be taken.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said of the defence minister's firing that this "will teach a lesson to all of us". Apparently not everyone on that side is a very quick learner.

The fact remains that the Solicitor General orchestrated a contract that directly benefited his friend. Now the government is condoning rewarding friends and family with taxpayers' money. Does this not show once again why the Prime Minister and cabinet need to be subject to an independent ethics commissioner?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the process does speak for itself. There is a process in place to deal with contracts. Where they are let in the circumstances such as in this case, they do need to be published on the MERX system. It gives a right to anybody who may be interested in the contract to apply for it. Those steps were followed in this case in accordance with Treasury Board guidelines.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Solicitor General. Why was the \$140,000 contract not signed directly by David Nicholson if, as the Solicitor General professes, this individual's qualifications were so outstanding?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said many times in the House, the contract was awarded under Treasury Board guidelines. It was publicly posted and it was given to a firm, not an individual, which followed Treasury Board guidelines.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there are only two reasons the minister would not contract with Mr. Nicholson directly. First of all, he wanted his old political pal's firm to benefit from the contract, or it was to get around the very strict Treasury Board rules that govern the hiring of former civil servants. Which is it?

• (1420)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said on Friday, the advice was given by a very capable deputy minister, Mr. David Nicholson, and also it was given according to Treasury Board guidelines. These are the facts that I released last Friday in a statement.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in response to the serious problem of the fiscal imbalance between the federal government and Quebec, the Minister of Finance suggested that the Government of Quebec close its foreign delegations.

Does the Minister of Finance realize that closing Quebec's foreign delegations would only make up for two weeks' worth of the fiscal imbalance? There would still be 50 weeks left to deal with. Does he not comprehend that the problem is much more serious than he implies?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, does the member comprehend that there is no fiscal imbalance, since both levels of government have the same right to raise taxes or decrease spending?

It is not for me to suggest how a provincial government can deal with pressures. However, it is important to recognize that, for the past 20 years, provincial revenues have exceeded federal revenues.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is not up to him to make suggestions, but that is exactly what he did. While we are at it, if the Government of Quebec got rid of the entire ministry of culture, that would make up for 10 weeks of the fiscal imbalance. If it eliminated all regional development assistance, that would be the equivalent of about four weeks of the fiscal imbalance.

Will the Minister of Finance acknowledge that the serious problem of the fiscal imbalance cannot be solved with simplistic solutions, and that his suggestion is to eliminate everything that makes Quebec Quebec, so that it winds up like any other province?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is up to the Government of Quebec to set its own priorities. If it is a priority for the province to have representatives around the world, it is up to Quebec to explain it to their constituents. It is not my place to decide.

However—and this is what I said in Montreal on Friday—if we could work together by reducing the problems between the different levels of government, by reducing the overlap, we might be able to pursue objectives that we have in common.

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has proposed that the Government of Quebec close all of its foreign delegations, thus saving \$100 million to remedy the fiscal imbalance.

Yet the problem of fiscal imbalance is costing the Quebec government somewhere in the vicinity of \$50 million weekly. Instead of focussing on cuts to Quebec's budget, would the Minister of Finance not be better off looking closer to home, getting rid of the private foundations, eliminating interference in areas of provincial jurisdiction and putting an end to his propaganda aimed at Quebec?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very simple. On shared projects, we can work together. Projects like the Séguin report, however, with its 20-year revenue projections, are not at all a basis on which to work together.

I believe the people of Quebec and the rest of Canada have lost patience with governments constantly trying to point the finger of blame at each other.

We need to work together. That is what I said in Montreal.

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to the Auditor General, billions of dollars are lying dormant in private foundations set up by the federal government in order to encroach upon areas of provincial jurisdiction. We are also aware that millions more have been spent on propaganda in Quebec alone, not to mention a multitude of other needless expenditures.

Instead of making simplistic proposals, would the Minister of Finance not be better off cleaning up his own budgetary act and opening up a dialogue with the provinces, in order to solve the problem of fiscal imbalance for once and for all?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a problem that does not exist cannot be solved. The provinces have the same revenue sources as the federal government, and others as well, lottery revenues for instance.

We all have an obligation to control spending and the public has its priorities. That is what we must focus on. We must stop blaming each other. We must find real solutions in order to meet the priorities of Canadians.

\* \* \*

• (1425)

[English]

**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

*Oral Questions*

Last week the government announced the appointment of Howard McNutt as the director of the CBC. The press release listed many of Mr. McNutt's previous occupations and stated that he is a member of the board of directors of a number of organizations in the country. What the release failed to mention however is that Howard McNutt's relationship is with the Liberal Party and with Compass Communications, which is a long time Liberal tied marketing agency in Halifax.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister explain to the House why the government made a political appointment to the board of the CBC?

**Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the CBC is governed by a board of directors appointed independently from the government.

Surely, the position the government takes is finding the best qualified people to ensure there is a strong, healthy CBC that speaks for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Let me explain further, Mr. Speaker. Howard McNutt has ties with both the Liberal Party and Compass Communications. Compass Communications is a member of the Groupaction consortium that is at the centre of an RCMP investigation of government sponsorship contracts. Even more, Compass is one of the firms that has lost its exclusive contract in management sponsorship grants.

My question for the Deputy Prime Minister is the following. Can the government explain why it rewarded Mr. McNutt, an individual with links to a firm currently under RCMP investigation?

**Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again I would like to repeat that the role of the government is to appoint a board of directors to manage the day to day operations of the CBC which the hon. member knows is independent and a crown corporation.

What the government does do is effects the policy for the CBC. As the hon. member knows, the heritage committee is actually in the process of examining the Broadcasting Act and the role of the CBC and how and when directors should be appointed. I am sure that report will be tabled in December and we can discuss it at that time.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the ethics counsellor can sort that one out too.

The plot thickens in P.E.I. In a note prepared by the executive director of the Canadian Police College it indicates the minister's adviser, David Nicholson, was actually acting on behalf of the minister's brother's college.

Was the minister's adviser, Mr. Nicholson, acting as a lobbyist for the minister's brother's college while employed by the office of the solicitor general? If the minister can follow that one, please tell us.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member refers to the minister's brother's college, he should point out this as well. It is news to the 14 member board of governors of Holland College that it is owned or has been sold to a Mr. Alex MacAulay.

That is news to the 14 member board of governors. It is also news to the provincial legislature because Holland College was created by a statute of the provincial government legislature. It is news to the minister of education. I am also sure that it is news to the premier of the province. I am sure it is also news to the maritime provinces' higher education commission.

If the member wants to start—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, that was a nice attempt at distraction by the minister responsible for ACOA. What is news is there is a Senate vacancy for P.E.I.

Examples of patronage and ethical lapses by the Liberals seem to be piling up on the island. Last February the federal government announced a \$5 million improvement to the Confederation Centre of the Arts. The minister bragged of this last week.

Could the minister advise whether that \$5 million contract was (a) untendered and (b) awarded to P.E.I. Liberal Party president, Tim Banks, the same Mr. Banks who holds the \$17 million contract and lease for the Greenwich development centre in the minister's riding?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the hon. member is trying to create some news, we will just clarify.

The Confederation Centre of the Arts is an incredibly important project. In fact, everybody in the House understands extremely well the value and credibility of it. It was all done in proper order.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, information trickles out in bits and pieces as the solicitor general sees fit. He tells us only what he thinks we need to know. The four exceptions to sole sourcing a contract are: one, it must be under \$25,000; two, it must be an emergency; three, it can only be filled by a supplier; or four, it is not in the public interest to solicit bids.

Today I ask the Treasury Board minister, which one of these four criteria was used when awarding the contract to the solicitor general's friend?

• (1430)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I indicated last Friday in a press release all the details of what took place with this contract. As my hon. colleague must have heard, it was publicly posted. It was issued under Treasury Board guidelines. The rules were followed.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General has had four days to come clean to the House and explain his actions. Instead he slowly dribbles out his version of the truth. Now the Treasury Board minister fails to answer. She will not do so.

The Treasury Board guidelines state that only contracts under \$25,000 can be sole sourced. Is there anybody on that side of the House who is willing to stand in his or her place and tell the taxpayers of Canada what criteria was used to hire the Solicitor General's friend?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. colleague, I suspect, is well aware the contract was awarded to a firm, not an individual. It was given under Treasury Board guidelines and it was also publicly posted. In fact, those are the details. Whether the opposition likes it or not, those are the details and the guidelines were followed.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, the Minister of Public Works said he would make enquiries about the contract awarded to Everest for the tour by the former Secretary of State for Amateur Sport.

Is the Minister of Public Works able to table Heritage Canada's request to Public Works Canada for Everest's services, the supporting reasons and the response to Heritage Canada's request?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am advised that prior to the particular contract that has been referred to, a competitive process was indeed used to select a number of firms to be placed on the pre-qualified supplier list for advertising and related services on behalf of both the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Department of Public Works and Government Services. Groupe Everest was one of the firms that was on that list and that list was established by a competitive process.

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois asked Heritage Canada for the list of companies eligible for government contracts. The department refused to provide it, suggesting we should request it under the Access to Information Act.

If Heritage Canada will not provide us with the information, is it not because Everest was not on the list and the heritage minister was bypassed by going to Public Works to go along with the request by the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport?

[English]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I gathered from the line of questioning last week that that might well have been the allegation that the hon. gentleman was making. I have made inquiries and I am advised that in fact there was a standing offer in place and that it was available to both the Departments of Public Works and Canadian Heritage.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in 1996 the government encouraged senior officials to break the rules governing sponsorship contracts. The rule of law was disregarded in pursuit of raw political ambition. This trend continues today with the actions of the Solicitor General.

Why do the government and the Prime Minister continue to place Liberal Party politics above independent ethical standards by refusing to appoint an independent ethics commissioner?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, we have said that the guidelines Treasury Board has for issuing contracts were respected in the matter of which the hon. member complains. Second, at his initiative, the ethics counsellor is reviewing the matter. The hon. member should at least wait until the ethics counsellor has had a chance to review it and to give his report to the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if in fact that is the case, if the rules were followed, why will the government not allow an independent commissioner to examine the facts?

Canadians are demanding that steps are taken to restore the credibility of the government. Departmental reviews and RCMP investigations are simply inadequate when it is the Prime Minister's Office that is encouraging the officials to breach the rule of law.

Since the Prime Minister refuses to appoint an independent ethics commissioner, will the Minister of Public Works finally sum up the courage to demand a full judicial inquiry into the Prime Minister's—

• (1435)

**The Speaker:** The Hon. Minister of Public Works.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on many occasions during the month of June I outlined a series of steps, indeed layers of series of steps, that were being taken to get to the bottom of this matter and to provide a complete ventilation of what went on.

I am pleased to inform the House that there are two further steps being taken. First, a time verification audit in respect of some of the matters that raise particular concern has now been launched and is proceeding. Second, my deputy minister, as stated before a standing committee of the House, has launched an administrative review to examine compliance with the Financial Administration Act with the Government of Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on the sponsorship issue, every time the opposition seeks answers from the government, it is told that police investigations are underway.

*Oral Questions*

Will the Minister of Public Works admit that the police investigations have nothing to do with the sensational revelations made last week by Chuck Guité about the sponsorship scandal, revelations about the relations between the Prime Minister's office, the Prime Minister himself and those involved in the scandal? Will he admit that the investigations do not deal with that at all?

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no such thing. There are two broad types of inquiries or investigations that are now underway.

First, as the hon. gentleman will know, launched by the Auditor General with respect to a government wide advertising and sponsorship activity. The House knows that the Auditor General will go wherever she has to go to investigate matters.

Similarly with the RCMP. If a matter is referred to the RCMP it is not for the government to interfere. The RCMP will investigate whatever it chooses to investigate.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the RCMP investigations deal only with the administrative aspects of the cases. At this time, there is nothing in any investigation having to do with the revelations made by Chuck Guité about the relations between the Prime Minister's office and the players in the sponsorship scandal.

How will we get at the truth about the role played by the Prime Minister and his office in the sponsorship scandal? There is no investigation into that at the present time.

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in all of my work in this portfolio over the last number of months I have found no evidence to substantiate the type of allegation the hon. gentleman is making.

I would suggest to the House that the two most effective, the two most qualified, the two most probing investigators that one could have in circumstances of this kind are, on the one hand, the Auditor General of Canada and, on the other hand, the RCMP.

\* \* \*

#### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it turns out the lobbyist helping Bombardier got the untendered contract for new jets received a cool million dollars for his trouble. That is pretty good pay for three months work, considering no other company was allowed to even bid. This is sort of like a modern day Canadian Karlheinz Schreiber.

Apparently the need for ministerial comfort was so important, the tendering process, expert advice and legal niceties were all tossed into that big round filing cabinet in the corner.

Does the government believe that the million dollar lobbying fee was paid to promote the Challenger jet, or was it paid to ensure that no other firm was even allowed to bid?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, having looked at the record of this matter in terms of all of the steps that need to be examined to conclude an effective procurement of goods on behalf of the Government of Canada, it would appear that all of those steps were properly followed in this case.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Shandong Airlines of China ordered four 604 Challenger jets from Bombardier for \$100 million. Shandong cancelled two of those jets and then the Prime Minister bought them, two of them, for \$100 million, twice the price. It is lucky for taxpayers Shandong did not cancel all four.

After all those years of free money for its friends and relatives at Bombardier, why did the government pay double the Chinese airline price? Why did it pay double?

• (1440)

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to the very best of my knowledge and information, the calculation that is causing some confusion for the hon. gentleman is that the Shandong transaction was calculated in American dollars and the transaction with the Government of Canada was contracted in Canadian dollars and that entirely accounts for the difference.

\* \* \*

#### MIDDLE EAST

**Ms. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East. Two years ago today, three Israeli soldiers were abducted by Hezbollah while patrolling the Israeli side of the Lebanon-Israel border. This abduction occurred after Israel withdrew from Lebanon in accordance with UN resolution 425.

Would the government tell the House what it has done to assist Israel in bringing its soldiers home?

**Hon. Gar Knutson (Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague for her question and I applaud her interest in this issue.

The case of the abducted Israeli soldiers is another tragic chapter in the continuing cycle of violence and instability in the region. Canada deplores such kidnappings. Our sympathies go to the families of the soldiers suffering from uncertainty around the fate of their loved ones.

Canada made inquiries about the situation in May 2001 at the request of the Government of Israel. We communicated our findings to the Israelis at that time. Since that time several ministers and senior officials from Canada have raised this issue during their visits to the region. They have not had an opportunity to meet with the families to inform them of their efforts.

*Oral Questions*

I join with—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government is fuelling the perception that to get good health care in this country one needs a good pile of cash.

[*Translation*]

On the one hand, Mario Dumont and the ADQ are using the government's laissez-faire attitude to promote one health care system for the rich and another for the poor.

[*English*]

On another side the former Leader of the Opposition demonstrated what is wrong when he jumped the queue and went to a private MRI clinic last week.

When will the health minister get a grip on the privatization situation and start cracking down on violations of the Canada Health Act?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said on a number of occasions in the House that if in fact there is a violation of one of the five principles of the Canada Health Act we investigate those violations; we work with provincial officials. If we conclude that there is a violation that cannot be resolved, we have the power to withhold transfer payments.

The hon. member raises a very important question in and around the renewal of our health care system. Obviously we all await with great interest both Senator Kirby's and Commissioner Romanow's reports. Both will be coming in the coming months. I know that the hon. member will have much to say about the renewal of our health—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Churchill.

\* \* \*

**AIRLINE SECURITY**

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, air carrier WestJet announced Friday that it would be reducing services on short haul flights and cutting service to Thompson, Manitoba. Air Canada has also reduced services. Increased fees, including the government's airport security tax, have added to passenger costs and deterred air travel.

The government exploited the September 11 attack and implemented the security tax, insisting we would have improved security. However a person can board a plane in Thompson and fly to Winnipeg and never pass through a security gate, yet the person is still required to pay the security tax.

When will the government admit the security tax is a cash grab that is negatively affecting air access, especially to Canadians in rural and smaller communities.

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the design of the security charge was that users would pay the additional expenses that were incurred to

provide the level of security that Canadians want and expect at their airports.

We will be reviewing the level of the charge together with the level of expenditures during the course of the coming months to determine whether the amount of the charge was appropriately determined. I would point out that the decline in use is related to many things other than simply the additional charge.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General's intention to award his most recent sole source contract was posted on the government's advanced contract awards system on March 15, 2001. Obviously the Prime Minister's Office knew that Mr. Roche had been the minister's official agent.

Why did the Prime Minister not refer this potential conflict of interest to the ethics counsellor at that time? Was the PMO asleep, or was it in collusion?

• (1445)

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the matter is being reviewed by the ethics counsellor at the present time. Perhaps we could all do well to wait for his report.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, thank you King John.

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. However respectful the title, the right hon. member knows very well that he must refer to other hon. members by their proper title or by their constituency name. He would not want to get into disputes about the monarchy at this time I am sure.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, less than 24 hours after the public knew that the former Minister of National Defence had given a contract to a friend, the ethics counsellor had passed on advice to the Prime Minister, and the minister was out of cabinet 24 hours. Yet 72 hours have now passed since the ethics counsellor launched his investigation respecting the Solicitor General.

Has the ethics counsellor given advice to the Prime Minister? Why is this investigation taking so much longer? When does the Prime Minister expect to receive advice from the ethics counsellor respecting the Solicitor General and his solicitous interest in his friends?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have always thought of the king as Elvis. In any event—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I know all hon. members will want to hear the Deputy Prime Minister's answer. The Deputy Prime Minister has the floor. We will have a little silence please.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John Manley:** Mr. Speaker, the ethics counsellor has not provided his advice to the Prime Minister at this point as to how much time it will take him. That is a question that would be better put to the ethics counsellor. We expect that we will have his report in short order, at which time we can review its contents.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, speaking about hound dogs, I would like to ask the Minister of National Defence a question.

The government pays lip service to the military but that is just about it. In fact there is so little cash there that the military has had to raid \$1.5 billion allocated for equipment simply to pay salaries.

This jester of a minister has continuously dropped the ball by forcing our military to juggle funds. When will he stop the sideshow and increase funding for our military?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was true for my predecessor and it is true for me that the number one priority in the military is our people. It is true that my predecessor, over a period of five years, substantially improved the quality of life of the men and women of the Canadian Forces. That is not a job completed but it is a work in progress. We can be very proud of what we have achieved today.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, he should be embarrassed. One of the works that is in progress is a blue ribbon panel, a study that says that our military is close to collapse in terms of equipment and manpower. The government should be embarrassed. It is not even ashamed that our military has to rob Peter to pay Paul just to meet the payroll.

Under this government, our forces have been committed to an increasing number of missions with a decreasing number of dollars. Our military does tremendous work, but it is in spite of the government not because of it.

Why does the minister commit our troops but he refuses to commit to our troops?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said on several occasions that the military is under stress in a number of areas, but it is totally inappropriate to use this apocalyptic language.

I could give examples of a number of recent new investments we have undertaken: a new fleet of 15 search and rescue helicopters; 651 high tech armoured personnel carriers; 203 state of the art Coyote armoured reconnaissance vehicles; and a 24 item clothe the soldier project. I could go on and on.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec's assistance plan for farmers compensates them based on their particular sector. The federal plan provides for blanket compensation for all farmers, which has the undesirable effect of providing assistance to farmers who do not need it at all.

Could the government not instead adopt the approach taken by Quebec's minister of agriculture, an approach that has the benefit of corresponding with reality and of assisting the farmers who really need it.

• (1450)

[English]

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the \$600 million that I announced some weeks ago, the distribution of which started on Friday of last week, is a national approach.

I can honestly say that there has not been one sector of our Canadian agriculture that has not said that it wanted to be included in that support because of the stress that it might have had in its sector for any one of a number of different reasons. It is not the same reason across the country.

We will be taking a national approach and to the best of our ability treating all farmers in Canada on an equitable basis.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, why does the federal Minister of Agriculture not ask his government to give the money directly to the Financière agricole du Québec, as the Union des producteurs agricoles has asked, so that the money is better used, and by farmers who really need it.

[English]

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I answered that a moment ago. We will be treating all producers in Canada on an equitable basis to the best of our ability.

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture announced that he would use the net income stabilization account to deliver the \$600 million funding.

Most grain and oilseed producers who have been hardest hit by depressed commodity prices due to the foreign subsidies will only receive about \$6,500 and most will get less. Once they get the money, NISA rules will not allow them to access the full amount of money.

Would the minister please explain why he ignored the advice of every farm group to find an alternative method of delivering this money?

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I did not ignore the advice of every farm group. I heard comments, advice and views given by a number of different farm organizations across Canada.

As I said a moment ago we wanted to distribute this as equitably as we possible could. There are caps on the contribution to any program that we have had in the past, and this one is the same in agriculture.

That is the approach that we will take. Of the \$600 million, 58% will go to grains and oilseed producers and by far all of them will be able to access that money within 30 days of it going into their account. Even if they do—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Oakville.

*Oral Questions*

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for CIDA—

**The Speaker:** I am sorry, I forgot the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake's supplementary question.

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that great line I just had, I lost it now. What it is, is that Saskatchewan will have a drop of 73% in income next year. The government at the same time is cutting safety net program money.

Under the agriculture policy framework, there will only be \$850 million a year for the whole budget for over six years. That is 5.2 divided by 6 to equal \$850 million. Currently farmers are getting \$1.1 billion in farm safety net money.

Why is this minister going to cut it under the agriculture policy framework?

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in all due respect, it is not the first time the hon. member has lost it. He lost it when he tried to read the agriculture policy framework.

The money in the agriculture policy framework for the next five years is \$1.1 billion a year. Prior to this agreement it would have been only \$600 million a year. It is considerably more than it would have been until we received the moneys from the cabinet and from the government for the agriculture policy framework.

\* \* \*

**INTERNATIONAL AID**

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that tuberculosis kills more than two million people worldwide every year. The overwhelming majority of these deaths happen in developing countries.

May I ask the minister responsible for CIDA what the Canadian government is doing to address this deadly and entirely preventable disease?

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago Canada led the world by investing in the global drug facility and helped reduce the cost for tuberculosis drugs from \$15 per person to \$10 per person, U.S.

Yesterday at the World Conference on Lung Health in Montreal, I was pleased to accept the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease award in recognition of Canada's leadership in the fight against tuberculosis.

Further, I committed Canada to continue the fight yesterday by announcing \$80 million over four years to the stop tuberculosis partnership. Canada is committed to breaking the cycle of tuberculosis and poverty.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, polygamy has been getting support from the

immigration department. Ottawa overruled B.C. officials trying to keep a polygamist man from sponsoring another three wives.

Under new regulations men will find it even easier to sponsor additions to polygamist relationships. Many of these women will be in their teens.

How can the minister justify allowing Canada's laws against polygamy to be violated through the backdoor of his department?

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a very interesting question. I would like to answer the three's company out there by saying that first, the rules are very clear. An individual can only sponsor one spouse. Polygamy is illegal.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that is not what his department did. Although his own officials in the field clearly told him about a case where a man was trying to bring in three more wives, his own department in Ottawa overruled the decision in the field and allowed the man to bring those women in.

The minister knows full well that polygamy is repugnant to Canadian values in society. It very often exploits young women. Why is the Liberal government not ashamed of this action to aid and abet an illegal practice in Canada?

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with my colleague. Polygamy is illegal.

[Translation]

It is important to mention that after having read that article, I asked my officials to explain this. I will get back to her with a more detailed answer.

\* \* \*

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in its report, the Standing Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities criticizes the way people with disabilities are being treated.

However, the Minister of Finance disagrees with the committee's findings and, moreover, he is advocating a tightening up of existing eligibility criteria that allow people with disabilities to deduct certain costs that are incurred because of their condition.

How can the Minister of Finance explain that, after targeting the unemployed and various other groups, he is now going after the elderly by making it harder to qualify for the disability tax credit?

**Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are not limiting access to the tax credit. We have tried to clarify who qualifies, following the decision of the courts. In fact, there has been an increase of about 70% in the amount that has gone out under the disability tax credit since 1996.

We are actually increasing the benefits available to people with disabilities.



*Points of Order*

[English]

**CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade. Earlier this year the U.S. trade representative warned that the Americans were considering WTO action against the Canadian Wheat Board because of illegal trade practices. It now looks like the U.S. will be ready to file in the next few days.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade update us on this important issue for Canadian wheat farmers?

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's wheat sector policies have been investigated many times. Every time they have been shown to be fully consistent with our international trade obligations.

Marketing boards, such as the Canadian Wheat Board, are domestic policies. They will be made in Canada, by Canadian farmers.

\* \* \*

**KYOTO PROTOCOL**

**Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know the Kyoto accord will be detrimental to our ability to compete in global markets, costing hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars. The government has said that it will consult prior to ratification, but it has no realistic estimate of costs nor an implementation plan.

As the consultation process clearly shows no appetite for this pig in a poke deal, will it stop its bulldozer tactics, shelve Kyoto and come up with a made in Canada deal?

● (1500)

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. member's question is incorrect.

However with respect to the issue of the made in Canada plan, that is precisely what the Government of Canada wants. That is why we were so disappointed that the government of the Province of Alberta pulled out from co-chairing the process after five years, just this last summer.

We want to bring it back in because we think the made in Canada plan includes the contribution of all governments in Canada, not just the federal government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last week we learned that some prisoners had used their personal computer in prison to commit fraud through the Internet and to devise escape plans.

Following these revelations, correctional services announced a moratorium on the procurement of personal computers in the future, but said that inmates who already had a computer have vested rights.

My question is for the Solicitor General. How does he justify and explain the fact that the notion of vested rights applies in prison, particularly since it is inmates who already have computers who have used them for dubious purposes?

[English]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, CSC is conducting a thorough risk assessment of all the computers in the system. CSC is also conducting a full review of the situation.

\* \* \*

**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the Honourable Kimmo Sasi, Minister of Transport and Communications of Finland.

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

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in the course of question period a member of the NDP, in making reference to my colleague from West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, accused my colleague of recently having been involved in queue jumping in the medicare system. I wish to set the record straight on this matter.

As a pedestrian in Vancouver the member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast was struck by a car several days before the House of Commons opened. At that time the X-rays apparently were misread. In spite of the member having a serious fracture, he travelled across the country to be here for the opening of the House.

Upon being in considerable pain, his office arranged a legal MRI with a private clinic here in central Canada. None of this, by the way, was in violation of the Canada Health Act or on the recommendation of a doctor or jumping any kind of queue.

On the basis of the MRI, it was noted that the hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast had a fairly serious fracture in his leg upon which a doctor then recommended him for emergency surgery. He received that emergency surgery one week after being struck by a car and being in considerable pain.

This was not queue jumping. This is an outrageous accusation by the NDP. I want to say that it is about time the NDP began to put people's health and pain ahead of its little ideological crusade. I know that members of this party and other parties in the House wish the former leader of the opposition well in his recovery.

● (1505)

## JOURNALS

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very brief point of order with respect to the correctness of the Journals of the House of Commons. I know the Chair takes great pride in assuring their accuracy.

*Routine Proceedings*

The Speaker will naturally recall that on last Friday the Chair delivered a ruling concerning the motion offered by the government concerning the revivification of dead parliamentary business that fell victim to the government's prorogation last session. Your Honour's ruling was that the government's motion was flawed in form and directed that the government motion be divided for the purpose of voting.

There are many rulings of little consequence to the actual business before the House of Commons but, by contrast, Friday's ruling had the effect of altering the question. Indeed, it created two questions where there had previously been one the day before.

There is no reference to that ruling in the Journals. What we are left with is a record that makes no sense. The Journals report that the government leader moved two distinct motions at once. It would be easy for those who consult the Journals to interpret the record as indicative that the government moved by right to move two motions at once.

Avid readers of the Journals, such as myself and others in my employ, simply seek that the record report accurately what occurred on this matter before the House. The Journals are the record of the proceedings of the House. It is my respectful view that your ruling Friday was a precedent in that it altered the question then before the House and therefore the ruling should be recorded and reflected in the Journals.

If the House had altered the motion by amendment, that fact would have been recorded. In this instance, Your Honour used the undoubted power of the Chair to divide the question and, in that fact, and I would suggest it should be the Chair's view, it should be recorded in the Journals as part of those proceedings.

**The Speaker:** The Chair must thank the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough for his vigilance in reviewing the Journals in this way. I can only say that having arrived in Ottawa a little late this morning I have not yet had a chance to read the Journals for Friday or I would have shared the hon. member's horror at the omission.

I can assure him that we will review the matter and try to ensure that the proper corrections are made in the finished product which, as the hon. member knows, will be published later this week. We will strive of course for excellence in these matters, as we do at all times. We appreciate the hon. member's vigilance.

---

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the pleasure to table, in both official languages, two copies of the 2001-02 annual report of the Chief of the Defence Staff.

## 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 five petitions.

\* \* \*

### USER FEES ACT

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-212, an act respecting user fees.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring back to the House this bill, an act respecting user fees, which will bring greater accountability and transparency to the introduction and increase in any user fees brought about by the government or its agencies and departments. It also links user fees more closely with performance and with international benchmarks.

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

\* \* \*

• (1510)

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-213, an act to amend the Criminal Code (violent crimes).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased once again to reintroduce this private member's bill. Under this bill everyone who is convicted of a violent crime for the second time would be imprisoned for life. In other words, two strikes and they are out.

Canadians deserve to feel that they and their families are safe in their homes, at work, at school, on the street and in their communities. In short, Canadians want a country in which they are not constantly looking over their shoulders to see who is coming after them.

To the perpetrators of violent crime, this private member's bill would ensure that they never again have the opportunity to commit such dangerous acts. For the victims and their families, the bill represents a return to fundamental justice.

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

\* \* \*

### CARRIE'S GUARDIAN ANGEL LAW

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-214, an act to amend the Criminal Code (dangerous child sexual predators).

He said: Mr. Speaker: I am pleased to reintroduce this bill entitled Carrie's Guardian Angel Law. The intent of the bill is to get tough with dangerous child sexual predators. It carries a sentence of 20 years to life imprisonment in cases of sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault on a child that involved the use of a weapon, repeated assaults, multiple victims, repeat offences, more than one offender, confinement or kidnapping for an offender who is in a position of trust with respect to the child.

As the bill is identical to Bill C-396, which I introduced in the previous session, pursuant to Standing Order 86(1) I ask that the bill be reinstated in the order of precedence.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hon. member for Prince Albert for seconding the bill.

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

**The Speaker:** The Chair is satisfied that the bill is in the same form at Bill C-396 was at the time of prorogation of the first session of the 37th Parliament. Accordingly, pursuant to Standing Order 86 (1), the bill shall be added to the bottom of the list of items in the order of precedence on the order paper following the first draw of the session.

\* \* \*

#### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-215, an act to amend the Criminal Code (prohibited sexual acts).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to reintroduce my private members' bill which seeks to raise the age of sexual consent from age 14 to age 16. I first introduced this bill in 1996, reintroduced it in 1997, 1999, 2001, and now again in 2002.

In this country we do not vote, consume alcohol or fight in the military until age 18, yet it is legal for a child at the age of 14 to engage in sexual activity, according to our Criminal Code.

With the increase in child pornography and child prostitution it is now more urgent than ever to raise the age of consent to protect the young and vulnerable in our society from sexual predators among us.

I urge hon. members to give the bill full and fair consideration.

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

\* \* \*

#### REFERENDUM ACT

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-216, an act to amend the Referendum Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a very sensible act. The bill would amend the Referendum Act to allow a referendum to be held on any question relating to the reform of the electoral system and here I thinking about the introduction of proportional representation where the people would have the final say in the kind of system we want in this country.

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

\* \* \*

● (1515)

#### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BANK OF CANADA ACT

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-217, an act to amend the Business Development Bank of Canada Act and the Canada Student Loans Act to provide for a student loan system that is more supportive of students.

#### Routine Proceedings

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this enactment is to establish the Business Development Bank of Canada as a lender of guaranteed student loans and to provide that student loan interest rates are set at the rate of inflation for the previous year and adjusted annually.

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

\* \* \*

#### PENSION BENEFITS STANDARDS ACT, 1985

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-218, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this act would make a number of changes to the Pension Benefits Standards Act. Among those changes, it would also give the members and beneficiaries of pensions in this country some representation on the boards of trustees of the pension funds, on the pension committees and on the pension councils, as well as about five or six other important things I do not have time to enumerate today.

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-219, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (oath or solemn affirmation).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce a bill to make an addition to the oath of allegiance for federal members of parliament who wish to sit in the House.

[English]

If my private member's bill is adopted, newly elected members would henceforth have to swear allegiance to our country and not exclusively to the Queen.

[Translation]

It is strange that Canada is possibly one of the only countries where elected officials do not swear allegiance to their country. It was out of pride and patriotism that I included this voluntarily when elected the last three times.

*Government Orders*

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

\* \* \*

[English]

**PETITIONS**

## CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Sudbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table two petitions on behalf of a number of constituents in my riding of Sudbury. They call on the federal government to take swift action to ensure that all forms of child pornography are prohibited and dealt with in the strongest possible manner.

## STEM CELL RESEARCH

**Mr. Rick Casson (Lethbridge, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is my honour today to table a petition that was presented to me mostly by the good citizens of the town of Coaldale in my riding. They petition the government to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illnesses and diseases of suffering Canadians. They also point out that they support ethical stem cell research but they encourage it to be done using adult stem cells and not embryonic stem cells.

## PEDOPHILIA

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have the honour and privilege to present to the House a petition certified correct by the clerk of petitions. It is signed by Canadians living in Burlington, Waterdown, Dundas, Hamilton and Niagara Falls. The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

• (1520)

## STEM CELL RESEARCH

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of a number of constituents in my riding of Mississauga South. It concerns reproductive technologies related research.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that hundreds of thousands of Canadians are suffering from debilitating diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, et cetera. They suggest that Canadians support stem cell research, but particularly ethical stem cell research. Therefore they call upon parliament to focus its legislative support to adult stem cells to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illnesses and diseases of suffering Canadians.

## FISHERIES

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I am pleased to present, on behalf of constituents of Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, a petition calling upon the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to revisit fisheries policy as to the effect it is having on the people of Canso. The petition is signed by residents from all over the three counties, including Boylston, Sunnyville, New Harbour, Port Felix and Dorts Cove. The petition calls upon the minister in particular to reconsider decisions with respect to Canso, the fisheries and the denial of quota

and for Parliament to take such other measures as may be considered appropriate to restore the economic vigour of the town of Canso.

## MIDDLE EAST

**Ms. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I present a petition signed by over 10,000 concerned Canadians with respect to the hostages that have been taken in Lebanon. It calls upon Parliament to use all the resources at its disposal and on its own and in coordination with other countries and the international non-governmental organizations to ensure that the Israeli hostages are treated with due regard and basic humanitarianism and other things. This is a large petition.

## BANGLADESH

**Mr. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have the honour of presenting a petition signed by many constituents from the greater Toronto area.

The petitioners are concerned with the constitution and violation of the human rights of Hindus and other visible minorities living in Bangladesh. They are calling upon Parliament to encourage the Canadian government to review the foreign aid it provides to the Bangladesh government in view of its record of the violation of human rights of minority groups living in that country. They further ask for our government to consult with the government of India and request that they offer assistance to all the refugees belonging to Hinduism from Bangladesh based upon humanitarian grounds.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS AND REINSTATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BILLS**

The House resumed consideration of Government Business Motion No. 2A and of the amendment, and of Government Business Motion No. 2B.

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ)** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in the House to share with it the Bloc Québécois position on the amendment proposed by my colleague from the Canadian Alliance concerning exclusion of Bill C-15B from the first session of the 37th Parliament.

*Government Orders*

I must begin by making it clear that the Bloc Québécois is in favour of concrete and appropriate measures against the scourge of animal cruelty. This is a serious problem and one that merits our full attention and consideration.

This is a problem that has been with us far too long and one we have a duty as parliamentarians within a democratic system to address and to come up with the appropriate remedial measures for.

I stress the term “appropriate”, because this is the basis of our opposition to this animal cruelty bill. I must point out that the Bloc Québécois also agrees with the amendment proposed by the Alliance, since its effect would be to set aside this bill, with its serious problems relating to gun control.

With respect to cruelty to animals, I want to say again: this refers to acts of extreme violence deliberately committed against creatures unable to defend themselves and win recognition of their rights.

Although the intention of Bill C-15B is good on the face of it, the Bloc Québécois opposes it for two main reasons. First, because of the lack of protection for legitimate activities involving animals, and second, because important powers are being taken away from the chief firearms officer, who currently reports to the Quebec government.

In the last Parliament, an amendment to the bill was put forward requiring that the bill be referred back to committee for detailed consideration of clause 8. Therein lies the crux of our opposition. Clause 8 sets out how the bill will be applied, and its flaws are too big to be ignored.

One of our main objections to Bill C-15B is the disgraceful lack of explicit defences—I stress the word explicit—for legitimate activities relating to animal husbandry.

We want to stress that the clause in Bill C-15B concerning firearms would benefit from a thorough review as well. As far as the Bloc Québécois is concerned, that part of the bill is actually a camouflaged decrease of the powers of the chief firearms officer, who currently reports to the Quebec government.

The Bloc Québécois is in favour of the creation of a new section in the Criminal Code, which would institute an innovative concept, the object of which would be to completely change the concept of what an animal is. This way, an animal would no longer be considered as property, but rather as an entity specifically mentioned in the Criminal Code.

However, the Bloc Québécois is opposed to any change to the Criminal Code that would have a significant negative impact on all those who are involved in a totally legitimate way in animal husbandry, hunting or scientific and medical research.

Such an amendment is very important, because the application of the Criminal Code will be forever altered. It goes without saying that such a change in perception must not be detrimental to what is already in place. And this what we fear will happen if Bill C-15B is reintroduced without a thorough and in-depth analysis. All this because of the current wording of the bill. It is obvious that we will no longer look at animals in the same way as before and that we will no longer treat them like before.

We support the amendment to the extent that it will have the effect of revisiting Bill C-15B and amending it thoroughly when it is before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, while seriously taking into account all aspects of the proposed changes.

● (1525)

So, the proposed changes must not have the effect of radically and forever changing the lives of those who have been involved for many years in animal husbandry or scientific research, among other activities.

We are asking the government to recognize that an in-depth review of clause 8 of the bill is essential in terms of its form, but particularly its substance. We are asking for the explicit addition, in the new part V.1 of the Criminal Code, of the defences provided under section 429 of the Criminal Code.

Section 429 includes the defences called “colour of right” or legal justification or excuse. These defences are specifically mentioned in that section, but they are not included in the new part V.1.

The Bloc Québécois recognizes the urgency of the tragic situation that keeps recurring daily. In proposing this amendment, parliamentarians are asking for an in-depth review of the bill by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

The Bloc Québécois believes that it is essential to closely review clause 8 of the bill, because that provision is considered to be the cornerstone of the criteria for protecting legitimate activities involving animals, including animal husbandry, hunting and scientific and medical research.

Bill C-15B caused quite a controversy from the outset. We all received correspondence from constituents asking us to support the bill. I had the opportunity to present the Bloc Québécois' position and people said they supported it. Basically, the Bloc Québécois believes that animals must be protected, while acknowledging the legitimate activities related to the animal industry.

We repeat that we stand for increased protection for animals. However, we also support specific protections for those who work in the animal industry. Under its present form, Bill C-15B displays a flagrant lack of respect, when it comes to the legitimate practises of the animal industry as a whole.

