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—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, December 9, 2002

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

• (1105)

[*English*]

Ms. Paddy Torsney: Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties and if you seek it I think you would find unanimous consent for the House to go to presenting reports from committees to permit me to table a report of the Special Committee on the Non-medical Use of Drugs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Is there unanimous consent to go to presenting reports from committee?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the interim report of the Special Committee on Non-Medical Use of Drugs entitled:

[*English*]

“Policy for the New Millennium: Working Together to Redefine Canada's Drug Strategy”.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): It being 11:08 a.m., the House will now proceed to private members' business as indicated on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.) moved that Bill C-220, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (genetically modified food), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Bill C-220 is to require mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods.

Mandatory labelling would ensure that the genetic history of a food or food ingredient is recorded and traced through all stages of distribution, manufacture, packaging and, finally, sale. These steps would then ensure the integrity of the documentation trail, accurate labelling and would also prevent incorrectly labelled material from reaching the consumer. The Minister of Health would thus be able to monitor the presence of genetically modified foods in the food chain and conduct intensive research into the potential long term effects of genetically modified foods on human health.

Public concern with regard to genetically modified organisms, commonly referred to GMOs, is reflected in the result of public opinion polls. Canadians overwhelmingly support mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods. The most recent poll commissioned by the Government of Canada reveals that 84% of Canadians support labelling genetically modified foods.

As members may recall, Bill C-220 was introduced during the last session of Parliament as Bill C-287, which the procedure committee saw fit to deem votable. Bill C-287 received 91 votes in this Chamber and prompted the government to request a study by the Standing Committee on Health.

The study so far is not completed and is in limbo because last September Parliament was prorogued. In the meantime, the government relies on appointed bodies to study the question of mandatory labelling. One so-called consultative body the government turned to is the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee, to which I will refer to from now on as CBAC.

CBAC was charged with initiating a national dialogue on issues relating to biotechnology, including labelling. Its discussion paper and workshops produced very little response. Last August CBAC recommended against mandatory labelling. It said that it was too expensive, that it would lead to trade wars, that industry was not ready for it and that it would be better to go for voluntary labelling and check back in five years perhaps to see whether mandatory labelling might be advisable then.

Private Members' Business

While industry and lobbyists argue that mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods will result in consumers having fewer choices in future, their claim is also to the effect that labelling GM foods will result in mass consumer rejection of these products. However research exists to disprove this claim that, quite the contrary, labelling will not only recognize consumers' rights to know, but also, when given an informed choice, suspicion and reticence by consumers would be dispelled and they might even accept GM products.

Had the government decided to label GM foods as of the day they were introduced on the market, we would not have the problem of consumer acceptance. Consumers' reluctance, as we find it today, can be linked to the government's preference to deny consumers information about the food they eat.

In addition to this problem there is another one. Industry seems unwilling to recognize the fact that Canada is increasingly losing agricultural export markets because of our unwillingness to label genetically modified foods.

● (1110)

Moreover, other countries are developing the agricultural capability to capture these markets where they want the labelling of genetically modified food. Canadian canola farmers, for example, would benefit from mandatory labelling because presently they are unable to sell their product to the European Union. At present it is difficult to know precisely the economic losses being incurred as a result of the loss of export markets, but they are probably considerable given the fact that 37 countries, including the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, China, Mexico and Japan, now have in place or are developing the necessary legislation requiring mandatory labelling of genetically modified food.

Furthermore, we have the paradoxical situation whereby we label products for export so as to conform to foreign mandatory labelling regimes, and yet continue to tell Canadians here at home that it cannot be done for domestic purposes. Of course this inconsistency erodes public confidence.

The lack of consumer acceptance of genetically modified food has led a number of companies not to buy genetically modified ingredients. Canadian companies are not able to supply such companies because they cannot obtain from the Canadian regulatory authorities a certification that would say that their product is genetically modified organism free even when it is.

The case of Unibroue, a Quebec based brewery, illustrates the damage of the absence of a mandatory labelling system. It was notified by the government of France that it could export its beer to France only if it provided a certification that it did not contain genetically modified ingredients. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency certified Unibroue's beer as free of genetically modified ingredients. However the very same agency unexpectedly went to court to prevent Unibroue from using this certification and as a result Unibroue had to seek a European genetically modified organism free certification. The lack of mandatory labelling almost cost Unibroue its entry into the entire European Union markets.

While the Europeans now benefit from knowing that Unibroue's beer is genetically modified organism free, Canadian consumers are

denied this information. In addition, concerned about the unclear genetic integrity of Canadian corn, Unibroue had to import from France corn certified as non-genetically modified. Thus we are importing corn of which we produce plenty.

The conclusion for the rationale behind Bill C-220 is simply that Canadians do want to know what they eat and Bill C-220 addresses this right. Hopefully the health committee will conduct its study and provide recommendations for the government on the desirability of having mandatory labelling of genetically modified foods.

The fact is clear, whether the committee conducts its study or not, that five years, as recommended by CBAC, the committee I referred to earlier, is too long for Canadians to wait just for the possibility of introducing mandatory labelling by the year 2008.

● (1115)

The government, I submit, should act now in the public interest, and also in the interest, and this is never sufficiently and strongly enough underlined, of Canadian exporters, as the example I gave of Unibroue earlier indicates, by introducing mandatory labelling next year so that it can apply to the products we export and so that the consumer in Canada is also made aware of what we are facing domestically on the shelves.

To conclude, it seems to me that we are badly behind other nations on the labelling of genetically modified organisms, and procrastinating the appropriate action is definitely not in the public interest.

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have returned to the House to once again debate the mandatory labelling of genetically modified organisms or food. I guess in private members' business we can return to the same subject over and over as long as that bill comes up, but in listening to the speech of the member who sponsored the bill, I would say we have a situation where he and like-minded members of Parliament, and some members of the public and special interest groups who have a social concept of this issue, are basing the bill, as the member said, on public opinion polls.