We cannot support the bill with its current wording, because of this unacceptable and unfortunate flaw. For this reason, we believe it is preferable to review and amend Bill C-15B.

We base this on the fact that there are currently explicit means of defence for activities related to the animal industry. These means are found in section 429 of the Criminal Code.

Section 429 of the Criminal Code protects those who raise livestock, hunters, the animal industry and researchers. Our problem with it is that these protections are not included in the new part V.1 of the Criminal Code.

*Government Orders*

The primary purpose of this bill should have been to increase penalties for any reprehensible and violent activity involving animals. In the case of a cruel offence, the penalty should be serious enough for those who committed it, and serious enough to deter anyone contemplating such vile behaviour. But this is not the case with Bill C-15B, because it lumps all violent actions together, whether or not cruelty is involved.

Officials from the Department of Justice told us in committee that the government's intent was not to deprive those who take part in legitimate breeding, hunting or research activities of the protection to which they are entitled. How can this be the case when the current protection that is specifically laid out in section 429 of the Criminal Code is not included in clause 8 of the bill?

• (1530)

We have some serious questions about what the officials from the Department of Justice have to say. Their information is so ambiguous as to end up being contradictory, which is the main reason for our disagreement.

It is all very well to tell us that the legal experts have covered all the bases, but we have serious doubts about that. If indeed everything were covered, why not include the protection currently given to legitimate activities in the new bill? In other words, why refuse to include explicitly the rights set out in section 429 of the Criminal Code in the new section V.1 of the code? No one can give any coherent answer to this, not even in committee, because the very structure of the bill is totally at odds with the government's intention to protect legitimate activities.

This makes no sense. Once again, I ask why the specific and explicit defences set out in Criminal Code section 429 are not being repeated here? Once again, it is important to state that these are not reproduced in the new part V.1 of the Criminal Code, not even implicitly, regardless of what the justice department may think.

Section 429 applies only to sections 430 through 446 of the Criminal Code. The government claims we can quite simply apply the general defences of section 8 of the Criminal Code, in other words common law defences. If this were the case, why would the legislator have specified, "legal justification, excuse or colour of right" in subsection 429? Why would the legislator have specifically and explicitly set these defences out in section 429 if common law defences were implicit for such offences? Let us get serious here. The Minister of Justice tells us he considers that section 8 of the criminal code, that is common law defences, could apply to all legal, legitimate activities involving animals. Why then is he refusing to include them explicitly, if they are already there in section 429?

Why not include what has been there for a very long time? One of the first principles one learns in law is that the legislator is not deemed to speak in vain. Everyone in the legal profession knows that. If the legislator has made provision to apply section 429 to certain sections, that means it does not apply to the entire Criminal Code. Thus, if the legislator has deliberately specified that these protections will apply only to certain specific sections, and not to the code as whole, it is because that is what was intended.

The Bloc Québécois moved amendments to correct this situation, but they were all rejected in committee during the last session. What an unfortunate thing.

The Bloc Québécois repeatedly tried to reconcile stakeholders' demands, but a majority of committee members rejected the idea. I should point out that this was rejected by the majority only when the time came to vote.

When stakeholders from the animal industry appeared before the committee, those who support protection for animals against cruelty showed respect. All the stakeholders from the animal industry want protection against cruelty to animals. However, they want to keep their defence rights, which are truly specific and which were included in section 429.

Again, these rights are the colour of right, the legal excuse and the legal justification. These rights are explicitly provided under that section. Why not take them and include them in the new part V.1? This is where we have a problem. This is why not just the Bloc Québécois but the whole animal industry fears that frivolous suits could be launched, even in the case of sporting activities.

• (1535)

I can think of activities such as hunting with hounds and the roue du roi. The hunting season is on, right now. These are activities in which hunters have engaged for a long time. However, there will no longer be any specific defences, if this bill is passed. We will have to rely on implicit defences that are based strictly on common law defences.

Therefore, let us be serious. If the government really means it when it says that the purpose of Bill C-15B is to not adversely affect the animal industry, then it must review clause 8 again and take into account the amendments moved by the Bloc Québécois during the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Justice.

The Minister of Justice must realize this, because during the last session, I asked him questions on this issue and he was never able to explain why he did not want to include explicit defences. He would only say, "We rely on the implicit nature of clause 8 for common law defences". But I will explain something truly ridiculous that happened during the meetings of that committee.

Amendment No. 1 was adopted and it was even proposed by the government, following my representations. Clause 8, dealing with common law defences, was explicitly included. The government felt that it would appropriate to explicitly include clause 8, which deals with general means of defence for the entire Criminal Code. This is done explicitly for clause 8 of the Criminal Code, but not for the means of defence provided in section 429. We definitely have doubts about how serious the government is and about the motives behind Bill C-15B.

This is why, unfortunately, the Bloc Québécois has no choice but to vote against this bill, whose ultimate purpose should be to protect animals against cruelty, not to adversely affect the animal industry. We tabled amendments to correct this situation, but they were all rejected in committee.

*Government Orders*

As we have been saying since the beginning, the Bloc Québécois supports the creation of a new part in the Criminal Code to include a new definition of what an animal is. The idea is to give animals a new definition and new legal protection.

However, it is unacceptable that this should be done without respecting the defences that are currently available to the whole animal industry. The decision not to include the existing defences is very worrisome, particularly for that industry.

It is important to point out that we currently have the necessary tools such that offenders could be punished, while breeders, hunters and researchers could be protected. But this is obviously not a priority for the government.

The amendments proposed by the Bloc Québécois should be accepted. I agree with the amendment proposed by the Canadian Alliance to the effect that Bill C-15B should not be reinstated at the stage at which it was during the last session. This bill must be reviewed. We must take a serious look at all its implications for the animal industry.

I am not saying that we should not add new clauses or that we should not protect animals against cruelty. The Bloc Québécois wants to preserve the provisions dealing with animal cruelty, but this must not be done at the expense of the whole animal industry.

The Bloc Québécois therefore supports the amendment, because it would send a clear message to the government that it is imperative to review the contents of Bill C-15B. We are of the view that not including the defences found in subsection 429(2) of the Criminal Code in the new part V.1 will have the effect of depriving those who legally kill or cause pain to animals of the protection they are currently afforded.

Section 429 of the Criminal Code is clear. It says that legal justification or excuse and colour of right constitute specific protection for whoever takes part in a legitimate and legal activity. It is therefore essential to include these specific safeguards in the provisions of new part V.1 of the Criminal Code.

• (1545)

According to the evidence given by Department of Justice officials in committee, subsection 8(3) of the Criminal Code should apply.

They said that defences of legal justification or excuse or colour of right are implicit in section 8. Why not include them explicitly in the bill as the entire animal industry is requesting?

These protections are not implicit, because they must be made explicit. We insist on this request. The means of defence currently laid out in section 429 of the Criminal Code must be specified in the new part V.1.

So, if I may conclude—

**The Speaker:** I regret to inform the hon. member that his time has already expired; 20 minutes goes by very quickly.

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps you could seek the unanimous approval of the House so that I might finish my comments.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to conclude his speech?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt:** Unbelievable.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do understand the member's concern. He has expressed I think some important points, in his view, with regard to certain legislation, but the debate is now with regard to the overarching motion about the reinstatement of bills and related testimony, and reinstating committees et cetera. I do want to get the debate back to some of the principles and hopefully share with members some of my views with regard to why Parliament has not been disadvantaged by the prorogation or reinstatement.

The House prorogued in late September. I think it would be interesting to look at some of the research material. Members well know that the principal effect of ending a session by prorogation is to terminate business. That is the historic purpose of prorogation. At that point, members are released from their parliamentary duties until Parliament is reconvened. All unfinished business normally drops from the order paper; technically, it dies on the order paper. All the committees lose their powers to transact business. It provides a fresh start for the next session. It is a fairly terminal situation and rhetorical questions have been asked about it. Why have we prorogued? What was the purpose?

There is precedent in this place such that even after prorogation, with unanimous consent of the House to reinstate legislation, it can be reinstated at the same stage it was at prior to prorogation, or the House has also historically adopted amendments to its standing orders to carry over legislation to the next session following a prorogation. There is some precedent for prorogation, but it is interesting to note that in regard to the bills that were in process at the time of prorogation, whether they were at some stage in the House of Commons or going through the Senate, it is being asked that all of the bills that were in process be reinstated.

So the question is valid: Why was there a prorogation? Precedent plays an important role in this discussion. The fact is that it has historically been the case that mid-mandate the government would prorogue. We have, in each of the parliaments since 1993, at mid-mandate prorogued the House and come out with a throne speech to refresh the mandate.

That is exactly what is happening, but was it necessary to prorogue? I think it is a valid question. I think it was. We probably could have simply carried forward with a statement by the Prime Minister, maybe, with regard to our plans for the coming period, but I think it was important that there was a prorogation, that there was a throne speech and that it got the kind of attention it did to frame the legislative intentions of the government for the remainder of its mandate. It was an important thing to do.

*Government Orders*

Certain strategic events have occurred since the last election, probably the most significant of which was September 11. It created in this place a demand, a need, to deal with certain legislation and to bring forward new legislation with regard to the security and safety of Canada. There were a number of other consequential bills that came forward. At the same time, there was also the legislative agenda of the government as laid out in its election platform during the last election.

I think the issue of whether prorogation was necessary, et cetera, is really a moot point. In fact, all the bills that were in place continue to be as if the House had not prorogued. That is in fact what is being asked for now. On top of that, the prorogation date and the day at which the House resumed were very close, so theoretically there was no productivity of the House compromised by having a prorogation at a time during which the House had not been scheduled to sit in any event. So the question then becomes one of what we are talking about.

● (1550)

A number of members are taking the opportunity of this motion to discuss some of the bills that are of particular interest to them or to their party and to again renew the arguments of debate that they had at a time when the bills were at certain stages, depending on which bill it was. In going through this, I tried to listen to the arguments. Of course the classic came up: private members' bills. We have established the principle that private members' bills that have not changed in substance can be reinstated at the same stage. I can understand that fully, absolutely, knowing the process we have to go through to get a private member's bill crafted, selected in a lottery and made votable and to get it through the various stages, along with the time it takes and what is really the luck of the draw, because if members are too late in a particular session we may not have enough time in the legislative calendar to actually get through the full stages.

Private members' business is almost an impossible scenario to go through. We have had very few pieces of private members' business go through, so I think that is not the meatiest argument that we could make with regard to reinstating legislation.

The reinstatement, for obvious reasons, has some advantages. Clearly where legislation has been brought forward by the government, has proceeded along a certain path and has in fact passed second reading, there has been some time invested by this place, from the beginning of the process up to second reading. Maybe I should just very quickly review the process. First reading is simply the introduction of the bill in this place. From a private or confidential document in presentation at first reading, it becomes a public document. It gets a bill number and it is printed for all to see, the public included. Second reading, as members know, is debate in the House, a debate among members about whether or not the general direction or the thrust of a piece of legislation is something that they can work with and whether this is a good starting point. We go through a process in accordance with the Standing Orders to have this debate at second reading, after which time it goes to committee.

At committee witnesses are heard as necessary. There is extensive discussion among all parties. All official parties are represented on all committees. There could be amendments at committee. Following

that process the bill will go through a process of clause-by-clause: Are we happy with this and can we report it back?

It comes back to the House at report stage and another opportunity for report stage amendments whereby the bill can again be amended. After report stage and another vote by the House of Commons, then there is third reading. Again some limited amendments or motions could be made at third reading, one of which could be to refer it back to committee.

So throughout the entire legislative process within this Chamber, there are numerous opportunities, numerous steps, at which members have the opportunity to argue their case, to seek support, to try to get a minister to appreciate the importance of a certain amendment or to make other changes that would be consequential to other developments.

So this House really is dynamic. Bills are not just tabled at first reading and then stay exactly the same as what is passed. We have numerous cases in which bills have changed substantially, one of which is the species at risk act. I must admit that it had one of the rockiest roads I have ever seen, but as a consequence of the work of many hon. members that legislation was changed substantially and now in fact is at the Senate.

Following the House of Commons process, once we pass third reading the bill goes to the Senate. The Senate has a similar process to deal with legislation. It can also hear witnesses. It can do almost anything it wants. The Senate is a separate entity unto itself and members have the opportunity to sell their ideas again. As we can see, without carrying on this part of the argument very long, parliamentarians, whether they be in this place or in the other place, have numerous opportunities to affect legislation from first reading right through to royal assent. It is important to understand that opportunities are not lost. By virtue of the fact that we are proposing to reinstate the bills at the legislative point they had last completed, it means that there would be no time or no opportunity lost to members.

● (1555)

Some will argue that what really has been lost is a bill that passed at third reading in the House of Commons and is referred to the Senate. They will argue that they have lost their House of Commons battle, that they have given it their best shot but did not win the case. Members do have an opportunity at the Senate but may not be sure about it if the House has given it passage at third reading, because unless there have been material changes in the facts, the Senate may not be in a position to consider certain changes simply because they are opinions which one parliamentarian has that does not agree with the others.

I think the point here, quite frankly, is that to deny the approval of this reinstatement motion because there are bills that members maybe did not win the battle on is to simply ask the House to sacrifice all the work that has been done on all the bills so that they get another crack at the same bill all over again. I think we have to assume that Parliament did its job to the best of its ability and it is now at another stage.



*Government Orders*

I do not believe that members can ever argue successfully that they have lost an opportunity to express the will of their constituents, to express their views and their convictions on matters of importance to them. It is on the record and the record is there. In fact, with regard to those bills that have passed second reading and are now before committee, we also have proposed that there be a reinstatement of the testimony. I think that is very important. Witnesses, however, even though they would have their previous testimony reinstated, can always be called again, and we can call more witnesses, the reason being, as we all know, that committees are the masters of their own destiny. They have the rights of a committee to do what they as committees feel like doing.

Many committees have done excellent work on important pieces of legislation. I do not have to tell hon. members of the good work that committees can do when they set aside the partisan issues and start looking at the substantive issues of good legislation, of what they can do to contribute to good legislation. I know that far and away most committees have been operating on a very productive basis and have done a wonderful job on behalf of the people of Canada on a non-partisan basis.

I was on the finance committee and I know a couple of members across who are currently on the finance committee. We all know that the important work done on prebudget consultation and special studies such as those on bank mergers or productivity issues has produced important reports for the House.

With regard to legislation, work has been done and we have to assume that Parliament has done its job and done it to the best of its ability. In the event that there are events or circumstances that were not known at a prior point, as long as that bill has not received royal assent there is always still another opportunity to have the legislation amended. I will give an example of this. I think it is useful to give an example of how things might have changed between June 21, when the House rose the last time for the summer recess, and today. In fact, this has to do with Bill C-56 on assisted reproduction and with related research. I have taken a lot of personal interest in the bill. I want to raise with the House some of the points that could demonstrate how something might change.

I am not supporting an effort not to reinstate the bills. I want them reinstated. I want changes to this bill, which is now at committee, but I have opportunities to do that. If I cannot achieve that at committee, I will have an opportunity at report stage. I will have another opportunity at third reading. I will have another opportunity when it goes to the Senate, if I can convince the Senate, or any of those other stages, of the relevance or the validity of the points I wish to raise.

• (1600)

The story came out with regard to the stem cell issue and reproductive technology. Part of Bill C-56 is about stem cells. As members know, stem cells have been found to be very important cells. They can become virtually any cell in the human body. If they can be harnessed and so-called tweaked to become any other cell in the body, they can then become the instruments for therapies and cures for a host of diseases, like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes and cancer to name just a few.

There is no opposition that I have heard of right now, from anyone, to stem cell research, full stop. There is no opposition. So what is the issue? The issue is, where do we get the stem cells?

When the legislation first came out it came out in draft form. The draft bill from the Minister of Health and sent to committee for its consideration had one overriding premise: that stem cells, which can come from virtually any organ in the human body as well as placentas, umbilical cords and umbilical cord blood, and from aborted fetuses, could also come from embryos, which are fertilized eggs. The overriding premise was that embryos and stem cells coming from embryos had more potential than any of the other stem cells and therefore the legislation should permit embryos to be used for research purposes. The problem starts to get a little complicated from there, the reason being that to get those stem cells we have to destroy the embryo. We have to kill the human being.

Then the ethical question is, do we destroy one human being to help another human being? That is a very difficult argument for some. For myself, no, it is not very difficult at all. I believe that life begins at conception, period. That is my position. Other members have different views. On top of that, the embryonic stem cells have a different DNA from that of a potential patient. That means there would be the problem of immune rejection. It also means there would be lifelong anti-rejection drugs. They also found that stem cells from embryos had a tendency to create spontaneous tumours when injected under the skin. So suddenly there were these problems, but the researchers were saying they still wanted to use them because they had more potential. Why would we do that when adult stem cells, or those stem cells that come from the human body, could do that?

On November 21, finally, we got the research. It showed that stem cells from human blood, from bone marrow, could become any cell type in the human body, proof positive from the Stem Cell Institute at the University of Minnesota, totally ratified. I would like to read into the record that Dr. Alan Bernstein, the president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research said that this was a "beautiful paper" and stated:

Aside from the ethical issues, if one could take one's own adult... stemcells from bone marrow and use them to cure Parkinson's disease, you wouldn't have to worry about [immune] rejection problems. So this would be just a huge advance.

He went on to state:

In general, there has been a dogma that's grown up over the years that cells that are neurons are not going to switch and become blood cells tomorrow, or muscle.

In other words, they are not going to change, but he said:

As a result of this research, it looks like the minimum one can say is the old view... is going to have to be modified.

The president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research has said unconditionally that the old view has to be modified. Bill C-56 has to be modified because the original premise that embryonic stem cells had more potential than non-embryonic stem cells has been totally dismissed by third-party research, by ethical research, and it has shown that we can continue to pursue cures and therapies for those requiring them without getting into the ethical argument.

*Government Orders*

I should also point out that even Dr. Françoise Baylis on the board of governors of CIHR has pointed out that only 2% of embryos donated for research purposes would be useful for research purposes, as 50% of them do not survive the thawing process, the cryogenic process of in vitro fertilization, and the balance of them would not meet quality criteria. It is estimated that there are only about 500 embryos out there. That 2% means that all this argument about embryonic stem cells has to do with 10 embryos. We are searching in Canada for 10 embryos so that we can do research. Based on the evidence that I hope to provide to committee, to anybody else in this place and to the Senate, there is no need to go to embryonic stem cells. We have, based on the research from stem cells from human bone marrow, the ability to do the research necessary to treat all illnesses and diseases.

• (1605)

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, after the proroguing of Parliament, it is once again my pleasure to be back here to debate with members of the opposition party and, in particular, the members of the governing Liberal Party.

We are speaking today of the omnibus motion and the amendment by my party to have two bills separated out, Bill C-15B and Bill C-5. They are such bad bills that they should be separated out so Parliament can reconsider the votes held, re-examine the issues and do it right.

It was very interesting to listen to the hon. member for Mississauga South, I believe, talk about members of the official opposition and the fact that we were talking about the merits, the reasons and all the facts behind debating Bill C-15B and Bill C-5 again. Somehow it is not good when we on this side of the House talk about re-debating bills, particularly when we talk about this big omnibus motion, but that member himself sees fit to go into a lengthy debate on his pet bill with regard to stem cell research.

What we have is a debate on an omnibus motion that the rules are good when for use by the government side, but if the opposition plays by those same official rules, then somehow it is bad.

We intend to speak up about bills that are bad and about the fact that those bills have ended up back here because Parliament was prorogued. It is necessary for Parliament to once again pass a motion that will reinstate those bills that died on the Order Paper to their former position. I do not think it is a waste of Parliament's time, as the Liberal government has put forward, to talk about the substance of the issues of those bills that died on the Order Paper.

The question of whether it was necessary to prorogue Parliament in the first place is one that deserves a bit of comment because that has put us back in this position of having to debate this and some of the very same bills that were already been passed.

The proroguing of Parliament was done so that there could be a throne speech. That throne speech was to lay out some grand visions for Canada, its problems and opportunities for the future. We expected something new in a throne speech. What did we get? We got talk about trying to do something about health care, child poverty and first nations problems, everything from education through to health and governance issues. There was talk about infrastructure. The opportunity was there for the government and the Prime

Minister to do something about those topics. He has had 40 years as minister of various portfolios, including as the Minister of Indian Affairs, and as Prime Minister since 1993 to have fixed those issues or to have laid out the plan and instituted it. By proroguing Parliament, he was trying to make these promises again as if they were something new and that somehow that would make things all right.

The Prime Minister has said that he will not be around very long, that he will quit and make room for the next leader of the Liberal Party. However he has insisted on trying to set out an agenda, committing Parliament to vote in the future to spend money on his promises in the throne speech. It is pointless.

• (1610)

Should I be in the House as the various spending bills, which the Prime Minister has promised, come up, I can guarantee that I will not have my hands tied for votes in the House because that Prime Minister wanted to have a throne speech and therefore prorogued Parliament.

With regard to the question the member for Mississauga South raised about saving time and reinstating these bills, what point is there in trying to save time when a really bad piece of legislation, which was opposed by many members on the government side and the opposition side, was passed because of the terrible whipping backbench Liberals received. That legislation, Bill C-15B, ended up going to the Senate.

Bill C-15B has an interesting little story onto itself. It goes to the very essence of whether we in the House should simply pass this omnibus motion and put everything back in place the way it was, or should we have a second thought and look at this again. From the Liberal point of view, I cannot imagine that they would not be really excited about having a second chance to look at the legislation contained in this omnibus motion.

With regard to Bill C-15B, while it was going through the House and committee, the Liberal rural caucus with its chairman, the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, criticized and pointed out that this was a really bad bill. They said it hurt medical research and the livestock industry. They said it would hurt hunting, fishing and other pastimes that involve the use of animals in our daily lives.

However, when push came to shove, at the final vote in the House at third reading stage, the Liberal rural caucus members, including the chairman, stood up and voted in favour of Bill C-15B. The question immediately arose: Why, when members and their constituents were opposed to a bill as in the case of rural Liberal caucus members, would they vote for that legislation? The truth of the matter is, the Prime Minister told them that if they did not, there would be certain repercussions in any number of ways. He told them they could forget about their future political careers.

*Government Orders*

However that could not be said to the general public. That could not be said to our farmers and ranchers. They could not tell these people that they had been whipped by the Prime Minister and leaders in cabinet, so they had to come up with some other reason. What did the reason turn out to be? The member for, and he has a long riding name so I want to get it right—

• (1615)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. While the member is looking for that additional information, could he assist the Chair and indicate if he is sharing his time or will he be taking up the remainder of the time allocated to him?

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom:** Mr. Speaker, I will be using up my full time because of the importance of this issue.

In any event the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey and other members, but this member in particular, had to come up with a reason why they would vote for a bad bill for farmers when they knew that the farm associations, lobby groups and farmers in their own ridings did not want it.

The reason was because a promise had been made by the justice minister to the Liberal rural caucus that the bill could be amended in the Senate, that they should just vote for it, that it would be amended and then things would be all right for the livestock industry and medical research.

That was a fine enough reason. There was a public press release, and I am not telling any stories here or making anything up. It turns out that when the bill went to the Senate, the senator who was responsible for shepherding the bill through the Senate, said that absolutely no deal had been made to amend the bill. I could stand to be corrected, but I think justice minister himself denied that he had made any deal to have it amended in the Senate. In fact I do not know how the House could force the Senate to amend a bill anyway. That is totally up to the senators. That is what happened.

The exact case the Canadian Alliance is putting forward now is that the House, including the member I have been talking about and the Liberal rural caucus, should now separate Bill C-15B, the cruelty to animal legislation and Bill C-5, the species at risk legislation, out of this omnibus motion, pass what is left of it to reinstate the bills to the position they were at before Parliament prorogued. Where we in the House collectively made a mistake on Bills C-15B and C-5, we would now have the opportunity to correct that mistake. The Canadian Alliance members will take that opportunity to correct the mistake made on the cruelty to animal legislation, by separating it, not having it sent back to the Senate and let the government reintroduce a new bill that satisfies the very concerns of the livestock industry, medical research and others who are so opposed to these bills.

What a glorious opportunity to simply do that. I have heard from my friends in the Bloc Québécois and the other parties that our motion to separate the bills is a good one. Let us correct the mistakes that have been made. How many times in life do we say “I wish I had done things differently” then have the opportunity to go back and correct those mistakes?

We have seen the broken promises from the justice minister and the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, promises that

were not kept or promises that were never made in the first place. We do not know. It was tangled web that they got themselves into. Who would have ever known in that the members in the Liberal rural caucus would have to own up to the tangled web they wove by having the bills come back from the Senate, back into our own little hands right here in the House of Commons? This is a glorious opportunity for those members to stand up and say that they made a mistake when they passed those bills in the first place and now they will not have them come back.

Should we expect the Liberal members who are opposed to Bill C-15B and Bill C-5 to stand and vote against their own government? I would hope they would. There is an opportunity for them to go to the Prime Minister and to the other cabinet ministers and tell them that they do not want to vote against the government on this omnibus bill, so why do they not take those bills which they are opposed to, Bill C-15B and Bill C-5, out of the omnibus motion and they will vote for the rest of it.

• (1620)

That could be done without any embarrassment on the side of the Prime Minister or the cabinet or the individual members who are so opposed to that bill. There is an opportunity, and it is getting a little late for them to do that now, that they may have to vote against their own government. So be it.

We have had a lot of talk in the House about reform of Parliament. There is talk about individual members not having enough clout to do anything about some of the major issues coming along. When it comes to having clout with a majority government, the Liberal rural caucus has enough members who are elected, in essence, by farmers that they should at this point represent their constituents by defeating this omnibus bill to correct the mistake that they made earlier on.

If that does not happen, we go back to our ridings and put out another press release saying that the Senate may fix the mistakes in the House because we had two chances at it, but we did not fix it; perhaps the Senate will do it this time. That will be seen as another false hope for change.

I would like to talk about Bill C-15B. That included the Firearms Act. The Firearms Act, from day one when it was first brought in going back as far as the federal Progressive Conservatives when former Prime Minister Kim Campbell started to bring in firearms legislation, had the ultimate goal registering all rifles and shotguns, having no due regard that the people who owned rifles and shotguns were not criminals.

If they were criminals, why would they be given a registration and licence for firearms? This was to nail the poor average citizen who just happened to own firearms or wanted to own firearms. This is another good reason why Bill C-15B should not go back to the Senate to be passed.

*Government Orders*

Under the firearms amendments there is a new commissioner of firearms being established, who would report to the justice minister thus taking away from the commissioner of the RCMP this coordinating effort on the registration of firearms. We would create a brand new bureaucracy, a new commissioner of firearms, and have that new commissioner report to the justice minister. More costs going up constantly and not solving one crime.

In my riding there was a man whose son had been in trouble under the Young Offenders Act. Police went to the house and asked if there were any firearms in the house. The man said that he did have firearms, but that his son did not. The son did not have access to the gun cabinet. He did not have the key. The police had to get it from the father. The father had committed absolutely no crime, but his firearms are in police custody right now because somehow this act has a catch-all clause that says "if something happens". As a result, police have the authority to take people's guns away. This man was a law-abiding citizen who did absolutely nothing wrong, yet his guns have been seized and locked up.

We have a lot of good reasons to have Bill C-15B and Bill C-5 separated away from the omnibus bill. Let us bring it back into the House of Commons. Let us do it right, then all our constituents will be happy. I appreciate the time today that I have been given to speak on these bills. I hope that it has made some impression on those Liberal rural caucus members. I am sure that when they reconsider they will vote the right way this time.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in the debate on the Canadian Alliance motion, a motion we will, moreover, be supporting.

Before I begin my few comments I will congratulate, if I may, my colleague for Châteauguay who has, right from the start of the debate on Bill C-15B, or its prior incarnation, done an admirable job on a very complicated issue. He has always listened with an open mind to the various interests, often contradictory, and has succeeded in adopting a balanced position.

As we know, in public policy, a balance is sought between the various stakeholders and their interests. The very sensible and very balanced middle of the road position of the Bloc Québécois is a result not only of the painstaking efforts but of the willingness to listen of the hon. member for Châteauguay, and I must congratulate him.

The prorogation of the House and the Speech from the Throne brought one thing home: this government has never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity. This government has never really had the knack of using what was there to use in order to reach optimum solutions. I will explain.

What a missed opportunity. What a great opportunity missed to go back to the drawing board, start over. A missed opportunity, particularly in this case, to take into consideration the questions, the concerns and the objections raised in order to start again, to chew it over and digest again, in order to come up with a bill that better balanced all the issues and all the concerns it raises.

What does Bill C-15B represent? Principally, four amendments to the Criminal Code. First, to create a new section, part V.1 of the Criminal Code, dedicated exclusively and solely to the protection of animals and to cruelty toward animals.

Second, it increases the penalties for animal cruelty offences.

Third, it amends the Firearms Act in order to bring its administrative procedures up to date.

Fourth, it also amends the Firearms Act to give more powers to the commissioner of firearms, resulting in decreased powers for the chief firearms officer, who reports to the Government of Quebec.

The intention behind this bill is a laudable one. The government acted in response to a well orchestrated and well-justified campaign. Thousands were calling for more effective legislation with respect to animal cruelty and for cruelty to animals to be punished.

Since the beginning, the Bloc Québécois has supported several elements of the bill, particularly the first point that I was mentioning, the creation of a new part in the Criminal Code, which would see the transfer of provisions about animals from part XI of the code, acts in respect of property, to a new part V.1 of the Criminal Code, which would deal solely with animals, and increase related penalties.

However, the Bloc Québécois can no longer support the bill, because it does not protect the legitimate activities of breeders, farmers, hunters and researchers.

The spirit of the reform is, of course, to protect animals. It would have been much better to specify certain elements in the legislation, so as to reassure the animal, farming, medical and sports industry regarding any risk of frivolous prosecution.

The Bloc Québécois was in favour of the bill in principle, if it could have been amended to reflect the means of defence currently laid out in part XI of the Criminal Code.

• (1630)

That is why the Bloc Québécois—courtesy of the member for Châteauguay—asked that the means of defence in article 429 of the Criminal Code be added explicitly to new part V.1 of the Criminal Code.

The Bloc Québécois is also opposed to the bill because it would remove a number of powers and responsibilities from the chief firearms officer, who currently reports to the Government of Quebec. Essentially, the Bloc Québécois is against the bill because it provides for no specific protection for legitimate activities carried out in the animal industry, hunting and research and because it removes enforcement powers from the Firearms Act that are currently held by the Government of Quebec.

Bill C-15B consolidates current Criminal Code provisions regarding cruelty to animals and includes some new elements. Given that animals are currently considered as property instead of human beings, the penalties and possible recourses are essentially minimal. Lenient sentences, as we know, encourage repeat offences.

We support increased protection for animals, but on the condition that the legitimate livestock, sporting and research activities are protected, which is not the case with the current Bill C-15.

The definition of animal in the bill, as “a vertebrate, other than a human being, and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain”, is too broad. That is what section 182.1 of the Criminal Code provides, in the new part V.1.

This another example of change, besides moving animals out of the property section, which shows how animals will be viewed in the Criminal Code from now on, that is as creatures capable of feeling pain.

Hence the concerns of stakeholders in the animal industry. Could a farmer who deliberately poisons a rat—a vertebrate—be convicted under section 182.1 of the Criminal Code and be liable to the maximum sentence of five years in prison? The bill does not specify either what is meant by “kills an animal without lawful excuse” in paragraph 182.2(1)(c). Is a hunter who “kills an animal without lawful excuse” also liable to a sentence of five years in prison?

Similarly, Bill C-15B could cause problems, particularly for breeders and the entire sport hunting industry in Quebec, as well as for medical and scientific researchers.

A better balance between these two opposing interests should definitely have been struck, which Bill C-15B as it stands does not do. The Bloc Québécois also fears that there may be unjustified legal proceedings, which will create significant costs for the industries mentioned earlier, that is the animal industry, sport hunting, and research.

Another problem with Bill C-15B is that adding a new section to the Criminal Code will have the effect of moving animals to a section of their own, without transferring the defences available under section 429 of the Criminal Code, in the property section. The fact that the means of defence are not included in the new part V.1 will result in those who legitimately and legally kill animals or cause them pain being deprived of the protection currently afforded them under section 429 of the Criminal Code. Such a provision would ensure lawful justification, excuse or colour of right.

Although Bill C-15B contains provision for lawful excuse for certain offences, as well as the common law defences set out at the present time in section 8 of the Criminal Code, these are inadequate because they apply only to offences under sections 182.1(c) and (d) and are much narrower than those set out in the current provisions.

It would have been so simple to take the defences set out in section 429 for property offences and transfer them to the new part V.1 which would be the part reserved for animals.

Furthermore, section 8 of the Criminal Code, which responds to the concerns of various stakeholders, states that common law defences render a circumstance a justification or excuse.

•(1635)

According to the government, the rules of common law are still in force, but it has chosen to reaffirm them in the new part of the Criminal Code. We have serious misgivings about this. On the one hand, legal experts tell us that defences provided for under section 8

### *Government Orders*

(3) of the Criminal Code apply all the time and, on the other hand, the government chose to include them explicitly in its bill. This lays the appropriateness of this approach open to question.

The first common law defence is that of necessity. The three evaluation elements for this defence are: first, the existence of an imminent danger or peril; second, the absence of reasonable legal alternative; and, third, the proportionality between the harm caused and the harm avoided.

The second defence is the inducement to commit an offence, or police provocation. This defence may be used when, during the course of a criminal investigation, peace officers provide an opportunity to commit an offence, in the absence of a reasonable doubt that such an offence would be committed.

The third defence is due diligence. This involves a reversal of the burden of proof, in that the person accused of an offence under a regulation must prove, under the balance of probability, that he acted with due diligence. This becomes a reasonable restriction on the presumption of innocence.

A fourth defence is intoxication. If the intoxication is induced by the accused himself, it is not a defence. However, it can be a defence for a crime of general intent, if the intoxication is such that it is not associated with a reasonable person.

Finally, the last defence under the common law is known as an alibi, where the accused endeavors to prove that he was in a different place when the offence was committed.

As everyone knows, Quebecers and Canadians are very attached to the moral principle of ensuring the wellbeing of animals. Many are concerned about this issue and feel that animals should be better protected against criminal behaviour. Many studies have also confirmed the existence of a close connection between cruelty to animals and aggressive criminal behaviour. Therefore, it appears that imposing harsher penalties on those who are cruel to animals could help prevent violent crimes against people.

However, we must start from the premise that, in its current form, this bill is unacceptable to all those who are directly or indirectly involved in the animal industry.

For the great majority of stakeholders in the animal industry, these new provisions are likely to increase the likelihood of criminal charges against those who work in the industry or who engage in recreational activities such as hunting and fishing. Moreover, producers are also asking for protection of their livelihood, which is normal.

Someone who owns an animal industry and who, legitimately or legally, earns a living and provides for his family and children has the right to expect that his livelihood will not be threatened by a poorly drafted piece of legislation. These producers are asking for assurances that they will not be hauled before the courts because of their professional activities. We can understand that.

Stakeholders in the animal industry are saying that this bill is poorly drafted, but there is also the case of hunters and sports associations. This is an industry that generates millions of dollars every year and that creates thousands of jobs in Quebec and in Canada.

*Government Orders*

According to a number of hunters and people who engage in sport hunting, the bill was drafted as though hunters, fishermen and trappers did not exist. Indeed, it is extremely difficult to reconcile the legitimate activities of hunters, fishermen and trappers with the bill in its present form.

The severity of the new bill would be such that a sport hunter could fairly easily be charged with a criminal act for which a means of defence had not yet been anticipated, even with all the necessary permits and authorization for hunting, fishing or trapping.

Three offences would be created for acts committed against animals not necessarily causing death, but pain, suffering or injury. However, the bill goes even further, by including unnecessary. If a fisher loses a fish, if a hunter only injures game, how can necessity be used as a defence?

If Bill C-15B were passed as is, many people think that hunters, fishers and trappers would all be guilty.

• (1640)

As well, aboriginal communities, which have always practised these activities, would also be in the same boat.

The Bloc Québécois proposed a compromise to ensure that those who intentionally cause suffering to animals receive the appropriate punishment, while protecting the means of defence of those who cause suffering in the context of legitimate activities.

The Bloc Québécois supports this compromise. It has championed it, but the government wants nothing to do with it.

The animal industry has problems with the bill. So do hunters and sporting associations. There are also, however, the universities and colleges, their researchers.

You yourself know this, Mr. Speaker—you were here in the House when the former Bill C-17 was introduced in the fall of 2000—the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada asked that certain provisions of the bill be clarified in order to ensure that Canadian universities were not subject to unjustified legal action.

On March 15, 2001, that same association adopted a resolution to express to the then federal Minister of Justice, who is now the Minister of Health, its concerns about the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code regarding the treatment of animals. These changes could inadvertently jeopardize legal university research that uses animals in compliance with the standards recognized in Canada and abroad by the Canadian Council for Animal Care.

As we know, Bill C-15B includes major amendments to a provision of former Bill C-17. Section 182.3, which the government proposes to add to the Criminal Code, states that “Everyone commits an offence who negligently causes unnecessary pain to an animal”. The term “negligently” means “departing markedly from the standard of care that a reasonable person would use”.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada is very pleased that these amendments were made. To a certain extent, they reflect its concerns. However, according to the association, the bill does not at all identify a behaviour “departing markedly from the standard of care that a reasonable person would use”. The

amendments made by the government between Bill C-17 and Bill C-15B did not clarify the situation at all.

Bill C-15B also includes changes to the Firearms Act and part III of the Criminal Code. One of the amendments proposed addresses airguns. Although the Department of Justice claims that the intention of clause 2(2) of the bill is to exempt a weapon if it meets either of two criteria, there is still some confusion because a double negative is used.

We proposed new wording for this article, which would eliminate any confusion. Unfortunately again, despite all the listening to the various stakeholders that was done, the government refused to respond to the Bloc's fears, which it wanted to see eliminated by redrafting.

I could go on and on about this bill. I am getting the signal that I do not have much time left, so I would just like make one more point—and this is one of the reasons we oppose this bill—which is that this bill would create a firearms commissioner, which will have the effect of diminishing the powers currently held by the chief firearms officer, who currently reports the Government of Quebec.

In short, the bill as drafted is unclear. On the one hand, it does not strike a balance between those, ourselves included, who are in favour of enhanced protection for animals, and the others, the various associations of industries involved in animal husbandry, sports, hunting or research, who want to see this important objective of animal protection balanced by the acceptance of various legitimate and legal industries, which are the livelihood of thousands of Quebecers and Canadians.

[English]

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the opposition amendment to the motion that would enable ministers to reinstate government legislation from the last session. The opposition amendment would exclude Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B from that motion.

Both the species at risk bill, Bill C-5, and the legislation dealing with animal cruelty, Bill C-15B, should not be reinstated. The official opposition, other opposition parties, as well as several members of the government side, belatedly but nevertheless, have raised numerous and legitimate objections to these bills in the course of debate. Unfortunately, the ministers responsible for the bills, and the federal cabinet, have consistently refused to address any of these concerns.

Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B deal with different provisions. They both negatively impact on Canadians in similar ways, particularly rural Canadians. This is more and more a trend that we see in the government. It is not concerned about what is happening in rural Canada. It is simply concerned about vote rich cities. We saw it in the throne speech where it talked about a commitment to infrastructure. However, the wording of that commitment was intended to convey benefits upon urban centres rather than rural areas.

*Government Orders*

These particular bills, Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B, are more than that. They do not simply ignore the valid concerns of people in rural areas but in fact impact negatively on those Canadians. Under both bills there is a real potential that the livelihoods of rural Canadians would be put at risk.

As the member for a primarily rural riding, Provencher in southeast Manitoba, I am proud to represent a large population of farmers who are some of the most committed stewards of both the environment and of animals in this country. I am concerned that these two pieces of legislation, while no doubt are well-intentioned, will put rural Canadians who are already facing overwhelming challenges, both in terms of the environment and in terms of trade practices, into an unworkable situation.

Many of my colleagues have spoken about the drought that has occurred in Canada this last summer. In my riding we have been suffering from flooding. Southeast Manitoba has been inundated with water. Many of my farmers, whether they are dairy farmers or other types of farmers, have been severely affected by flooding. Despite those kinds of environmental issues that they are already facing, they do not need the kind of legislation that is being proposed both in Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B.

In the case of Bill C-5, the most serious flaw is that the federal government would be permitted to expropriate land from property owners without full or guaranteed compensation. The issue of compensation was debated at length at committee stage of the bill. All Canadians are concerned about our environment. The real question is who will bear the cost of the measures that must be taken in respect of those environmental steps.

•(1645)

I think we will see that similar debate develop in the context of the Kyoto accord. Whether or not one agrees with that particular accord, the question is, who bears the cost of this particular government action?

In the case of Bill C-5 the answer must clearly be that if the Canadian public considers it to be a good thing to preserve endangered species and their habitat, then the burden of protecting those species and the habitat must not fall on a particular segment of our society. It must fall on the shoulders of all Canadians equally.

This issue was debated at length at committee. Unfortunately the amendments proposed by my colleagues requiring mandatory compensation were defeated. Instead the environment minister indicated to the committee that compensation would be given out on a case by case basis. For the rule of law, compensation on a case by case basis simply is not acceptable.

Property owners need to know that there are criteria, that there are laws in place, and that compensation is determined by reference to an objective standard of laws. It cannot simply be granted at the whim or on the best wishes of any particular minister. While some compensation is certainly better than none, this lack of a commitment to compensate all property owners is disconcerting for many Canadians, especially those who are property owners.

We need to ensure that those property owners who buy this property to farm it for example can go to the banks on the strength of that property and say they require a mortgage so that they can pay for

that property. However if the banks realize that property or the use of that property can be expropriated without any guarantee of compensation, what prudent lender will lend money on the flimsy guarantee of the environment minister saying that he will consider compensation on a case by case basis?

This is simply not the way things are done in a civilized country, in a country where we need to respect private property. Private property is the basis of our wealth. If we allow governments to introduce legislation that undermines the basis of our wealth creation, we will cripple our economy.

Another serious flaw in Bill C-5 is that the bill provides for various offences in which a very low level of mens rea is required, mens rea of course being the ingredient in a criminal offence of a guilty mind. We have on the one hand the actus reus and on the other the guilty mind or the mens rea. In a true criminal offence both elements must be present, the actus reus and the mens rea.

Those who committed offences under the legislation would be under what is called strict liability. This means the courts would be required to take into account the level of criminal intent of the accused for sentencing purposes only.

•(1650)

The issue or level of criminal intent is a very low requirement. The person who commits the act is held strictly accountable for a breach of the provisions of the act and as I said, the courts can then take into account in sentencing the degree of that guilty mind or mens rea. It still is almost unintended that an individual could be held liable for a criminal offence. This makes many landowners and farmers in my riding, and it should make people all across the country, very nervous.

There are hundreds of species at risk. That is admitted. Steps need to be taken. However, it is not always easy to recognize these species. The landowners and farmers could be faced with expensive and cumbersome criminal prosecutions, even where they are not eventually found guilty. Many farmers and landowners today are working under difficult financial circumstances and the idea of having to defend themselves against criminal charges for unintended actions is alarming.

We have seen in the American context with similar legislation where the right to property is threatened and governments have not put in place sufficient assurances to provide compensation or to clearly delineate the level of criminal intent required, that individuals are being proactive. As soon as they hear rumours that there might be an endangered species on their land they are going out to till the soil or rip up the habitat so that government inspectors and enforcement officers cannot determine whether in fact there was a species at risk on the land.

The intention here, which is to preserve endangered species, will in fact result in the destruction of species. I think we can take the American experience as a clear example of where that happened.

*Government Orders*

Instead of writing into the law assurances that Canadians will be compensated for their losses and not prosecuted unjustly, the government has simply asked Canadians to trust it. Not only has the government failed to calculate long term costs to every Canadian taxpayer from the legislation and failed to estimate or even consider the burden it may place on landowners or farmers, it has ignored the need of the public to be informed and consulted on matters that their way of life depends upon.

This approach serves not only to foster mistrust on the federal government but ultimately renders the legislation less effective as it does not promote a spirit of cooperation between those who are making the laws and those who must adhere to them.

I note in this particular context the right of the federal minister to impose federal standards on provincially owned land. This is not just federal land in a province, it is provincially owned land, and contrary to the division of powers, the fact that civil rights and property within the provinces are the jurisdiction of the provinces, there is a unilateral approach by the federal government moving in to deny the provinces and individuals in those provinces control over their natural resources.

● (1655)

The federal government needs to step back and fashion a new approach that is cooperative and respectful not only of the spirit of the Constitution and the division of powers, but the private property that is owned in these provinces.

In respect of Bill C-15B, the government expects Canadians to simply trust it that they will not be unjustly prosecuted. As the justice critic for the official opposition, I have said for months that in its current form the bill poses serious concerns for not only farmers, but others who depend on the legitimate use of animals for their livelihood, including scientific researchers.

I do not think that anyone including government members wants to see farmers, sporting groups and scientific researchers unjustly prosecuted for carrying out traditionally accepted practices involving animals. However animal rights groups in Canada have already stated their intention to use this legislation as the basis for such prosecutions and the bill as it stands does not preclude the possibility of such prosecutions.

We have repeatedly asked the Minister of Justice to provide certainty to Canadians who depend on the use of animals that their livelihood will not be threatened. Unfortunately, the Liberal cabinet has consistently refused to make the necessary protections explicit in the law. The former justice minister and now the present justice minister have said the defences that are required are implicit in the law, that they are not intended to allow for these prosecutions against scientific researchers, farmers, hunters, and others in the animal food production industry. The position of the minister is that they are not intended, that they are implicit.

Speaking as a former lawyer and as a former prosecutor, defences are not implicit in the law in our Criminal Code where we have a statutory Criminal Code. Defences and their applicability to any particular provision are spelled out in the Criminal Code as they are presently spelled out in the Criminal Code. The movement of these new animal cruelty charges into a new section of the Criminal Code

leaving the old defences behind leads to the inescapable legal and statutory conclusions that the intent is to alter the defences that are available in respect of those offences.

● (1700)

I say to members opposite and specifically to the former Minister of Justice and the present Minister of Justice that if they have already conceded that those defences are implicit in the law, why not make them explicit? What not provide that certainty? Why not make it explicit to scientific researchers, people in the medical field, hunters, sports people and farmers?

The chair of the rural Liberal caucus, the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, has also echoed these same concerns about Bill C-15B in the House of Commons. He asked the Liberal rural members to vote for the bill on the assurance that the Minister of Justice gave him that the bill would be amended once it went to the Senate.

When the bill went to the Senate, the Senate indicated it had no intentions of amending it. The minister then said there was no obligation and he had no intention to make any amendments. Now is the opportunity for Liberal rural members, specifically the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, to make good on their word that they will protect farmers and people in rural Canada.

**Mr. Shawn Murphy (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to government Motion No. 2, a motion that would allow for the continued business of Parliament in this new session.

It is my view that the motion is important as it allows for the reinstatement of government bills and the continuation of committee business. I believe there are nine bills that are being reinstated and a number of committees in the House which have important business before them to be reinstated. Simply put, the reason comes down to common sense.

When the House was prorogued a lot of work had been done by certain committees prior to the date of prorogation. All the motion does is reinstate all the work done by the committees prior to that date. I realize that committees have the option of reinstating their own work but it is much simpler to do it in Parliament in the House of Commons.

However, if we accepted the argument being advanced by the official opposition, then the committees would have to go back and start from square one and go through all the hearings, the witnesses, the reports and the tabling of documents that have gone on for the past month and sometimes years.

● (1705)

I have asked to speak to the motion because it has a special interest to me. I am on the public accounts committee and the finance committee and both those committees have embarked upon relatively significant issues. They have spent a lot of time, energy, effort and resources going through the issues and I, at this point in time, do not want to throw out the baby with the bath water. I want to get on with the work of Parliament.

The motion states:



*Government Orders*

That, in order to provide for the resumption and continuation of the business of the House begun in the previous session of Parliament it is ordered:

1. That any evidence adduced by any Standing or Special Committee on any matter not reported upon in the previous session shall be deemed to have been laid upon the table in the present session;

I will speak directly now to the two committees with which I am involved because those are the two issues for which I have intimate knowledge. The first one is the public accounts committee.

As I believe everyone who reads newspapers in Canada is aware, in the last three to five months we have had an extensive investigation of the Groupaction affair. We have had at least six to eight witnesses. We have had very heated discussions among all members as to the procedures to be followed, the witnesses to be called and the witnesses' right to counsel. It was extensively published in all media outlets. We had a couple of hearings in camera. We had two hearings in the summer, one in July and one in August. The work of the committee was almost done. The only thing we had left to do was to finalize the report. If it had not been for the summer recess this work would have been done, the report would have been filed in the House and we would be looking for a government response.

However, because of the summer recess, the report, which I understand is in draft form, has not been done and has not been filed in the House. If the motion does not get passed by Parliament then we will have to go back and do the whole thing again: call the same witnesses, have the same arguments, et cetera. Of course we would take another six months of time.

I believe every person in Canada watching this show tonight would agree with me that it is incumbent upon that committee and Parliament to get that committee's report filed in the House as soon as possible so that a response can be made by the government of the day.

● (1710)

The second committee is the finance committee. As everyone is aware, the government back in I believe 1994 or 1995 started a new procedure to get the views of all Canadians before the budget was tabled in the House of Commons. Prior to that, the budget document was cloaked in secrecy. Only a few people knew what was going on and only a few people had dialogue on the budget. This has become a very significant process involving democracy.

The finance committee starts to hold hearings in the fall and it holds hearings very extensively. It travels to the west coast and the east coast. I am not exactly sure of the number of different groups and organizations that appear before the committee but it is at least 300 or 400 different groups and individuals. These groups put an awful lot of time, energy and resources into presenting their submissions. Many of the groups are very well organized. They have their own economists and they come forward with excellent papers dealing with their views and positions as to what should be in or not in the upcoming budget.

That process started in April of this year. We had a large number of hearings with a large number of groups. We received their submissions. Under normal circumstances that process would continue on and we would file a report by November or December of this year. That report would be considered by the government

when preparing the budget, which would be tabled by the Minister of Finance in the House.

If we look back at the number of reports of the finance committee and the pre-budget consultations, the results are not always immediate. However if we were to go back and read the recommendations made by the committee we would find that a significant number of the recommendations that were made did find their way into the budget that was eventually tabled by the Minister of Finance. In other words, the government is listening to the people of Canada.

The process has been started and a tremendous amount of time has been spent, not only by the committee members but, more important, by the groups, organizations and individuals who made submissions to the committee. I do not know the exact number but the submissions have been substantial.

If the motion does not pass the House the proponents to defeating the bill have suggested that we go back, start again, ask those groups to present new submissions and come back before the committee. It would just delay the matter that much further. With all due respect, that lacks common sense.

Another issue I would like to speak to is the costs, the costs of travel, of bringing in witnesses and of having hearings. It would all have to be repeated and duplicated but for what purpose?

If we listen to the official opposition it is because it does not like one particular bill, the species at risk bill. That was debated in Parliament long before I arrived here. An act has gone to the Senate. This particular bill pits the agriculture community against the animal rights community. It was a compromise. It is not perfect. I am sure there are people out there watching this show who are not totally happy with all the provisions of the bill. However a lot of work and effort has been put into the bill. It has gone before the committee. Hearings have been held and evidence has been adduced. It has taken up a lot of time, effort and energy of a lot of people in the House to come forward with this bill.

● (1715)

I want to bring to the attention of the House the reinstatement of the special committee on the non-medical use of drugs. I believe most members are aware of the extensive amount of work that committee has done hearing evidence and researching the whole issue. I believe it was near the completion of its mandate and was almost ready to file its report. The Senate has already filed its report and I believe the Canadian people want that report to be filed by the House of Commons as soon as possible.

I did some research on this issue. This matter has come before the House many times before, in 1970, 1972, 1974 and 1986. It seems to be a common procedure that when the House prorogues to reinstate bills that died on the order paper and committee work that was in existence. I believe that in 2000 the same procedure was followed.

I want to point out that the very same procedure is followed for private members' bills with the consent of all parties in the House. Private members' bills that died when the House was prorogued are automatically reinstated pursuant to a bill that was adopted in the House. I see the same argument being advanced in this motion also.

*Government Orders*

Another committee is the subcommittee on the status of persons with disabilities of the human resources development committee. This is a very timely matter. It is an important issue and it is one that the Canadian public deserves to hear from Parliament on.

I want to highlight how ridiculous this is. Let us look at the heritage committee. As I believe most people are aware, the heritage committee was in the middle of a very extensive study on the Canadian broadcasting system. The committee has travelled, heard witnesses, done research and put a lot of time into this initiative. Therefore the motion would also support this committee in the completion of this very important study.

In conclusion, those are just some of the examples of what we are dealing with in the House. I will come back to my point on the public accounts committee and the finance committee that would benefit from this motion. It would benefit the committees, it would benefit the House and would benefit the Canadian public

Therefore I urge all members to support the adoption of the motion.

**Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be back and see you after the summer. I hope all members had as much fun in their constituencies this summer as I had.

In my constituency we ended the summer by having the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Musical Ride entertain five times in the space of 10 days. I was fortunate enough to attend all of them. The people who sponsored the musical ride did a great service for the youth of Canada. The youth were able to attend the morning programs and it was a tremendous summer.

During the summer people invited me to their wedding anniversaries and family reunions. I had the pleasure of attending the 60th anniversary ceremony in Dieppe. I was proud to lay the wreath at the monument in honour of the South Saskatchewan Regiment. Most of the members of that regiment came from my constituency. It was with humility that I was able to walk among the graves and look at the tombstones and recognize a name from the offspring and kinfolk still living in my constituency. I was thankful for that opportunity.

Members do not usually receive many compliments in the House. We receive a lot of jabs here and there, but the other night I received a compliment. It was not directed at me personally and it was not meant to be a compliment. A member from the other side of the House while speaking referred to Texas cowboy thinking. The member was referring to the President of the United States.

The member then made reference to those on this side of the House and this party as cowboy thinkers. That is one of the best compliments I have had for a long time. I grew up with cowboys. There are certain characteristics of cowboys that are right on. When a cowboy says "yes, sir", he means "yes, sir". When he says "no, ma'am", he means no. When cowboys make a deal they shake hands and that is the deal. They do not have to go to a lawyer with a bunch of paper and all the rest. That is cowboy thinking and that is what I grew up with.

I was not insulted by the remark. I took that as an extreme compliment. For example, if I were to ask my neighbour when I was

farming, "How much would it cost me to have the hay cut on that piece of land?" If it was a long way from where he was, I would say, "Just give me a third and let me know how many bales and we will figure out a price". That is cowboy thinking. People are respected and their word is respected.

Many people told me this summer, no matter where I went, that Parliament was not for them any more. The people do not respect Parliament any more. Then I pick up the *Ottawa Citizen* and it says, "Canadians don't trust government. They feel alienated."

Where I come from, the home of some great cowboys, some of them still living, we trusted cowboys. We trusted them when we were at school. We trusted them to their word. I would trust that person who wanted to buy the hay from me. We would trust each other and agree to what was fair and reasonable and we would shake hands.

I spent a lot of time last session on the environment committee before the House prorogued. The committee members were great people to work with. We had a great chairman and we got along fine. We spent many hours together. We then found out that the Prime Minister did not even trust us. He chucked most of the amendments we made. In cowboy country that is not fair. Pure and simple, that was just not fair.

● (1720)

All that the opposition, these cowboy thinkers over here, asked for in the way of remuneration for land is the same as the fellow who wanted to buy my hay. We asked the government, to proceed if it had to expropriate land, for a fair and reasonable compensation. I want to ask the House, was that too much to ask for in the bill that if land was expropriated that landowners would receive fair and reasonable compensation? I do not find that difficult to understand.

I want to touch on something else that bothered me and it was in the cruelty to animals bill, Bill C-15B. I know what was said. Many of the government members were going to vote against the bill. There was no question. Everyone on this side of the House knew that. I will tell members something about cowboys. If people are cruel to animals they are going to hear from a cowboy. Do not mistreat an animal such as a horse, a cow or any animal. If the member is referring to us as being cowboy thinkers, we truly are. However, all that we asked to be included in the bill was that those animal practices that had been carried on for over a century would not be considered as being cruel to animals. That is all a cowboy or a rancher would ask.

It is easy to put that into the legislation. It would not have to come back. We would agree to both bills if all that was put in. That was it. Now government members are calling us cowboy thinkers on this side. We have all had this before. We are asking why we have to keep telling them the same thing. All we want is fair and reasonable settlement or compensation. It is that simple.

*Government Orders*

I will let members in on a little secret. I went out to visit some burrowing owls the other day. The neighbours do not know about it and the guy whose property they are on trusts me. I am a cowboy with cowboy thinking. Hidden at least four miles from where he lives, he has 30 or 40 burrowing owls fenced off. I asked him if he had reported this and he had not. He wanted to protect them his way. He told me his neighbour had the owls which the authorities found out about. They put a sign up, went through every gate, left them open and even caused a fire in one area. He was not willing to tell the authorities where his owls were because he was not using the land and wanted to protect them himself.

These cowboys have been protecting the environment long before Saskatchewan became a province. We have had practices of dehorning and branding. All the legislation had to say was that in Bill C-15B "normal animal husbandry practices will not be part of this bill".

I took some kids to the circus. I found out the Rotary Club, which puts on the circus, has had warnings from the animal rights people that this may be its last circus.

• (1725)

Somebody who spoke this morning mentioned PETA and how its members have been allowed to go to schools telling children that milk is not good for them and by drinking milk they are causing pain to the cow. I have milked a few cows. One cow I had would stand at the barn and bawl her head off because she wanted to be milked. My nephew at one time had a large goat herd. They would do the same thing. Yet these people are allowed to go around as a group and tell people that milking cows is painful so we must abolish milk. The ultimate goal of the animal rights people is to shut down the Calgary Stampede. We heard about it this summer.

Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B have no business being brought back to the House at all. They should have been passed a long time ago. What happened when the backbenchers supported the cruelty to animals bill? The government said that the Senate would change it. When the press release came out the Senate said it did not take orders from anybody, and it does not. The bill was not amended and it will come back from the Senate. If these cowboy thinkers over on this side of the House still do not agree with the bill, it is very simple, it could be flawed.

When I think back to the people I know who were called cowboys, some of them have received the Order of Canada. One cowboy I know was at Dieppe. He was captured and spent two years in a prison camp. He is a great deep thinker. All of these people I know at whom the Liberals want to point their fingers are honest, people of integrity, who think things out carefully, are respectful of their neighbours, and are always willing to help their neighbours. I hope somebody calls me a cowboy thinker again, because I would really be proud of that.

Members might be interested to know that after all the hubbub about the gophers and how barbaric we were, I found out that, despite the fact that there was a contest, fewer gophers were shot this year than ever. However I must show members my new award. It is on a hat. I have now become the official gopher herder. I am proud of that because this House and the people who phoned in did not know that gophers could be herded.

What bothers me is that if the government had amended Bill C-5 or included our recommendations in Bill C-5 it would have been law by now. It would have been passed. If the government had done what we recommended with C-15B, it too would have been law by now.

Members should not blame the official opposition for the non-passage of the two bills in the first place. It is incorrect because in committee and many times in the House we agreed that nobody was more against animal cruelty than the cowboy thinkers, nobody. We do not tolerate it. At the same time if it is not possible to persuade the people on that side that they are listening to lobby groups, they should go out there and talk to cowboys, for goodness sake. It will do their hearts good.

As the official gopher herder and as a cowboy of notoriety, I want to assure members that I will continue to be proud of the cowboy heritage and of cowboy thinking.

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to rise today to speak to this motion. It is simply designed to allow a minister, during the first thirty sitting days of a new session of Parliament, to ask that a government bill be reinstated, provided it is in the same form as in the previous session. I stress the latter, namely that it has to be in the same form as in the previous session. With the permission of the Speaker, the bill could be reintroduced at the stage to which it had progressed at the time of prorogation. This would allow the various committees to pick up where they left off.

First, it should be noted that such a procedure is not new to this House. Bills have often been reinstated, and even recently. In 1970, 1972, 1974 and 1986 for example, the House unanimously approved motions to reinstate bills. Indeed, one such motion was passed in 1991, under the previous government.

In 1991, a one day prorogation ended the second session of the 34th Parliament, and the third session opened the following day. At that time, two standing committees were reactivated by unanimous consent in order to allow them to finish what they had been mandated to do in the previous session, provided they would cease to exist after their report was tabled. A special joint committee was even reactivated, and two bills were reinstated.

In 1977 and 1982, the House adopted amendments to its Standing Orders to carry over to the next session consideration of a bill. As recently as March 1996, the House adopted a similar motion. Also, in October 1999, the House unanimously passed a motion similar to the one before us today, in order to be able to pick up where it had left off in the previous session.

Finally, the motion put forward today is similar to the provisions of the Standing Orders allowing private members' bills to be reinstated following prorogation.

*Government Orders*

Clearly, there are many precedents for the procedures put forward today. The government's motivation is equally clear. It wants to set the work of the House and its committees in motion without sacrificing the rights and privileges of parliamentarians.

In fact, this motion would save precious time and spare members work, who would otherwise have to spend time on bills and committee work that had already been studied and adopted. If this motion were adopted, the first result would be substantial and impressive savings in terms of public funds. If the motion were adopted, it would also allow Parliament and committees to devote themselves to what all Canadians consider to be new and important work. Thus the pressing need for such a change. In fact, last summer, when the session ended, more than ten government bills disappeared.

Allow me to list them. These bills are all very important. There was the bill on species at risk, before the Senate; the bill to amend the Criminal Code on cruelty to animals and firearms, also before the Senate; the bill to amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, before a committee of the House; the bill to amend the Copyright Act, before the Senate; the pest control products bill, also before the Senate; legislation to promote physical activity and sport, before the Senate; a bill on assisted reproduction, in committee. As a doctor, this bill is very important to me and must be passed, as soon as possible. There is also the specific claims resolution legislation, in committee. Finally, there is the bill on first nations governance, which was also in committee.

If the Standing Orders contained procedures to reinstate legislation, the House and members would have been spared a great many hours. For example, bills having already been passed by the House could have been reinstated and submitted to the Senate without having to debate them or consult again, because all of that work would have been done in the previous session. Bills that had been referred to committee could also be resubmitted, without delay.

• (1735)

The government wants to speed up the business of Parliament, but let us not lose sight of the fact that we have a duty to protect the rights and privileges of members so that they may give careful study to bills, and ensure that the interests of all Canadians are fully represented and protected. The procedures of this motion would not bypass the parliamentary process and no stage would be skipped.

Bills would instead be tabled in the same form and at the same stage as they were before the end of the last session. In this way, no period of consideration and no debate would be eliminated and no opposition critic would, of course, have his time cut short.

Finally, freeing up the House's time with the measures included in this motion would also enable us to keep a closer eye on new measures that might be tabled in future.

Obviously, redoing the work already done on old bills cuts into the time that can be devoted to new ones, and makes us less available to respond to the emergencies that crop up from time to time.

The committees should be able to continue where they left off and move forward from there, without having to start all over again.

This motion is, therefore, essential if we are to make up for lost time on old business and prepare ourselves for the new challenges we are likely to be confronted with in future.

The opposition said that it would oppose the motion, for the sole purpose of delaying the bills that were introduced during the last session.

This is unfair. This is contrary to the practice that has been in effect in the House for the past 30 years. This shows that the opposition does not have any new agenda and wants to prevent us from meeting the new challenges that are facing Canadians. The official opposition often asks the government to proceed with parliamentary reform and to change certain rules. We are making a proposal, but it is opposed to it. The opposition is only interested in reviewing bills from the previous session.

Because of this attitude on the part of the opposition, the House, Canadian taxpayers and the witnesses who appeared before and who will have to give the same evidence that they gave barely a few months ago will all lose.

In conclusion, this motion is fair and reasonable, and it deserves to be supported, since it would give ministers a simple way to reintroduce bills at the stage they were at when the previous parliamentary session came to an end. It would allow committees to continue their proceedings without interruption. This is what the House has been doing for over 30 years. It is the same procedure as the one that applies to private members' bills. It is in the best interests of the House, of members of Parliament and of the public, since it would ensure that our time and taxpayers' money are not wasted. This motion would also allow the House to deal with critical issues, rather than rehashing bills that, in many cases, have already been passed, to a large extent.

For all these reasons, I am seeking the support of all the members of this House to ensure that this procedural motion is adopted and that the House of Commons can conduct its proceedings effectively and focus on the fundamental issues facing Canadians.

• (1740)

[English]

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, we are getting some pretty good messages coming from the House today on this issue. I think it is a shame that we do not have enough Liberals in here to listen. I call for a quorum count.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** There has been a quorum call. We do have quorum. Resuming debate.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is too bad about that slight interruption but it was an extremely important one.

One of the things that concerns me about what we are talking about is why we are wasting time discussing something like this anyway. We should have been here two and a half weeks ago dealing with the very issues the government now wants to bring back to the table.

*Government Orders*

The government is asking to have its cake and to eat it too. Prorogation wiped the record clean. The government is pretending that we never did some things and it wants to bring back not what was on the table, but to pick and choose from what was on the table. That is what makes all the difference. A manipulative group of individuals is trying to undermine the system of Parliament. It is playing games with how Parliament is supposed to work.

It is an interesting procedure we saw unfold over the last few weeks. All of us thought we would be back here in September dealing with extremely important issues. Some of them were on the Order Paper. New ones had occurred, including the possible war in Iraq, the terrible fishery we have had, the fiasco of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans in dealing with overfishing, the agricultural problems across the country, and the list could go on and on.

What happened is the Prime Minister figured he had to have time to develop a throne speech to illustrate to the whole country how he was going to construct a legacy for himself. First, people do not construct legacies for themselves. It is the work they do in relation with others and for others that leaves behind a legacy. That is what the Prime Minister should have done. After nine or ten years we should be able to look at what a wonderful country we have because of this government and its great leader. Can we say it? No, we cannot.

I get applause even from people on the opposite side who realize that very few people support him. It is a small number. Less than half of the caucus showed up for his speech. It is hard to believe. The Prime Minister was due to speak and the airplanes were filled with Liberals.

Those people realize there is no legacy, but how do we get one? We have to create one. How do we create one? We develop a throne speech during a period when we should be here discussing the issues pertinent to the country.

Who developed the throne speech? Certainly the architect was not Michelangelo or da Vinci or any of the great artists or architects over the years. It was somebody who knew how to use a photocopying machine. It must be a very poor machine at that if it took two and a half weeks to copy the throne speech that was delivered here just a short time ago.

What is in it for the country? Absolutely nothing. What is in it to create a legacy? Practically decimation of certain parts of our country. That will be the legacy of the Prime Minister and the government.

I come from Atlantic Canada. Atlantic Canada grew in the early years and is still there and is still developing because of its ability to use marine resources, mainly the fishery. Newfoundland and Labrador, the province I represent, was rediscovered in 1497 by the Europeans who immediately afterward began to go there and fish.

• (1745)

The province was developed by people who settled all over the rough geographic area to set up fishing communities. They made a living for 500 years. In fact, until 1949 when Canada joined us, we were doing okay, but when the government opposite in particular started to take control of our fisheries, places like Newfoundland,

northern Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick saw our resources being traded off for the benefit of individuals and other parts of the country. We saw a decimation of resources.

Has this government, has this Prime Minister taken it upon himself, when support is building across the country, to do something about this disaster that has occurred? Has the Prime Minister said to himself "I will be the one who will take back control of our resources so that Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland can benefit from these resources that were abundant off our shores, that are being overfished by countries other than ours"? People within our own country, because of a lack of government regulations, also certainly have been to some point responsible for what is happening.

Did the Prime Minister take leadership here? No, he did not. What did he say about the fishery in the throne speech? One word, and I do not mean one word in the throne speech. There were no words in the throne speech. The one word is "nothing". There was not one word about the fishery in the throne speech. A whole section of our country depends on the fishery. If we go west to British Columbia and talk to the people who are here today in our gallery and have all kinds of concerns about what is happening in British Columbia with the fishery, we will see that they know how much attention the government is paying to it: none, absolutely none.

So whether we talk to fishermen, whether we talk to farmers, whether we talk to people who work in the forestry sectors, and whether we talk to scientists involved in our research, all we hear about is mismanagement, cutbacks and lack of attention. When we talk about our people with disabilities, we see the complete and utter insult passed on to them by the government sending out forms which their doctors have to try to fill out saying whether or not the person can walk 150 feet. If the person can walk 150 feet, he or she will not be able to apply for a disability tax credit allowance. I had an individual say to me "I have no problems walking 150 feet. If somebody can put my shoes on for me, I will walk 150 miles".

That is the kind of government we have. Now we see the trial balloon floating around about unemployment insurance. Members opposite will say they will not touch that. We heard the same thing a couple of years ago, and only for the election intervening we would have seen severe cuts to the unemployment insurance system. We have areas in this country where the employment is on a seasonal basis. Because of the nature of the country, it will always be that way. Will the same people always be there year after year drawing from the system? Maybe not, but people will be there. If people are in the fishing industry, they cannot fish at certain times of the year. If they are in the logging industry, there are certain times of the year they are going to be unemployed. In the manufacturing industry and the processing industries, depending on downturns, there will be times when there will be unemployment, perhaps in certain parts of the country more than in others as the universe unfolds.

*Government Orders*

● (1750)

Ten years down the road, the have provinces that today perhaps thumb their noses at some of the rest of us may be the have-not provinces, because some of the others have rich resources and, if given half a chance by the government, we could be doing very well and be contributing partners. Where is it written in the throne speech, the throne speech that took two and a half weeks to put together to create a legacy, that resource-rich provinces will be the primary beneficiaries from the development of their resources so that they in turn can be contributing partners in Confederation and not be perceived as having their hands out, waiting for the goodies from Alberta and Ontario? Where is it written in the throne speech for Newfoundland and Nova Scotia in particular that as their oil resources come on stream they can benefit, to reinvest and to create opportunities that enhance the provinces involved so that we can become contributing partners? Where is the incentive in the throne speech? There was no mention of it whatsoever.

The offshore in Newfoundland is starting to produce a lot of oil. We are starting to see a lot of revenue being generated. People may say we must be extremely rich, but if we did a breakdown to look at Newfoundland's share this is the way it would sum up. There are 365 days in a year. If we look at revenue from development over a 365-day period and somebody says we are getting half of that, Newfoundland's share equates to something like a day and a half in relation to the total amount of production. We are getting about one half of one per cent of the development from the offshore. Number one, this is because of the lack of consideration by the present government to properly interpret the Atlantic accord, and number two, it is because of resource royalty clawback.

What government is saying to provinces like ours, to Nova Scotia, to Newfoundland, and to Quebec, also a resource-rich province, is "you develop your resources but we will take the money", instead of saying as it said to Alberta in the early days "you develop your resources and for the first 8 or 10 years we will let you hold onto the larger percentage" of that as a sliding scale that would bring the amount down to what the government was giving Alberta, so that it could reinvest in its infrastructure and improve its educational system.

Our country would be a tremendously rich contributing country if we developed our provinces. By holding on to this central control, the government is the boss and keeps the provinces in line. Why do we have so many concerns expressed throughout the country? Why do we hear people in Alberta talking about separation? Why do we hear people in Quebec talking about separation? Why is there a royal commission in Newfoundland and Labrador conducting hearings on our place in Confederation? Why are so many people saying they would be better off out of Canada? Simply because of the relationship between the central government and the governments of the different provinces.

We are not being treated fairly. The cry from the west some years ago was "the west wants in". It still has not gotten in. The east also wants in, and the present government or some future government must decide to treat this country fairly, to give people from one coast to the other a chance to develop and get on their feet and become contributing partners when they have the resources to do it. Newfoundland and Labrador is not a poor province. It is an

extremely rich province when it comes to resources. We are leading the country in GDP. We have for a number of years and we will for a number of years. People ask us what we are complaining about. They say we are well off.

● (1755)

GDP, as you know, Mr. Speaker, means absolutely nothing. It means the value of our gross domestic product is relatively good compared to every other province. If we cannot hold within our province for developmental purposes some of these resources it means nothing. If it is only the value of the resource that is taken from the ocean or from the land and sent elsewhere to create jobs and build up the economies of other places, the gross domestic product means absolutely nothing. The net domestic product is an entirely different story. How can it be corrected? Simply by having a government that uses its head to help develop strong provinces, strong economic bases, people who can work together, and provinces that can feel good about being part of this great country and work as a partnership, not feel subservient as many of us do at present.

There is another issue I will mention. In the great throne speech that took two and a half weeks to copy, where do we talk about investing in our youth? If we are talking about bringing back legislation, let us look at some new legislation. The government is picking and choosing what it brings back. Maybe we would agree to let it pick and choose provided it selects some legislation pertinent to the needs of the country today. Where is the investment in our youth? Where is the investment in our health care?

Let me deal with health care first. Today as we speak, the doctors in Newfoundland are on strike. They have been for some time and maybe they will be for some time to come. What is the main bone of contention? It is pay. They are grossly underpaid. They are looking for parity with at least the doctors in Atlantic Canada. Any of them could pack up, leave Newfoundland today and go anywhere and do considerably better than they are doing in our province. Why is the provincial government not settling with them? I am no fan of the present provincial government, but let me say, however, that one of the problems we have is that we do not have money. We do not have money for some of the reasons that I have already given, but in relation to health care a lot of our funding comes from the federal government through the CHST, the Canada health and social transfer payments.

How are the payments delivered? They are delivered to the provinces on a per capita basis. For every person in the province, the province gets so much money. As the population increases the investment in health care increases. The government always talks about more and more money going into health care, some provinces doing very well because they have rapidly increasing populations.

*Government Orders*

In fact, every province in the country except Newfoundland and Labrador has either a steady or an increasing population, which means that its health care funding increases. Newfoundland has three strikes against it and we know what happens after three strikes, especially now when it is very relevant with the World Series coming up and the playoffs already underway.

First, we have a declining population. Over the last eight or ten years, we have lost 10% of our population. Consequently we get fewer dollars. The people who are leaving are younger people, so those left behind are older people requiring a greater health expenditure. So we get fewer dollars to deal with greater expenditures over the roughest geographical section of the country. We need more money to be equal and what happens? We get less. So can we compete? Not unless the government finds a better way of delivering health care funding on a more equitable basis to the rest of the country.

• (1800)

I am told my time is up. It is too bad. Education will be picked up at another time because investment in our youth is extremely important.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to address Motions Nos. 2A and 2B, which really are motions to reinstate legislation that died with the prorogation of parliament.

I want to start by talking about how in my judgment this contradicts something that members on the government side have been talking about in the last while, which is the issue of the democratic deficit.

This is an omnibus motion. I have heard the government House leader say that it is not an omnibus motion. The reason that is important, for people who do not understand, is that an omnibus motion or bill just piles a bunch of different ideas into it. It makes it very hard to vote for or against it because one might be in favour of some things or opposed to other things. Many parliamentarians regard an omnibus bill or motion as anti-democratic. Certainly we do. In this case that is precisely the situation.

There are some things in Motions Nos. 2A and Motions Nos. 2B that we can live with and other things to which we say no. They are completely contrary to what we believe in and what our constituents believe in. We also believe that there are some bills in Motions Nos. 2A and Motions Nos. 2B that still have not received scrutiny, and the government has not done a good job of listening to people. I will say a little more about that in a moment.

We are also opposed to Motions Nos. 2A and Motions Nos. 2B because the government is invoking closure. There is no method more anti-democratic to ram through legislation than to use closure. The would-be prime minister, the member for LaSalle—Émard, talked about the democratic deficit. I will be interested to see where he votes on all this legislation. I do not recall him voting on the closure motion today and that is not surprising. I am sure he probably would not have the courage to stand and vote against a closure motion, even though that is what is required if we are going to bring about some change in this place, but he did not do that. We are opposed to it on those grounds.

Finally, we are opposed to Motions Nos. 2A and 2B on the grounds that when a government brings in a throne speech, it wants all the benefits that come with a throne speech. It wants all the hype in the media and all the attention when it says that it has a new agenda and it will wipe the slate clean. However it also wants to have it the other way. It wants to bring back all the old stuff too. The reason there is a tradition of wiping the slate clean is because it is a bit of a democratic safeguard. If it has taken months, nay years in some cases, to bring legislation through, maybe that is a sign that the legislation should not come through. Maybe there is enough opposition in the public that that legislation should just die.

A good example is Bill C-5. Bill C-5 is endangered species legislation. Everybody in the House supports the idea of protecting endangered species. No one debates that. Of course we want to save endangered species. We live in a country that is environmentally sensitive. Many of us live in rural areas. We enjoy the environment. Certainly a lot of us in our party come from rural parties where we have the benefit of seeing the animals, sometimes in our yards and around our ridings, on a very frequent basis and we enjoy that. It is one of the great benefits of serving a rural riding. We are happy to support legislation that protects endangered species, however we also want legislation that is balanced, and balanced in this sense. We want legislation that if it is going to set aside lands that endangered species occupy and these lands belong to private landowners, then we would expect that in the course of ensuring natural justice that those landowners would receive fair market compensation, fair market value for the land that is taken away from them.

I cannot emphasize that enough, at a time when in agricultural areas of the country people are really struggling. In my riding we have had a drought for the last number of years. This year we have had a pretty moist year and things are looking good. Now we have the other problem. Now we cannot get the crops off. We have rain like crazy. I just talked to home not very long ago. It is raining and we have lots of valuable hay laying out in the fields turning black. We have all kinds of crops that we cannot take off.

I was talking to some people on Sunday morning. Believe it or not, in my part of the world, we actually have some areas that are very high in altitude. My part is a very flat. However if one goes up into the Cypress Hills, it is the highest point east of the Rockies. They had eight inches of snow up there. They had to bring the cattle in out of the pasture there was so much snow.

• (1805)

The point is that we have weather problems that are hurting agriculture right now, combined with the government's inability to really address agriculture in a meaningful way, and I will say more about that in a moment, and insensitive pieces of legislation, like Bill C-5, where the government does not recognize that farmers need to have fair market value if their land is taken out of production.

In our part of the world we have burrowing owls. If people have burrowing owl colonies on their property, they can occupy a lot of acres. It is possible that taking those acres out of production and not providing fair market value to compensate the farmer or rancher could mean the difference between them holding on. We have to be sensitive to that.