That is what is wrong with the bill and that is why the bill was voted down in the last session of Parliament. The questions of labelling and food safety have to be based on science. They cannot be based on opinion. If social opinion were such that even if a majority of people felt a food that was not good for people must be good because they had been deceived through some kind of public relations program, would the government go ahead and say yes, that because they had asked for this unsafe food the government would give it to them? I do not think so, because the principle of science-based decision making on food safety and the laws that pertain to it is paramount over and above an individual member's belief as to whether or not Canadians should have food labelling.

The member talked about the study being done by our health committee, but he failed to mention that in fact another committee, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, also dealt with this issue. The committee did a report and made recommendations. I will refer to the Minister Agriculture and Agri-Food's response to the report. He said:

The Committee's report and hearings make a valuable contribution to public and government understanding of the complex and cross-sectoral nature of the genetically modified (GM) food labelling issue, and the implications of labelling for the agriculture and agri-food sector.

That is what we on the agricultural committee studied. The minister went on to say the following:

We believe that...[the] findings, along with those of the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee, provide the Government with strong support for a standardized but voluntary approach to GM food labelling—

That, of course, is to serve the consumer, and it is also to serve the interests of our trade, both for our exports and our imports, and the relationships we have with other countries.

That agricultural committee report was quite clear. Part of the issue that was dealt with was the fact that sufficient analysis has not been done and there is not a sufficient understanding of just what the trade implications are. If we have mandatory labelling here in Canada, for instance, we are telling countries like the United States and other countries that will be sending food into Canada that they have to meet certain labelling criteria set out by Canada. When it comes to trade, that very easily could be seen as a non-tariff trade barrier.

Obviously the world is working on a standardized system. I think that in the meantime we absolutely should wait and work through that process so that we do not end up trying to create these non-tariff trade barriers. That is exactly what is happening in the European Union right now. The Europeans are not against GMOs or advances in science. In fact, they have a mammoth industry right now in the research area of developing these very kinds of foods, as well as technologies and medicines in the case of health. In doing that, though, they are doing so in order to protect their agriculture industry, to keep imports out so they can just consume mostly their own foods and charge whatever price they want. That is why they are rattling the cages about this labelling and what they see as the right way to do it.

• (1120)

I would like to deal with the following point of view for just a moment, as I have touched on the economics of it and the trade implications that show this mandatory labelling bill is so wrong. From my comments it is obvious that neither I nor my party is in favour of this kind of legislation going forward. I find it strange to be siding with the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food on this issue, but sometimes he is right and on this one he definitely is.

The Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee has been mentioned. In this world, not everybody is so fortunate as to be from Toronto where people have good incomes and if they have some tough times and need food they can go to the food banks, and/or the government will provide them with some support. We can get a healthy diet here in Canada, but what about third world countries and those countries where there is virtually no income, or there are low incomes, and there are large populations that do need a healthy diet?

Private Members' Business

We see mammoth social unrest around the world because of poor diets and poor education. I would just like to refer quickly to the fact that genetically modified foods have a very big benefit to the world, particularly in feeding the poor and providing a balanced, nutritious diet for them.

The biotechnology advisory committee report mentions vitamin E, saying that it “is the most important fat-soluble anti-oxidant in our diet” and that it is “associated with a decreased risk of cardiovascular disease and some cancers”. Through GMO research on canola and grains, researchers have been able to increase this active ingredient by more than 95% by introducing a gene that aids in the conversion of a certain chemical to provide vitamin E. The report also states, “Iron deficiency is one of the most common dietary deficiencies worldwide and affects an estimated one to two billion people”.

Here is what is wrong with the labelling and the scare tactics of this type of legislation. Of course, I see my good old friend Mr. David Suzuki here too, who also is getting some coverage on the Kyoto agreement. What is wrong with this is that we are scaring the living daylights out of people who do not have the scientific information being put before them in regard to GMO technologies. Before the pooh-poothers and the naysayers get at me on this issue, let me say that we need only look at Zimbabwe, where large numbers of the population are starving and a lot of food aid was sent in. What happened was that the government over there said it would not allow the food aid because there might be something wrong with the GMO corn that was coming in to feed its people. Any government that will let its people starve because it believes the scaremongers who say something is wrong with GMO food just flies in the face of reason and flies against all sense of humanity.

The member sponsoring the bill talks about the acceptance of GMO foods. In Canada we have been eating GMO foods for many years now. Around the world people have been eating it for many years, in corn, soybean, canola and other crops. These crops all provide the base ingredients for most of the foods we eat. We are already eating them and they are safe.

If we want voluntary labelling, which we do have right now, if we want to export and get into a niche market that wants GMO free food, through identity preservation, we can do that right now. We do not need mandatory labelling.

• (1125)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this debate has come back to the House again and, unfortunately, it will have to come back several more times before people realize that consumers have the right to decide what they eat.

The previous comments are quite shocking, in my opinion. The suggestion is that if people don't like genetically modified foods and if they want these foods to be labelled, then it is because they are suspicious and want to hurt trade.

Private Members' Business

Like the hon. member who just spoke, I served on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. We heard experts speak about genetically modified foods. I also had the opportunity to sit once or twice on the Standing Committee on Health, which was discussing the same subject matter. I attended the committee's meetings and heard different sides of the issue.

Last year, along with my hon. colleague who is the Bloc's international relations critic, I also attended an event on World Food Day. We heard people working in developing countries speak about their experience.

I remember the urgent appeal they made when they said, "Be careful of genetically modified products, because this is not a way to help developing countries". This is not known this for sure.

For example, when the day comes that only a handful of companies own all the seed, this is not going to help the developing countries. If we are going to provide them with food, this may be open to question, but if we want to make it possible for them to be self-sufficient—the old saying about teach a man to fish, or to garden—there is no proof that genetically modified foods are going to attain that objective.

I am scandalized by the fact that about 95% of the population simply wants to know what it is eating. That is not complicated. The purpose of this bill—which, incidentally is not votable, unfortunately, and which was defeated when introduced last time by the colleagues of the member who introduced the bill this morning—is to require mandatory labelling, to inform the consumer if products sold or purchased contain more than one per cent of a genetically modified food.

It is simply a matter in my opinion of respect for the individual, the consumer. Consumers, it is increasingly said, can influence voting. I remember hearing in committee that consumers are not in favour quite simply because they do not know what will happen 20 years down the road with a transgenic product.

This is, I think, a good reason to question transgenic products, which may well be good. But why should I, as a consumer, not have the right to say that I do not trust them at this time? I am waiting for the results, I would like to have a choice about what I eat.

So let us label the foods we eat, the ones that contain GMOs. That does no harm. We are not pulling genetically modified foods from the market or making it any easier for them to get onto it, just giving the consumer the freedom to choose. I think that there is no greater right than the right to choose what we eat.

I recall mad cow disease 20 years ago in Europe, England in particular. They said it was not serious because sick animals are slaughtered and the meat is edible. As soon as it was well cooked, there was no longer any problem. Twenty years later, it was discovered that the disease could be transmitted to humans. It took 20 years to find that out.

So when I hear a consumer tell me "let us be cautious here", that is exactly what I as a consumer want to be.

● (1130)

I would like to be able to choose what I eat. For that reason, I do not think mandatory labelling hurts anyone. If there is nothing to be afraid of, if "There is no problem for health", as indicated by the hon. member, if there truly is no problem for health, then what is there to hide? Why is there resistance to mandatory labelling? If there is no problem, if I have no doubts, if I need not have any doubts, then there is no reason to hide that the food I buy contains genetically modified products.

Out of respect for the consumer and to be able to compete on the European market, labelling should be promoted. In Europe, it is not easy to sell products that are genetically modified. In fact, in some European countries, consumers want to know if the products they buy are genetically modified.

Trade is international. Those are arguments we heard during committee meetings. No one has said, "I guarantee you that genetically modified food does not present any problems". No one has said that. Everyone says, "It is too new, it is just the beginning. It has already been available on the market for some time now and it will become increasingly available. It is not thought to pose any health risks". However, no one can confirm this, here, or elsewhere in the world.

I remember taking a trip to Germany with some committee members. In Berlin there was a discussion specifically on the topic we are debating this morning. There too, according to several experts at the table, namely doctors and specialists of all kinds, no one was able to say that GMOs are absolutely safe. Nor could anyone say, "There is a risk". However, it was agreed that "Time will tell".

In the meantime, there is no reason not to allow consumers, who know no more than others, to have a choice when it comes to their foods. Choice means labelling and mandatory labelling. Obviously, we support this bill. Unfortunately it is not votable; it will only be debated. However, it allows us to discuss the issue once again. It also allows people to have a voice and to exert pressure.

As I was saying earlier, we are talking about the greatest respect that we could have for consumers. After all, why do the agricultural sector and the food industry exist in the first place? They exist because there are consumers. Without consumers, there would be no agriculture.

I remember, from when I used to work at the UPA in Quebec, that the main concern was always to satisfy consumers. The best way to satisfy them in this case—and it would be easy—would be to say, "We will tell you what you are eating. We will give you a choice. If you like genetically modified foods, you will know that you are eating them. If you want to avoid them, you will probably be able to choose to avoid them".

In fact, this reminds me that a brewery in Quebec, Unibroue, has announced a GMO-free beer. I do not have to buy this beer, but if I am afraid to purchase other beers, and if I am assured that there are no GMOs in this particular beer, I might choose it. And why should I not have the right to make this choice? I think that we should have mandatory labelling out of respect for consumers. Out of respect for everyone. Labelling would also promote new technologies. It would allow us to learn more about GMOs. It would allow us to take this further.

The Bloc Québécois supports this bill. However, we do not feel that it goes far enough. Unfortunately, this debate is only for debate's sake, because there will be no vote on the bill.

● (1135)

[English]

Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to join in this debate on Bill C-220 introduced by the hon. member for Davenport.

As indicated by the previous speaker, it is disappointing that it is not a votable bill. There are a number of items that have come up for debate in the House that are not votable. Many of us would like to see more votable bills. I guess until that process changes we deal with what we have and make a point of getting the message out to Canadians knowing that when pressure comes from Canadians there is greater pressure on the government to address their concerns.

My colleagues in previous debates this year, as well in other years, have brought up the issue of genetically modified products. That is not the crux of the issue that we are talking about here even though the question of whether or not there is a need for everything to be modified genetically does come into question when there is a situation where crops are made in such a way that the seed cannot be planted again.

There is a shortage of food in numerous countries. The idea that any company would see it as an essential thing to modify a seed so that there would not be regrowth is somewhat astounding. It is one of those areas where it is the final straw for a good number of people to realize that it is just something where a company is out to make money and it is not for the benefit of society.

The issue of whether or not labelling should be mandatory is extremely important. It has been suggested that voluntary labelling would do the trick. However, we have often seen that anything voluntary within business does not work. Those who see that—

An hon. member: That is just not true.

Mrs. Bev Desjarlais: My hon. colleague says that is just not true. In a good number of instances it is the only way to make it work because there are some businesses that, quite frankly, want to save every little bit of cost and therefore deny the right of consumers to know what they are eating in this case.

Approximately 90% of Canadians want to see labelling on food products that are genetically modified. For a variety of reasons over the years different types of labelling were suggested. At one point I asked, is it that important to even mention that there is a slight bit of nut oil in something? Then we saw tremendous allergic reactions to different nut products. We were more conscious of it and were not

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willing to see even one person die as a result of an allergic reaction simply because people could not find out if that product had nut oil in it.