*Government Orders*

What does the government do in response? It says that it will give some reasonable compensation. However that is so arbitrary. Fair market value tells people something. It says that they can get someone who is an independent real estate appraiser to assess the value of that property and then the government can provide a level of payment that will allow farmers and ranchers to get that fair market value. That is important to us. We just do not understand why the government is so opposed to that, even when it understands that it will be very hurtful to farmers and ranchers.

Bill C-15B is another part of legislation in Motion Nos. 2A and 2B that we do not want to come back. The reason we do not want it to come back in its present form, and the reason why we want it to come back right from the beginning, is that it deserves further debate. Again, it is tied to farming and ranching.

Nobody in this place favours cruelty to animals. Let me make that very clear. However we also understand that in the course of normal animal husbandry there are things that farmers and ranchers need to do with animals that are unpleasant but necessary. Dehorning a calf is not a pleasant thing but is necessary. Putting an ear tag on or even providing vaccinations causes some pain to animals but it is in their interest in the long run. We are very concerned that radical environmental groups and animal rights groups, like PETA, will use this legislation to impede the ability of farmers and ranchers from making a living.

We know that Liberal members across the way are on the same page here. They have said it to us privately. We have heard some of it in the debate today. We heard a member from near Hamilton talk about how he would like to see the minister bring the legislation back to the House for debate again and put some safeguards in place so that radical animal rights groups could not challenge the legislation and put farmers through all kinds of hoops to get them to stop what they do, which is raise livestock. The problem is that is a whim and a hope. It is a wish.

What we want from the government is a commitment that it will hive Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B off of Motion Nos. 2A and 2B so that we can have that discussion again and address the very real concerns people have, again at a time when people in agriculture are really struggling. We are not asking for the moon. We are asking for some very small changes that would clarify the legislation, that would continue, in the case of Bill C-5, to allow protection to endangered species and would continue to allow animals to be protected from cruelty, in the case of Bill C-15B, so that farmers, ranchers and landowners also are protected.

We will have an emergency debate on agriculture tonight. I regret that everybody wanted to debate that because I was unable to get my name the list. However I do want to say a little about that. I have already touched on it somewhat, but I want to say a little more.

My riding occupies a big chunk of southeastern Alberta. It goes from the Saskatchewan border, probably close to 150 miles toward the west, and then from the Montana border, probably 200 miles up to the Red Deer River. It is a big riding and full of lots of prairie, farms, ranches and very good people

● (1810)

What I am concerned about is that the government, when it brought down its throne speech, really displayed how insensitive and out of touch it is with rural Canada. There was exactly one sentence in that throne speech that said anything at all about agriculture. That concerns me because agriculture is being assaulted from a hundred different ways. Sometimes those people are being assaulted by their own government in the legislation it brings down, like Bill C-15B and Bill C-5. Sometimes they are being assaulted by governments in other countries which unfairly subsidize to the point where they depress prices and make it impossible for countries like Canada, which is trying to play by the rules, to have fair market prices so that farmers can prosper when they raise these crops and take them to market.

Sometimes it is the weather. We have drought occurring in central Alberta and it is devastating.

I came back from the airport last week. I swung up into central Alberta, where my son is goes to college. I spent some time with him and then came back down toward my riding. It is a beautiful drive. It is nice to see those beautiful fields but there are pretty sparse. When one gets up into the riding of my friend from Wild Rose, up around Three Hills, where I was, and in through there, where in the past they have had some beautiful crops, it is not pretty. They are having a terrible drought.

There are all kinds of people, my friend was telling me, who are actually having their power cut off because they cannot afford to pay for it. It is very serious. It is the most serious drought they have had in 133 years.

As one makes one's way down to my riding, one sees some better crops. It is a beautiful time of year. Every once in a while there is a combine but not often because it has been so wet.

People say, "It's dry. It's wet. What's your problem?" The problem is that it has been just so many years in a row. In the past our farmers have been able to survive because they have had some good years and put something away. They are proud people. They do not want handouts. They do not want subsidies. However when there are so many things arrayed against them, especially things like foreign subsidies that make it very difficult, they would like to know that the government has some kind of safety net in mind.

They also grow very frustrated when they find that the government is imposing all kinds of restrictions on farmers and ranchers which are not imposed on the rest of the economy. I am thinking of the Canadian Wheat Board.

A farmer in my riding, John Turcato, will go to prison for 113 days for the great crime of selling his own wheat in the United States. Here is a guy who wants to support his family by going down and accessing the United States market where he can make a few extra bucks on his wheat. Know what is going to happen? He will go to prison for that. Would that ever happen in any other sector of the economy where people make things with their own hands and take them to another country to sell? I do not think so.



*Government Orders*

For reasons that will never make sense to me, the government says that back during the second world war it used its powers to put in place the Canadian Wheat Board, which imposed all kinds of restrictions. That may have made sense during wartime, but guess what? We are no longer in war. It has been 57 years since the war ended and we still have the same legislation in place.

All people like John Turcato want to do is make a living but they cannot do it. It is ridiculous. I just cannot understand why the government still imposes that on people still today. They want the ability to do with their property what they will, as long as they are not hurting anybody else. That is not too much to ask. For reasons that I do not understand, the government is stuck in the 1940s when it comes to agriculture.

• (1815)

I could go on about that but I will not. I know lots will be said on that tonight. However when October 31 rolls around, members should watch the news and watch a bunch of farmers go to jail for selling their own grain. It is a disgrace but it is going to happen.

There are a number of other things I want to talk about. The government is bringing in some of these old measures. Strangely enough, a throne speech is a time when it is also supposed to bring in new measures. Of course in a lot ways it is not. The government is bringing in recycled policies from the past.

This time the throne speech says the government will provide money to help aboriginals. We all want to help aboriginals, but the government does this year after year in the throne speech "This time we have a program and this time it will work". Year after year nothing gets better. Maybe it is time for a new approach. Maybe we should try something different. How about that?

The same thing applies with child poverty. The government says it will cancel the youth employment strategy and present a new strategy. Maybe it is time for a different approach. What about if we did some things to really stimulate the economy? We could get the economy moving at such a pace that employers had to look really hard for workers and said, "We know you are young and you do not have any experience but we really need you and we will give you on the job training". What if we tried that approach instead? It is time for some different thinking.

One of the things that is in the throne speech of course is Kyoto. Kyoto is such a mistake on so many levels. The situation is the government has not provided any kind of an assessment of the impact Kyoto would have, but it wants to ratify it. The government has no idea how it would be implemented but it wants to ratify it. The government says it is consulting people. The government has not even finished consulting people, but it wants to ratify it.

How can Kyoto be ratified if the government does not know what people are going to say about it? Maybe they will say they do not want Kyoto in its present form but they want other measures to deal with real environmental issues that affect them directly every day, things like smog in the city they live in or acid rain, or maybe there is a problem with the lake they live beside. If they live in Sydney maybe it is the tar ponds. Would it not be more practical and direct to address those things that have such an immediate and direct impact on people's health? I think so.

We could go to Canadians and give them a choice. Should we deal with Kyoto and ratify the treaty which will have almost no impact overall on the environment and the issue of global warming? We have 2% of the emissions. How big an impact could it have? It would jeopardize many jobs, and I do not think anyone disputes that. Even the cabinet now acknowledges that hundreds of thousands of jobs would be affected or lost by this and it would cost billions of dollars. No one is denying that. We could ask Canadians if they want to do that or if they want to look at each local situation and see how it can be dealt with.

In Calgary where there is an inversion problem perhaps people would say to council they should burn a little ethanol to help clean up the inversion problem and get rid of some of that smog. That is what has been done in Denver, Colorado. California has its own emissions standards because it has an inversion problem. Maybe some of the local jurisdictions should be driving some of the environmental changes. That makes a lot more sense because every place is different. Everyone has their own situation.

People in Atlantic Canada they may say that is not their big problem. Maybe their problem is pollution in Halifax harbour. I know the government has put some money toward that and that is good. It is a good idea and a good approach. Then there is the Sydney tar ponds and other things. That is the approach we should take when it comes to the environment.

I will wrap up by saying a word on behalf of the Canadian military. This summer I spent a week with our troops in Wainwright. I slept in tents with them, put on the web gear, carried a rifle and did the whole thing. They are the most professional, disciplined, dedicated people I have ever met. It is unbelievable how hard they work and how little respect they get from the government. It is a disgrace.

• (1820)

Our troops are prepared to go to Afghanistan and put their lives on the line. They are prepared to go anywhere the government sends them, but they want some respect. I do not think that is too much to ask. They want it in the form of just some proper equipment.

I ask the government to heed some of the things I have said. I can tell the House that my remarks come directly from the folks in my riding and some of the people I have associated with. If the government were a little more in step with the public, I think it would have had a much better throne speech and maybe a much better approach in general.

**Hon. Paul DeVillers (Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to take part in the debate to reinstate some of the bills the House of Commons had been working on through its committees, et cetera, prior to prorogation and the start of the new session of Parliament.

We have had the Speech from the Throne. There were many new initiatives outlined in the throne speech. There was also a lot of work that had been done in the previous session on many important bills. The government thinks it is very important that the work not be lost.

*Government Orders*

In times when Canadian taxpayers are being asked to be prudent, certainly it is an opportunity for Parliament to behave that way. It is somewhat disappointing but not surprising that we were not able to obtain consent from all parties in the House to reintroduce and reinstate certain bills at the stage they were at at the time of prorogation.

In particular, we have been hearing comments today from members of the Canadian Alliance dealing with Bill C-5, the species at risk bill. I believe from their comments today it is the one that has caused them to withhold their consent. They want changes to that bill.

From what I have heard of the debate, there seems to be an issue around the definition of compensation that would be paid to landowners who would lose land or would have restrictions placed on their land in consequence of the bill. The dispute is over whether that is described as reasonable compensation or whether it is called fair market value.

Prior to entering politics, I practised law for 22 years. I did quite a bit of real estate and real property law. The argument being put forward by the Canadian Alliance is that fair market value is a much more precise term than is the reasonable compensation that is in the bill.

Frankly, from my experience, fair market value can vary significantly from appraiser to appraiser. When I was trying to be flippant with my clients, my definition of fair market value was what some sucker was willing to pay. A person could have many qualified appraisers with all the initials behind their names say that a piece of property was worth a certain amount of money, but if there was not a willing purchaser at the time when the vendor wanted to sell, the vendor would not fetch that price.

I have to admit I am a little confused over the reluctance of the members but perhaps there are other agendas at play. I know in this place it is considered bad form to impute motive to hon. members, but it seems that the reference to Bill C-68 and gun control does come up quite a bit in the discussions around Bill C-5.

I would like to concentrate my remarks this evening on one of the other bills that is subject to the motion. The bill would be reinstated at the Senate. The bill had passed the House of Commons prior to the adjournment in June. I am referring to Bill C-54, the physical activity and sport bill which I had the privilege of introducing.

• (1825)

Bill C-54 had received all party consent. No party had voted against the bill at third reading in June. Bill C-54 had gone through committee stage. Considerable work was done on the bill. My friend from Bras d'Or—Cape Breton was one of the members of the committee who did stellar work in getting that bill through the committee.

[*Translation*]

We also made significant amendments to Bill C-54 at committee stage, following the concerns voiced by the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Bloc Québécois and our own caucus regarding the bill.

We made changes to ensure that services in our sports system are available in both official languages. If this motion does not get the support of the House this evening, all this work will have been for nothing, and this is definitely something that we are trying to avoid.

[*English*]

Getting back to some of the particulars of Bill C-54, it replaces the Fitness and Amateur Sport Act, legislation which was passed in 1961. Our new physical activity and sport bill is a modernization of our entire sports system. By changing the title to physical activity we are describing the work that it takes to become fit. We previously referred to fitness, which was the result of physical activity. By changing the wording from amateur sport to sport, we are reflecting the realities of our present system.

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

As members know, there are professionals at the Olympic Games. The NHL players who were in Salt Lake City and who won the gold medal are actually professionals.

Many of our athletes in Canada do not play in professional leagues, but they have contracts and sponsors. A number of them earn a fair bit of money but, technically speaking, they qualify as amateurs. The reality is such that we can no longer refer to amateur sport or professional sport. We simply refer to sport, and this is one of the goals of this new bill.

[*English*]

Bill C-54 on physical activity and sport was brought in after extensive consultations. Meetings and consultations were held regionally throughout the country and culminated in a summit on sport that was held here in Ottawa over which the Prime Minister presided. As a result of that consultation we ended up with a new Canadian sport policy that was endorsed by all 14 jurisdictions in the country.

The provinces, territories and the Government of Canada all endorsed the new Canadian sports policy. For the first time we now have one sports policy from coast to coast to coast in all jurisdictions. It is that policy we are entrenching in legislation with Bill C-54, this very important bill that we are trying to get brought back at the stage it was at prior to prorogation, which was after third reading. It had finished in the House of Commons and was in the Senate.

The Canadian sports policy entrenched in the bill has four pillars. One is the pursuit of excellence by improving our results in high performance sports. Another is increased participation. That is where we get to the physical activity side of it. By having a more physically active population we are sure to have a more healthy population. Obviously, there would be savings that we would obtain in future health care costs by having a very active and healthier population. The other two remaining principles in the policy entrenched in the bill are building capacity in our sports system and improving interaction among the partners in our Canadian sports system.

We have the support of all levels, the provinces, the territories, the municipalities and the federal government. We have the support of sports organizations, the national sports organizations and provincial sports organizations. We have the support of the volunteers. Our entire sports system operates primarily on a volunteer basis.

[*Translation*]

Volunteers do most of the work in our sports system here in Canada. They are truly partners, and we must ensure that they remain involved. There are also the athletes for whom our system is designed.

Last April, when we welcomed to Parliament Hill the Salt Lake City Olympic and Paralympic medallists, I pointed out in my comments that without athletes, there would be no sports system, no national organizations and no Secretary of State for Amateur Sport.

Our sports system depends on our athletes, and we must work together with all our partners.

• (1835)

[*English*]

There is the involvement of schools. I had occasion last Friday to be in Banff to meet and speak with the Canadian School Sports Federation which is the national organization of sports in our school system. It is an important partner. These are the teachers, volunteers and coaches who are involved with our young people in the high school sport system that will lead them to some of our national provincial teams and to other developments.

That is a significant portion of our Canadian sports system at the development stage where students from our high schools are exposed and coached in the relevant sports. The federation is an important partner in our entire sports system. It is looking for recognition and it is something we need to take into account. We need to consult with the Canadian School Sports Federation when we are looking at policy and sports policy in our system.

There is also in the Canadian sports policy the provision to ensure that underrepresented groups become more represented in our Canadian sports system. The groups identified were: aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, visible minorities and women. In the case of women, I had the privilege last week to launch the Women's History Month along with my colleague, the secretary of state responsible for women's issues. This year the theme of Women's History Month is "Women in sports". I was in Montreal, she was in London, and we were able to launch it in the high schools, along with the ESTEEM team which is a group of former athletes who speak to students and encourage them to become involved in athletics to develop the personal esteem that they will need to perform well.

This is all part of the Canadian sports policy that is being entrenched and is for the benefit of my friend who is asking what is the relevance to the motion that we are debating. We would lose the time put into the bill if we are not able to get this motion to reintroduce it at the present stage in the Senate.

If we are able to get this motion, we will be able to carry on with the bill at this stage and all of that time and effort would be saved.

### *Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

That is why I find it very important. Our colleagues across the way do not seem to understand what we are trying to accomplish here. They want to continue the old fight about former Bill C-15B, and they are not going to give up easily.

We on this side, however, believe it is very important to continue trying to build on the work already done and the expenses already incurred in considering these bills.

• (1840)

[*English*]

Many of these bills are important. I go back to my concern about the time that would be lost and the expense if we had to start over on Bill C-54. Again, there are provisions in that bill that are relevant and significant, and that we need to get into place sooner rather than later.

This weekend I was in Vancouver speaking at a seminar put on by PacificSport Group, which is a coalition of the national sports centres in Vancouver and Victoria and the British Columbia provincial sports centres. PacificSport Group puts on a series of seminars for young, developing athletes and their parents to teach them about some of the processes within our Canadian sports system, which they will need to take advantage of the entire system. Bill C-54 deals with that and would set up the framework for that important work from which these young developing athletes would benefit to develop into some of the world class athletes that we are all so proud of in this country.

We cannot just support them every four years when the Olympics are taking place, we see our flag being raised and O Canada is being sung. We must be prepared to step up and support these developing athletes all the time, between Olympic games. That is what Bill C-54 would help do. It would provide the framework that would let us do that.

We must also be prepared to step up to the plate with our partners in the private sector and in the provinces, and commit the necessary resources. From the work that I have been doing in the short time that I have been in the position of Secretary of State responsible for Amateur Sport I have seen a fairly healthy appetite within the Canadian population to step forward and be prepared to dedicate more resources to our athletes.

[*Translation*]

It is very important to be there for our athletes. We can best support them by voting in favour of the motion before the House this evening. This is a motion to reintroduce bills, and Bill C-54 in particular, at the same stage they were at before prorogation, which would mean it would be referred immediately to the Senate.

For these reasons, we seek the support of all members of the House for this motion.

[*English*]

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton—Strathcona. We are back again and it reminded me that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

*Government Orders*

I have a quick response to a couple of things that the previous member had to say. I found it interesting that he would be concerned about the expense that it would cost to bring a bill back to the House. We have heard regularly that the government has no qualms about spending a lot of money on its friends, contracts for friends and neighbours.

It spent \$100 million on jets out of the blue that it was told it did not need. The bureaucrats told it that it should not be buying them. It went ahead and bought them anyway. The member talks about the expense of bringing one bill back to the House and how it is such a tremendous concern to him. I hope he takes that concern with him to the caucus meetings on Wednesday and mentions to members of his caucus that it is an important thing that they manage their money well.

If the government could do business competently and in a proper way, we would not be here today discussing this issue. If these bills were important, they would have been passed in the last session. We would not have had the prorogation to get the attention of the media back to the Prime Minister and his legacy.

There are two bills today that I want to talk about that we find particularly onerous. They are Bill C-15 and Bill C-5.

The first one is Bill C-5, the species at risk bill. We have talked a lot about the bill in the House before. It is going to be a complete and total failure. I want to talk about a couple of the reasons why the bill should be allowed to die.

First, there is no faith in the bill at all. How many times has this legislation come back to the House? Three or four times. Why not let the bill die? We can do it one more time and this time we will do it right. If the government would take the opposition's amendments seriously, we could create a bill that would be good for landowners, for the environment and the environmentalists. The only one that it might not be good for would be the minister because he would have to admit that he has made a tremendous mistake in his presentation of Bill C-5.

This bill was brought to committee. It had 127-odd witnesses. The committee made 300 amendments to the bill and sent it back to the minister. He gutted it and sent it back to the House. Basically all the time and effort that the committee had put into the bill was irrelevant. Who can treat it seriously other than the minister in charge of the bill?

Second, the bill has no fundamentals that would make it work. It assumes that government knows best. There are a lot of us who believe that government is more part of the problem than it is part of the solution to the environmental problems that we have. It assumes, and I really take offence to this, is that rural people are a negative, evil influence in the environment. That is an insult and hard to comprehend. It bothers those of us who have a rural background or come from rural areas.

Finally, it assumes that local people, unless they are aboriginal, should not have a say in environmental legislation that touches their part of the world. This puzzled me the most when I read the legislation. What is it that the government is afraid of that local people could bring to the bill that it does not want in it? The cost to local people has not been considered.

The basis of all legislation is that we are trying to make a change in a particular area. One of the things we need to look at is how it would affect the people in that area and how it would affect the places that it impacts. Is it not reasonable to expect that a bill would address the socioeconomic impact before it is made law? This legislation does not do that.

We tried to bring in some amendments that would address that. The government refused to pass them. Why was that? Why did the government refuse to pass those amendments? I have one answer to that. It is because it did not have a clue how much the bill would cost Canadians. I have some evidence to back that up. The minister had an information supplement put out about a year ago. He wrote:

Environment Canada is aware that compensation for restrictions on the use of land is a complex issue that requires careful consideration and innovative thinking. We will need several years of practical experience in implementing the stewardship and recovery provisions of the Species at Risk Act (SARA) before we can be precise in prescribing eligibility and thresholds for compensation.

In other words, we will experiment on Canadians and Canadian business, but we do not have a clue as to what it would cost. The minister admitted that in October of last year when he said:

We then got deeper and deeper into this and it became more and more of the proverbial swamp, more and more difficult to do partly because, of course, governments should not pass legislation which is open-ended in terms of funding. We have fiscal responsibilities which, as you can well imagine, are fairly strict on us. Forty-five million a year is what we've been given to run the process and that's what we can expect and that's it.

• (1845)

The minister was admitting that he does not know the cost, that he does not know the implications. He is pretty sure it will be more than \$45 million a year, but how much more? We have no way of knowing. He has produced no studies. He has not given us idea of what that cost would be. The minister will not pay for it, but he has no problems with other people absorbing the cost.

An even a bigger concern than this is a letter that was sent from Minister of Fisheries and Oceans which really is unbelievable. It was sent to the member for Wascana, who at the time was the chair of the Cabinet Committee for the Economic Union. The fisheries minister stated in his letter:

On the issue of compensation, I join others who may be concerned about both the precedent-setting nature of the legislation, and the potential costs of providing it. Removing compensation from C-5 altogether would be the ideal case from my point of view—

We begin to see that the government has no interest in providing compensation to people. He continued:

—but this is unlikely given the expectations of resource users. The proposed approach that would see compensation provided on a case by case basis, without a detailed policy or regulatory regime, restricts application of compensation provisions to the minimum and is acceptable to me—

That sounds almost like one could give one's friends more money than one's enemies, does it not? There is really nothing in there to give any consistency to the application of the legislation.

*Government Orders*

I would like to address one of the other issues that the last government member spoke about. That is the fact that there is no compensation in this legislation. He left the impression, as other government members have, that there is compensation in the bill. Actually all the bill does is require the government to set up regulations about compensation. The bill does not require the government to provide it in any way.

We heard many times from members on the government side that they had concerns with this. The chair of the rural caucus, for example, the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, said that he had problems with this, but when it came time to vote he was only too happy to vote along with his colleagues, the other rural Liberal MPs, and support the government. The government promised compensation. The members were saying that it was going to supply it, but it failed to provide it and we have not heard anything from them since.

Hopefully this will be one last chance. Maybe they will take up the issue and put compensation in the bill where it should be. I doubt that will happen but we challenge them to do that. This legislation could have had a very positive impact. The government has not considered that at all.

The biggest concern I have about the legislation in Bill C-15B is that it continues this government's way of fracturing our country and our people. The government's ongoing attempts to fracture the country are shown in a number of areas. It has gone on for many years. We have seen it over the multiculturalism policies that it has pursued. We have seen it in the bilingualism issue. The government pursued that and now has revived it. It is determined to make that an issue again within the country after so many of us had thought that we had reached a resolution on it and a solution that people were satisfied with.

The government has been notorious for trying to divide and conquer. It has happened in many different areas, in things like subsidizing favoured industries and not others. Bill C-68 was mentioned earlier. It has been an extremely divisive bill, a piece of legislation that the government will not revoke. The species at risk act is another one of those examples. Kyoto is going to be another example that will divide the country in half. I challenge the government. I would like to know: Has it done any studies on the impact of Kyoto and agriculture? We do not believe it has. We would like to see it do that before it steps forward and ratifies this protocol.

The agricultural policy framework is another agricultural-rural initiative that has been developed basically in secret. It left farmers, particularly western farmers, out in the cold. The Canadian Wheat Board is another issue. We have some farmers who are actually going to jail in less than three weeks because they dared to take one bushel of wheat across the border and donate it to a 4-H club. The government is going to lock them up for from 25 to 125 days. It is ridiculous. It is happening in this country. It is the fault of the government. It can fix this. It can change this but it is not willing to.

The government has deliberately pitted rural Canada against the rest of the country. The legislation that we heard about, Bill C-15B in particular but also Bill C-5, only benefits a certain number of people: special interest groups, consultants and lawyers, not people who are primarily involved with rural issues and/or with animal rights. This

is coercive legislation that has been forced on Canadians. I am challenging the rural caucus members in the Liberal government to stand up and show a little bit of backbone this time around. They have one last chance to stop the legislation, to make it into decent legislation. I would encourage and challenge them to do that. I guess my expectations are not very high but hopefully they will take up that challenge and do the right thing.

• (1850)

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in this place today to speak on the motions we are dealing with on reinstating bills, but I would like to start by addressing some of the points that were made by the hon. Secretary of State for Amateur Sport. I noticed how passionate he was when he spoke about Bill C-54, one of his bills. I know that he is a great fan of sports so I hope he will, and I encourage him to, come out and join us when, as he may know, our MPs' soccer team will be playing Wednesday night against the EU All-Stars. We are called the Commoners. Knowing how passionate he is about sport, I know he will be there ready to kick some balls, if you know what I mean, Mr. Speaker. I am sure he will join us on Wednesday and I encourage him to do so.

Now I want to make a point that he seemed to miss in his speech. When he talked about the opposition being against reinstating the bills we are talking about, he seemed to miss the point. On this side we encourage the work done in the previous session. We do not want to stop it or thwart it unnecessarily. We want to get back to business right away. What the hon. minister forgot to mention was that the two bills we do have problems with are Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B. The other bills that we want to reinstate right away and get right into the business of debating are, obviously, Bills C-53, C-55, C-54, C-56, C-60 and C-61. We would like to see all these bills from the previous session of Parliament reinstated. We would like to get back to business but the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport failed to mention that and focused specifically on Bill C-54, the bill in which he is so interested.

Today in debating Motions 2A and 2B, we are suggesting that we in the opposition have a serious problem when it comes to Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B of the previous session of Parliament. It is clear from what we have heard from a number of members why we have a problem with those two particular bills and why we introduced this amendment so that those bills would be left out of mix. That is because of the way those two bills evolved in this place and specifically because of the way the government dealt with talking to stakeholders in trying to build consensus. The government just refused to bring stakeholders together. It refused to listen to the people who would be most affected by these two particular bills.

I will focus on Bill C-5. The stakeholders, especially the agriculturalists, the ranchers, the farmers and all these particular groups, had huge concerns with Bill C-5. In fact, the government failed to listen to them properly and equally and give them representation leading into Bill C-5 and in passing the bill as we were reaching the final stages of it.

*Government Orders*

Some of my colleagues, in discussing the problems we had with Bill C-5, focused particularly on the issue of compensation. The Secretary of State for Amateur Sport said he did not see a problem between the ideas of compensation and fair market value or with the fact that compensation would be given at the discretion of the government any way it sees fit. There would not be a real equation or plan put together. It would be left to the government to decide what is fair compensation is, while it is not actually willing to commit to fair market compensation.

I was surprised. He said he was a lawyer and that he advised his clients. I am glad I never went to him for advice, because the biggest problem with Bill C-5 is the idea that many of the people involved, their livelihoods, their farms, their ranches or whatever it might be, are afraid to commit. As much as they are environmentalists and stewards of land and take on voluntary efforts to protect their land and inhabitants of the land, they want to make sure that they are compensated fairly if the government decides to expropriate their land, for whatever reason, whether it is for protecting habitat, protecting endangered species, whatever the case that is made to take the land away from people who rely on it.

Is that too much to ask? I think that in a free and democratic society it is only a fair demand to have free and fair compensation based on market value. I am still astounded to this day as to why the government is so afraid to make that sort of commitment to the people who in the end are going to do the most good in protecting the environment. This is just something that is beyond me, but let us face it, the government has done a lot of things that are beyond me and beyond Canadians many times over, so it is no real surprise.

● (1855)

My colleague who just spoke talked about the government's attitude in dealing with bills like Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B. We saw it most recently with its attitude on Kyoto. The government does not want to bring stakeholders together. It does not want to try to build a consensus. It has an attitude of divide and conquer, as I believe my colleague mentioned.

What are we doing in this country if that is the way we are going to approach Canadians and build consensus? Are we going to divide and conquer? That seems like we would be pushing people in different parts of the country further apart instead of trying to bring them together.

The government had an opportunity to show some leadership on Bill C-15B and Bill C-5 by trying to bring together all of those stakeholders I mentioned earlier, the people who live off and work the land, the environmentalists, the ranchers, and the people who have long-term leases doing natural resource work for their businesses. All of these groups could have been brought together if the idea of compensation had been addressed properly.

This same pattern the government shows is being unveiled in its whole plan for Kyoto. There is only one way to describe it: either we are for the environment or we are against it. There is no in-between. This boggles my mind. Clearly we have the opportunity under Kyoto, at least if we look at it properly, to look away from what has been done under Kyoto and to try to bring all stakeholders together for the environment. If cleaner air is what we are actually trying to achieve, then we have to do it by bringing people together. I am

speaking of those people who are involved in the natural resource industries, oil and gas and all types of industry that deal with the production of fossil fuels whatever they might be. We need to bring them together through technological advances to be able to solve the problem of greenhouse gas emissions and try to clean up the environment. We should not cut them out or restrict production. We do not need the types of solutions the government has by not bringing people together. It seems that we actually are going to go backwards if we try to go down the road of Kyoto.

That is why I am saying here today that we have seen this constant pattern. One would think the government would have learned in the past session of Parliament with the type of opposition it had, especially under Bill C-5, from all the different groups that put a lot of work into that bill to try to convince the government that compensation was a big part of something the government is missing and a big part of why people would oppose that legislation. Yet the government refuses to acknowledge that. If the government goes down the road of Kyoto it is going to suffer the same fate. We are going to be dividing people. They are not going to be working in the best interests of the environment. They are going to be looking out for themselves, because the government refuses to take in other socio-economic factors when it makes a decision. It is a real shame that the government has that sort of attitude.

I know I have digressed a bit because Kyoto is a big concern for a lot of Canadians as we lead into this Parliament, but to go back to Bill C-5, there are a few different provisions that we had addressed in Bill C-5 when the bill was going through the House. One of the things I talked about was compensation. Clearly this is something that the government can still amend and improve before the bill comes back to the House if that is what the government decides to do.

Particularly in dealing with Bill C-5, the idea of criminal liability was another issue that many farmers were afraid of, especially ranchers and farmers who deal with the land. If unfortunately by accident a habitat or an endangered species were destroyed unintentionally, under the bill these people could be penalized under the highest type of criminal penalties that sometimes do not take into consideration harm incurred by accident. This was a big fear among many farmers and ranchers. Those accidents may occur. Are we going to penalize those individuals to the highest levels and actually prosecute them criminally? That seems to be a bit outrageous.

Overall the other thing we missed out on with Bill C-5, which the government has continuously failed to deal with and continues to fail to do as we head down the road of Kyoto and other issues like health care, is trying to work with the provinces to develop a sense of cooperation. Let us face it. For a lot of the things we do and decide here, the provinces are given the responsibility to administer them. Unless we are bringing them on board with some of these bigger issues, we are not going to have the success rates that we would like to see. I wish the government would start to take into consideration provincial responsibilities and work in a more cooperative spirit with the provinces, but let us face it: The divide and conquer attitude of the government is something we are going to see continuously and it is going to fail Canadians over and over again.

*Government Orders*

● (1900)

We wish we could see more leadership but that will not be coming from that side. I will not hold my breath because I would probably expire if I waited for those things.

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Mr. Speaker, being a new kid on the block, I expected to see a lot of things happen that really did not happen. Of course it has been said to me before that I will learn the process and learn that certain things will happen, but as a society we should not accept what the government is doing.

It seems like the government, for some reason or another, is building half a house, then shutting it down, waiting for the fall to come and building it again. If it starts something it should finish the process. Because of that, the House should not allow it to bring things back just for the sake of bringing them back. If the government had been concerned about the issues that were at hand, it never would have shut down debate, closed down and sent us all home for the summer. We should have been here.

Mr. Mayor—I apologize, Mr. Speaker, that is from my councillor background. The EI system is one of those items we should be talking about rather than going back to the past and bringing bills back again that were half done. We should be looking at the EI system and what it is doing, especially in rural areas of the country.

For some reason the federal government is the only government that can get away with top up programs and not have to pay its workers who are on these top up programs. It is a total shame what the government is doing to people in rural Canada, especially in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, in my area.

We can talk about the health care system and how the government has cut, cut, cut. All of a sudden it has a big brain scheme about the new health care system into which it wants to put all these dollars. The government took the dollars away and now it wants to put it back because it will be good for the government if an election is called down the road, or for the Prime Minister.

The thing is that the government has failed the people totally. We can look at what it has done with regard to the appointment of people with Marine Atlantic. That ferry service supplies all of Canada but the people who are most affected by it are people from Newfoundland and Labrador. Of course we do not have a proper representation, a full quota of people from Newfoundland and Labrador.

The government has stayed solid. My office has been flooded with phone calls wondering where the Newfoundland minister is. I do not know where he is. Apparently he is doing a lot of talking behind closed doors but it is not being effective. People are very concerned that our livelihood, our ferry service that connects us to the rest of Canada, has totally been affected.

Those are the things that we should be talking about in the House rather than bringing back items that for some reason the government did not feel were important but now they are important. It should be the law that the government should not be allowed to do that, but for some reason it has the attitude, as the premier of Newfoundland and Labrador had, which is that it had the majority and it could do as it liked. We should not allow it to do that and Canadians should not allow it to do that because that is just total arrogance. The government has no respect for the Canadian taxpayer.

I made a speech during labour day. All the politicians were there talking about health care. They did not know what they were talking about. I spent 22 years here. I know what is happening in health care. The politicians are not listening.

I am learning quickly. We should be working for the people. We should be putting programs in place so people can function in society as a total unit without having to beg for things that are rightly ours.

Let us talk about the military. We know what happened after 9/11. The government did not do very much to bring more spending into the military. What did it do? All of a sudden contracts went out to the supply chain. For goodness' sake, the zippers on the servicemen's pants will not stay up. They are going around with their pants not properly secured. Submarines are going down but cannot get up. It is totally ridiculous. We need to start spending more money on the military. What is the government doing? It is going to do a review. What a waste of time. It already knows how to do it. It just needs to do it and do it right.

● (1905)

It is like I said earlier, the government is building half a house. If it is not going to do the job right in the first place, it is time for it to get out and let another government do the job.

I can go on to the air service. I believe the minister was in the House last week. I do not know exactly what he said, but from what I understand he said that everything was fine in rural Canada and rural Newfoundland and Labrador with regard to air transportation. The minister does not realize what people have to go through to get a flight back to Ottawa. It is totally ridiculous. The hon. Gerry Byrne knows because he flies back and forth all the time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. You can call me Mr. Mayor and you may get away with that but you cannot refer to your friends, if you have any on the other side, by their names. Refer to their portfolios or their riding names and the rest you can settle behind the curtains. As long as we are here in the political arena let us stay within the rules.

● (1910)

**Mr. Rex Barnes:** Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for ACOA and member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte. We are all friends. We have differences of opinions but that does not make us enemies. Life is too short to have enemies.

I think the minister realizes, as well as I and everyone else who travels back and forth, that the air service is not what it should be. It should be upgraded. Since Air Canada seems to come to us when it wants a bail out, it should be required by law to provide the same type of service in rural Canada as it provides in central Canada. We should be no exception. It is like we are second-class citizens in the rural areas of this country. It is time for the government to take a stand. These are things that we should be discussing to make sure it happens for the people because we are elected for the people. They elect us and it seems like we forget that.

*Government Orders*

One of the big things that the government has missed, as far as I am concerned, is that it should have come back with a real plan for the next generation. The next generation is from rural Newfoundland and Labrador and all of Canada. We should be putting money where it is needed the most. Right now I think rural Canada has been totally forgotten. We are not doing the things we should. Yes, we are doing some things but they are not enough. The government should be coming out with a plan to revitalize rural Canada so that we know where we are going. I bet it does not know where we are going because I do not where we are going. All I know is that people in rural Canada and rural Newfoundland and Labrador are leaving, which is causing a big problem.

We cannot have our cake and eat it too. The government has decided for some reason that it now wants to bring back all these important bills. I heard a speaker tonight talk about the money and the fact that it would be costly. There is no cost factor as far as I am concerned. If the bill was important the government should have stayed and debated it at the time.

As far as I am concerned, the House should send a clear message to the government and tell it that it will not get away with it. If not, it will have the attitude that it can do what it wants, because it feels that way anyway. We should stand firm and tell the government, no, it cannot do what it wants because we were elected for the people. If we do not do it no one else will. The people expect us to do it.

I will finish off by saying that it is time for the politicians in this country to look at why they were elected and where we are going. The thing about it is that it does not appear we are going very far because the Liberals do not have a plan and we need a plan.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to take this opportunity at the beginning of this new session to raise some of the issues that concern us, especially with regard to the topic at hand here.

The whole effect of prorogation is to quash all the business that was on the order paper. The purpose is to start anew with a fresh agenda to inspire and lead Canadians for the rest of the government's mandate.

What have we done at the beginning of this second session instead? Nothing. It is not new, it is not inspiring and that is the essence of the debate that we have here. What we have is an old, tired Prime Minister with a self-serving agenda, leading a caucus of members who are fed up with his leadership. The Liberal leader in waiting, the member for LaSalle—Émard, is not getting any younger himself and everyone over there is becoming impatient. Those are the dynamics the Canadian public might as well know.

Compounding this whole mood of discontent, the Prime Minister is proposing a throne speech made up of worn out promises with a few new promises ready to be broken. To make things even worse, the government has introduced a motion that gives it authority to reinstate bills from the last session. Included in that list of bills is Bill C-5, the species at risk bill, and Bill C-15B, the cruelty to animals bill. If reinstated, both of these bills will bypass the Commons and go straight to the Senate.

Those two bills represent the Liberal government's esteemed legislative and political attack on the lives and livelihoods of rural Canadians and the communities where they live.

The Prime Minister has to learn that he cannot make travel plans for every member and every region of the country by using the map of Toronto. He will get lost just like he did with the gun registry.

I would like to talk a little bit about Bill C-15B and Bill C-5. I would like to start with Bill C-5. This would have a very negative impact on agricultural producers. They were hoping that when this session ended these flawed and misguided bills would be dead. Now, with the debate we are having here this evening and the vote that will take place in probably an hour, they will all be back on the agenda and the nightmare that agriculture producers were undergoing will come back.

With the species at risk bill back, the government has not looked into the social and economic impact of this bill on Canadians. What kind of costs are we going to see from this bill? The minister says that it will cost more than \$45 million. Is he sure? Has he taken into account the cost of enforcement and the costs that will be placed on the industry and property users? He has stated in committee that the legislation is open-ended in terms of what it will cost property owners.

I have stated in the House before that compensation must be made available to property owners who lose their land due to the bill. It is imperative that in order to alleviate the social and economic costs of the bill adequate compensation must be made. As the bill currently stands, it preserves the minister's right, his discretionary power, to decide who gets compensation and how much compensation. He decides whether provincial laws are effective or not. It gives him power to impose federal laws on provincial jurisdictions. This power in the hands of one person totally eliminates any transparency in the bill. That is why this omnibus bill should not just point blank reinstate all of this legislation. One of the reasons is Bill C-5.