Over time I have come to realize that it is crucially important that whatever consumers need in the labelling process it should be made possible for them to make an informed decision as to whether or not they would consume that product. We as a Parliament must ensure that the information is there. Voluntary labelling would not cut it. What happens within a society is, if there are a good number of products that are voluntarily labelled, there is a tendency for the public to think that the government has already established that foods must be labelled, so if it does not say it, we are okay. Quite frankly, that is not the case.

There are a number of Canadians out there to whom it has been brought to light on numerous different issues where they thought something existed because it was always done that way, but there was no legal responsibility and, as a result, they suffered the consequences. That is what the hon. member for Davenport has indicated in his years of experience in the House and within the environmental aspect of things.

● (1140)

I put a lot of value on his experience. The fact that he would come before us and say that we need mandatory labelling itself is a point that the government should be looking at. It is not often that I will sing the praises of any individual from the governing side, however the hon. member for Davenport has been extremely good in this regard, as have my colleagues from Palliser and Winnipeg North.

There is no question that 90% of Canadians want to see mandatory labelling. The government is ignoring that. Some 75% of processed foods found on our supermarket shelves contain some kind of genetically modified product. I must tell the House that since this debate has become more open I have started looking at things and reading more about it. I am shocked at the number of genetically modified products.

I know people who have different symptoms that are sometimes related to some of the things found in genetically modified products, or there is an indication that they may come from genetically modified products. Those individuals deserve the right to know so that they can make informed decisions as to whether they want to take chances with their lives. There is also an indication that some genetically modified products, apart from having allergenic concerns, may be toxic or even carcinogenic.

It is not a matter of saying that we do not know for sure because there have not been enough studies. I do not know about everyone else, but when I see that kind of wording I think, yes, but I have the right to make the decision as to whether or not I will be a guinea pig. I do not want myself being a guinea pig and I do not want my children being guinea pigs while someone decides whether or not it is a problem. I do not want my grandchildren being guinea pigs.

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We should have the right to make informed decisions as to whether or not we would take those chances with our lives. If other people still want to take those chances, so be it, but surely we must allow individuals to have the right to make those choices by having an informed labelling process which would allow them to make those choices based on proper information.

I am looking forward to hearing further debate on this. The real disappointment is that it is not votable. I wish to acknowledge again the work in this area by the hon. member for Davenport.

• (1145)

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Mr. Speaker, we have to get this debate back on track again. I heard what the member for Churchill had to say. First, this is not an issue of food safety. I have heard the fearmongering and the scaremongering. The member said that they wanted to ensure that the foodstuffs we consumed were safe.

Canada has safer food than anywhere else in the world. We have an organization called the CFIA that, with science, has proven that the food that we eat and ingest is safer than anywhere else in the world. Therefore this is not an issue about food safety, and I want to put that to rest right now.

We have been eating genetically modified foodstuffs for decades. We just now recently extended the life expectancy of Canadians to I believe 78 or 79 years, which is one of the longest life opportunities anywhere in the world. Please, this is not about food safety.

I obviously have touched a nerve with the member for Churchill. The fact of the matter is genetically modified foodstuffs have been with us for a long time.

The member also said that there was no benefits to society, that this was only a business benefit. The New Democratic Party is anti business, anti corporations, anti agriculture and anti just about everything.

This has nothing to do with non-societal benefits because right now society itself would love to have foodstuffs generated and grown that require less pesticides. Is that not wonderful? Would it not be nice to ingest less pesticides in our foodstuffs, the potatoes and the cereals we eat? Guess what? Genetically modified organisms allow for less pesticides to be used in the production of potatoes, canola and wheat. That means less pesticides go into the systems, and that is very positive.

Genetically modified products bring societal benefits. The same member said that there is a real serious problem for society because of the allergens. Now if that same member could only say that there is the possibility, through genetic modification or through biotechnology, that we could take the allergen out of the peanut, would not that be the best thing for society? I know from personal experience just how serious the peanut allergen can be. There is a good possibility, through the biotech industry, that could be taken out. That would be a huge benefit to society.

Here we have on one hand an individual who is arguing against genetically modified products and on the other hand is saying it is those same allergens that they would like to have removed from some of those products.

Let us move back to the issue here, the bill proposed by the member for Davenport. This is not the first time a bill requiring mandatory labelling has come forward. It came forward before, was voted on in the House and was defeated. This issue has been debated not only on the floor of the House but in numerous committees as well. Report after report say that voluntary labelling is the supported way to go, not mandatory. There are a couple of reasons for that.

A lot of the fearmongering that we have heard comes from a lot of the environmental activists. However, as was mentioned earlier in a comment from the Alliance, a lot of that is more of a non-trade barrier put into place for trade, not because of the GMO but because they do not want our crops and products to have access to their marketplaces. Let us ensure that we talk about this with some knowledge, first, and, second, with not quite as much emotion and passion that has been put forward by the environmentalists.

• (1150)

I would have preferred to have heard from the agriculture critic for the New Democratic Party, who obviously has been very instrumental in a lot of the committees in which we have been involved. He hears, he has heard and he is a very knowledgeable individual. I wish he could have talked to this as opposed to someone who has never had any experience in those committees or who has never heard the other side of the argument.

The other side is quite substantial. There are three things about which we should know.

First, the agriculture committee sent forward some recommendations in a report on genetically modified organisms. One recommendation was that we ensure we got the right information to the public and that we educate it properly so it would have the proper information that would backstop a lot of the misinformation which had gone out from the activists. That is extremely important. We have to know exactly with what we are dealing. It goes back to what I said initially. It has to be based on science, not simply a motion. Therefore the first thing is we have to educate the public.

Second, we have to ensure that the public and the House recognize that we have a requirement to maintain international standards, for two reasons. We have to access export markets because, from an agricultural perspective, we export a lot of product. We have to ensure that we can access those markets. We need to have the same standards as set in other countries.

The proposed legislation calls for a 1% tolerance. The tolerance being recommended is 5%. It is almost impossible to deal with a 1% tolerance. Therefore we have to ensure that is identified and recognized.