The other bill that I want to briefly touch on is Bill C-15B, the cruelty to animals bill. It is even more hideous. The bill as it currently stands is much too vague. It is too broad. It shows a hidden agenda put forward by animal rights activists. If we take a close look at the bill, the main thrust of this was to increase penalties to those who abuse and neglect animals. However the bill has become a broad net, going away from its original intent to moving toward a redefinition of "animals" in our Criminal Code. As the bill reads right now is so unclear that animal rights activists will use it as a tool to destroy the livelihood of thousands of agricultural producers.

● (1915)

We must ensure that there are three clear changes to this bill. We must maintain the status of animals as property under the Criminal Code. The ownership of animals is the fundamental principle of Canada's agricultural industry. A farmer's legal right to use animals to produce food comes from his right to own these animals. Moving animals out of the property area would cause farmers to be under an unfair risk of prosecution. I wish the government was listening. These are key concerns and the bill should not be included in this omnibus motion to reinstate all of the bills.



*Government Orders*

It would be to the great joy of animal rights activists if the bill is passed. They want to test this new law in the courts because a farmer would have to reconcile his own right to own animals with the new status of animals under this code. Farmers are not able to defend themselves against these large multinational animal rights groups. The bill itself infringes on civil liberties, the most important being the ownership and enjoyment of property.

The bill, along with Bill C-5, should not be included in all the bills that are being reinstated. Bill C-15B is the single largest threat to agriculture producers and to their way of life.

I would like to point out that the definition of an animal in Bill C-15B is much too broad. A vertebrate other than a human that can feel pain would subject farmers to long legal litigation, causing a judge of the Canadian courts to deem whether an animal can feel pain or not. This definition does not further the original intent of the legislation to increase penalties for those who abuse or neglect animals. We supported that basic aim but the bill has gone way beyond that and is not acceptable in its present form. No one is more concerned about the welfare of animals than those who work with them every day. I will leave those two bills at this time and I hope the government will seriously concern itself with what farmers are worried about.

With respect to reinstating any unfinished business from the last session, I would like the government to reconsider its resistance to implementing one of its own policies, the policy to appoint an independent ethics counsellor who reports directly to Parliament.

● (1920)

Members will recall that in the last session of Parliament the Canadian Alliance introduced a motion that lifted that promise word for word from the Liberal red book. The government voted against it. Believe it or not, the government voted against it and took away the opportunity to carry through on that promise in the first session.

One Liberal member who must have been uncomfortable voting that motion down was the former finance minister, the member for LaSalle—Émard. He was one of the principal authors of Liberal red book one, introduced in 1993. That red book contained that promise. What must be even more embarrassing for him is to have that on his record at a time he is promoting parliamentary reform. That member has quite a parliamentary reform record. He is not a young man and perhaps his memory is becoming faulty.

I do not know if members recall the program *Dallas*, when Pam Ewing woke up beside Bobby Ewing and everything from the last season, including Bobby's death, turned out to be only a dream.

Our former finance minister is hoping for the same second season. Instead of Pam Ewing waking up, the member for LaSalle—Émard wakes up, it is the 1990s, he is nine years younger and there is no government record to taint his reputation. All of the corruption and internal strife attributed to too much pizza before bedtime.

Mulroney is still the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party has not yet broken its promise to scrap the much hated GST. As he rubs the sleep from his eyes he slowly realizes that his record has been expunged. The unpleasantness is trapped in a moment of rapid eye movement. There is no record of him voting against a motion to

appoint an independent ethics counsellor who reports directly to Parliament.

He is pleased to discover that it was only a dream that he supported a record 78 closure motions, many of which were used to prematurely close off debate on finance bills when he was finance minister. He sighs a sigh of relief to discover that the rat pack is still jumping over tables and screaming at former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney with righteous indignation.

While this is truly a nightmare, it is no dream. The member for LaSalle—Émard cannot wipe out his parliamentary record and that of his government. He cannot pretend that the first session of the 37th Parliament and the sessions of the 36th and 35th Parliaments were only a dream. As much as he would like, he cannot rewrite the script like it was done on *Dallas*.

Let us turn to some business from the last session that I would be happy to reinstate. There is the report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs which I worked on intensively, proposing that all private members' business be made votable. This is not a government initiative but a battle fought and won by private members.

The proposal to provide for all private members' business to be votable was part of our reform initiative at the beginning of the 35th Parliament, the 36th Parliament and from the first session of this Parliament. In the first session, the Canadian Alliance introduced "Building Trust: A plan to make Parliament more responsive to Canadians". As we face the second session, we have offered an updated version of "Building Trust", "Building Trust II—Making Parliament More Responsive to Canadians", which represents our ongoing commitment to make Parliament more responsive to Canadians.

The purpose of "Building Trust" was to propose modest parliamentary reforms that the government might accept with the aim to restore some of the procedural ground that private members have lost over the years to the executive branch of government.

The government's powers are sweeping and if members are to provide the necessary checks and balances they must be accorded certain rights. While we convinced the government to accept a number of proposals from "Building Trust", we ran out of time to convince it to implement the remainder. "Building Trust II" carries over a number of proposals from "Building Trust" and introduces new initiatives that we trust can realistically be accomplished in the 37th Parliament.

*Government Orders*

•(1925)

The motion the government has put forward establishing a procedure for government bills to be reinstated should be defeated. What we would like to see reinstated is a commitment to reform private members' business. Canadians would be much better off if a lot of these bills from the last session remained but a memory. Generally the government would want to forget everything that happened in the first session and not try to relive that nightmare.

Did I inform you, Mr. Speaker, that I will be splitting my time?

**The Deputy Speaker:** No, the member did not inform the Chair. As a matter of fact he has gone well over what would have been the 10-minute allocation. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Lakeland.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commending my colleague for the tremendous job he did talking about Motion No. 2 and why Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B should not be reinstated at the stage they were at but should be debated all over again.

We all remember those debates. We remember that closure or time allocation was invoked on both of them. There was a lot of debate that had not yet taken place, not only in this place but across the country, because there seems to be a period where things can be debated in the House and the general public has not caught on that it is happening. Even though each MP goes out to his or her riding and talks about it in the riding, it still takes time before the general public gets involved in the debate. Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B had only just started at the stage where the general public was starting to understand what was included.

An interesting thing that we found, probably MPs from all political parties but the Alliance MPs certainly because I have talked to my colleagues about this, is that the more we talked about this in the constituencies and elsewhere across the country, the more people came to understand that these two pieces of legislation were bad legislation, not that the concept and the intent of the legislation were bad.

Canadians agree, for example, with Bill C-5, species at risk, that they should be committed to preserving endangered species. Canadians support that. However when they got into the legislation and came to understand what was in the legislation, they came to see that it was bad legislation which did not deserve to be supported by Parliament.

For that reason, we should start from scratch again, go through the process again. By the time we are done, maybe we will have the Canadian public across the country more engaged. There is a good chance that the legislation as it is now would not pass, due to public pressure, or that there would be changes made so that we could pass it. That is certainly another option.

Bill C-15B, the cruelty to animals legislation, was much the same. Canadians support the concept of tough penalties for people who abuse animals. Who does not? That is a motherhood concept. However the legislation itself had some extremely dangerous clauses which infringed on civil liberties and would not do the job intended. I argued in debate on these bills and at meetings across my constituency and elsewhere that some of the clauses would do

anything but perform the function that the government said they would perform.

These two pieces of legislation need to be debated more. The government sent the signal when it decided to prorogue parliament and end the session. Why does it do that? It does that because it wants to clear the slate and start over again, get rid of the bad legislation it should never have introduced and start over again.

These are two pieces of bad legislation that should never have been introduced, not as they are at least. They need a major change before they should be passed. The government and the Prime Minister chose to prorogue the House. Let us start from scratch and do exactly what Parliament is supposed to do when we clear the slate and start over fresh again.

I would be happy if the government never brought these forth again in the new Parliament because they do not do the job intended. I would prefer it takes these back to the people drafting legislation and get the changes made that would make it good legislation so that we could support it.

There is something else that has led me to not want these two pieces of legislation to come back at the stage they were at. I found that in this place there is precious little debate on agriculture. For example, tonight we have an emergency debate on one of the worst agriculture crisis in the history of the country, the worst in the last 35 years without doubt.

•(1930)

We have an emergency debate on this coming up after we vote on these motions. How much time do we have allocated to this emergency debate? Eight-thirty to midnight. That is three and a half hours, if we get that. There is simply not enough time devoted to debating issues that are critical to what I would argue is the most important sector in our country: farmers, the people who produce our food and many other products that we simply cannot do without. I would argue that for that reason we should start from scratch on these bills, if the government still wants to go ahead with them. I think the argument on that is fairly obvious.

I want to talk a bit about farmers and agriculture not getting the attention they deserve in this place. This is something I have seen over the past nine years. Rather than the debate which is in the House to deal with issues which will make things better for farmers, too often the debate is about things like Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B, which will put an incredible hardship on farmers if passed. Some of my colleagues have talked about this in the past.

Now we have an agriculture crisis which is hurting cattlemen, grain farmers and hog producers. It is hurting agriculture producers across the country. It is certainly not appropriate to burden them with the consequences of legislation like this. I would argue there are other things government should do for farmers.

The drought certainly is the immediate cause of this crisis, which again I argue is the worst in 35 years, since the late 1960s or early 1970s. The drought is not really what has led to the mess that agriculture is in today. It is the immediate cause for some of the problems, but the long term cause is the government's neglect when it comes to dealing with some trade negotiations.

In the GATT, in the WTO and even in the free trade agreements, which are excellent trade agreements, agriculture was mostly left out. For that reason, we have all other industries in the country dealing under a trade agreement which gives pretty much fair trade. We have exceptions. We have problems the odd time. Softwood lumber is a huge problem. However most of the problems we have seen have been in agriculture because the agreement does not cover these things.

Instead of the government trying to bring forth Bill C-5 and Bill C-15B, which have had this incredible negative impact on farmers, why does it not deal with the real problems that farmers face? Again, it is the cumulative effect of prices being driven down year after year for the last 10 to 15 years due to unfair trade practices in other countries. I am talking about the common agriculture in Europe, especially the part of the common agriculture policy which deals with export subsidies which pays farmers from Europe to dump their products in our traditional markets. By doing so, it not only causes us to lose those important markets, but also causes prices around the world to be driven down.

Then we have the Americans getting involved to combat and counteract Europe. They want to counteract the harm of the European subsidies. Therefore, they get involved with their export enhancement program and that type of thing, which further depresses world prices. Then the Canadian farmers, who have only a very small portion of the subsidies the United States and the European Union have, are left holding the bag.

Canadian farmers are truly the most efficient in the world, I would argue. If we level the playing field or even make it closer to level so that year after year they do not have to combat the impact of these prices being depressed, the agriculture sector would do extremely well. Under those circumstances, when these drought years come from time to time, although never as bad as this, then farmers could deal with it and we would not be here talking about the crisis in agriculture.

• (1935)

The problem is that for the last 15 years farmers have had their equity chipped away. They have not been allowed to build up reserves in their business, like most corporations and businesses do, because prices have been driven down due to unfair trade practices.

Why does the government not deal with the root of this problem, which is primarily unfair trade practices and higher prices that Canadian farmers have to face due to the other things the government imposes on them, such as high taxes on inputs?

**An hon. member:** Tell us how to fix it, Leon.

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** The hon. member said tell us how to fix it, so I am going to do that.

The place to start is with is the unfair practices. It is time for the government to start to really put some pressure on the European Union, the Americans and the Asian countries who impose import restrictions. It is time for the government to get tough on the trade negotiations and actually bring some change in that area. That is the first thing.

### *Government Orders*

The second thing is that it is time for the government to make some changes which will allow input prices to go down for Canadian farmers. Canadian farmers are operating at a disadvantage, not only because prices are driven down due to unfair trade, but also because of our high tax regime relative to our biggest trading partner, the United States. That high tax regime adds to input costs, so again our farmers are put at a disadvantage; lower prices, higher input costs.

We have a regulatory system which is quite burdensome. The red tape our farmers have to go through compared with the red tape our American trading partners have to go through is not even comparable. There is simply too much red tape. Some of that red tape, the unnecessary regulations, has to be reduced.

There is a start in terms of suggesting things that have to happen, but it is certainly not the end of it.

Quite frankly, I am tired of being here on emergency debates on agriculture. I have been here nine years now. I am tired of having to have this debate. I am tired of having especially members of the governing party, but even some of the other opposition parties, stand up and say that the problem is the drought and farmers should be able to deal with the drought.

The problem is not the drought, although it is this year. The problem is the government. It has not done what is necessary to put in place a level playing field. Prices are driven down due to unfair trade. Input prices are pushed up due to over regulation and high taxes.

I have not really even talked about the high taxes yet. Look at taxes on fuel and fertilizer, especially the energy portion of it. It is just extremely high compared with other countries. We could go right through the list. The prices our farmers have to pay for what they buy are so much higher than our competitors. It makes it awfully tough for farmers to do business well.

I want to expand a bit on the problem area of taxation. I have talked about how it raises input costs, but I want to talk about a change for which I have been calling. I have written to the revenue minister, the finance minister and the agriculture minister over the past five years on this. I have brought this issue up on several occasions through private members' motions and so on. That is the issue of extending the period farmers have to sell off their breeding stock due to drought and things like that.

There is a program in place for the deferral of livestock sales due to drought and other emergencies. It has been in place 15 years. That legislation, as it is now, allows farmers only one year to buy back their breeding stock after they have been forced to sell it off. In my area many farmers have sold off their entire herd, but they want to be back in business down the road. Many farmers have sold off a large part of their herd and they want to buy it back next year. Just imagine this scenario of the cattlemen in our country. My constituency is probably in the worst part of the drought area and across the border into Saskatchewan.

*Government Orders*

● (1940)

Probably 40% of the cattle herd has been sold off. It takes 15 years for a farmer to build up a good herd. Because of one drought, they do not have the reserves they would have had had the government done its job in dealing with important trade issues. Because of high taxation and so on, they are forced to sell. Now they will be forced to buy back over the next year.

Imagine farmers trying to buy back 40% of the herd one year. Prices will be driven through the sky and they will be unable to get the livestock they need. The program which was set up 15 years ago will not work. I have argued for four to five years, as have my colleagues and my party, that the period should be extended so that farmers would have five years to buy back breeding stock which they were forced to sell off due to a drought or some other freak of nature.

Is that too much to ask? I am talking about a very straightforward change. The Liberal member asked that I tell them what should be done. Well, I am telling them.

This should be done now. It should not drag on until next spring. The revenue minister, the finance minister and agriculture minister should get together and say, yes, that it makes sense to extend the buy back period to five years so cattle prices will not be driven up beyond anything that is reasonable. This would give farmers an opportunity to pace themselves so they could buy back as opportunities arise over the next five years to rebuild their herds and be back in business suffering the loss only from one year and not from 15 years of building a herd.

The member asked what the government should do. That is another thing it should do. We have a long list of things the government has ignored when it comes to agriculture.

Instead of focusing on bills such as Bill C-15B, cruelty to animals, the government should put in place a bill to protect animals from cruelty, because we all care about that, that will not impose an unmanageable burden on farmers.

I am asking the government to set priorities and base them on something that really will allow our farmers to operate and compete fairly with our competitors around the world. It has been said by many that agriculture is the closest thing to a true marketplace because so many producers are selling and competing around the world. The only problem is that farmers in Canada simply are not competing in a fair marketplace because the prices are driven down due to unfair trade and the Government of Canada cannot afford subsidies that match the European or American subsidies.

Why has the government not done its job and negotiated with the Europeans and Americans? It could start by getting rid of the export subsidies. Over time the domestic subsidies can be removed. We have the time there but simply do not have the time for export subsidies which affect the price the most.

I ask the government to wipe the slate clean on legislation like this or at the very least start from scratch so we can have the rest of the debate that we did not have the first time around, so we can get people across the country more involved in the debate and so we can deal with some of the solutions to this agriculture problem. I

encourage all members in the House and Canadians to listen to my colleagues in the agriculture debate tonight and listen to solutions for which the member asked. I have only brushed over them. They will be talked about in more depth by my colleagues.

Unfortunately, because of the priorities of the House, we only have three and a half hours to talk about agriculture. Therefore, I am left out of that debate. However members opposite noticed that I just gave my agriculture speech because I had to, and I am glad they did. At least they are listening for a change, and that is good.

● (1945)

I have given my agriculture presentation, a few thoughts on Motion No. 2 and why Bills C-15B and C-5 should be started over again if the government insists on bringing them back. That is what proroguing Parliament is supposed to do.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the comments of my hon. colleague from Lakeland as well as many of the comments from other members today. I think it is fair to say, and my colleague would probably agree, Mr. Speaker, that you have been very generous in your latitude in the topics that have been covered today. We even heard an early intervention on agriculture, the topic which will be before us in a little while on the emergency debate. That is a very important topic on which I know all of us will be interested in hearing from members.

We have heard concerns about many topics today. We have heard about agriculture, about cruelty to animals and other issues around animals, about firearms and about Kyoto. We have heard from members opposite about overfishing and about species at risk. My colleague the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport wants to be sure I mention sport which I will come to in a moment. We have talked about the species at risk act. We heard comments about ethics and the various aspects of the throne speech.

We have even heard about soccer among the sports that have been mentioned. My hon. colleague from Edmonton—Strathcona was talking about soccer and the fact that there will be a game on Wednesday evening. The diplomats here in Ottawa from the European Union will be playing against a number of us MPs.

I want to mention this because I think the pages will be interested to hear that every year we have a soccer game against the pages. The pages ought to know that they have quite a challenge before them, because last year the pages were defeated by the members of Parliament. They should know also that when this happens, it is customary after the game for one of the members in the House to rise during statements by members and make a statement about the game the night before and actually indicate whether the members of Parliament or the pages were victorious. I am sure this will increase their interest and their eagerness but I do not want to increase their eagerness so much that the pages go out to practise.

I do want to speak to the topic at hand, although many of my colleagues today have not, Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you will acknowledge. The topic is the government motion which allows for the reinstatement of government bills from the previous session of Parliament.

*Government Orders*

Some members objected to this procedure on the grounds it is inconsistent with parliamentary procedure. This is clearly not the case. The standing orders provide for the reinstatement of private members' bills in a new session of Parliament. There appears to be a double standard in that private members have the automatic right to reinstate their bills while the government must pass a routine procedural motion to reinstate its bills. I want to focus my time on this double standard which demonstrates why this motion should be supported by all members in the House.

The procedure for reinstating private members' bills was adopted by the House on November 30, 1998. It is found in Standing Order 86.1, which states as follows:

During the first thirty sitting days of the second or subsequent Session of a Parliament, whenever a private Member, when proposing a motion for first reading of a public bill, states that the said bill is in the same form as a private Member's bill that he or she introduced in the previous Session, if the Speaker is satisfied that the said bill is in the same form as at prorogation, notwithstanding Standing Order 71, the said bill shall be deemed to have been considered and approved at all stages completed at the time of prorogation and shall stand, if necessary, on the Order Paper pursuant to Standing Order 87 after those of the same class, at the same stage at which it stood at the time of prorogation or, as the case may be, referred to committee, and with the designation accorded to it pursuant to Standing Order 92(1) during the previous Session.

There we have the same procedure we are looking for in this motion already in place automatically for private members' bills. They can be brought back by members automatically. That is very important to consider.

As we can see, the part of today's motion that relates to the reinstatement of government bills is practically identical to the provisions of Standing Order 86.1 for the reinstatement of private members' bills.

• (1950)

We have already seen private members take advantage of the provisions in Standing Order 86.1. For example, the member for Ottawa—Vanier was able to use the standing orders to reinstate his bill to amend the Canada Health Act. His bill is now on the order of precedence as a votable item as a result of his using this procedure.

The member for Surrey Central also reintroduced his bill to amend the Statutory Instruments Act. The member was also able to use the standing orders to reinstate his bill on the order of precedence as a votable item.

Were it not for the reinstatement procedures in the standing orders, those members would have had to reintroduce their bills. They would have had to then wait and see if their names were drawn in the lottery in order to place their bills on the order of precedence. They would then have had to ask the committee to which I belong, the procedure and House affairs committee, to deem their bills to be votable. It does not always happen. They would have had to go through the whole process once again. Instead we have a very good process built into the standing orders that provides for this automatic reinstatement.

It is interesting to point out that the motion adopting these amendments I have been talking about was moved by the government House leader, the very same government House leader who proposed the motion before us today. So today's motion is in

fact entirely consistent with the government House leader's previous support to allow for the reinstatement of private members' bills.

Also the government House leader's motion on the reinstatement of private members' bills was adopted by unanimous consent without debate. Why then are members not prepared to have the same courtesy or the same principle applied to government bills? I want to suggest to members that just as they are prepared to support the government House leader's motion to allow for the reinstatement of private members' bills, they should also support the government House leader's motion to reinstate government bills. It is only fair.

Of course, the government House leader's motion was based on the proposals of parliamentarians as recommended by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. That committee tabled its report on November 26, 1998. That report proposed the reinstatement of private members' bills. However, the work of the procedure committee on these matters dated back to the 35th Parliament when the committee agreed to examine the procedures relating to private members' business.

We are now faced with a double standard whereby private members' bills can be reinstated in a new session under the standing orders but the House must debate a routine procedural motion so that government bills can be reinstated. It does not seem to make sense. This is clearly an anomaly. We ought to be able to correct this.

It is clear that members should support this motion. In fact, it only makes sense that all members should support this motion putting government bills on the same level as private members' bills. I would also urge that the House consider permanent amendments to its standing orders that would allow government bills to be reinstated, just as the standing orders allow private members' bills to be reinstated.

I want to go further for a moment and talk about the precedence for this procedure and this kind of motion. The fact is the House gave unanimous consent to a motion to reinstate a bill in a new session at the same stage it had reached at prorogation in 1970, in 1972, in 1974 and in 1986. The House adopted amendments to the standing orders to carry over legislation to the next session in 1977 and in 1982. The House adopted reinstatement motions on division, not with great debate or a day talking about everything under the sun except for the motion, but on division in 1991, in 1996 and in 1999.

• (1955)

In fact the 1996 motion included a provision to reinstate private members' bills. In 1997 a private member's bill was reinstated after dissolution. Standing Order 86.1 allows private members' bills to be reinstated, as I have discussed, and this standing order was adopted not that long ago, in 1999. It seems to me that members should consider their views on this and support the motion. There have been so many cases in the past.

*Government Orders*

In fact the U.K. House of Commons has a very similar practice. It is considering adding this procedure which it has been in the habit of doing, as this House has been doing for many years, but the U.K. House of Commons is looking at putting a new procedure in its rules to make it routine prior to the start of a new session. That would make sense to me. I hope members opposite will agree that we should be discussing this in the procedure and House affairs committee. We should discuss a routine procedure that at the beginning of each Parliament, after dissolution or after prorogation, these motions including government bills would come back in automatically.

Under this procedure all we are looking at is making it possible for bills that have already been considered and bills on which there has already been a great deal of debate to come back to the House at the stage they previously were at. I do not think members of the Canadian public want to see us spending hours and hours and thousands and thousands of their dollars going over and over the same arguments, the same debates, the same bills. They want to see things progress.

Canadians want to see the species at risk bill progress. They want to see the Criminal Code amendments on cruelty to animals and firearms progress. They want to see the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act get back to committee and get moving. They want to see the Copyright Act back in the Senate and moving toward completion. They want to see the pest control products act passed. That bill is of concern to many people in my riding but one in particular who has been leading the charge. Maureen Reynolds has been very concerned about environmental illness and pesticides. I am sure she would be interested in seeing that bill move ahead and would not want us to stall and debate the same thing over and over.

Of course there is the physical activity and sport bill that my hon. colleague the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport is so interested in. He did an outstanding job of preparing it and bringing it to the House. I want to congratulate him for that. We have to get that bill moving. People want to see the government putting the bill into effect, into action and getting Canadians into action, being more physically fit and active.

They do not want us to go on and on talking more about the assisted human reproduction act which should go back to committee. The specific claims act, the first nations governance act, these are all bills that should be put back on the table. Let us get back to work. Let us get them through. Let us stop spinning our wheels. Let us get moving.

I ask my hon. colleagues from all parties to support this important motion.

• (2000)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 8 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motions now before the House.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (2025)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 4*)

## YEAS

## Members

Ablonczy  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Bailey  
Benoit  
Breitkreuz  
Brisson  
Cardin  
Casson  
Crête  
Doyle  
Epp  
Fournier  
Hanger  
Hearn  
Hilstrom  
Jaffer  
Keddy (South Shore)  
Lanctôt  
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)  
Marceau  
Mayfield  
Obhrai  
Penson  
Rajotte  
Ritz  
Roy  
Schmidt  
Solberg  
Spencer  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Tremblay  
Williams— 63

Anders  
Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)  
Borotsik  
Brien  
Burton  
Casey  
Clark  
Desrochers  
Duceppe  
Fitzpatrick  
Grey  
Harper  
Hill (Macleod)  
Hinton  
Johnston  
Lalonde  
Lebel  
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)  
Mark  
Merrifield  
Pallister  
Picard (Drummond)  
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)  
Rocheleau  
Sauvageau  
Skelton  
Sorenson  
Stinson  
Toews  
White (Langley—Abbotsford)

## NAYS

## Members

Adams  
Anderson (Victoria)  
Assadourian  
Barnes (London West)  
Bellemare  
Bertrand  
Binet  
Blondin-Andrew  
Bonwick  
Bradshaw  
Bryden  
Caccia  
Caplan  
Carroll

Alcock  
Assad  
Augustine  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bevilacqua  
Blaikie  
Bonin  
Boudria  
Brown  
Byrne  
Calder  
Carignan  
Castonguay

*Government Orders*

Catterall  
Chamberlain  
Coderre  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cuzner  
DeVillers  
Drouin  
Easter  
Eyking  
Folco  
Galloway  
Godin  
Grose  
Harb  
Hubbard  
Jennings  
Karetak-Lindell  
Keyes  
Knutson  
LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Mahoney  
Maloney  
Marcil  
Matthews  
McCormick  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Normand  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Paradis  
Peric  
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
Pratt  
Proctor  
Provenzano  
Reed (Halton)  
Robillard  
Savoy  
Scott  
Shepherd  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Stewart  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tonks  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Wappel  
Whelan  
Wood— 137

Cauchon  
Charbonneau  
Collenette  
Comuzzi  
Cullen  
Desjarlais  
Dromisky  
Duplain  
Eggleton  
Farrah  
Fontana  
Godfrey  
Goodale  
Guarnieri  
Harvey  
Jackson  
Jordan  
Karygiannis  
Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)  
Lastewka  
Lee  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCallum  
McDonough  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault  
Nystrom  
O'Reilly  
Patry  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Price  
Proulx  
Redman  
Regan  
Saada  
Scherrer  
Sgro  
Simard  
St-Julien  
Steckle  
Stoffer  
Telegdi  
Thibault (Saint-Lambert)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Wasylycia-Leis  
Wilfert

**PAIRED**

## Members

Allard  
Bagnell  
Bigras  
Cannis  
Dalphond-Guiral  
Dion  
Dubé  
Fry  
Gagnon (Champlain)  
Graham  
Guimond  
Laframboise  
Loubier  
Ménard  
Pagtakhan  
Parrish  
Pettigrew  
Speller

Asselin  
Bergeron  
Bourgeois  
Coppes  
Dhaliwal  
Discepola  
Efford  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gauthier  
Guay  
Harvard  
Laliberte  
McTeague  
Neville  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
St-Hilaire— 36

**Ms. Marlene Catterall:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you were to seek it you would find consent in the House that those who voted on the immediately previous motion be recorded as voting on the motion now before the House with Liberal members voting yes.

• (2030)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there consent to proceed in this fashion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Dale Johnston:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Canadian Alliance will vote no to this motion.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Brien:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois vote no on this motion.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the NDP vote no on this motion.

[*English*]

**Mr. Rick Borotsik:** Mr. Speaker, the members of the Progressive Conservative Party will vote no to this motion. I would also ask that the member for Fundy—Royal be included in this vote as no with his party.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ghislain Lebel:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote no on the motion, like the Bloc Québécois.

**Mr. Jean-Guy Carignan:** Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote in favour of this motion.

[*English*]

(The House divided on Motion 2A, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 5*)

**YEAS**

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Anderson (Victoria)	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Barnes (London West)	Bélanger
Bellemare	Bennett
Bertrand	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonin	Bonwick
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brown	Bryden
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Caplan
Carignan	Carroll
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Chamberlain
Charbonneau	Coderre
Collenette	Comuzzi
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Easter
Eggleton	Eyking
Farrah	Folco
Fontana	Galloway
Godfrey	Goodale
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harvey
Hubbard	Jackson
Jennings	Jordan
Karetak-Lindell	Karygiannis
Keyes	Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast)
Knutson	Lastewka

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 2A under Government Business.

*S. O. 52*

LeBlanc  
Longfield  
Mahoney  
Maloney  
Marcil  
Matthews  
McCormick  
McKay (Scarborough East)  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)  
Paradis  
Peric  
Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)  
Pratt  
Proulx  
Redman  
Regan  
Saada  
Scherrer  
Sgro  
Simard  
St-Julien  
Steckle  
Szabo  
Thibault (West Nova)  
Tonks  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Wappel  
Wilfert

Lee  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCallum  
McGuire  
McLellan  
Mitchell  
Myers  
Normand  
O'Reilly  
Patry  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Price  
Provenzano  
Reed (Halton)  
Robillard  
Savoy  
Scott  
Shepherd  
St-Jacques  
St. Denis  
Stewart  
Telegdi  
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Volpe  
Whelan  
Wood— 128

Dion  
Dubé  
Fry  
Gagnon (Champlain)  
Graham  
Guimond  
Laframboise  
Loubier  
Ménard  
Pagtakhan  
Parrish  
Pettigrew  
Speller

Discepolo  
Efford  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gauthier  
Guay  
Harvard  
Laliberte  
McTeague  
Neville  
Paquette  
Perron  
Plamondon  
St-Hilaire— 36

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The next question is on Motion No. 2B under Government Business.

**Ms. Marlene Catterall:** Mr. Speaker, I believe if you were to seek it that you would find consent in the House that this motion be deemed adopted on division.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**An hon. member:** On division.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

(Motion, 2B agreed to)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The House will now proceed to the consideration of a motion to adjourn the House for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely the farmers' situation in western Canada.

---

## EMERGENCY DEBATE

[English]

### AGRICULTURE

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC)** moved:

That the House do now adjourn.

He said: Mr. Speaker, my party and I sought this emergency debate to raise the critical situation facing Canadian agriculture today.

I will be sharing my time in the debate with my colleague from Brandon—Souris.

In August, Statistics Canada indicated that wheat production in western Canada will be at its lowest level in 28 years. That is due in large part to the severe drought on the Prairies yet again this year. On many farms an infestation of grasshoppers further damaged what meagre crops did grow. My colleague from Brandon—Souris and I walked the fields in Allan, Saskatchewan in late July where the grasshoppers literally outnumbered the green peas and where weeks of relentless heat had shrivelled crops too low to combine.

Canadians across the country watched nightly news stories about cattle producers having to sell off their herds, often having to sell off their breeding stock because they did not have enough grass to graze the herds or forage to feed them.

## NAYS

### Members

Ablonczy  
Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)  
Bailey  
Benoit  
Borotsik  
Brien  
Burton  
Casey  
Clark  
Crête  
Desrochers  
Duceppe  
Fitzpatrick  
Godin  
Hanger  
Heam  
Hill (Macleod)  
Hinton  
Johnston  
Lalonde  
Lebel  
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)  
Mark  
McDonough  
Nystrom  
Pallister  
Picard (Drummond)  
Rajotte  
Ritz  
Roy  
Schmidt  
Solberg  
Spencer  
Stoffer  
Toews  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Williams— 73

Anders  
Bachand (Saint-Jean)  
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)  
Blaikie  
Breitkreuz  
Brisson  
Cardin  
Casson  
Comartin  
Desjarlais  
Doyle  
Epp  
Fournier  
Grey  
Harper  
Herron  
Hilstrom  
Jaffer  
Keddy (South Shore)  
Lanctôt  
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)  
Marceau  
Mayfield  
Merrifield  
Obhrai  
Penson  
Proctor  
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)  
Rocheleau  
Sauvageau  
Skelton  
Sorenson  
Stinson  
Thompson (Wild Rose)  
Tremblay  
White (Langley—Abbotsford)

## PAIRED

### Members

Allard  
Bagnell  
Bigras  
Cannis  
Dalphond-Guiral

Asselin  
Bergeron  
Bourgeois  
Coppes  
Dhaliwal



In the best tradition of Canada, farmers in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada organized the Hay West campaign and shipped hay out west. I commend those Canadians for their initiative and their generosity. I have to note that the government's participation in this effort was minimal and it was slow.

New figures released only last Friday by Statistics Canada show that crop conditions have continued to deteriorate in western Canada. The report states:

After struggling with one of the worst droughts on record, western farmers encountered heavy rains and freezing temperatures in August and September... Some seeds waiting to be harvested sprouted, rendering them useless for any purpose other than for animal feed. Other cereal grains were stained or bleached by the rain, making them less suitable for milling and decreasing their value. During this type of weather, plants do not dry, delaying harvest and increasing the probability of frost damage.

Canadians in cities might miss just how tragic this is and what it means. Total wheat production is expected to fall from 20.6 million tonnes to 15.5 million tonnes, that is down 25%; barley production will drop by 29% this year; canola by 33%; field peas by 30%; and rye by 50%. While production is down, prices are up. Unfortunately, many Canadian farmers do not have the quality to fetch the high prices that the falling global supply for wheat is demanding.

The federal government announced new bridge funding of \$600 million last spring. Glacier funding would be a better term than bridge funding. By last week, months after the announcement, that money was not reaching the farmers who need it. Indeed, by sheer coincidence, the very date we applied for this emergency debate the government began to send out the cheques. Some producers who do not have NISA accounts will not be able to access the bridge funding in any event.

Since 1996, Canada has lost 30,000 farmers. The census on agriculture has confirmed that more and more producers are packing up their dreams and simply moving off the land. Farm debt has grown to \$15 billion between 1993 and 2000. Over 4,000 Canadian farms have declared bankruptcy.

Support levels remain very high in competing countries. Over past years that drove prices down. Canadian farmers fight the weather, they fight pestilence and they fight high subsidies in other countries.

The federal government can do much better than it has. I am proud to have been part of a government that ensured agriculture was a priority department. In 1988, when there was a severe drought, we responded with over \$900 million for livestock and grain producers. That funding would be over \$1.2 billion in today's dollars. Between 1988 and 1993, \$800 million was paid to Canadian farmers through the Canadian drought assistance program. In the 1991-92 fiscal year alone, federal assistance to agriculture for income support was over \$3.4 billion. That is one year and federal support only. Compare that to the new agricultural framework policy that the Prime Minister announced last June, \$5.2 billion over six years, including the minister's glacier funds.

● (2035)

Farmers need a reasonable and reliable basis on which to plan. The government needs a quick and simple program to help respond to the disasters and the emergencies that are becoming more commonplace.

*S. O. 52*

We need a long term disaster relief program so farmers will know there is money in the bank when they need it. The hon. member for Brandon—Souris proposes an ongoing fund of \$600 million for disaster relief alone.

There has been enough wasted money by the Liberal government to fund it: \$500 million in cancellation charges of the EH-101 helicopters; \$101 million in new, unnecessary Challenger jets; and \$400 million in additional costs to split the contract to replace the Sea King helicopters. That is a billion dollars alone that could go to agriculture.

[*Translation*]

An independent form of disaster relief would allow farmers to recover lost inputs, such as the price of feed, when harvests are poor due to a natural disaster or disasters such as drought, which are not normally covered by crop insurance.

In addition to dealing with the initial effects of a crisis, disaster relief would also help in maintaining fields after a disaster, in order to renew their production capacity. Money is often needed to establish infrastructure that could help in preventing another disaster, or to mitigate its effects.

We also need to review how such an assistance program would be funded. Currently, federal program costs are shared equally with the provinces at a 60:40 ratio.

● (2040)

[*English*]

When a disaster hits, like the drought did this summer, often the provinces most affected are the ones whose chief revenue comes from agriculture. Is it fair to expect a province that is already being hit hard with declining revenues because of the disaster to pony up the 40% required for the disaster relief program? Should we not be looking at some type of an equalization program for agricultural disasters?

Farmers already do that. The Hay West program, sending from one part of the country where production was good to another part of the country where production was poor, happened whether the government was going to be involved or not. Can we not develop a disaster relief fund that does not further punish the provinces that are already hurting?

We should support agriculture in this country because a viable agriculture industry is one of Canada's great national assets. Maintaining a viable agriculture industry is about neither special interests nor nostalgia. It is about guaranteeing Canada's secure supplies of safe food and harnessing the innovation of an industry that brings vitality to rural Canada. It is very much about the future of the country.

**Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC):** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the right hon. member for Calgary Centre for applying for this very important emergency debate in the House.

*S. O. 52*

I have had the opportunity to travel across western Canada with the right hon. member for Calgary Centre. I find that he understands the issues and the seriousness of the issues. He understands how it affects people in communities far afield from Ottawa and urban centres. I do appreciate his assistance in bringing this issue forward to make sure there is a profile and that people do understand the seriousness of the issue.

I would also like to thank the Speaker who ruled in favour of having this emergency debate. In his jurisdiction he believes very strongly that there is a need to make sure that we put forward some positive ideas to the Minister of Agriculture who I appreciate is listening to the debate on these issues and opinions this evening.

I have been a member of the House since 1997 and nine emergency debates have been allowed. I can assure hon. members that every one of those debates were taken on the seriousness of the issue. Since 1997 six of the nine emergency debates in the House dealt with agriculture. Is that because of bad luck? Is it because of mismanagement? Or is it because there is no direction with this particular department?

The emergency debates were not about health. They were not about justice. They were not about immigration. There were about agriculture. One has to ask the question: Why is it that department particularly has not been able to deal with the issues? These issues continually come forward and yet nothing has been put into place to deal with it.

This debate is going on today for two reasons. First, it is to raise the profile and recognize that there is a serious issue in agriculture, particularly in those areas that have been affected by this severe drought, which some of my constituents have said, that has never been seen before in the history of the country. We succeeded in raising that profile.

Unfortunately, members who live outside my constituency or constituencies in western Canada, particularly in urban areas, believe that the problem has been fixed. The minister and the Prime Minister stood up and said that \$5.2 billion would be going to agriculture. People came to me and asked me what the problem was. They said that the farmers received \$5.2 billion in the APF fund and that should be enough to satisfy them.

What they did not tell us was that they played with numbers. It is a five year program. It is a program that has only \$600 million that will be applied toward the drought assistance that is necessary in western Canada. Alberta alone put in \$325 million for one province because that was needed in that particular area with drought assistance. That \$600 million sounds like a lot of money but across the country it does not work.

Hay West did a wonderful job of bringing forward the profile of what was required in western Canada. The problem is that when people saw that on television they said that must fix the problem. An hon. member was very instrumental and involved in the Hay West program in Alberta. The fact of the matter is that is less than 1% of the problem is being repaired by Hay West. We thank them very much but where was the government with some sort of disaster assistance, with feed requirements and feed subsidies, so those

people could feed their cattle and in fact look forward to maintaining their herds this year and perhaps into next year?

The major reason for this debate is so we can profile this and tell Canadians that the problem have not been fixed. The \$600 million is not even a start to fixing the problem.

The second thing was NISA. We heard the minister say that he would put \$600 million in the NISA accounts of producers and that would be the save all and be all. NISA will probably end up at about \$6,500 to \$8,000 per user, which is peanuts in the big scheme of things, particularly when Alberta put \$325 million itself into one particular jurisdiction.

Let me tell hon. members what the stakeholders think about NISA accounts.

"There continue to be serious accessibility problems," committee co-chair Bob Friesen said Sept. 28. "The government needs to respond to this".

● (2045)

On September 28 the minister announced that he was still going ahead with an ill advised distribution of money into NISA accounts. I have a letter from a constituent in my area who says that because he had not shown a profit or had any income over the last three years he could not get a NISA account. If people cannot get a NISA account they cannot have part of the \$600 million that the minister is so generously putting into the farm account. What we would like to do today other than bring profile to the issue is convince the government that there has to be a change in attitude.

My leader talked about a disaster relief program. There has been a disaster in agriculture every year for the last five years. Every year there has been an ad hoc program from the government that resolves nothing.

I would like to share something with the House which comes from a member of the minister's own staff. I hate to say it but I was a bit of a prophet back on April 30. I asked the staff member if the government was looking at the possibility of a mitigating program for the potential drought that could happen in western Canada. I told the staff member that there may not be a drought, but asked if we should not be proactive. I asked if there should not be a plan in case there was a drought. The answer was that crop insurance would look after everything.

I then asked the same staff member if he had approached the government to ask for more money in case there was a drought. His answer was no, there was enough in programs right now to satisfy the problems that would be created by a drought.

This year there will be in excess of \$3 billion taken out of crop insurance. In Saskatchewan alone there has been an uptake of claims of \$1 billion. Saskatchewan has, through reserves and through premiums, about \$500 million. There will be a shortfall in Saskatchewan alone of \$500 million this year in crop insurance. How is crop insurance going to cover off a \$500 million shortfall? The last time there was a shortfall in the Saskatchewan crop insurance it took 13 years to pay it back. It was a loan from both the provincial and federal governments. There is a \$500 million shortfall and it is not over yet, and there could well be more claims. In western Canada \$3 billion will come out of crop insurance this year. Although there is no money in crop insurance this staff member says it can take care of everything.

The government has to think out of the box. We have had a serious problem in agriculture and it has not been resolved by the government or the ministry. The government needs to get a natural disaster program and make it available to the people who really need it on an annual basis. That is what we are talking about. Until that happens the government will continue with an ad hoc program that will not resolve any of the issues.

We need to have an affordable safety net program available to the provinces as was alluded to by my leader. Provinces, particularly Saskatchewan and Manitoba, cannot afford to put dollars into a program when they are not generating revenue from their agricultural economy. There has to be some thinking outside the box. There has to be some sort of an equalization program with provinces that cannot do that. Alberta gave \$325 million because it can, and good for it. It recognizes the need to support its agriculture industry. Ontario did the same thing recently. It came up with \$73 million to put into the hands of farmers because it can do it. Should we, as a government, not allow other provinces to support their agriculture industry even though they cannot financially support them right now? That is a responsibility of the government and the ministry.

I have to get a comment in from my good friend from St. John's West. There are issues not just in western Canada but issues across this country. The environment is a major one in my colleague's constituency as well as mine. There are also some issues with land costs, and I know we can deal with those. The real issue is to get the minister and his ministry on side so they can support agriculture like it has to be supported or we will not have it in this country in the very near future.

● (2050)

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I welcome the opportunity to make some comments tonight. I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Erie—Lincoln.

I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the situation in agriculture today. The government has and will continue to build on that support for our industry. There is no question, when one is working in a risky and weather related industry such as agriculture, that there are weather stresses and other stresses from time to time.

The role of governments and the role of individual producers is to mitigate those and be as well prepared as we possibly can because we know that weather, in particular, changes. We had some large

areas in western Canada this year that had shortages of moisture. We have had areas and still have areas in Canada this year that have too much moisture. We have some areas in Canada this year that are not too bad as far as moisture and temperature is concerned. It is a big country.

The right hon. member and his colleague from Brandon—Souris were talking about playing with numbers. They need to use all the numbers that are there. As far as the announcement that I made about the \$600 million was part of the June announcement that the Prime Minister and I made. I said shortly after that money would flow to farmers in October. They did not believe me. They did not want it to happen because it would mean that I was telling them a fact. It started to flow on October 4 and about 25,000 cheques or deposits a day are going into accounts out there.

Farmers can access that money. It is based on their eligible net sales and, without question, by far the majority of farmers have eligible net sales. I would like every farmer to have a profit but those payments are based on eligible net sales and there is a formula that calculates that. That is on top of the crop insurance payments that will be going out this year across Canada.

There is over \$2 billion in crop insurance payments. It is on top of the \$500 million that is available, and will be, through the Canadian farm income program this year. We must realize that there is \$1 billion available in the net income stabilization accounts for farmers that has been triggered. There is \$3.4 billion in the accounts altogether, but about \$1 billion has been triggered.

There are other programs such as the interest free loans with up to \$700 million in total across the country this spring. These are interest free loans to help farmers put their crops in the ground. There is the advance payment for crops where farmers, in order to maintain and receive the best prices in marketing their products, are able to borrow and pay back on that as they sell their crops this year.

I could go on. There are a lot of approaches that we have taken. The right hon. member mentioned the amount of money that his government put forward to support farmers and I am glad. However I do not want to embarrass him again by reminding him of the annual deficits that that contributed to while his government was in power because I know he is embarrassed by that when he has to recognize it.

We must take the responsibility. When I look at the extra money we have received I want to put it into perspective. I want to tell the story as it really is. We now have, after the announcement in June, not \$600 million available for crop insurance and NISA payments. It is now going to be more than double what that was. That is what it was up until that announcement. Now it will be \$1.1 billion a year for those programs to work with the industry and the provinces.

We are in ongoing discussions, as the industry wanted us to be, on how we can make the crop insurance program work more effectively than in the past and how the NISA program can work more effectively as in the past as risk management. We are making investments, as we said in June of this year, in other areas to strengthen our industry as well.

*S. O. 52*

• (2055)

These are areas such as the \$54.5 million to address the concerns that the industry has for minor use pesticide registration; \$100 million for environmental farm plans; \$10 million into green cover programs; and an increase of \$150 million in marketing support. Approximately 48% of the average farm gate dollar in this country comes to our farmers because of exports and we need to continue to work with the industry, the provinces and farmers to promote their products.

There was \$80 million in national water projects and water expansion. There was \$55 million put into rural partnership programs and even more money than that put into community development. We have been working, and will continue to work, with the industry to strengthen it and help to mitigate the challenges that are out there.

I want to thank the volunteers who instigated the Hay West program. I get a little upset when people say that it was not meaningful. It was certainly meaningful to those who received hay. Everybody did not receive hay. The federal government rented 377 cars and paid for the fumigation of the hay. This was a project and a result that showed how Canada can and really does work. Individual hay producers in this case as well as individuals who wanted to help gave money from their own pockets. There were corporate donations as well to give some relief to producers in western Canada who were suffering from drought.

We announced the tax deferral earlier than we ever have before to assist producers who had to sell off some of their breeding stock so they did not have to pay taxes. They could defer taxes on some of the sale from their breeding stock until a year when it was more applicable or more suitable for them to do so and they would not be penalized for doing so.

As we have already heard, we have had droughts before. We have had excess rains before. That will probably happen again. It will be repeated; that is agriculture. That is mother nature; it comes in cycles, unfortunately. That is why we will continue to work with the provinces and the industry.

Mention has been made that some provinces have put their money forward and other provinces cannot. I would ask the members to look at the way in which some of the provinces say they will not come forward with the 40% to go with the \$600 million that the federal government has put forward in transition payment. By the way there will be another \$600 million next year along with all the rest that is there.

I would ask members to take a look at the contribution and the investment that some of those provinces have made, one of them in particular that I do not think I have to name. Look at how they have made their contributions and support to agriculture over the last number of years and with very few blips. There is a percentage of investment into agriculture which has been on a steady downward decline. They then expect everybody else to do it. We are doing it the same across the country. The provinces are at liberty to do that. Some provinces have made the decision that they do not wish to support agriculture to the extent they did in the past. They have

chosen to use the investments or the money in their budgets for things other than agriculture.

We will continue to work with the industry. I appreciate the opportunity to remind everybody that we are not done yet. We know that there is work to be done. We know that it takes the involvement of everybody. The determination is there to do so. The demonstration is clear and evident that we must continue.

As the hon. member was speaking a few minutes ago, I wrote down the different extra amounts of money, above and beyond what was budgeted since I became minister: \$900 million, \$240 million, \$100-plus million, \$500 million, \$500 million, \$500 million, \$600 million and \$600 million.

• (2100)

Then there was the program spending on top of that, which was announced this summer. It is a considerable sum of money. We will continue to work with the industry to place that in investment well to support the industry which it richly deserves.

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about what the government is doing to develop solid environmental programs which help support the sustainability of our natural resources and to mitigate the impact of unforeseen weather events such as drought. Governments cannot make it rain but they can help lessen the effects of drought. That is exactly what our government is doing.

Working together with all stakeholders, the Government of Canada is helping to enhance the agricultural sector's ability to better manage environmental resources, improve public access to secure supplies of quality water, adapt to climate change and support practices that will ensure good soil and water quality.

Good farming goes hand in hand with sound environmental practices. That is why environment is a key element of the agricultural policy framework. This new plan developed by the federal, provincial and territorial governments along with industry and other interested Canadians aims to secure the profitability and prosperity of the agriculture and agri-food sector for the 21st century.

On June 20 the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food committed \$5.2 billion toward the agricultural policy framework.

Of this investment, \$600 million in federal funding will be delivered this year through NISA. This money started flowing into producers' NISA accounts last Friday. The agricultural policy framework, which is now ratified by most of the provinces and territories, sets out integrated action around food safety and food quality, environment, science and innovation, and the renewal of the sector. It also calls for the development of a new generation of business risk management tools to help producers better manage risks like drought.

For the environment, the framework aims to increase the use of environmental farm plans and regional environmental management plans. It will also accelerate the management practices such as decreasing the number of bare soil days on farmland, increasing conservation tillage and improving management of riparian areas, grazing lands and water.

Simply put, it will result in action on the farm. By doing so the agricultural policy framework will help to increase the long term sustainability of our farm operations in both drought and non-drought years. This approach builds on the progress already being made through programs and practices that guard against drought and that incorporate weather conditions and other environmental considerations into farmers' day to day planning and risk management.

This summer our government announced a \$110 million initiative for Greencover to assist farmers in converting economically marginal farmland to alternate uses, while improving the management of forage, rangeland and critical habitat areas. An additional \$80 million will be allocated to support drought mitigation measures. This funding provides for water supply expansion programs to reduce the risk of future water shortages through the development of secure water resources. It also helps in the acceleration of a national land and water information service to provide analysis and interpretation of water data needed to make improved agricultural land and water management decisions.

Furthermore, in June the federal government announced \$54.5 million in funding for minor use pesticides. The program will allow for faster registration of more environmentally friendly minor use pesticides, and improved availability of reduced risk products to help protect our environment, particularly water.

The tender fruit producers and horticulturalists in my riding of Erie—Lincoln, indeed growers throughout Ontario, were most appreciative of this announcement. In fact the chair of AGCare, Mary Lou Garr, one of my constituents, commented, "These changes are extremely important to the environmental and competitive sustainability of Canadian farmers". They certainly are.

This followed the announcement in May of \$7.3 million for risk reduction activities and the introduction of safer products under the new Pest Control Products Act. This fall the government will be consulting key stakeholders on the program details.

The Government of Canada is also working toward more environmentally friendly farms through environmental farm plan programs. In June we announced \$100 million for farmers over a four year period to help increase implementation of environmental farm plans. This announcement is part of the bridge funding package to help accelerate the goals of the agricultural policy framework. All EFP programs will promote a holistic approach and will be implemented across Canada.

Since the dust bowl days of the 1930s, the work of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, or PFRA, has vastly improved farmers' ability to cope with the unexpected forces of nature. Through increased knowledge, advances in technology and better management practices, PFRA has been able to significantly lessen the effects of drought. On a practical level this means specifically

*S. O. 52*

designed dugouts that help farmers withstand two years of drought and irrigation systems of dams and reservoirs that supply water to farmers. When a drought occurs or reoccurs as it did this past summer, sound soil conservation practices become crucial.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is working with other stakeholders to develop and promote management practices such as conservation tillage, which keeps moisture in the ground and prevents soil from blowing away; chemical summerfallow, which lets the roots of the previous year's growth trap moisture; nutrient management plans; grassed waterways; grazing management of pastures; cross-slope cultivation; and contour cropping.

In addition to Greencover, the Government of Canada is also investing \$4 million over five years for the shelterbelt enhancement program. This initiative is designed to reduce greenhouse gases through increased shelterbelt plantings on agricultural lands across the prairies. The shelterbelt enhancement program will also help fulfill Canada's commitment to the Kyoto protocol to reduce greenhouse gases by increasing the organic carbon stored in soil and vegetation. It can also mitigate the effects of drought by reducing wind erosion and trapping snow for water conservation. These practices also reduce soil disturbance, increase crop yield and enhance the efficiency of fertilizers.

Since the agri-food industry has the potential to be affected on a large scale by climate change caused by greenhouse gases, we are looking at ways the industry can be part of the solution. Therefore the federal government is also encouraging and helping producers to reduce greenhouse gases like nitrous oxide and methane. They are admitted into the atmosphere from farming.

● (2105)

The Government of Canada, in cooperation with the provinces and territories, is taking active measures to provide Canadians with a healthier environment, higher quality of life and preservation of our natural resources.

In conclusion, the government will continue to support our farmers and the efforts they have made to reduce the impact of drought in our country. Through the efforts and good stewardship of farmers, through the programs we have established in the past and the promise of a new approach to our environmental responsibilities, we will successfully mitigate the effects of this drought.

● (2110)

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to address the House on this very serious issue facing Canada's farmers, the drought, the lack of adequate funding and the minimal response by the federal government to a sector in deep crisis.

*S. O. 52*

Agriculture and agrifood is one of the leading contributors to Canada's trade surplus and our gross domestic product. These industries contribute over \$26 billion in exports. Many of the commodities are returning a positive net income, but farm families are continuing to struggle with factors outside their control such as drought and foreign subsidies.

One would think with all the challenges facing Canadian farmers the Liberal government would be burning the midnight oil to come up with some solutions but this summer, other than giving contracts to their friends, it seems the Liberals spent the summer completely preoccupied with the power struggle over leadership within their party. There has been precious little sign of caring, compassion or concern for what farmers and ranchers have been facing over the past few months.

We in western Canada are all very appreciative that private citizens did show a lot of concern. The Hay West initiative from many parts of eastern Canada was a tremendous act of Canadians caring for other Canadians. It was genuinely appreciated in western Canada. Even if ultimately the amounts of hay are small in terms of the total problem, it really does go to show that farm families are a very special breed of Canadian.

This summer our members were travelling around the Prairies, the member for Selkirk—Interlake, our agriculture critic the member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, the member for Crowfoot, and I could speak of many others. They have been overwhelmed, I think is the way to put it, by the emotional stories of worry, anxiety, anger, sadness and despair that they have found on the Prairies.

I must be honest in saying that I did not quite find the same thing everywhere I went. I had a strange summer in that wherever I spoke this summer on the Prairies, it rained, including in the drought-stricken areas. I was actually caught in a torrential downpour.

The government is claiming that with the Kyoto accord it can control the weather. I can assure it that we do not necessarily have to have Kyoto to do that.

The land this summer has been drier than it was in the dust bowl of the 1930s. This has affected farmers in areas that were not affected by drought. For instance, my brother-in-law had a cattle herd in an area not affected by drought, but because of the extreme effect the drought had on feed prices, he ultimately had to reduce his herd just the same, so it has affected all farmers.

Some 75% of Alberta's farmland suffered from drought, no grain, no barley, no hay. Farmers have been forced to sell their future by sending the breeding stock to auction. Thousands face for the first time in 100 years a fall without any harvest at all. Of course, farmers have been fighting to save the farms that have been in the family for over three generations.

How would our party be different if we had the chance to be government and take care of this? In the short time I have, I will go over a number of measures we would take.

First, we would put in place a meaningful plan for disaster relief. It seems that each time a natural disaster strikes, the federal government is completely unprepared to respond. Step one is to ensure there is a disaster component to the agricultural safety net.

In June the federal government announced the \$600 million it was making available to farmers through the agriculture policy framework as bridge funding until the start of the safety nets in the APF slated for April 1. Not only did it take the government nearly two months to determine the method of distribution for this money, but it also completely ignored the advice of almost every farm group not to use NISA as the delivery vehicle.

Farmers who need to access the money may not be able to do so because they cannot trigger their accounts. The minister claims that NISA money began to flow to farmers on Friday. The truth of the matter is that the vast majority of farm families will not have access to money until later this year, if at all.

The Canadian Alliance would ensure that every farmer would get a fair share. Under our plan of action farmers would receive the payments through a direct cheque within a couple of months of the announcement.

Second, the crop insurance program, while a useful risk management tool for farmers, is not meeting the needs of producers in drought areas. It must be improved to allow for greater flexibility and coverage for producers who are facing total crop failure.

The crop insurance program is facing a \$2 billion payout this year. This is going to result in higher premiums, possibly as much as 50% higher. Farmers need this program but cannot afford these kinds of increased premiums.

● (2115)

Finally, the Canadian Alliance would extend the tax deferral program from one year to five years for farmers who are forced to sell their breeding stock because of the drought. As well, the one year tax deferral program should be extended to producers who are forced to sell two years of feeder calf production in a single year.

I will summarize those quickly: provide immediate aid by adding a disaster component to the agricultural safety net, improve crop insurance and extend the tax deferral program. Those are short term measures. We need to take an in the longer run view, though. In the longer term we need new approaches that the government simply has not been willing to pursue. We need to challenge our trading partners, we need to compensate producers fighting trade injury and we need to change harmful government practices. Those are the three C's, if I can call them that: challenge, compensate and change.

Many of the most important issues facing Canadian agriculture are related to international trade, especially trade with our closest partner, the United States. Canada should be leading the fight for free trade in agriculture. For example, we should have already begun the process of challenging aspects of the protectionist U.S. farm bill, such as the imposition of mandatory country of origin labelling. Instead, the federal government seems to take a wait and see approach.

We also need to be more innovative in resolving agricultural trade disputes between Canada and the U.S. While the NAFTA and the WTO lay out some binding dispute resolution processes to deal with trade disagreements, dispute resolution can take years to complete, costing farmers on both sides of the border. The lengthy processes raise the need for rapid procedures that would give an opinion to guide decision makers and industry. The Canadian Alliance has proposed a rapid response process that could resolve trade disputes between our two countries in 90 days.

A well functioning process would not only save the agricultural industry money, but it would foster a greater level of trade unity between Canada and the United States. All of this would improve the income of our struggling farmers. There is a clear and current example of why this is needed. The U.S. is threatening to impose a tariff on Canadian wheat. This is the last thing our farmers need right now. The issue could have been resolved months ago if there was a forum for resolving disputes. It is time for the government to try and act on this front.

In addition to providing leadership on the trade side, the Canadian Alliance believes we must compensate producers who are fighting against the current trade injury being caused by our trading partners. We must push forward with trade negotiations and move to an agricultural environment that is free from government interference. Our government needs to take a strong stand at the ongoing World Trade Organization talks. We need to work together with like-minded countries, like the Cairns Group, to give our farmers freer trade in agriculture. There have been questions regarding Canada's commitment to this group. It would be a mistake for Canada to walk away from the Cairns Group forum.

Our farm families are depending upon our trade negotiators and we cannot afford to have our bargaining position weakened. However, we realize there is no way we will convince the U.S. and the EU to reverse protectionist measures in the short term. Canadian farmers must have protection, direct protection, trade injury protection and responsibility of the federal government, from the damaging foreign policies today.

The third arm of our agriculture policy deals with the need to change existing government policies and legislation that are harmful to agriculture. Many of these changes would cost the federal government nothing to implement, but would go a long way to improving the competitiveness of Canadian agriculture.

Let me give several examples: the ongoing labour dispute with the grain handlers at the Port of Vancouver; modifying the triggers on farmers' NISA accounts; ending the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board; protection from those who want to use the new animal cruelty bill to stop livestock production; lack of guaranteed compensation in the species at risk bill; ending unreasonable fish habitat regulations in inland regions; reducing the added costs of user fees and taxes on farm families; addressing the issue of tuberculosis in the wild elk herd, which is a particular problem in Manitoba and does not bode well for the government's ability to deal with similar crises in the future; tackling the lack of commercial grain handling and transportation system in Canada; and extending the money available to the water assistance programs, as well as the regions it applies to under the PFRA.

*S. O. 52*

It has been indicated to me that my time is nearly up. Let me say that there are lots of things that could be done if we had an active government that was focused on these problems. It is time the government stops sitting on the sidelines wishing the problems facing agriculture away and coming up with fanciful solutions, like passing the Kyoto accord that will somehow cause there to be more rain. Canada's farm families need some real action now.

• (2120)

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, tonight we are debating on an emergency basis the drought situation in western Canada, Saskatchewan and Alberta in particular.

However, I would like to point out that it is not only in western Canada where we have a drought. In four out of the last six years there has been extremely dry conditions in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia. Southern Ontario also has a drought. Never has there been any special help for these farmers stricken by this drought. This year was a little more dramatic I suppose in the sense that there were gigantic acreages involved, due to the size of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

However the evidence is clear. The government has never taken drought as a serious issue that needs special measures. That was demonstrated again this year with the inaction of the Liberal government. The available \$600 million was for agriculture policy framework bridge funding for all farmers across the country. That has nothing to do with the drought. Farmers need that program money to offset the low prices they were receiving due to foreign subsidies which were depressing the prices because of over-production in those competing countries. That was exactly what we needed for the drought, but it did not come.

This is an all Canada thing, not just simply western Canada.

If we look at the Statistics Canada statistics for the next year, New Brunswick is expected to be down 19%, Quebec 31%, Ontario 31%, Manitoba 28% and Saskatchewan 73% in realized net income. This drop in realized net income will not be compensated in any way by the federal government, except for the limited agriculture policy framework money it is putting forward.

I distinctly remember the Prime Minister announcing that it would be \$5.2 billion over six years. If anybody can divide and come out with \$1.1 billion, which is what we are currently getting in a safety net program, then I believe that there will be more money under the agriculture policy framework. However there will be less money under the agriculture policy framework for safety nets than there is now.

*S. O. 52*

Let us talk about what is happening in western Canada in regard to agriculture. Right now warrants of committal are being prepared to send wheat and barley farmers to jail. Some say, "That cannot be true. Why would any government send a farmer to jail?"

The fact is, these farmers wanted to sell their own wheat and barley and when they did it, they were arrested and charged for failing to obtain an export permit from the Canadian Wheat Board. Farmers in the rest of the country can get an export permit for nothing. They just go in and ask for it. They get it and they export at no extra cost. Farmers in the designated region of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba have to sell that wheat to the Canadian Wheat Board, buy it back and then export it. That makes it uneconomical. As a result, western farmers cannot export outside the country. In fact they cannot even take a load of wheat, haul it from Manitoba into Ontario and sell it without the Wheat Board getting a piece of the action.

How do farms that have over \$1 million in assets, where the families are trying to make a living, do it when the right to market their own crops to their own best advantage is taken away from them? They are told by the Liberal government that they have to believe in the big socialist mentality that everybody will get an average income and there will be nobody who will do better because of their abilities to do a better job of marketing.

New Brunswick is the province with the greatest value added in this whole country of all the produce that it makes. Why do we not have that in western Canada? Partially because of the socialist attitude that wheat and barley cannot be marketed except through the Canadian Wheat Board.

There has been a really big push in Ontario, and a lot of credit to the people in Ontario. They have decided that the Ontario Wheat Marketing Board should not be a monopoly. Why? Because they want to have value added. They know that they cannot just ship bulk crops out and make money at it.

We see that happening across the country, but our western Canadian farmers still suffer under the yoke of a monopoly that tells them they cannot use their own initiative to market their wheat and barley.

Is there some big conspiracy to keep western farmers down? I would not say that. However, when we look at the facts, it is mighty sad. I mentioned the 14 farmers from Alberta. They have to pay their fines by November 1. They are the farmers for justice who are protesting an unjust system which says they cannot market the fruits of their own labour. They took the chance putting those seeds in the ground. They took the chance that the rains would or would not come. With what did they end up? A government that told them they could not market their own wheat and barley. Not only that, if they did not do it the way they were told, they would be put in jail.

• (2125)

On November 1 these 14 farmers will refuse to pay those fines. It will be a sad day when the Liberal Government of Canada puts them in jail for trying to market their own wheat and barley.

The government is failing to do these kinds of things. We look at many of the other issues about which my leader from Calgary spoke. We look at the inaction of the heritage minister in regard to the

tuberculosis problem in the Riding Mountain National Park. That has the potential to affect all livestock exports from Canada. It adds costs right now to the province of Manitoba, but it affects the credibility and status of all beef exported from Canada.

What has the heritage minister done? She talked about a scientific study. I found out this summer that they put collars around elk to see where they would go. Well, wherever they go, they will be spreading the TB. Why is the government not doing something about it?

The minister talked tonight about the minor use of pesticides. I had representatives of CropLife Canada in the other day. They said that they wanted me, my party and the other opposition parties to get into the House of Commons and tell government members that they were not making any progress on speeding up the authorization of the use of minor use pesticides. I told the association that they had appropriated money for that purpose. They said that the Liberals were spending the money, but nothing was happening quickly for the use of minor use pesticides.

Tonight we heard two great speeches by members from the Liberal side who talked about all the great things. As far as the government is concerned and as far as Canadians who are watching this on TV, those farmers must be rolling in cash. There are billions of dollars. We hear the government talk about all these programs. The fact of the matter is Statistics Canada has come out with statistics on the drop in incomes, particularly grain and oilseeds, and the negative margin incomes for farms.

Those negative incomes translate directly into farm families having trouble sending their children to school with the right books or buying clothes for them. We are talking about the direct impacts on farm families. We are not having some hypothetical argument in the House of Commons about too much money flowing around. That is the image the government would like to give.

This safety net money is insufficient for the hurt that is being caused, especially to the grain and oilseed farmers. The government plainly does not care.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Are you asking for a subsidy?

**Mr. Larry McCormick:** How much of a subsidy do you want?

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom:** Let us talk about how much money our competitors are receiving in the European Union and the United States. What is the matter with a commitment from the government of maybe a 75% or a 50% subsidy level. Why not come out with a position like that?

When I came to Parliament in 1998 as the chief agriculture critic, the Liberal government had cut farm support down to the grand total of \$650 million for all Canada, including running the agriculture department.

During the drought, only pressure from the people of Saskatchewan, particularly the Lloydminster area, and the Reform Party at that time drove the government and the minister to bring in the AIDA program which finally gave some extra help. Until that time it was farmers be damned, they can do it on their own.



S. O. 52

[Translation]

**Mr. Odina Desrochers (Lotbinière—L'Érable, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to begin, I would like to say that we in the Bloc Québécois feel a great deal for the situation that farmers in western Canada are experiencing.

Once again, agriculture in Canada is being threatened by the Liberal government's inertia. This is not hard to fathom, because since the current Prime Minister announced his retirement, there has not been any debate of substance on the economy, with the exception of the reply to the Speech from the Throne, an anemic document full of recycled promises and unfulfilled commitments from the Liberal Prime Minister.

I almost forgot. There was one little insignificant line about agriculture, which again demonstrates how important the sector is to the Liberals. To put it clearly, the Speech from the Throne on September 30 did not broach any of the problems affecting farmers. There was nothing on the protection of supply management. There was nothing on rural development. There was nothing on tax measures for agricultural cooperatives. There was nothing on GMOs. There was nothing on intergenerational transfers of farms and also nothing on natural disaster relief, such as what the people out west are currently experiencing. How unfortunate. All this explains why agriculture is currently in such rough shape.

In my brief career as a member of this House who was elected in June 1997, not one year has gone by when we have not had one or two emergency debates on agriculture. Are such debates brought about by the economic context? No, but rather by the irresponsibility of the Liberals, who have abdicated their responsibilities.

The federal Liberals—be it the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister for International Trade, the Minister of Finance or backbenchers—support the vision of the current Prime Minister, who treats agriculture as a second class industry in this country.

All the while this government is attempting to download part of the bill onto the provinces and acting behind dairy producers' backs, it is failing to take its responsibilities.

I would like to mention the drastic and dramatic cuts the Liberals have made to support to Canadian farmers. The current Minister of Agriculture has been played like a schoolboy by the Americans and the European Community, which obstinately refuse to lower their agricultural subsidies, as provided in the GATT agreements.

Let me give a few figures. Between 1993 and 1999, farm assistance programs were cut by \$1 billion.

In this very place, we repeatedly and vigorously denounced the cuts made by the Liberals. We accused them, and rightly so, of having reduced the deficit on the backs of the provinces, the workers, the unemployed, the sick and—I say so unequivocally today—Canadian and Quebec farmers.

Last spring, during the umpteenth consultation tour by the Standing Committee on Agriculture, at the specific request of the Minister of Agriculture, we were able to size up the crisis in the agricultural industry.

This minister keeps consulting, but forgets to come up with a real plan for the future of agriculture. Moreover, bereft of ideas, the Liberals went on their own partisan tour before this one, but nothing concrete came of it. This lack of leadership has forced thousands of farms into bankruptcy in western Canada. This region is now faced with one of the worst droughts in its history.

• (2130)

I will tell you, if I may, what I saw and heard during my tour of the Canadian west. I saw people whose family farming heritage dated back for generations. These men and women came to tell us in anguish that, if the federal government did not come to their aid, things were over for them.

The Liberals have turned a deaf ear. They are not listening to the complaints from farmers in the west as well as many in Quebec.

After this extensive tour, the committee published a voluminous report last June on the agricultural sector's expectations of the Liberal government. We all were given copies of this wonderful report, and still we wait. The crisis has worsened in the meantime.

The Liberals' response is always the same. There is no concrete follow-up, despite the report recommendations. Our audience realizes that the end result of all this traipsing across the country once a year or so—and I have seen a number of these tours since 1997—is to disturb people, consult them, ask their opinion, tell them changes will be coming. Then none do, and so the government over there has no shred of credibility left. No credibility with the people of the maritimes, Quebec, Ontario or western Canada.

The Prime Minister delayed the beginning of the session of the House of Commons.

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

**Mr. Odina Desrochers:** It upsets members opposite when they hear the truth. But it is our hope that the more they hear the truth, the better are the chances that they will wake up some day and help farmers in Quebec and across the country, from coast to coast.

The Prime Minister delayed the beginning of the session and this evening, the opposition must bring the Liberal government to order. Again, we support farmers from western Canada who are facing problems.

However, in Quebec we are increasingly concerned about the behaviour of the Minister for International Trade and of his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, who refuse to formally commit to maintaining the Quebec model of supply management. Officials from the Fédération des producteurs laitiers du Québec keep asking for a meeting, but the Minister for International Trade keeps postponing it, thus showing his incompetence and, more importantly, that he does not want to have anything to do with the agricultural sector. The Minister for International Trade does not know anything about agriculture.

*S. O. 52*

I would now like to discuss the issue of supply management. Supply management is based on three pillars. It is the result of many years of efforts in Quebec and in the Canadian provinces that adopted this system. The three pillars of the supply management system in Canada are: the control of imports; the price paid to producers; and the planning of production. There are significant benefits to this supply management system. In Quebec, the Fédération des producteurs laitiers and the UPA worked very hard to build the dairy industry. These benefits are that supply management has given producers the possibility of earning a fair income on the market, without direct assistance from governments. A constant supply to processors has given consumers continued access to a wide variety of reasonably priced, high quality products.

Agricultural producers are so worried that they travelled to the Saguenay region during the caucus meeting held by the Liberals, in August. If nothing else, they put some life into it, because all that we were hearing during that caucus had nothing to do with politics or the economy: it was all about the infighting within the party opposite, a situation which is currently paralyzing everything in the House of Commons.

• (2135)

In the coming months, nothing will get done in Parliament because all efforts will be directed towards the race for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada.

We know that Liberals like to play hide and seek. A cabinet document confirmed farmers' fears that they were being betrayed. According to the document on the mandate for WTO trade negotiations, Canada is allegedly prepared to give up supply management.

The secret document, recently made public by the Council of Canadians—a few days ago—raised the ire of Quebec's 10,000 dairy, poultry and egg producers. I will read an extract and you will understand why Quebec's farmers no longer trust the members opposite. I used to work in negotiations. Modern society likes us to try for a win-win situation, but when you are negotiating with the members opposite, it is clearly a win-lose situation, because the centralizing policies of the federal Liberals kill any regional or provincial initiatives and threaten all of agriculture, be it in Quebec or Canada. The document reads as follows:

The problem: negotiations involve compromise.

I am sure the members opposite do not know anything about that.

Sectors of the economy benefiting from protection which shelters them from foreign competition will object to any change in the status quo, particularly if it comes during an economic downturn.

We have already seen that this government has laid a lot of blame on the events of September 11. It is incredible how much they blame on September 11. Imagine what the members opposite are going to be like in negotiations. What will they come up with in order to justify their behaviour and their decisions?

Supply-managed producers of eggs, poultry and dairy products, the textile and clothing industry, and certain service sectors will probably object to any changes that would lead to increased foreign competition.

Here is the grand strategy of this secret committee. The people on the payroll of International Trade have said:

The government will recognize that multilateral trade negotiations require Canada to consent to certain measures to open up markets to its trade partners. The government is working in close collaboration with the sectors most likely to be affected in order to define the priorities and objectives for negotiations.

So far, so good. But then:

A more thorough examination is also required of how to manage the ongoing transition to a more globally integrated economy and the related costs of adaptation.

Things are starting to head downhill. It goes on:

At the same time, we will emphasize the overall gains the new negotiations will bring for Canada's economy, businesses and consumers.

Clearly put, this means that this government is prepared, when it has to negotiate multilateral agreements, to sacrifice supply management, and I am convinced it is also prepared to sacrifice other important elements of the Canadian and Quebec agricultural sector. And we are going to trust them? This is unacceptable.

My colleague for Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, the official agricultural critic for the Bloc Québécois, is currently holding a series of meetings. People in just about all areas of Quebec have reacted to the disclosure of this document and now it is being discussed again in agricultural circles.

• (2140)

Do you know what they tell me? They say “How is it that you are coming back with this question? We appeared four times before the agriculture committee in Ottawa. Liberal members paraded through our office and they still do not understand”.

So I answered, “Listen, based on the document that was just released, I do not think that they did understand”.

Currently in Quebec and in agriculture across Canada, people are mobilizing, especially back home in the riding of Lotbinière—L'Érable, which is the most rural riding in Quebec. I have also begun meeting with the Fédération des producteurs laitiers du Québec and the Union des producteurs agricoles in order to fully identify their needs and more importantly, establish Quebec's strategy with them in preparation for the next round of negotiations between the World Trade Organization and Quebec.

They want to meet with the Minister for International Trade, but he is not available, he is not there, he is absent. I do not have to explain what a complete mess we are in with softwood lumber, which is also hitting the Canadian provinces hard. Nor do I have to tell you about the famous U.S. Farm Bill, which will create phenomenal distortions on Canadian and American markets. There is not a peep out of them. They are silent. We are waiting.

Meanwhile, the agricultural crisis is growing worse in Canada and Quebec. The Bloc Québécois and all the stakeholders from the agricultural sector have already made their demands known to this government. We keep repeating them in the hope that some day it will understand. We will keep reminding the government. This is what opposition parties have done this evening, because what I have heard from the other side has not convinced me at all that they are sensitive to the problems that farmers are experiencing right now.

If this government has a hard time taking action, it should at least take the first step and start listening. Because the perception that members opposite have of the agricultural crisis is quite different from ours. Opposition members, including Bloc Québécois members, have solutions. We are prepared to act. Since we were re-elected in November 2000, we have regularly asked questions on this issue in the House.

Voters who elected opposition members can be proud, because these members are looking after their best interests. Unfortunately, the members opposite regularly provide evasive answers and keep repeating that their obsolete program might solve the crisis. This government has no initiative, as we saw in the Speech from the Throne. The Liberals only have old ideas that they keep recycling, and they think that Canadians and Quebecers will continue to believe them.

It is unacceptable to see how little this government cares about such an important issue as agriculture. Let me give an example. In some European countries, the Minister of Agriculture often also is responsible for international trade. This is also the case in Australia, New Zealand and Brazil. Here, agriculture is treated as a secondary issue, and we what that has led us to.

I hope that all the efforts being made on this side of the House will make the government more receptive, so that solutions can be found to help these people and put an end to the agricultural crisis that is hurting hundreds of thousands of people so much all across the country.

• (2145)

[English]

**Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating the Speaker for allowing this important debate to take place tonight. I especially want to pay tribute to the right hon. member for Calgary Centre for having proposed an emergency debate on agriculture.

I had the privilege of attending an Ontario Federation of Agriculture convention in Toronto in November 2000, just days before the last federal election. I had the privilege of sharing a platform with the member for Calgary Centre as well as the agriculture minister. I recall the right hon. member saying that in order to be successful any agriculture minister must have the support of the key members of cabinet, the support of the Prime Minister and the support of the finance minister.

This is not a comment on the agriculture minister but a comment on the inner sanctum of the cabinet: I think it has been very clear throughout the past number of years that this minister really does not have the full support of the main members of cabinet. That explains why Canadian farmers have in effect had it with the government. Despite the fact that farmers' backs are against the wall, foreign subsidies and the worst drought in memory having caused that, there was basically no mention in last Monday's throne speech of financial assistance for agriculture.

**An hon. member:** Didn't vote Liberal.

**Mr. Dick Proctor:** Right.

S. O. 52

The member for Brandon—Souris said that six of the last nine emergency debates since 1997 have been on agriculture. Do members know that an emergency debate that we did not have was one after the ice storm in 1997-98? Why? Because the government moved and moved quickly to assist Ontario and Quebec farmers. That is not lost on people in western Canada and Atlantic Canada who are going through an extremely difficult time.

In Saskatchewan, as has perhaps been pointed out but bears repeating, farmers are harvesting the smallest crop that they have harvested in more than three decades. In short, it has been a summer from hell: drought, a frost on August 2, and grasshoppers. If I may be permitted black humour in this debate, and there is plenty of it out there, a friend of mine, Bob Long, who farms in west-central Saskatchewan, said that he and his neighbours were really worried about an infestation of grasshoppers in June but the fears proved to be groundless because the grasshoppers went out to the fields and promptly starved to death.

In late summer we did have some rainfall in the drought areas. Some farmers are now cutting crops for hay, crops that obviously did not mature, while others have simply abandoned their fields completely. We have lost 30,000 farmers over the past 5 years, 6,000 in Saskatchewan alone, where agriculture is and always has been number one. Employment in Saskatchewan agriculture has fallen by 30% over the past three years alone. In short, people are leaving agriculture in droves because, regardless of their sacrifices, they simply cannot make a living from farming. It is a combination of isolation, poor pay, long hours and constant financial worries. No wonder that parents would not want to have their child inherit all that difficulty.

The problems, the reality, that Canadian farmers have are in part the massive United States and European subsidies that are driving international prices. Farmers are simply walking away. This year alone there is \$1.3 billion in trade injury, and farm income overall is off by 19%. The pain extends to rural community centres and the small towns and cities.