Third, we have to recognize that every report I have on my desk right now says that voluntary labelling is the way to go. Our report, the blue ribbon report and other reports all say voluntary labelling, not mandatory labelling. If it was mandatory, the third problem we would have would be cost.

Private Members' Business

The recommendation from the agriculture committee was to ensure that we identify the real cost would be to producers and consumers. There is a thing here called segregation. We have to ensure that we segregate products, that is GM and non-GM. To do that and to ensure that we can testify that the product has less than a 1%, 3% or 5% tolerance will cost a lot. In fact some people who appeared before the committee said that it would be almost impossible to segregate GM and non-GM.

We have products in our country right now, canola, soya, corn and even potatoes, that were genetically modified for the right reasons and not just because big business wanted it. Not only was it good for the producer but it was also good for the consumer. However we have to segregate that to say that unequivocally on mandatory labelling that there is less than a 1% tolerance. It cannot be done and the cost to do it would be passed on to the consumer. Therefore those same consumers, the 90% that the member for Churchill has indicated have stood up, waved their flags and said they want mandatory labelling, have no idea of the cost.

If we want to make an analogy between that and Kyoto, which again is a bit of an irony because the member also supports Kyoto, the public now after being faced with some of the true costs are now turning against Kyoto. They are saying that they want to know the real plan. They want to know what the costs will be for consumers when and if Kyoto is implemented. The same thing is true of genetic modification. Consumers have a right to know what the costs will be for them to achieve that 1% tolerance and that mandatory labelling.

The member for Davenport brought the bill back. It is not votable this time like it was last time, and it was defeated. I suspect the member for Davenport will continue to bring it back until he gets his way. The fact is he is whistling in the wind and everybody who knows about the issue realizes that voluntary labelling is the way to go and it is not an issue of food safety. The food that we consume is the safest of any country. We should never try to put food safety and genetic modification in the same breath.

• (1155)

Mr. Larry McCormick (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Davenport for bringing this issue to the attention of the House again. I hear people discussing this from all sides of the issue. They are not really that far apart. We are talking about voluntary labelling, mandatory labelling and we are making some really good progress toward this.

I want to acknowledge the great work on the GMOs and on any environmental issue by one of the great deans of the House, the member of Parliament for Davenport, who I respect. I thank him for his work and is always sharing it with Canadians. I also want to thank the excellent work done on this issue by Dorothy and Lauchlin Chisholm, residents from the great riding of Ottawa—Vanier and formerly of HFL&A, Napanee, friends of the riding and personal friends of my wife and mine forever.

We may differ a little bit on this but as the House may be aware, Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency share accountability for food labelling policies under the Food and Drugs Act. Health Canada's responsibilities derive from this mandate for health and safety issues, while the Canadian Food Inspection

Agency is responsible for protecting consumers for misrepresentation and fraud and for prescribing basic food labelling and advertising standards.

Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency recognize that the labelling of foods derived from biotechnology has become an important issue for consumers. The Government of Canada continues to discuss an appropriate approach for the labelling of biotechnology derived foods with Canadians and international standards organizations around the world. Several initiatives are underway to determine the most appropriate mechanism for providing consumers with information necessary to make informed food choices.

We are here to discuss a private member's bill, Bill C-220, which was put forward in the House and which was defeated in October 2001. Like the previous bill, this bill proposes amendments to the Food and Drugs Act to make labelling and post-market monitoring of genetically modified foods mandatory. Specifically, the bill proposes mandatory labelling of food containing more than 1% genetically modified material, either as a genetically modified food, a genetically modified food ingredient or an ingredient derived from genetically modified organisms.

It should be noted that one initiative currently underway in Canada is the development of a Canadian standard for the voluntary labelling of foods derived from biotechnology, a project led by the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and the Canadian General Standards Board, CGSB.

The development of the draft standard involved the participation of a committee composed of approximately 100 organizations, including consumer groups, food companies, producers, environmental groups, general interest groups and government, in several meetings held since November 1999. The proposed standard describes requirements for making positive or negative labelling claims regarding the presence of a food or food ingredient that is a product of genetic engineering for either single or multi-ingredient foods. A tolerance level of 5% is being proposed with verification by either analytical methods or proper documentation.

We would like to note that significant resolution has been achieved by the CGSB committee since the first ballot vote held in January. If the second ballot is successful, the final standard could be published as early as spring 2003.

Like the CGSB's voluntary standard, the bill provides a narrower definition of genetically modified food than what already exists under division 28 of the Food and Drugs Act, also referred to as a novel foods regulation. Under division 28, "genetically modified" includes modifications obtained through the use of more traditional techniques such as chemical mutagenesis and conventional breeding as well as those obtained from modern biotechnology.

Private Members' Business

The novel foods regulation permits Health Canada to assess the safety of all novel foods, irrespective of the method used for the development and thus including genetically modified foods prior to their sale in Canada. Only after a novel food is determined not to pose a health or safety concern is it allowed to be sold on the Canadian market.

• (1200)

Mr. Speaker, we have the safest and I would say the best food in the world today.

Health Canada notes that Bill C-220 proposes a 1% tolerance level but does not provide a rationale for the specific tolerance level, nor does it define specialty foods which the bill proposes to exempt from the prescribed requirements. In addition, it remains unclear how this tolerance level would be applied to multi-ingredient foods.

Health Canada also notes that the proposed amendments would apply to products such as oils and refined sugars which contain neither recombinant DNA nor expressed protein after processing. For these products, verification would have to rely on documentation alone.

Bill C-220 also proposes that the Minister of Health maintain a publicly available list of all foods offered for sale in Canada that contain more than 1% genetically modified material.

In view of the diversity and constant evolution of the Canadian food supply, the maintenance of such a list of individual marketed foods that have a content of more than 1% material that is derived from a genetically modified organism would demand a considerable investment of time and resources.