In a crisis like this, farmers who are self-reliant are looking to the federal government for help and unfortunately are looking in vain. As a result of the government inaction, Canadian farmers from eastern Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes initiated a Hay West campaign to assist their western counterparts. It was a great initiative in nation building, as has been pointed out by virtually all the previous speakers. The media climbed all over it. It was an example of distant neighbours helping out. The generosity was extremely well received in western Canada, but who jumped shamelessly on board the Hay West campaign? Of course it was the government. Its financial commitment was to pay for some of the fumigation, and about 377 cars were donated to match what the railways had done and donated to the Hay West campaign.

*S. O. 52*

● (2150)

However, as Senator Sparrow and others have said, the Hay West shipments from eastern Canada were never necessary and the cost was twice as much as that of what was readily available in southern Alberta and southern Saskatchewan. For all the ballyhoo that the Hay West campaign generated this summer, it amounted to less than 1% of the hay that is required to feed the livestock this winter. Whoever said it was like offering two pizzas to a city on the verge of starvation put it in the proper context, but it did serve the public relations purpose: a photo op of a government and a Prime Minister who really, really care. It had nothing to do with rolling up their sleeves and doing the right thing. Rather, it was to make the federal government look good in Ontario and elsewhere and to give the impression that the feed problem in western Canada had been solved. Hay West was a great initiative by some well-meaning and caring folks who gave hay, hard work and a lot of time and effort, and a cynical government tried to capitalize on that initiative.

In June the Prime Minister announced \$5.2 billion for agriculture, a sleight of hand. It is like the old carny trick of trying to guess which of the three peanut shells the peanut is actually under. Half of the money had already been announced while much of the new money was earmarked for items in the agriculture policy framework, things such as improving water supplies, on-farm environment plans and export markets, but really nothing to help solve the drought and the cost-price squeeze that farmers are in. Just \$1.2 billion of the \$5.2 billion was actually for compensation against enormous subsidies, spread over two years. In Saskatchewan, which has 47% of the arable land, it works out to about \$3 an acre.

That was the Prime Minister's big June announcement. The agriculture policy framework is a long-term plan for agriculture in Canada, but it is important to point out that without a short-term plan to find relief for farmers hurt by several consecutive years of low prices, high input costs and rising farm debt, a long-term plan will not be necessary at all. The government simply has to reassess the way it looks at agriculture. Its position is "if you can't make it on your own two feet, find another line of work". In fact, the minister of agriculture personifies that approach and wears it like a badge of honour.

That attitude, I believe, is a hangover from the 1993 to 1997 era when the government was cutting the deficit and the Reform Party opposed any kind of government support to agriculture. We have heard those members change their minds on that. We have heard it as recently as this evening. The fact remains that if we look back over the 130-odd years of Confederation, federal governments, regardless of their political stripe, have always supported agriculture in this country. Hon. members should think back to the free or almost free land of 100-odd years ago in western Canada, to the Crowsnest Pass freight rate agreement of 1897, or to a two-price system for wheat. Only in the last 10 years has the federal government adopted this approach of "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" and "my mind is made up so don't confuse me with facts".

To make matters worse, the government refuses to accept any responsibility in the trade injury area, which affects so many farmers. The minister of agriculture has said that the money announced in June does not relate to trade injury, but the bulk of our agricultural products is indeed traded on world markets. How can the

government promote an agricultural policy framework agreement and pretend that trade irritants and trade injury simply do not exist?

● (2155)

In the lead up to the agriculture policy framework endless consultations were held with stakeholders, as has been referred to previously. The promise is for a long-term plan for agriculture. The consultations seem to go on and on. Another round is planned and skepticism as well as frustration is growing. The fear is that this is another public relations smokescreen to create an illusion that there is genuine consultation while the government intends to go its own way on agricultural policy.

What is to be done? First, we must put money into sustainable agriculture. We need a food production system that allows Canadian farmers to earn a decent living and if we do not we will soon be buying our food from others. Incentives are required to ensure food production remains in the hands of farmers and not of agribusiness.

Our farmers are on the verge of becoming modern day serfs running businesses that will belong to the Cargill's, ConAgra's and the Archer Daniels Midland's of this world. We need policy and practices to protect the environment, to create economic stability and promote job creation and employment in rural Canada. We cannot allow an efficient, commercial farm sector to be permanently crippled or dismantled because of unfair international trade practices, or by a government that ignores that this country has helped farmers since the inception of the country. Make no mistake, we are on the verge of doing permanent damage to agriculture and the future of agriculture in the country.

In 1988 there was an election on free trade and while food exports have tripled since 1988 in the 14 years since, net farm income has dropped by 24% when adjusted for inflation. Farm debt has doubled. Our value added flour mills and malting plants that used to belong to Canadian companies have been taken over by large U.S. commercial operations.

Freight rates in western Canada have gone up by 500%. There are the Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan pools which have all gone the way of the dodo bird. They were once co-ops and now they have either merged or they are something else and simply are a shadow of their former selves.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food made great announcements about the government's commitment. The fact is that government spending is down more than \$1 billion a year unadjusted for inflation.

Farmers have doubled and redoubled their exports over those past 14 years. They have diversified and adopted new techniques and technologies. They have invested billions of dollars in their farm operations. In short, they have done everything that they were told to do to adapt to the new world of free trade and globalization. The result is the worst farm crisis in more than 70 years.

There are two things that have to happen. The free trade agreement erases the economic borders between nations and forces one billion farmers around the world into what has been described as a single hyperactive market where they are all frantically competing. That is on the one hand but simultaneously with that, free trade agreements are creating waves of agricultural business mergers which reduce or eliminate competition and drive prices ever higher. The end result of all that is that there is a balance of power between farmers and agribusiness that has become totally distorted and the distribution of profits is tilted dramatically toward corporations and away from farmers.

The government must provide adequate assistance to farmers. The Prime Minister said he does not want a legacy. That is fine. Let us give a decent legacy to our farmers. Let us put the resources into sustainable agriculture and food safety.

We in this party will use every means to ensure the government pursues those policies and Canadian farm families deserve no less.

• (2200)

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to say a few words on this important debate tonight which was started by the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, our leader, stating again that the opposition party, which is supposed to be the fifth party in the House, has been the one to drive the agricultural issue. We are all very proud to be part of it.

I have been listening to the speeches from the various members, all of them undoubtedly speaking from the heart. Many of them come from the areas affected by the drought and grasshopper problem in western Canada this year.

Before I go on I wish to indicate that I will be splitting my time with the member for Dauphin—Swan River.

Those of us who live in the areas that do not have a large farming component may find it hard to understand how difficult it is. However, there are many comparisons. On a previous occasion when I was debating an agricultural issue which was asked for and granted to our party I asked why someone who comes primarily from a fishing area would talk about agriculture. There are similarities.

The devastation that we see facing the west because of the farming crisis is similar to the one that we have been trying to educate the House about as it relates to Atlantic Canada, particularly to Newfoundland and Labrador, in relation to the fishery. We also have a large farming component in our province. In my own district we have several large dairy farms. We have vegetable farmers and

consequently they are affected by the elements of nature, but more affected by government policy.

I want to touch on a couple of issues that have not been raised directly tonight, but affect the people in the west who are facing this crisis the same way it affects our people in the east.

The first is in relation to land mass. One of the major problems facing our dairy farmers is the accessibility to land. Some time ago I wrote the minister with some suggestions and I must say his response, even though it was not directly to the questions raised, showed that he had some interest in the topic.

In Atlantic Canada and undoubtedly in the west, as has been mentioned by a number of the speakers, there are a number of people who want to get out of the farming business. In some cases it is because of frustration about the costs, the time and effort they have to put into it, the returns, and the lack of government assistance. Those of us who have been around for a while realize how important it is to have the food that is produced in areas of our country protected. If we do not protect our fish and agricultural areas, how will we feed the population of the country?

We know full well what it costs to buy products from outside the country, particularly if we find that they have problems in their own areas. Imagine if we had to buy the staples that we use everyday that are produced in our country what it would cost us to live. We should protect every single inch of agricultural land we have in this country. We should encourage the people who farm to continue to farm. When it reaches the stage that they no longer want to farm, then we should ensure that the land that is rich, developed and capable of yielding the new product be available to those who want to continue farming.

• (2205)

The example I was using was related to a number of young aggressive dairy farmers. One of the problems we find is that we do not have a lot of good, rich, agricultural land. Some farmers are travelling in excess of 100 miles from their home base to farm on small tracts of land that they acquired from people in different parts of the province. Yet right next to them, in many cases, we have farms not being used any more because the people who own them want to get out of the business. They are older, they are retiring, or for some other reason they do not want to continue farming.

Because the land is termed agricultural land it has a low value even though it is considered rich, prime real estate in an area or areas where the land could be used for development. The owners of the land could become wealthy people. However, because it is under a land freeze, as it should be, I have no argument with that, their hands are tied. We assist farmers to develop crown land, rocks, brush and whatever. It takes years to make that land profitable. Right next to them is this rich, fertile land ready for farming. Farmers cannot afford to buy the land at the price it should be worth. The government will not assist them. The land is not sold because it is the owner's only means of retirement, it is his or her lifetime investment. Thus we have a stalemate.

*S. O. 52*

If we combine what the new, young aggressive farmer can offer with what the federal and provincial governments offer in different forms of subsidy and zero in on providing land that is readily available everybody would win. However, we are told that regulations do not permit us to do this; regulations do not permit us to do that.

I say regulations should be developed that put together a policy that makes sense and is practical so that people who want to get out of farming can do so, and yet have something to show for their lifelong investment in the land.

A fisherman who buys a fishing licence and eventually decides to give up fishing can now sell it for a high price. A groundfish licence can command anywhere from \$100,000 up to \$300,000 in some areas, with the government buying up many of them to get native people and so on into the fishery. The government justifies it by saying that individuals have to have something for their efforts as they retire.

I have no argument with that, but what about the farmers who invest their lifelong sweat equity into a piece of land that is theirs and when they want to sell they are told that this is only agricultural property. They are told it is of low value. They must sell it to the government at what it will offer them, which is very little, a pittance, or the government will charge them taxes if they do not rent it to somebody else.

The policies and programs are there. If properly moulded together to be able to buy that property at a reasonable price from the person who wants to get out, and deliver it to the person who is ready and willing to use it, he or she can move forward without any difficulty whatsoever.

The one other thing is an environmental problem that we face. Many of our farms are being surrounded by new developments. As cities expand they encroach upon the farming areas. The farms are there first but the city or the housing developments move in. In the old days we realized a farm was a farm and we put up with the smell, or a fish plant was a fish plant and we put up with the smell because it provided employment in our area. Times have changed.

Once they move too close to a farm people complain about the environmental conditions, whether it be the smell or the affluent that runs off the farmland because of the manure and the nutrients which affect the water supplies. This is becoming an extremely dangerous situation for the farmers because now the environmentalists, and people generally, are encroaching upon them saying that the farm is polluting the water system. They are told to stop using manure in their fields or they must stop using a certain type of nutrient. Basically what they are told is that they must stop farming.

● (2210)

There are challenges for the government above and beyond just providing financial subsidies. Unless government takes our resource sectors, our farming and our fisheries, seriously and develops sensible and sound policies, we are in for a rough ride. It is no wonder people are moving away from these industries. As I said, if they do, it is to our loss.

I will now turn the floor over to my colleague from Dauphin—Swan River.

● (2215)

**Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my colleague from St. John's West for sharing his time with me.

I am honoured to take part in this evening's emergency debate on agriculture, as proposed by the right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

I represent a very large rural riding. In fact it is so large it is often compared to the country of Ireland. That is the size of Dauphin—Swan River. Agriculture is the lifeblood of Dauphin—Swan River. Unfortunately the government's approach to helping farmers is really choking the lifeblood out of the farmers.

Farmers are, to say the least, disappointed in the way the Liberal government has managed the agricultural portfolio.

I have been here for over five years. When it comes to farming and farming problems I ask the question: What has changed? Absolutely nothing has changed. The only change over the past five years has been that we have lost tens of thousands of farmers who could not afford to stay on the land and ensure that the country had a sound source of food.

The rural population base continues to shrink. Rural Canada depends on farmers. Canadians should know that all the little towns and villages in rural Canada depend on the farmer. Their survival depends on farm income. Farmers are the principal source of revenue for the economy of rural Canada. Basically at this time most of the rural regions are in the business of producing raw products, unlike that of central Canada which has the advantage of having the complete chain, both at the farm gate as well as the kitchen table. That is where all the jobs are created. Unfortunately, as I can certainly speak for the west, this is absent.

Farmers in Dauphin—Swan River are tired of listening to politicians, especially Liberal politicians. The Liberal government's promises are just that, promises. Farmers in Dauphin—Swan River have held protest rallies over the last five years, traffic slowdowns on Highway No. 1 and have even journeyed to Ottawa in protest, as well as to meet with government cabinet ministers and to lobby members of Parliament, but all of this was to no avail. In fact they have received very little benefit for all the work they have put into trying to get their issues on the table.

Why do we continue to debate farm emergencies in the House when the government has no solutions? It is quite obvious that if it had any solutions we would not be debating this matter.

I believe the member for Brandon—Souris said that this was the sixth time we have sat in the House in the evening to debate the emergency in agriculture. Are we going to keep doing this until there are no farmers left in this country?

The government continues to play politics with the farmers. The government proposals are all show and no substance. The big numbers that we hear from the agriculture minister, which come often, are just that, big numbers. Farmers want to know how these big numbers will help them stay in business. In fact, they are still waiting, the few who have successfully managed to stay in business despite all the challenges of not only debt but the weather.

Back in 1997-98 it was appalling that it took months and months of debate by the opposition before the government realized there was even a farm problem in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Again and again the government came out with big numbers. In fact I believe there was something like a \$1.5 billion support program and two years down the road it still had something like \$600 million or \$800 million in the kitty. That is the problem. These numbers are just numbers. The government has no solutions and no idea how it can help the farmer in need. It comes out with all these fancy programs that are still in existence but that do not work.

● (2220)

If the government really is concerned about our food industry why is it neglecting the issue of international trade subsidies? We have heard that debated this evening as well. The Europeans get something like 56¢ on the dollar. I guess the Americans with the new farm bill will probably get about the same. Meanwhile the poor Canadian farmer I believe gets 9¢ on the dollar. It is worse than the health care system.

Farmers want to be paid a fair price for their hard work. The neglect we see on the part of the Liberal government has forced farmers to eat up the equity in their business just to stay in business. I have had farmers call and tell me that at no time in history have they even called a member of Parliament for assistance. These are farmers who have diversified farms of 2,500 to 3,000 acres along with a 150 to 200 cow operation. Basically it is like robbing Peter to pay Paul. At the same time as they are paying their bills they are going nowhere. They are eating up their equity. These farmers are at the age where they should be thinking about retirement.

As we have heard farmers always say, hopefully next year will be better. Since I have been here, which has been over five years, farmers are still waiting for next year. The only good thing about this year for the farmers in my constituency is that they have had a decent crop. Unfortunately the prices have risen only because of the deplorable weather conditions of our neighbouring provinces like Saskatchewan and Alberta. However I am sure that will not last very long either.

NISA was also mentioned this evening. Many farmers do not even have a NISA account. Many farmers have told me that they will not use up their NISA account because they want to use that as a retirement fund. Unfortunately I do not think too many will have that option.

It is ironic that the minister created an advisory board many years ago. Through our travels back and forth we often encounter the board members coming to Ottawa. Surely the minister must be getting good advice. The board has representatives from national agricultural organizations. What has the advisory group been doing, or is the minister not listening to their good advice? So much for consultation on the part of the government.

*S. O. 52*

Farmers in Dauphin—Swan River are also concerned about bovine TB because it will have a huge impact, not only on the cattle of Manitoba but perhaps on our neighbours as well. The government has to take a more proactive approach and deal with the problem. It cannot let it sit there, much like the American subsidy program. If it continues to do that we may find that we may not have a cattle industry in western Canada or Manitoba.

Let me close by saying that this country needs a new agriculture policy and it certainly needs a new safety net program. One of the problems I see is that we need to separate safety net from disaster programming. Will the government do the right thing before our food producers in Canada disappear altogether?

● (2225)

**Hon. Andy Mitchell (Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise in debate on this emergency debate regarding agriculture. I should mention that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington who will be taking the second half of my time.

We have had an opportunity tonight to talk about the issues surrounding agriculture. I am a little bit concerned in hearing the debate as it has sort of unfolded over the last couple of hours. I suspect Canadians may be a little concerned over some of the things they have heard.

A large part of what the debate has been about is one member saying that another member did this, and another member saying, no, he did not do this. Another member says that so much has been spent and then another member says that nothing has been spent. The members then get off that particular type of debate and go into a philosophical debate.

Well, guess what? The Wheat Board is the worst thing that has ever happened to Canadian agriculture. This was said by the members over there. Then we have members over here and members over there saying that the Wheat Board is a necessary component of agriculture in western Canada. Then we have arguments about whether it should be in western Canada or in eastern Canada. And then we hear all the philosophical debates about money.

I hope the audience out there can hear the cackling that is going on in the House right now because that is the point I am trying to make. That is not the issue. That does not impress Canadians very much and I assure members that it does not impress producers at all.

The debate tonight has to be about some very basic and important things. Let me go over what I believe are some of the important issues.

First, let us be very clear, and I believe everybody in the House understands, that agricultural producers are critical to the future of this country. They are critical to the well-being of rural Canada. Rural Canada is critical to the well-being of this nation.

Rural Canada has 30% of our population. Twenty-five per cent of our gross domestic product, almost 25% of our employment and more than 40% of our trade surplus comes from rural Canada.

*S. O. 52*

This is a nation that was founded upon and continues to depend upon our natural resource based industries, including agriculture. Our producers, as I said, are critical to this nation.

We understand as a government and we understand as members that if we are going to have a successful Canada then both component parts of this nation, both rural and urban Canada, need to be strong. We understand that and that is a basic tenet as to why we need to have a strong agricultural industry in this country. That is a basic understanding that we need to have and not the cackling that goes on from over there.

The second thing we understand to be important and critical is that although producers are critical to this nation, we also need to understand that our producers are indeed facing a range of significant challenges. Whether that has to do with issues surrounding climate, and the drought is an example of that; globalization, and the issues over trade are an example of that; the changing demographics that are occurring in our agricultural and rural communities; and the trend of urbanization.

However, beyond understanding those trends, what is important and what I believe Canadians want us to understand and what they want to hear from the House is that these are more than just theoretical problems and more than just ideas about what is causing the problem. These are challenges faced by real people and real families with real consequences.

● (2230)

Those individuals demand that we understand the impact they have not just on their businesses, although we need to understand that, but the impact they have on them as individuals and the impact on the communities that support them as individuals.

Third, I know that the opposition debates this, but the reality is there is action being taken. It is subject to debate as to whether it is the type of action everybody would agree to, but there is action being taken. There is money that is being put toward agriculture. I do not really think that Canadians care when or how it was announced so I will just recap what the Minister of Agriculture and the Prime Minister announced in June in terms of what the agricultural budget is going to look like over the next five years.

The current base income budget, the money put toward income for the next five years, is \$3 billion. The APF income measures announced is an additional \$2.5 billion. The APF programs that go beyond simply the income measures is \$900 million. Short term risk measures over the next two years announced is \$1.2 billion. Other measures which the minister announced at that time is \$590 million. Some \$8.1 billion is being put toward agriculture because we understand the importance of that industry and we understand that producers are facing challenges today.

There is a fourth point that we understand very clearly which is, the work is not completed. This is a work in progress. I heard members on the other side talk about nothing being addressed in the Speech from the Throne, that there was no commitment, no understanding. The idea that this is a work in progress, that there are things being done for Canadian producers, that there need to be more things done for Canadian producers is clearly in the Speech from the Throne. I want to quote what it says in terms of agriculture:

The government will implement the recently announced agricultural policy framework and related measures to promote innovation in that key sector, which is vital to rural Canada and all Canadians.

In the Speech from the Throne there is a very clear commitment that we have begun a process with that announcement that was made in June with the dollars that we talked about that are being spent. There is no idea that we have completed the task and no pretending that all the problems are solved or that all the solutions have been developed. Rather, there is an understanding that we are making those investments that are critical to Canadian agriculture and that we are indeed developing and continue to develop responses to the issues that face Canadian producers.

I have heard the other side say on many occasions, in fact I was shocked when I heard an NDP member today actually say that we should not have a long term policy for agriculture. I could not believe that he said that. We heard for months and years from over there that we need a long term policy. Well, we have produced a long term policy, the agricultural policy framework.

Let me recap those four basic points. Agriculture is critical to this country. Producers do need help. Help is being provided but we do not intend to accept that the job is complete. There is work that continues to be done. I and my colleagues on this side, and I suspect colleagues on all sides, understand those basic tenets, understand those basic component parts of this debate.

Collectively, and this is what agriculture producers want to hear, we are committed to ensure that we continue to undertake measures that will address the issues that are facing our producers so that they continue to have a strong industry, that the rural communities that support them continue to be strong, and that this nation continues to benefit on what agricultural producers in this country have done since the founding of this nation.

● (2235)

**Mr. Larry McCormick (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this critical debate tonight.

As my hon. colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food previously mentioned, the government has implemented a number of immediate measures to support producers who are suffering from the effects of drought. As the minister also mentioned, the government is also committed to developing solutions to help secure the long term prosperity and profitability of Canada's farmers and the Canadian agrifood industry as a whole.

There is no question that farmers have to deal with any number of risks on a daily basis. Today we are talking about weather related risks. An equally critical long term challenge facing producers today comes from a changing marketplace, from consumers who are looking for even greater assurance about the safety and quality of their food and the environmental methods used to produce that food.



While a changing marketplace produces and presents a challenge, it also presents a tremendous opportunity because by working together we can lay the groundwork and provide the tools for this generation and future generations of farmers to compete in an increasingly tough world marketplace. It is for this very reason the government has committed, along with the provincial governments, to developing a national framework that is aimed at moving agriculture beyond crisis management to greater profitability and prosperity.

The agricultural policy framework is about meeting the challenges of the 21st century with a 21st century response. It is about securing success for the sector by giving the world's consumers what they want on the terms they want. It is about building on Canada's stellar reputation for agrifood excellence and making us the world leader in food safety and food quality, innovation and environmental responsibility.

As some members of the House will recall, the groundwork for the agricultural policy framework was laid in Whitehorse in June 2001. There federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture agreed on a comprehensive plan for integrated action around five key areas: business risk management, which is encouraging innovation and adaptation; food safety and food quality, the strengthening of on and off farm food systems; environment, allowing us to co-exist sustainably with the natural environment; innovation, ensuring our ability to succeed today and into the future; and renewal of the sector, contributing to farmers' success in the new century.

Over the past two years the hon. Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food has been working very hard to develop the framework and achieve consensus among the provinces, the territories, farmers, other stakeholders in the industry and all Canadians.

Under the framework, long term integrated risk management programming is being designed to provide a stable and predictable business planning environment. Farmers will have access to the tools they need to meet challenges in food safety and the environment. Science will extend beyond traditional productivity applications and deal with emerging challenges and opportunities in a bio economy. The renewal element will ensure farmers have skills and services to accept opportunities and make choices for future success.

When it comes to business risk management, we want to ensure that programming is focused on growth and improving income prospects. We want to move from reacting to income support levels to a forward thinking approach that improves a farmer's ability to manage risk over time, leading to greater predictability and profitability in the operation.

On food safety, we need a more comprehensive system that begins with on farm food safety and goes right through the entire production chain. For example, we are working toward a nation-wide assurance system that shows the world that food in Canada is safe and of the highest quality, which will respond to consumer demands.

On the environmental side, the agricultural policy framework will enhance Canada's reputation for environmental responsibility. Working with governments and using science based tools like environmental farm plans and best management practices, the

framework will establish national approaches, programs and objectives. It will also adopt better farming practices to ensure clean water and clean air, improve the quality of our soil and the living conditions of our wildlife.

● (2240)

The responsible use of science also plays an important part in this framework. Science has tremendous potential to help us deliver on farm food safety, strengthen environmental stewardship and create new products for the benefit of farmers and the public. Science can help Canadian farmers cope with drought and manage our water supply more effectively. Already, agriculture and agri-food scientists across Canada are working on various drought related projects and sharing their findings with farmers.

Finally, there is the renewal component to the policy framework. Knowledge is the key to making producers cooperative and competitive, and their businesses profitable in this rapidly changing and complex industry. Indeed there is a bright future for all producers in the country who already have or will develop the knowledge, tools, skills and the ability to adapt and to innovate.

In recognition of the work ahead of us and to achieve these goals, this past June the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food announced a historic investment in the Canadian agri-food industry: \$5.2 billion over the next six years to build the profitability and the prosperity of our sector for the 21st century. This federal investment includes \$3.4 billion to implement the agricultural policy framework, a task that will continue to involve governments, both federal and provincial, and the industry.

As the recent Speech from the Throne said, implementing the framework is a key priority for the government and the dollars are there to back up this commitment.

Over the past 18 months, governments have made tremendous progress toward achieving consensus on the path ahead. At this point the vast majority of provincial and territorial governments have signed an umbrella accord that sets out the common goals and the key policy directions of the framework. The agreement is open to signing by the remaining provinces. The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food is confident that they will all sign and we welcome that.

Much hard work is ahead of us however. The detailed specifics of programs and measures now have to be finalized. Over the coming months the government will ensure through ongoing partnership and consultation with the industry and negotiations between governments that the program specifics help us to meet the framework's objectives.

S. O. 52

In closing, in the context of this important debate on the drought, the agricultural policy framework will help Canadian farmers to better manage risks of all types to meet the demands of the marketplace and to be profitable and competitive on the world stage. By equipping our industry to be the number one producers of safe, innovative and environmentally responsible agricultural products, we are going to make Canada the first choice for buyers of food and agricultural products worldwide.

The agricultural policy framework will be a win-win solution for Canada. Canadian farmers will benefit, Canadian consumers will benefit and the Canadian economy will be stronger as a whole.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Yellowhead.

I would like to point out first of all that we did not wait until fall for the agriculture issue to become a priority for us. I would like to mention that on May 29 we applied for an emergency debate on this subject. I rose to raise an application for an emergency debate, made under Standing Order 52, concerning an important and urgent matter that we thought was affecting the agricultural industry. For the second consecutive year, most farmers in Saskatchewan, Alberta and many other areas of Canada were confronting the effects of another drought. The Department of Agriculture had been closely monitoring drought conditions but all indications were pointing to another hard summer for Prairie producers. Through the winter and spring the Prairies received very little precipitation. Spring runoff levels were non-existent in some areas. The South Saskatchewan River should have been teeming with water right then but because of low water levels it looked more like a creek.

Our livestock producers were also dreading this summer. They too rely on the land to feed their cattle. Local forage for cattle and other livestock was already very limited in May. Agriculture Canada was indicating that grass growth on pastures was going to be poor across the Prairies. If producers could not allow their cattle to graze on local pasture that meant they would be forced to either sell their cattle or buy feed at exorbitant prices. There was an added concern of an infestation of grasshoppers in Alberta, in Saskatchewan and in Manitoba as well. Agriculture Canada in fact listed a portion of my riding and three other areas in Alberta as having a very severe risk of a grasshopper outbreak.

Our point was that members needed to have the opportunity to draw to the attention of cabinet the serious conditions in western Canada and the importance of effective safety nets, unlike the current crop insurance program. If the minister had made these issues a priority as the Alliance did early on last spring, the government actually could have had an active role to play in the problems that we faced in western Canada this spring and summer.

I had a chance a while ago to watch the movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* in which in one scene the three main characters, Everett, Pete and Delmar, sit around a fire discussing what they would do with the loot they dig up. They ask Delmar what he would do with it and he says “Visit those foreclosin' son of a guns down at the Indianola Savings and Loan and slap that cash down on the barrelhead and buy back the family farm...you ain't no kind of man if you ain't got land”. And farmers ain't nothing without a farm. The

way the government is working, we are going to have a lot fewer people with land.

Farmers are under pressure. I will talk a little tonight about some of the pressures they are under. One of them is that farmers in this country are being intimidated and threatened by their own government.

In 1996 a group of farmers decided that they would take some wheat down to the U.S. border. Some of them took a load or two of wheat. A few of them actually took one bushel of grain across the border and donated it to a local 4-H club. When the courts began ruling in favour of the farmers, the government actually came to this place and changed the legislation so that those farmers would be guilty of an offence in Canada. They were arrested and charged. Since then, they have had at least four government departments, including the justice department, the CCRA, the RCMP and the Canadian Wheat Board, all working together to humiliate them. On November 1, these farmers will be jailed for from 23 to 125 days if they do not pay their fines. What kind of a system do we have here? We have farmers trapped, in six years of hell, trapped in a non-responsive judicial system, for taking a bushel of wheat across the border.

**Mr. Wayne Easter:** Did they break the law? They did. They tried to undermine the Wheat Board.

**Mr. David Anderson:** The response from the other side sickens me. They are agriculture-related people who are supposed to be defending farmers' interests and they stand over there and condemn western Canadian farmers for trying to make a living.

It appalls me that this continues to happen in the government. At least it is consistent. It has humiliated, threatened and harassed these people for six years and it sounds from the other side as if it will continue to do that, this at a time when sex offenders get \$100 fines, or as for domestic abusers, this summer I read of a case where the man was sent home to house arrest after abusing his spouse. They will lock up these farmers and that is ridiculous.

It reminds me of another situation in that movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, when the warden tells the guys he is going to hang them even though they have already been pardoned. What he says is “The law is a human institution. Perhaps you should start saying your prayers”. That is the situation these farmers find themselves in.

● (2245)

Farmers are under other pressures as well. In particular, as always, we find ourselves under the pressure of the environment. We live in a world and we work at a job where the environment is very important to us. I took great offence this spring at the suggestion of the Minister of the Environment that the reason there was a drought in western Canada was climate change. That is not the case. We have had droughts off and on over the years. One of the things we expect is that the government protect us from natural disasters. It is one of the few things that western Canadian farmers are asking for, other than the freedom to be able to make their own decisions and choices.

This summer was not the first drought we have seen, but the government response was typical of what we have seen in the past. That was virtually nothing. If it were not for some civic counsellors and some MPs in western Canada, and I think particularly of the hon. member for Crowfoot and my colleague from Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar who allowed their offices to be used to take names, and other people like my hon. friend from Lakeland, if it had not been for them and the generosity of the individuals in Ontario, probably nothing would have happened to help out those farmers, because the government certainly was not responsive to them. If anything, the government hindered rather than helped in this situation.

I was in Ontario talking with some people and they said that they ship hay all over North America and have done for years. They said that they had never heard of the fact that they have to fumigate hay before shipping it out of this area. They have shipped to Pennsylvania, Florida and western Canada, but when there was a situation where people actually wanted to help other people, the government was, of all things, more of a hindrance than a help to farmers.

The money coming out to farmers, I should mention, is not drought money. The government talks about the money coming out. It is not a drought package. It is not any special assistance money. That money was put in the program last spring. We have had that money announced ten different times out on the Prairies. Different ministers have come to announce the same money, but it never comes out. I am glad to hear that some of it may be beginning to come out now. Perhaps we will have it by Christmas. The drought was last spring; the help comes many months later.

Has the government's support fixed the farm income crisis? As we get away from the summer of drought, the issue is not the drought any more. It is the farm income that farmers will not have through this winter and next summer. The question is, what has the government done to fix that farm income problem? It has left the farmers with AIDA and CFIP, which have been a total disaster up to now. It has left them with NISA, which is an okay program for the most part except that in this situation some people who have put money into it cannot access that money, for a couple of reasons. One is that they do not trigger the withdrawal. More serious than that, we have had constituents coming in who have said the government gave them the impression over the last couple of years that they should get out of NISA, that it was important to get out of it because the government was closing it down. Now the government is using it as the program to distribute the money. The farmers ask which is it? It cannot be both.

The Canadian Alliance is offering solutions to the problems facing agriculture, real solutions for a real world with real weather, not recycled and rehashed proposals. We have suggested some things like the emergency disaster relief fund, which needs to be in place permanently, enhanced crop insurance to take care of the situations when we need crop insurance, and enhanced NISA to give people the opportunity to access that money in those accounts. Also, in our trade negotiations, why do we not show some guts? We have another challenge against our wheat system in western Canada and the government has had no response at all. We would like to decide how we market our grain, but the government has a responsibility to

*S. O. 52*

respond to those trade challenges. It has not done that. As well, the government needs to reduce regulations, not increase them.

Another thing the government needs to do is take a serious look at Kyoto. Up to now it has not done anything on that. It has not examined the problems that Kyoto is going to cause for agriculture. We think and we know that they will be extensive.

Farmers are in a situation like the bar owner who had a contest in his bar. He was a strong fellow and set up a prize of \$1,000 for anyone stronger than he was. The challenge went like this. He would squeeze all the juice out of a lemon and then turn it over to the challenger. If challengers could get another drop out of that lemon, they would win the money. One day a scrawny little guy walked in. He was wearing thick glasses and a polyester suit. He a squeaky voice and said "I'd like to take that bet". Of course the laughter erupted around the bar and the bartender said "Okay. That's fine". He grabbed the lemon, squeezed it and then handed the wrinkled rind to the little guy, who grabbed a hold of it and squeezed that lemon. Out came six more drops of lemon juice. Of course, the whole place cheered. The bartender was going to pay him his money and said to him "What is it that you do for a living?" The little guy replied "I work for the federal government".

• (2250)

There is an ancient but applicable saying that without vision the people perish. This has never been more true than it is right now in the farming community. If the minister and his department would begin to put farmers ahead of this lemon-squeezing bureaucracy, we could have an effective, aggressive, progressive farm policy.

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to discuss in an emergency debate the disaster that has happened on the Prairies and what is going on in agriculture across the country. I think we need to take a very serious look at that. That is why it is an emergency debate. We asked for this emergency debate last spring. If it had happened last spring, we would actually have been talking about something that would have made a lot more sense in being able to deal then with the crisis that came along, which we could see was going to happen, rather than at this time. It is not too late but it is very late for some. Some have had a devastating summer. Some are in the situation where they have lost everything already.

We have seen this drought on the Prairies. I farm and am very close to the area that is most stricken with the drought. Some of the crops that came up were so pitiful that they were not harvestable. Some of the crops that came up were not harvestable because they were victimized by not only a lack of water or moisture to grow but because of the grasshoppers that ate up everything that did grow.

Actually, now we have another problem. It has started to rain in the last month. Some of the crops in the marginal areas that did get a little bit of rain are now being damaged because of rain and frost. It is an absolute devastation, beyond I think what the people in the House, from what I have heard here, understand. When one talks to some of these farmers, one gets a better picture of what really is happening. We need to do that. We need to understand that so we can help them most effectively.

*S. O. 52*

People in agriculture learn to live with some hardships. It is sort of the way of life. Back in the twenties, 80% of population in Canada lived on farms and raised their families on farms. Now the population has shifted so dramatically that 82% of the population in Canada actually lives in large urban centres and the number of primary farmers is below 3%. Farmers learn to adapt. That is why they have survived to this point. They have lived through droughts before and through grasshoppers, low rainfall and situations where they could not harvest.

The biggest challenge that they face is not any of these. The biggest challenge they face is a government that does not understand, is unknowing and uncaring about what their situations are and has actually challenged them to the degree that they do not even believe that the government is there to support their industry at all. It is absolutely amazing.

This summer when I was in Leeds County and last week when I was in Lindsay, Ontario, I had an opportunity to talk to the people there who understood exactly what was going on. They were the first to rise up, send some of their hay to western Canada and take part in this Hay West project. The Hay West project was a wonderful thing in the sense that it was about farmers helping farmers. They were the first to rally to the cause. They understood the plight of the western farmer, what drought was and what the hardships of agriculture meant to them. They were prepared to give of their own so that others could be helped out in this crisis.

The frustration was that they could not get the product that they were willing to give out of their own livelihoods to the people who really needed it. It was very late in the game when the government finally decided almost out of embarrassment that it would fork over a few measly dollars, I think it was \$3.8 million, to send 377 loads of hay to western Canada, which was very much appreciated. The frustrating thing is that this needs to be levered into action by a government that has the dollars to be able to really deal with the problem. The amount of hay on those trains is enough to be goodwill and is very much appreciated, but it is certainly not enough to address the problem in western Canada.

It is absolutely shameful to see the results of that, because we have a government that had the ability this summer to upset farmers on both ends of the country for different reasons, some farmers because they saw the need, wanted to help and had a government that was not willing to support them, and others who needed the help and saw a government that was not interested in stepping up to the plate. We can see that the family farm is threatened from one end of the country to other, but when we look at family farms in Canada we understand a lot better just how important they are.

• (2255)

They provide the highest quality food, the safest products and the cheapest food not only in the country, but in the world. It has been said that never before in the history of mankind have so few raised so much for so little. That is what describes very vividly the picture we see of agriculture and farmers in Canada today.

I was in Wainwright when the first load of hay came in. One had to be there to see the excitement on the faces of the farmers when they understood that somebody was finally there and able to help them. What did they get? They had a Prime Minister who wanted a

photo op in eastern Canada. He did not have the nerve to come to western Canada to meet the trains, where he could have seen the same faces I did and understood the plight of those agriculture people. A photo op in eastern Canada was a little bit different and very unappreciated by the people who really needed the help.

I have to sit back and ask myself why a government would do that. Why would a government not understand the plight of agriculture? Maybe it just does not understand. Maybe that is the situation is here. Maybe when the cabinet members got together, they just did not understand.

I sent them a letter inviting them to come to Yellowhead. I said that I would take them around personally to a number of farmers to give them an idea of the plight of the western farmer and to show them how intense the problem really was. I got one phone call. The guy said that he was too busy to come. I had four or five letters. Two of them said that I should not worry about them because they understood the problem. I kind of doubt that. A few letters had lists of things the government was doing for the farmers, basically photo op situations. A few others were signed by staffers saying that their ministers were too busy to show up. That was the kind of reply I got from cabinet members with regard to my invitation.

It is absolutely frustrating when I see a government fail because it is not interested. Government members do not care. They have no plan and there is absolutely no leadership.

I then ask myself why they would do that. We have a government that does the math. It is not very good at helping farmers, but it is very good at math. It understands that 3% is not enough to help. What it fails to understand is that not helping agriculture will devastate our country because it is one of the economic drivers that is absolutely fundamental to the sovereignty of a nation. When a country fails to feed itself, then we have a major problem that drives right to the heart of the sovereignty of a nation.

The United States is one of the most free enterprise countries in the world and we can see what it has done. It has added \$280 billion over the next 10 years to support their agricultural industry. We have \$5.2 billion. When we compare that to the Americans, their support for their farmers is over 500 times more than ours. That is absolutely embarrassing. It shows us that the government has failed to understand what Europe learned a long time ago. When we go hungry as a nation, we will say to ourselves, "never again". I would hate to see that happen in Canada. I would hate to see what this government's action will accomplish.

We need to look at cash injections to deal with the problems. We have to look at a five year extension to the tax deferral for ranchers. We have to look at rethinking the safety net programs to make them more versatile so they can deal with some of the problems we have seen in the intense drought area and there has to be flexibility within the program to do that.

We have to look at the dual marketing. We have heard others say that the idea of throwing farmers in jail is not the way to go. We have to understand what their plight is about and what is important for them to stay in their livelihood. We need a lot of these things and more.

It is frustrating for me to see a government that does not understand agriculture in the crisis as we have today. The proof of that is every time I see one of my Liberal colleagues stand up and try to explain to the House all the things the Liberals have done. That proves to me that they have no clue what they are talking about.

• (2300)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.)** Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my time with the hon. member for Malpeque.

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in this important debate. We all know that drought is a natural phenomenon and unfortunately impossible to predict. With the help of the government, however, farmers are able to fight against Mother Nature.

As my hon. colleagues have said, the federal government is using a variety of means to try to lessen the effects of the drought, in the short and the long term. These range from direct financial assistance to farmers to the development of a new strategic framework for agriculture, in order to help Canadian farmers cope with the challenges they are up against.

For example, last August my hon. colleague, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, announced that \$10 million would be made available to farmers this year out of the \$60 million committed to the National Water Supply Expansion Program. This measure will help lessen the risk of future water shortages due to drought and improve economic stability and prospects in Canada's agricultural regions. It is of course impossible to predict drought but, through research, farmers can be helped to compensate for its effects.

Some Prairie regions would no longer be workable today if it were not for research and science. In fact, it can be said that, without the considerable presence of federal research laboratories in the west, the face of Canada today would be entirely different.

Without this indispensable federal aid, western agriculture would not have thrived in those extremely difficult conditions, and would not have become the important economic force it is today. For example, federal government researchers have been helping farmers in the Palliser triangle to cope with drought for nearly a century.

The government set up an experimental station at Lethbridge in 1906, and others soon followed, including Swift Current, where researchers developed drought-resistant crops suitable for the arid southern prairies. This research continues to this day at Swift Current at the Semi-Arid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre.

Last year, \$300,000 was also committed to the water shortage situation in Nova Scotia. This project was administered by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. The bulk of the funding will go to finance studies of catchbasins in the areas of Nova Scotia affected by drought and to better quantify and describe underground water resources in that province.

*S. O. 52*

The Canadian agriculture sector is one that relies on innovation. Not only do the latest scientific advances help alleviate the impact of drought, but they also expand the range of Canadian made products, all the way from food with unique health benefits, to crops providing the pharmaceutical industry with chemical substances, biofuels, and other products.

In short, science and research are essential to the growth and sustainability of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector.

Rapid progress in fields like biology and chemistry, combined with the impact of information and telecommunication technologies, have resulted in a revolution in what is today called the bio-economy.

These scientific advances are producing a number of significant results: first, a shift from the consumption of non renewable resources towards renewable resources; second, environmental cleanup; third, improvement of food safety systems; fourth, an increase in farm income through the diversification of agricultural production.

This is why the federal and provincial governments have made science and technology a priority in the agricultural policy framework, the new national action plan to ensure that Canada is the world leader in terms of food quality and safety, environmental sustainability and innovation.

• (2305)

All levels of government across the country are striving to create a climate that fosters innovation so that consumers worldwide can have access to the products that best meet their needs.

The agricultural policy framework incorporates science and innovation in business risk management, food safety, food quality, the environment and agricultural renewal.

It takes science out of isolation and incorporates it strategically into the agriculture and agri-food sector in order to meet in an innovative manner the demands of consumers who want safe, high quality food produced in an environmentally friendly manner.

As far as drought is concerned, the Government of Canada is using science, research and technology to develop a more comprehensive approach that is better integrated and better coordinated so as to alleviate the impacts of drought through improved preparation, monitoring and forecasting, and risk management.

For example, researchers at the Saskatoon Research Centre, assisted by the Saskatoon Wheat Pool, recently developed a new variety of canola that will soon be certified. This new variety, called Brassica juncea, can grow in parts of the Prairies too dry for existing varieties.

*S. O. 52*

In addition to this new variety of drought-resistant canola, the Semiarid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre in Swift Current is developing cultivars and strains of hard red spring wheat, durum wheat and Canada Prairie spring wheat, which are suited for the dry southern Prairies.

Canadian farmers will also be pleased to hear that researchers in Lethbridge are examining various climate change scenarios with a view to forecasting droughts more accurately, which would give farmers time to prepare.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is also a leader in research on plant genomics.

Basically, genomics enables researchers to identify the genes responsible for major crop characteristics such as drought, cold and freeze tolerance, disease and insect resistance and seed quality, and to determine the gene sequence.

As we learned last Monday in the throne speech, the Government of Canada plans to build on past accomplishments to strengthen the science sector by integrating activities carried out in the various departments and disciplines and concentrating on what Canadians see as priorities.

The government is advocating a horizontal approach to research in all agencies, whether governmental or not.

Innovation requires a system of relations, partnerships that link the different levels of government, universities and the public and private sectors.

Obviously, science and research will continue to focus on more traditional areas, such as agricultural productivity, and livestock and crops that are better suited to our climate and better able to resist pests and disease, as well as increasing yields and reducing production costs thanks to improved agricultural practices.

As I already stated, research being carried out at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is also looking into drought-resistant crops and initiatives to mitigate the effects of drought.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is spending \$5 million annually on research to improve land use and soil conservation. This work includes developing new crop irrigation technologies.

Among the methods being developed to offset water shortages are the following: automated micro-irrigation systems, which allow automatic irrigation based on plant needs; water-needs forecasting as crops develop over their life cycle so that farmers can accurately plan their water or irrigation needs; the use of mulch to reduce water loss through evaporation; and work on soil conservation and direct seeding to reduce erosion and conserve water.

• (2310)

To close, the challenge before us is to ensure that new scientific breakthroughs benefit all Canadians, particularly Canadian farmers.

[*English*]

**Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like others, I too welcome the opportunity to speak in the debate. I certainly thank the Speaker for allowing it.

This discussion must be held. We have heard many points of view all evening. There is much grumbling, much criticism, but there has been very little put forward as an absolute solution.

I will say that I am concerned in these important debates that for some reason, and we are no better on this side than they are on the other side, but we get into a we are right and they are wrong discussion. At the end of the day sometimes we are no farther ahead than when we started. I am concerned about that.

I want to try to put a human face on the issue. It is very serious for those farmers, families, communities and small businesses that are affected very personally by the drought and some of the serious weather patterns that have happened over the last number of years. Lives and livelihoods are being jeopardized. Some people are losing their farms.

It is not easy to lose one's life work. I have seen this happen in the farm movement over many years. Generally, people who have not lived on a farm, raised livestock or grown a crop cannot understand how it affects a farmer and his family when a herd is lost, or even to sell a few of the herd that a life's work or even generations before have put their life's work in terms of building the genetics of the herd. The same can be said for crops.

Simply put, it is like losing a member of the family. Their blood, sweat and tears are in that herd and in that crop. Their ancestry and previous generations in many cases have their life's work in that farming endeavour.

This debate is not just about an income loss. We have talked a lot tonight about money, but this is much more serious than about a few bucks, whether it is the government's dollars or somebody else's. This has a very serious personal impact on operations, on families and on communities. It is a loss of a part of their life.

To put it into perspective, I will use the example of a dairy herd. It may be four generations ago that some individual in a family decided to improve the genetics for milk production, for body type or whatever. That whole individual's life would have been spent trying to get the breeding right, improving it slowly generation after generation of cattle, and then generation after generation in the family. Then there is no feed and no money to buy feed. The banker calls and there is no option left but to sell the herd. Then it is not just an animal that is being sold, it is something that generations of the family put there. It is not just a simple sale. There is a tremendous human cost which cannot be measured in dollars.

Let us take a moment to look at the drought itself. Statistics Canada noted in a publication:

Crop receipts dropped to a seven year low, while livestock receipts fell after three consecutive years of increase.

This finding was released by Statistics Canada on August 26 this year. The report states that the findings released do not take into account the “extreme weather seen on farms during the 2002 growing season”. It is very serious in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba and the impact has been devastating.

• (2315)

For the 2001 season the Canadian Federation of Agriculture indicated that the impact of the drought was felt across the country. In my home province of P.E.I., potato yields were down between 20% and 60%. That was last year. In Ontario soybean yields were 50% to 60% of normal. In Alberta grain harvests were down from 20% to 80%.

The impact of the drought in 2002 on livestock producers has been estimated by the NFU. A farmer without access to hay will have to buy up to three tonnes of feed per cow. At an estimated cost of \$150 per tonne, the cost per cow could over the coming year reach \$450 or even higher. That figure does not include additional costs for water and other losses incurred from the selling of cattle in a depressed market.

The drought is certainly having a very serious impact. Yes, the Government of Canada, through the minister, spoke earlier. I believe the minister has been trying to do all that he can in the situation.

The Government of Canada has made some major strides in assisting agriculture: the \$5.2 billion over six years announced in the spring; the NISA accounts; the agricultural policy framework; and crop insurance. The community, eventually assisted by the government, has come in with what has become known as the Hay West campaign. I think members from both sides of the House have worked very hard to try to get hay from surplus areas to areas where it is needed. I know there has been quite an effort in my home province in that regard. Certainly that has been helpful but it does not solve the problem.

The bottom line is does more need to be done? Absolutely. Certainly. We have to seriously look at a special disaster program or maybe change the methods of the current relief programs available. I heard some members speak tonight about the ice storm and the Red River floods. Yes, they received disaster relief out of the regular disaster relief fund. As I understand it, what happens in agriculture does not trigger that fund so perhaps we need to look at that definition. In any event, I really believe we have to look at a special disaster relief fund for these kinds of situations. The regular kind of programming just does not deal with the issue.

I want to very quickly look at what is happening south of the border. We have to understand where our neighbours are coming from. On September 19 the United States agriculture secretary, Ann Veneman, announced an assistance package of \$752 million for livestock producers suffering from the current drought in the western states. The United States has several programs: a conservation reserve program; an emergency conservation program; emergency disaster loans; an environmental quality program; a wildlife habitat program; a non-insured assistance program; and a cattle feed assistance program. Certainly it is putting money into its industry and we have to recognize that.

S. O. 52

The bottom line is that it is a very serious situation. The Government of Canada, the country as a whole and the citizens of the country have to take the issue seriously. We seriously have to look at a special disaster program that would accommodate these kinds of weather situations that the other programs do not look after.

• (2320)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Just to inform the members in the House, the next slot will be shared between a member from the New Democratic Party and one from the Progressive Conservative Party, 10 minutes each. I will come back in the final round to the official opposition.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will let you know that my colleague from Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough and I are used to sharing our time in many other debates as well.

My colleague from Malpeque, Prince Edward Island said that there should be a program to help farmers. We on this side of the House say do it. Do it right away. Do not hesitate, do not talk about it, just do it.

Just sitting here thinking about what type of program we should have, a few years ago the government instituted something called the millennium scholarship fund. It put a couple of billion dollars into a fund and that fund generates revenues and those revenues are to help students. Unfortunately it only helps about 7% of the students in the country. However a program such as that would be much more effective to help all our farmers.

As was noted by my colleague from Brandon—Souris, this is the sixth emergency debate on agriculture we have had in the House since 1997. It is a telling sign when a member from the Bloc Québécois stands up for western Canadian farmers. The member from the Bloc deserves a real big hand for doing that. He and his party understand the difficulty western farmers are going through. It is too bad that although there are some backbench Liberals who understand it, the frontbench, the cabinet, still does not understand the devastation that is affecting our farmers.

A couple of years ago a farm lobby group came to Ottawa. We introduced it our NDP caucus. There was one young man who was about 12 years old. I think he was in grade six or grade seven. I asked him specifically if he was going to be a farmer like his daddy. He said no, absolutely not. I asked how many kids were in his school. He said about a couple of hundred. I asked him if any of the kids he knew were going to be farmers and he said, “Absolutely not. As soon as they can, they are gone”. When I asked him who he thought was going to feed us in the future, he just shrugged his shoulders.

*S. O. 52*

That is the question I ask the government. Who will be the farmers of the future? Are we going to lose the capacity to feed ourselves? Very likely. We have heard reports of over 30,000 farm families leaving the farm over the last few years.

Coming from the east coast I know all too well the devastation we have in industry. We watched the 1992 cod collapse when John Crosbie shut down the industry and 40,000 fishermen were thrown out of work. The devastation to the farm families is just as real as what happened to the people on the east coast.

We have a crisis in our forestry industry. Those people who worked in the mills on Vancouver Island and elsewhere in British Columbia are feeling just as devastated as the fishermen on the east coast and the farmers in central Canada.

We have to ask ourselves, what does the Liberal government have against farming, fishing and forestry? I have not been able to figure that out. We would assume that these good people are well meaning and well intentioned. They must hear the same stories we hear. They must read the same newspapers we read. They must get the same phone calls that we get. Why are those traditional industries that helped build this country so devastated? I have a feeling I know why.

A former colleague of ours from Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, John Solomon, was in France on an IPU tour. He met some agricultural ministers from the European Union. He asked the one from France about the subsidies to French farmers which were having a devastating effect on Canadian farmers. The man told my colleague, “John, don't even worry about it. If you think for one second that the French government is not going to support their farmers in any way, shape or form, you are kidding yourself. You are out to lunch. We are going to do everything we can every year to support our farmers. It does not matter about trade agreements, we are going to support our farmers. That is what the French government does”.

When John came back home he told us he could only imagine if that kind of spunk were in the Liberal government, that it would have the courage to support its farmers just as much, while at the same time working in the international community to reduce the international subsidies that hurt farmers around the world. It cannot be done alone. The United States farm bill has been completely devastating to our farmers.

● (2325)

Our government needs to act tougher and more unified with the provinces to stop that from happening. It is like Yogi Berra once said, “It's deja vu all over again.” I feel that I am repeating the same words we spoke last year on this.

While I am here I want to thank the member for Cumberland—Colchester and my Conservative colleagues in Nova Scotia for their effort in organizing and assisting, not only financially but manually, with the Hay West campaign in our area of Nova Scotia. I received a lot of calls from farmers within the Musquodoboit Valley and from the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. They did a great job of quickly organizing and working with colleagues across the country to get whatever hay we could at that time, but it took a long time for the federal government to understand. Even for a photo op government members should have moved more quickly. All the

farmers wanted was to provide the hay, ship it out and have the federal government provide the transport. It took a mighty struggle to get the government to listen to that.

The government must ask itself who the farmers of tomorrow will be? Will it be the big corporate farms run by other countries, and we as citizens will have to pay whatever the market will bear, or will we stand up and support our family farmers so that when they wish to retire from a farm they will be able to turn it over to their sons or daughters with pride?

If we can do that then we will have a legacy for our people in the farming industry. I ask everyone watching, and anyone in the House, to stop for a second before consuming their breakfast tomorrow morning, to say a little prayer and to thank farmers who produced the food that nourishes us.

● (2330)

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC):**

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to follow my colleague from Nova Scotia who was very magnanimous in his remarks. He comes from a Dutch family background. Along with the many Scottish names that make up many of the big farms in Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough there is a huge Dutch community of farmers that do tremendous work, and have brought great productivity, great pride in agriculture, and a tremendous work ethic to my community back in Nova Scotia.

This emergency debate application, as everyone knows and as has been pointed out, was moved by the former Prime Minister, the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, seconded by my caucus colleague from Brandon—Souris who has been active on this file. It has been noted that this is the third agriculture debate that has come about as a result of prices in the industry in the country. It is the third of six agriculture debates moved by the Progressive Conservative Party. Out of a total of nine, five emergency debates have been moved by the Progressive Conservative Party, one by my colleague from St. John's East on the issue of overfishing and the other on the softwood lumber crisis facing the west coast and the country moved by the member for Cumberland—Colchester. The Progressive Conservative Party has always been and continues to be active in the natural resource sector, fighting for those who are making their living from the land the way that Canadians did from the very beginning.

I recall growing up in rural Nova Scotia as a young kid. Our farm was small by comparison but there were kids who would come to school, I will never forget, who smelled of the barn. There were other kids in school who would make fun of that, but these kids had great pride. These kids had gotten up early and had done their chores before they came to school. These kids were instilled with the principles that would serve them their whole lives, that work ethic, that commitment to the family industry, that commitment to do hard work and to put in a full day. It served them well throughout their lives because I remember those kids then and I have seen many of those kids recently who have grown up to be productive members of their communities.



This issue is as Canadian as it gets. This crisis is one which has gripped many families. It has huge social implications, life and death implications, people who have been forced to the brink of bankruptcy and many literally have taken their own lives. I have heard it said by many farmers that the loss of the family farm is like a death in the family, that is how critical the issue has become.

We have heard the statistics quoted with respect to the money that was put in in previous years, the money that has been coming, but the issue is the delivery. The issue is that it is not enough and it is not getting there soon enough to allow farmers in many instances to carry on, to get through the next season, or to make it one more year.

There were references by previous speakers, including my colleague from Nova Scotia, about the Hay West program. The Hay West program was a wonderful effort, again a truly pan-Canadian effort that saw farmers coming together from different parts of the country to help other farmers. It was done purely out of the goodness of their hearts and there is nothing that rekindles people's faith in the human spirit more than gratuitous acts of kindness. That is what the Hay West program was all about. I am proud that Nova Scotia took part in that.

I say to my colleagues in the west and other parts of the country, to those in need, there is more hay. There is more hay if we can get it to them. I have farmers coming to my office asking how they can get it there. A good friend of mine, Hector MacIsaac, suggested a novel idea. What if there was a way to get cattle to the east to pasture them there? This might be a way, rather than to have cattle starve, to pasture them over the winter or in barns where hay exists. This might be at least another way to prevent the starvation of animals.

These types of reciprocal arrangements and acts of kindness have been there for a long time. In the east, during the hungry 30s, fish, food and clothing were sent from eastern provinces to the west. I am sure that it would be reciprocated.

• (2335)

I know that there is a great empathy that exists in regions like ours in Atlantic Canada. We have been through the collapse of the fishery. We understand hard times.

This approach that has been taken to reach out to help people in need is one that truly has to be encouraged and applauded at times. Caring, compassionate people span all politics and regions. It is something that Canadians do and do well. We take care of our own. We are not, unfortunately, able to say that at this point in time because we are not doing enough to help the agriculture industry.

The statistics we have seen talk about the need for a more comprehensive safety net. The hon. member for Malpeque, who I also know has personal knowledge of the plight of the farmers because of his experience growing up on the island, has stated there is the willingness there. I am hoping he will be able to bring that type of pressure to bear on the government and the cabinet, to get that money there immediately, to put the resource support there where the need is greatest.

I could spend the brief time that I have attacking the Liberal record about the cuts that have been made in all sorts of sectors including agriculture. Between 1993-99 program payments to agriculture programs decreased by over \$1 billion. We could all

*S. O. 52*

talk about the waste in other programs where money has been spent for frivolous purposes when one compares it to the importance of the agriculture sector, yet that is not productive. What we need to do is look for solutions right now. We can put the politics aside.

We need to look for a way to facilitate the continuation of farming, a way to save those who are hanging on by those hardworking hands, waiting for that money to get there. It has to get there right away before the season is over. We know that we are working with strict timelines.

The previous administration, the Progressive Conservative Party, by comparison when one looks at the record and the commitment to the agriculture sector, had a great deal in place. In one crop year, 1991-92, the GRIP and NISA programs delivered about \$2 billion to farmers in a single year. That is an example that the government could learn from because in those years farmers similarly were facing terrible devastating conditions of pestilence, drought, and flood. We are talking about apocalyptic types of conditions that are like the horsemen of the Apocalypse galloping through western Canada at this time.

Members like to talk about the debt. It is always pointed about the \$42 billion deficit that they inherited but let us get one thing straight. The previous administration inherited a \$38 billion deficit, \$12 billion of it that was racked up by the current Prime Minister when he was in the finance department. We can leave that record aside. We can talk about that another time.

What we need to do is talk about programs that will help farmers now. Fast effective programs that will get the money where it is needed, that will protect farmers, and then and only then can we put in place a long-term sustainable solution that will allow them to get the money for seed, for crops, for support, and for all of the various types of processes that take place.

There are many issues associated with farming. There are many ongoing crises that will continue unless the government steps up. We are calling upon it to do so. That is what this debate has been about in principle. We are hoping that the solutions and the concrete answers that farmers are looking for will be coming soon.

• (2340)

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House tonight, although it is not a pleasure to speak to the topic of the emergency debate. Agriculture in Canada is in a dire situation and the 15 second sound bite from the throne speech last Monday did not do much to reassure Canadians and Canadian farm families that the Liberal government opposite will be of any help to them.

Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague from Lakeland.

This is the second year my area in Saskatchewan has suffered a severe drought. Some areas have experienced from five to eight years of extensive drought. This year it took our livestock herds. Up until now we had been able to keep our livestock herds but this was the final year of that whole thing.

S. O. 52

My office in Saskatoon took over 4,000 calls for hay when the Hay West campaign was born. People phoned, faxed, cried on the telephone, told terrible stories of hardship and pleaded for hay and help. I wish I could have had a tape of every one of those calls to give to the Minister of Agriculture and his committees so they could listen to the stories of hardship that families were feeling.

I want to thank from the bottom of my heart the people of eastern Canada who gave so much to western Canada. We heard tonight that it was just a pittance but those bales and those rail cars that came to western Canada gave our people hope. There was a message of sincere sympathy from eastern producers saying that we do care. I wish the Government of Canada cared as much for our producers as the people in eastern Canada did.

On July 27 I received a letter that was addressed to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and the minister of rural development in Canada. It reads, "Sir, I write this letter with much sadness and a very heavy heart. A short time ago a neighbour of mine committed suicide because of depression, a condition caused in large measure by frustration and hopelessness due to very poor grain, oilseed, specialty crop prices and declining livestock prices, drought and the added threat of a heavy grasshopper infestation. I spoke with him a few days before his death at which time he could see no way out of his situation because of huge input costs and a serious shortfall in income.

Last week we read in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* obituary column of a young farm lady who committed suicide also from depression.

The draught has been most severe. Last year, 2001, and this year too in this region, as it is in much of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Still, with all the information available to your government, no hint of any immediate relief assistance appears forthcoming. How many suicides will have to occur before there is a response in kind from the federal Government of Canada?

I find it very difficult to understand why a government would not have a disaster assistance plan in place that would take effect on short notice, especially when a situation such as drought is of such a magnitude as to affect most of Saskatchewan and Alberta. There always seems to be money for other segments of the economy but little or nothing for the most important human task of producing food for humankind.

At the July meeting of the Council of the Rural Municipality of Perdue the council declared the municipality a disaster area due to drought. In much of the municipality there will not be sufficient crop yield to cover municipal taxes, school unit taxes, fuel costs for operation, let alone other production costs. Hay yields are down 20% to 25% of 2001 yields, which was down significantly. Many livestock producers have reduced their herd by as much as 100% in some cases. Many though have reduced their herds by 50% to 60%.

In 1984, I, along with four others, sat in your office in Ottawa to discuss agricultural issues, but in particular the crow rate retention at that time. You indicated you understood our concerns in western Canada since you had relatives out there who were able to keep you informed.

I thank you for your attention in this matter of very great concern to myself and many others. We look forward to your early response".

● (2345)

That is just one of the letters that I have on my desk.

The people of western Canada are very disappointed in the Liberal government and its lack of response to what has happened this year in western Canada.

The following is a letter from a young girl who, along with her husband, have just started farming. She writes, "My sister-in-law just phoned me to say that the news channel she was listening to said that we were to send our name and address in if we were in need of bales. In need of bales is the understatement as it ranks right up there with sure could use some rain. We are in desperate need of feed. We were hoping to bale some of the crop but it is too short, and what people are trying to bale for feed is coming out with extreme levels of nitrates. Our pastures for our buffalo are depleted and we cannot just go throw one wire around some crop land or there will be a rodeo unlike anything you have ever seen before. We actually brought some Hereford heifers too this spring, not the smartest move we have made but we were diversifying. Anyways, enough of the crying. If you have any resources we would appreciate your help".

Dr. Alfred Ernst from Rosetown in my riding deals with the farm crisis in western Canada every day. He sees people in dire need. He sees children crying because their moms and dads are working two jobs to try to keep the family farm going. He visits with pensioners who are living on their pensions to keep their farm. All their savings have gone into the land and into the farm. Dr. Ernst collected a petition of over 4,000 names in less than a month's time from people who were asking for help.

I talked to a young woman in a store in one of the town's in my riding. She told me that yesterday was the worst day of 26 years in business. She and two of her staff were in the store and the only business they did that day was a gift return. We hear that over and over again.

A young woman with a business in the service industry said that it was the first time that her husband who is a farmer had to go to work. She works at her own business and with the farm they had been able to manage but that now her husband had to find a job to put food on the table.

Agri business across western Canada is suffering. We can no longer afford to not support our agriculture communities. We cannot allow western Canada to become a large, barren land. We cannot afford to lose the family farm. The way the Liberal government is going there is no other way of looking at it.

I received a pamphlet the other day in the mail from an agri business. A lot of our farmers have gone into the SFIP, NISA and other programs but they have phoned and told me they would not go into SFIP this year. I spoke to an accountant who has talked to over 30 of his clients. These people have had money clawed back because the government made mistakes when it sent out their cheques. The lowest amount was about \$700. The government is telling farmers with no income that they have to pay back \$30,000. There is not \$30,000 to be paid back. The government made the mistake but it is telling farmers to give the money back. It says that it is not its problem.

The Liberal government is accountable for every farm and every farm family under the gun this fall. The Liberal government has not stood up for the Canadian family farm, and it is about time that it did.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak in this debate tonight. I understand that I will be the last speaker. I want to take a bit of a different approach to this tonight and talk a bit about what has led to this situation, as I see it.

Before I do that, I just want to acknowledge that the situation on the farm today is the worst than I have seen in the last 30 or 35 years. The drought is certainly the worst drought in recorded history in western Canada. There is no doubt about that. It is much drier than it was in the thirties. The only thing that saved farmers until now is their aggressive changes over the past 10 years, direct seeding in particular, which allowed every drop of moisture to be saved so that there would be crops in following years, where there would not have been any 20 short years ago.

Farmers have made any changes they possibly could to help them farm in a way that would allow them to make a living. These changes have led them to be the most productive farmers in the world. The evidence of that is that Canadian consumers only pay something like 11% of their income on food. That is lower than any other country in the world.

Our farmers are doing their part and yet we are in another situation where many farmers will lose their farms. Many farmers have been forced to sell their livestock. Many simply will not rebuild their herds again. This hurts. It especially hurts someone who has grown up on a farm, as I have, and who has been raised on a farm with livestock and crops.

I studied agriculture in university. That was my chosen field. I bought a farm while I was still in university, 100% financed. It was not with the family. I had some very difficult times on it. It was not easy. I watched my neighbours as they struggled.

Because I had the training in agriculture, I worked as a farm economist for Alberta Agriculture and did private consulting with farmers over that time period as well. I will never forget as long as I live those years in the late eighties and early nineties when I sat at the kitchen table with dozens of farmers who were losing their farms. I knew there was no way to save the farm and they knew that also. In so many cases, a father, a mother and their children would be sitting at the kitchen table. The father would break down in tears as he realized there was just no way they could save the farm. Then the

*S. O. 52*

mother would break down and the children would sit there wondering what was going on.

That is what drove me into politics more than any other thing. I had seen the impact of government policies on farmers and I was determined to change that, at least to do my best to change it. I was determined that never again would I see farm families in that kind of a situation. However here we are 10, 12 or 15 years later and this situation has come back again.

It is important to look at what led us to this situation. There is no one point in time or one cause which could be pointed to as starting this mess, but I think there is one that probably lends itself to that more than any other of which I can think. That was an action taken by the current leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, when he was Prime Minister for six months in 1979. That member caused more devastation and hardship than any other political leader in the country by signing on to the trade embargo against the former Soviet Union. The then president of the United States signed on and decided to take this action and that member, as prime minister at that time, supported the United States. That has been the most devastating action taken by any politician in Canada, when it comes to the problems we now see in agriculture. I want to explain why.

• (2350)

I believe the Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan. Part of the problems we see in Afghanistan now of course stem from that. Something had to be done. The mistake was when the United States and the Government of Canada decided to use food as a weapon. What was the response from our European friends? The Europeans said, "Never again will we go hungry". They built subsidies and a common agricultural policy to the extent that they could be sure they would produce the food they needed so their people would never go hungry again, as they did during the second world war. The Europeans built their system of subsidies, including export subsidies, which drove world prices down.

The Americans to protect their farmers, then responded to those subsidies, including export subsidies, which further drove prices down.

What happened in Canada? Canadian farmers were left without the support that the Europeans and the United States farmers were receiving. They were not competing in a fair way. Our farmers remarkably did a lot of different things much faster than the Europeans or the Americans to help adapt to this very unfair trading environment. It is only due to their remarkable reaction that they have survived as long as they have, and many of them have done very well. Many Canadian farmers in fact are thriving.

I am here to say that I do not believe that subsidies are the solution to this problem in any way. That is not what we should be calling for. Subsidies are not the answer. Our farmers have done their part. They are producing the food more efficiently than any other farmers around the world.

*S. O. 52*

We need compensation for trade injury absolutely, which is what we called for, and we need to improve the crop insurance program, which we certainly support. To portray farmers as charity cases is completely unfair because they have done their part. Governments have failed miserably.

First, we had the Conservative government with the member for Calgary Centre as prime minister and the tough, wrong-headed action which he took. Then successive governments since, Liberals, Conservatives and Liberals, again refused to deal with the base of the problem, which was unfair trade, particularly export subsidies on the part of Europe and the United States.

We have import restrictions in Asian countries, Japan, Korea and other wealthy Asian countries. They have refused to deal with these unfair trade practices and as a result have continued to keep our farmers in an unfair position where they simply cannot compete in an appropriate way.

I would like to close by saying that it is time for the government to finally do what it should have done all along, and that is to deal with some of the trade problems and high input costs that it has forced on

our problems through high taxes, over regulation and red tape that is very expensive and takes a lot of time on the part of farmers.

It is time that the government gave farmers freedom to market their own grain, for Pete's say. It should not throw them in jail when they try to get a better price for it in the United States.

We have to allow competition in the transportation system so freight rates will drop. The government has to take action in all these areas. When it does that, our farmers will compete fine and there will be no need for subsidies in any way.

● (2355)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being midnight, I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Accordingly this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 12 a.m.)

---





# CONTENTS

Monday, October 7, 2002

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Committee Business and Reinstatement of Government Bills

#### Motion that debate be not further adjourned

Mr. Boudria .....	335
Motion .....	335
Mr. Solberg .....	335
Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River) .....	335
Mr. Penson .....	336
Mr. Casson .....	336
Mr. Fitzpatrick .....	336
Mr. Cardin .....	337
Mr. Clark .....	337
Mr. Bailey .....	337
Mrs. Desjarlais .....	338
Mr. Hill (Macleod) .....	338
Mr. Merrifield .....	338
Mr. MacKay .....	339
Mr. Nystrom .....	339
Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) .....	339

Motion agreed to .....	340
------------------------	-----

#### Government Business Motions Nos. 2A and 2B

Mrs. Redman .....	341
Mr. Borotsik .....	342
Mr. Mark .....	343
Mr. Bryden .....	344
Mr. Casson .....	346
Mr. Merrifield .....	347
Mr. Cullen .....	349
Mr. Ritz .....	351
Mr. Schmidt .....	352

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### World Habitat Day

Mr. Mahoney .....	353
-------------------	-----

### Paul Ying Po Mak

Mr. Goldring .....	354
--------------------	-----

### Commonwealth Games

Mr. LeBlanc .....	354
-------------------	-----

### NATO Jet Pilot Program

Mrs. Redman .....	354
-------------------	-----

### Colin David Gibson

Mr. Keyes .....	354
-----------------	-----

### Nobel Peace Prize

Mr. Epp .....	354
---------------	-----

### Hay West Campaign

Mr. Adams .....	355
-----------------	-----

### Timor Leste

Ms. Lalonde .....	355
-------------------	-----

### Don Cherry

Mr. Proulx .....	355
------------------	-----

### Member for Ottawa South

Mr. Kenney .....	355
------------------	-----

### The Royal Visit

Mr. Simard .....	355
------------------	-----

### The Environment

Mr. Comartin .....	356
--------------------	-----

### Highway Infrastructure

Mr. Crête .....	356
-----------------	-----

### The Economy

Ms. Brown .....	356
-----------------	-----

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Mr. Doyle .....	356
-----------------	-----

### Literacy

Mr. Scott .....	357
-----------------	-----

### Government of Canada

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River) .....	357
--	-----

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Government Contracts

Mr. Harper .....	357
Mr. MacAulay .....	357
Mr. Harper .....	357
Mr. Manley .....	357
Mr. Harper .....	357
Mr. Manley .....	357
Mr. Sorenson .....	357
Mr. MacAulay .....	358
Mr. Sorenson .....	358
Mr. MacAulay .....	358

### Taxation

Mr. Duceppe .....	358
Mr. Manley .....	358
Mr. Duceppe .....	358
Mr. Manley .....	358
Ms. Picard .....	358
Mr. Manley .....	358
Ms. Picard .....	358
Mr. Manley .....	358

### Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

Mr. Nystrom .....	358
Ms. Bulte .....	359
Mr. Nystrom .....	359
Ms. Bulte .....	359

### Government Contracts

Mr. MacKay .....	359
Mr. Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte) .....	359

Mr. MacKay .....	359	<b>Citizenship and Immigration</b>	
Mr. Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte) .....	359	Mrs. Ablonczy .....	364
Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) .....	359	Mr. Coderre .....	364
Mr. MacAulay .....	359	Mrs. Ablonczy .....	364
Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) .....	360	Mr. Coderre .....	364
Mr. MacAulay .....	360	<b>People with Disabilities</b>	
Mr. Lanctôt .....	360	Mr. Brien .....	364
Mr. Goodale .....	360	Mr. Manley .....	364
Mr. Lanctôt .....	360	<b>Canadian Wheat Board</b>	
Mr. Goodale .....	360	Mr. Calder .....	365
Mr. Toews .....	360	Mr. O'Brien (London—Fanshawe) .....	365
Mr. Manley .....	360	<b>Kyoto Protocol</b>	
Mr. Toews .....	360	Mr. Burton .....	365
Mr. Goodale .....	360	Mr. Anderson (Victoria) .....	365
Mr. Gauthier .....	360	<b>Correctional Services</b>	
Mr. Goodale .....	361	Mr. Marceau .....	365
Mr. Gauthier .....	361	Mr. MacAulay .....	365
Mr. Goodale .....	361	<b>Presence in Gallery</b>	
<b>Government Expenditures</b>		The Speaker .....	365
Mr. Ritz .....	361	<b>Points of Order</b>	
Mr. Goodale .....	361	<b>Oral Question Period</b>	
Mr. Ritz .....	361	Mr. Harper .....	365
Mr. Goodale .....	361	<b>Journals</b>	
<b>Middle East</b>		Mr. MacKay .....	365
Ms. Bennett .....	361		
Mr. Knutson (Elgin—Middlesex—London) .....	361		
<b>Health</b>			
Ms. Wasylycia-Leis .....	362		
Ms. McLellan .....	362		
<b>Airline Security</b>			
Mrs. Desjarlais .....	362		
Mr. Manley .....	362		
<b>Government Contracts</b>			
Mr. Clark .....	362		
Mr. Manley .....	362		
Mr. Clark .....	362		
Mr. Manley .....	362		
<b>National Defence</b>			
Miss Grey .....	363		
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	363		
Miss Grey .....	363		
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	363		
<b>Agriculture</b>			
Mr. Roy .....	363		
Mr. Vanclief .....	363		
Mr. Roy .....	363		
Mr. Vanclief .....	363		
Mr. Hilstrom .....	363		
Mr. Vanclief .....	363		
Mr. Hilstrom .....	364		
Mr. Vanclief .....	364		
<b>International Aid</b>			
Ms. Brown .....	364		
Ms. Whelan (Essex) .....	364		

  

		<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>	
		<b>Annual Report of the Chief of the Defence Staff</b>	
		Mr. O'Reilly .....	366
		<b>Government Response to Petitions</b>	
		Mr. Regan .....	366
		<b>User Fees Act</b>	
		Mr. Cullen .....	366
		Bill C-212. Introduction and first reading .....	366
		(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	366
		<b>Criminal Code</b>	
		Mr. Hanger .....	366
		Bill C-213. Introduction and first reading .....	366
		(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	366
		<b>Carrie's Guardian Angel Law</b>	
		Mr. Hanger .....	366
		Bill C-214. Introduction and first reading .....	366
		(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	367
		<b>Criminal Code</b>	
		Mr. Hanger .....	367
		Bill C-215. Introduction and first reading .....	367
		(Motion deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	367
		<b>Referendum Act</b>	
		Mr. Nystrom .....	367
		Bill C-216. Introduction and first reading .....	367



(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	367
<b>Business Development Bank of Canada Act</b>	
Mr. Nystrom .....	367
Bill C-217. Introduction and first reading .....	367
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	367
<b>Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985</b>	
Mr. Nystrom .....	367
Bill C-218. Introduction and first reading .....	367
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	367
<b>Parliament of Canada Act</b>	
Mr. Bellemare .....	367
Bill C-219. Introduction and first reading .....	367
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) .....	368
<b>Petitions</b>	
<b>Child Pornography</b>	
Ms. Marleau .....	368
<b>Stem Cell Research</b>	
Mr. Casson .....	368
<b>Pedophilia</b>	
Mr. Keyes .....	368
<b>Stem Cell Research</b>	
Mr. Szabo .....	368
<b>Fisheries</b>	
Mr. MacKay .....	368
<b>Middle East</b>	
Ms. Bennett .....	368
<b>Bangladesh</b>	
Mr. Malhi .....	368
<b>Questions on the Order Paper</b>	
Mr. Regan .....	368

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

<b>Committee Business and Reinstatement of Government Bills</b>	
Mr. Lanctôt .....	368
Mr. Szabo .....	371
Mr. Hilstrom .....	374
Mr. Marceau .....	376

Mr. Toews .....	378
Mr. Murphy .....	380
Mr. Bailey .....	382
Mr. Patry .....	383
Mr. Hearn .....	384
Mr. Solberg .....	387
Mr. DeVillers (Simcoe North) .....	389
Mr. Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands) .....	391
Mr. Jaffer .....	393
Mr. Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls) .....	395
Mr. Breitzkreuz .....	396
Mr. Benoit .....	398
Mr. Regan .....	400
Amendment negatived .....	403
Motion agreed to .....	404
(Motion, 2B agreed to) .....	404

#### EMERGENCY DEBATE

<b>Agriculture</b>	
Mr. Clark .....	404
Motion .....	404
Mr. Borotsik .....	405
Mr. Vanclief .....	407
Mr. Maloney .....	408
Mr. Harper .....	409
Mr. Hilstrom .....	411
Mr. Desrochers .....	413
Mr. Proctor .....	415
Mr. Hearn .....	417
Mr. Mark .....	418
Mr. Mitchell .....	419
Mr. McCormick .....	420
Mr. Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands) .....	422
Mr. Merrifield .....	423
Mr. Binet .....	425
Mr. Easter .....	426
Mr. Stoffer .....	427
Mr. MacKay .....	428
Mrs. Skelton .....	429
Mr. Benoit .....	431
(Motion agreed to) .....	432

**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Communication Canada - Publishing  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

*En cas de non-livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*

Communication Canada - Édition  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

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

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

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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