For example, it is estimated that today the average grocery store contains more than 20,000 different products, approximately 70% of which are multi-ingredient processed foods. As a result there is a large number of foods on the shelf today which at one point or another may contain one or more GM ingredients or no GM ingredients at all. This is because manufacturers regularly change the formulation of these foods, depending upon the availability and price of individual ingredients. Overall the large number of products affected and the frequent changes in product formulations make the maintenance by the department of a current list of products containing more than 1% GM material challenging and impractical.

In addition, to facilitate the creation of this list, effective strategies for segregation and tracking throughout the food production and distribution chain would have to be developed for all commodities.

Bill C-220 also proposes that the Minister of Health be responsible for conducting research, including post-market monitoring of genetically modified foods.

The government invested \$90 million to enhance the regulation of biotechnology in budget 2000. Health Canada and other departments have established research programs which are aimed at further enhancing the scientific capacity underpinning our safety assessment of biotechnology products.

The research program conducted by Health Canada includes projects on post-market monitoring approaches for biotechnology derived products, including genetically modified foods; animal

models for assessment; and toxicity testing of whole foods. This investment further confirms the federal government's commitment to ensuring that products allowed on the market in Canada are safe and nutritious.

I know the debate will continue for a long time. As I said earlier, I think we are close to getting together on this. It is a matter of education. Do people want to have all the products in the grocery store with a GMO label on them, or do we want to arrive at say, a 5% level where we could work together on this?

In conclusion, the bill was clearly intended to respond to consumer demands for choice. However as I have noted, there are several elements in the bill which require greater consideration.

The government will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders and indeed all interested Canadians to develop mechanisms that provide meaningful information to Canadian consumers regarding food derived from biotechnology that is consistent with international approaches. We will continue to have the best and the safest food in the world.

• (1205)

Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this debate is all about choice. It is a debate on which Canadians have made their opinions very clear. Canadians are calling for mandatory labelling of genetically modified organisms.

Under the Food and Drugs Act as it stands right now, the government and others certainly are able to undertake a voluntary labelling approach. There is a Royal Society of Canada report that is often quoted as saying that it had accepted voluntary labelling, but let us be clear. The Royal Society of Canada report identified 53 recommendations that were absolutely imperative to implement before undertaking any form of voluntary labelling. Until those recommendations are met, this is not something on which Canadians can go forward with a great deal of confidence.

One has to understand the issues that were raised in the Royal Society report. The Royal Society is an independent scientific body of experts which identified issues around making regulations and risk assessments which are absolutely vital to restoring the confidence of Canadians.

The Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee was also charged with initiating a national discussion on the issue of biotechnology. Unfortunately many criticisms of this process have been put forward, including that the group has a very strong industry bias. It is interesting to note that very few members of civil society provided input into those discussions, yet the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee was able to come forward with a recommendation for voluntary labelling.

As I pointed out, with a group that has such a strong industry bias, that ability already exists. There is a demand in the public for choice and choice will only happen with mandatory labelling.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. As the motion has not been designated as a votable item, the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

Earlier today the Speaker's office received notice from the opposition House leader that he wanted to raise a question of privilege. The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast has the floor.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege to charge the Minister of National Revenue with contempt for her failure to comply with a legislative requirement compelling her to table a report on cases of theft, fraud and losses of taxpayers' money in the Public Accounts of Canada as required by the Financial Administration Act.

Section 79 of the Financial Administration Act mandates the reporting of losses of money or public property. In the national accounts, the report is made in volume II, part II, chapter 3, which is "Supplementary Information Required By the Financial Administration Act".

Section 23(2) states:

The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the appropriate Minister, remit any tax or penalty, including any interest paid or payable thereon, where the Governor in Council considers that the collection of the tax or the enforcement of the penalty is unreasonable or unjust or that it is otherwise in the public interest to remit the tax or penalty.

In the case of the GST fraud, the government has elected to remit the tax. Subsection (4) provides that a remission pursuant to this section may be granted:

(a) by forbearing to institute a suit or proceeding for the recovery of the tax, penalty or other debt in respect of which the remission is granted; (b) by delaying, staying or discontinuing any suit or proceeding already instituted; (c) by forbearing to enforce, staying or abandoning any execution or process on any judgment; (d) by the entry of satisfaction on any judgment; or (e) by repaying any sum of money paid to or recovered by the Receiver General for the tax, penalty or other debt.

Section 24(2) states:

Remissions granted under this or any other Act of Parliament during a fiscal year shall be reported in the Public Accounts for that year in such form as the Treasury Board may direct.

I stress the word "shall".

An article in the *National Post* on Saturday describes how the government has kept Parliament in the dark. Since 1995 it failed to report hundreds of millions of dollars in public money due to fraudulent claims for GST refunds.

Federal tax officials are required by law to inform Parliament about such theft and fraud. I stress the point that federal officials are required by law to inform Parliament about such theft and fraud. The government has failed to comply with this statutory requirement and therefore is in contempt of Parliament.

Privilege

According to the *National Post* in the 1994 public accounts, Revenue Canada reported 12 cases of GST input tax credit fraud. While the total losses were reported by the department as \$1.9 million, the department could not establish how much, if any, of that money had been recovered.

As more criminals exploited the scheme and fraud losses began to rise in the mid-1990s, the *National Post* reported that the information regarding such frauds vanished from the annual public accounts, with one exception. The department disclosed a case in 1995 regarding one of its own employees.

The *National Post* article references a CBC report that revealed that GST fraud has cost Canadian taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in losses. It said, "One expert told the public broadcaster that taxpayers may have lost \$1 billion over the past decade".

A spokesperson for the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency claimed that it stopped reporting these losses because they were not losses. I am not an accountant, but since the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency cannot recover the money, I would declare those losses as losses, as I am sure, would all other Canadians.

A footnote in the 1995 public accounts says that tax officials are unable to add up the losses from the GST fraud because their systems cannot provide the information. That is no justification for not informing Parliament.

The *National Post* reports that the former Auditor General, Denis Desautels, reported in 1990 an unidentified case of GST input tax credit fraud involving more than \$20 million in fraudulent refunds. This loss was not reported in the 1990 public accounts report or any report since.

We have experienced eight years of delay and the government has decided to refrain from collecting this tax because, by its own admission, it is unable to collect the tax. The government has not reported these losses to Parliament as required under the Financial Administration Act.

On November 21, 2001 the Speaker delivered a ruling in regard to a complaint by the member for Surrey Central who had cited 16 examples where the government had failed to comply with legislative requirements concerning the tabling of certain information in Parliament. In all of the 16 cases raised on November 21, a reporting deadline was absent from the legislation. As a result the Speaker could not find a prima facie question of privilege.

● (1210)

However, on November 21, 2001, the Speaker said in his ruling at page 7381 of *Hansard*:

Were there to be a deadline for tabling included in the legislation, I would not hesitate to find that a prima facie case of contempt does exist and I would invite the hon. member to move the usual motion.

The deadline in this case is an annual requirement for the government to table public accounts in the Parliament of Canada. It would appear this has not been done since 1995. This legislated deadline has not been met and therefore a prima facie question of privilege does exist.

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All Canadians have a right to hear from the Minister of National Revenue and the former minister of finance to find out why this was not reported to Parliament so that Canadians could have a look at this. This is a terrible affront to Parliament, to all members of the opposition and government backbench members who are not involved in the cabinet, to know that a cabinet deliberately hid this information from Canada and all members of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you find that there is a prima facie question of privilege and, if you agree, I would be prepared to move the appropriate motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): This is indeed a serious matter and I will take it under advisement for the Speaker to rule upon as soon as possible. The hon. government House leader.

• (1215)

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief because an important debate will commence momentarily.

The House leader of the official opposition referred to the fact that a remission may be granted. As a matter of fact there is a government program, known as the fairness package, that would invoke this. He indicated that there was a requirement that should this take place then the government shall report. He also added that, and I do not know if I have cited the words correctly, it should do so in the form that the Treasury Board will authorize.

The case has not been made that the form which the Treasury Board authorizes was in fact breached. That was not being invoked by the hon. member at all.

I will verify as to these facts and perhaps return to the House to make a further contribution on this point. If in fact there has been no breach pursuant to the methods established for reporting by the Treasury Board, it means that the hon. member is not correct.

Even if all that were true I am not at all convinced that there is a question of privilege here. There may very well be an interesting issue to raise at question period and perhaps in a subsequent adjournment debate, but that is not the same as claiming a question of privilege.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I will take the matter under advisement and send it to the Speaker for a ruling.

* * *

KYOTO PROTOCOL

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 Orders, Government Business No. 9, I move:

That debate be not further adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I declare the motion in order. Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1(1), there will now be a 30 minute question period, starting with the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, there is no need for me to go on at length about how shameful this is. It speaks for itself. Even the former finance minister has commented on how unsatisfactory the

consultations on this issue have been with both Parliament and Canadians.

Now the government is pursuing yet another agenda where its targets and its costs are unclear. The government has an abysmal track record when it comes to ramming policies down Parliament's throat without adequate consideration of costs in particular.

We have a gun registry that has gone 500 times over budget. We have the sponsorship scandal where millions was wasted. The HRDC has a billion dollar boondoggle.

Mr. John Reynolds: The GST.

Mr. Stephen Harper: Our House leader just mentioned the GST rebate fiasco.

We have the capacity for this once again. Already an internal audit of the environment department group overseeing Kyoto reveals the potential for, and I quote from its report, "errors, delays in processing requests, and...incomplete records".

Today we see in the newspapers that the government is playing around by guaranteeing large industries some kind of cap, a cap of maybe \$15 a tonne on the costs they would have to incur on emissions reduction, when most international forecasts peg the costs at well above that, up to \$80 per tonne.

My question is quite straightforward. Could the Minister of the Environment tell Canadians what steps he has taken or is taking to ensure Kyoto does not become yet another in the long list of multibillion dollar boondoggles?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the steps we have taken have been to work closely with the provinces and territories since not only Kyoto but also going back to the Rio agreement when Canada not only signed on to the Rio agreement but ratified it, ratified an undertaking not to allow human induced impact on climate to reach dangerous levels. Canada ratified that 10 years ago and since that time we have had continuous discussions with the provinces, the territories, a number of private sector groups and we have had a number of debates in the House, including the debate we had most recently on the ratification of Kyoto, which went on for over eight days in the House and involved some 33 hours of discussion time. There has been, clearly, very extensive consultations.

• (1220)

Mr. Stephen Harper: Mr. Speaker, it is just bizarre that the minister would cite his negotiations with the provinces. Relationships with the provinces on Kyoto have totally broken down under the minister.

[*Translation*]

My second question is on relationships with the provinces. All the provinces are challenging the government's approach to Kyoto. They presented 12 principles to ensure that costs will be spread evenly between the provinces and industry. However, so far, the minister has not done anything to explain to Canadians and the provinces how the Kyoto burden will be shared between the provinces and industry.

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Twice in as many months the minister was forced to cancel meetings with his provincial counterparts because of his inability to adequately inform provincial governments of his intentions.

What specific measures does the minister propose to get the provinces to accept this plan? Is it a first ministers' conference, or a meeting of environment and energy ministers?

[*English*]

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about the desire of the provinces to have the financial burden shared equally between provinces and the federal government. That in fact was not the request. It was in fact for the measures taken at the provincial level to be fully funded by the federal government. I am sure that he would be the first to understand how such a situation of one level of government not being responsible for raising the money, but nevertheless being responsible for spending, does lead to the very type of cost overruns that are most regrettable and we should try to avoid.

He also talked about the cancellation of meetings. Yes, it is true that one meeting of ministers, the energy and environment ministers, was delayed one week from October 21 to October 28, and subsequently a meeting of deputy ministers was delayed 10 days. However it did take place last Wednesday. Therefore it is pretty clear that we have had two meetings that were delayed relatively short periods of time and this is far from a collapse of federal-provincial relations.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Kyoto accord is a horrible deal that will do little for the environment and will kill jobs and investment in Canada. The investment freeze has already begun. Eight of the ten provinces know this and do not want the Prime Minister to sign on without a full plan and an accurate cost estimate.

On October 28 all provinces and territories agreed on 12 points they wanted the environment minister to agree to. He rejected three of them and refused to discuss them further. Three of the western provinces will now fight this in court. The government's so-called implementation plan goes on at length about cooperation with the provinces but in reality there is little cooperation. In fact the provinces have cancelled meetings with the environment minister because he will not listen to them.

Simply put, ratifying Kyoto is not the way to go and is a dereliction of duty.

When will the Prime Minister convene a first ministers' meeting to reach a consensus on ratifying Kyoto?

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to take note of the lengthy preamble of the hon. member. He talks about the investment freeze but it was in the House that I gave the figures, in response to a question about investment freeze from the other side, which pointed out that drilling rig utilization in western Canada this year was at the highest level it has been for years. These companies have had the opportunity to consider this since the Prime Minister announced the ratification in 2002, which he did in June 2001, and since he announced it in Johannesburg two months ago. It is perfectly clear that the industry out in western Canada is continuing to expand its operations despite its alleged investment freeze.

He then goes on to make the statement that we rejected out of hand three of the provincial proposals and refused to discuss them further. That is simply not so. We said that there were three that we could not accept immediately and that those were being discussed by the deputy ministers only last Wednesday.

• (1225)

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as a party we are always offended when we see government motions for time allocation or closure, and we feel that way with regard to this one, although, as we have made very clear, we are in support of the resolution to move ahead on Kyoto and that we should do so as quickly as possible.

We are actually confronted here as a House with a government that is trying to ram this resolution through after some five years of opportunities to move the process along. At the last minute, it is caught by the Prime Minister's decisions, and we are faced with the question of why it has taken so long. What has happened from 1997 to about six months ago when the Prime Minister finally decided he would ratify Kyoto? What has the government done to work on the implementation program?

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, we have been working on that since long before. We have been working on that with the other governments of Canada, provincial and territorial. We have been doing that in fact since before Kyoto, after Rio. We have been working on it for literally years. The hon. member is aware of that.

Certainly I agree with him that a decision to have closure is not what we would prefer. However after eight days and 33 hours of debate spread over three weeks what else could we do when we have filibusters by one member of eleven and a half hours of debating time?

The Alliance Party members applauded that but that is why at some stage democracy has to proceed after an adequate time for debate.

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Mr. Speaker, would the environment minister comment on the latest position of the former finance minister on climate change?

He spoke in the House during this debate on the need to have tax incentives for renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency initiatives and ethanol blended fuels. We all know that all these initiatives were directly under his purview when he was finance minister over the last five years. Therefore my question is quite simple. Who was the roadblock to implementing initiatives of that nature? Was it the Prime Minister, the finance minister or simply the environment minister who just did not have the courage to actually push the issue forward in cabinet?

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well aware of the measures that were put forward in the last budget of the former finance minister with respect to renewable energy. He did not bother to mention them of course but he is well aware of the \$260 million that was put aside in the budget for that.

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The former minister of finance had four points with respect to ratification: First, to maintain a strong and growing economy, for which I agree; second, maintain a climate of investment certainty, which is why we must have a decision on Kyoto, so that we get the certainty, and I agree; third, to reject the hot air credit purchases and invest in environmental technologies in Canada. Yes, I have said that we will not be purchasing this so-called Russian or eastern European hot air. The fourth point was to maintain openness and transparency in discussion with Canadians, which is precisely what we have been doing continuously.

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, here we go again. This is a very important public policy question that is very complex and we have the arrogance of the government in invoking closure again. When we look at the Liberal Party on arrogance it is like looking at the Grand Canyon. It is this big fact of nature that we cannot help but stare at.

The reality is that with the Kyoto accord two lines on a graph are crossing. There is rising public understanding of the Kyoto accord, and as people understand it more and more, people are liking it less and less. As more people are understanding it and fewer are liking it, the government has now decided to invoke closure.

Does the Minister of the Environment not understand what he is doing to the problems of national unity, to the problems of alienation, to the problems in western Canada and to the problems of economic development by invoking Kyoto without consulting the provinces? The government is doing this to give the Prime Minister a legacy and it is totally irresponsible in regard to the prospects of national unity. Why is the environment minister invoking closure and ramming through Kyoto without properly consulting—

• (1230)

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

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the member asks why we are invoking closure at this time. That is because we have had an extensive debate, with one member of his party taking a full 11 and a half hours in which he repeated himself time after time.

If the House is to have filibusters, the only logical option is for the government side to from time to time put in closure motions of this type.

Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Industry Canada recently released a report on the devastating effect Kyoto will have on certain sectors. The government tried to back away from this report when it saw the disturbing results.

The report indicated that Canadians can expect the following economic impacts over the long term: a 13% reduction in the agriculture industry; a 37% reduction in the iron industry; a 45% reduction in the coal industry; a 34% reduction in the petroleum industry; a 32% reduction in the electricity industry; and a 25% reduction in the chemical industry. The list goes on and on.

These are not our numbers. It is an Industry Canada report saying this. Canadians want to know this information, but are being denied

this information by the government, which is hiding any information that contradicts what it is stating.

Could the minister explain, in the government's blind rush toward ratification, what steps it will take to implement Kyoto without harming these industries to ensure that these industries are not devastated by the minister's foolhardy plan?

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member forgets to point out or does not point out that the industry study in question was done before we had an international agreement with respect to credits for sinks and before we had any plan in place. It is based on assumptions which are simply no longer true today, such as Canada being the only country to ratify.

There have been plenty of studies done on various scenarios, but picking one based on a scenario situation which now does not exist is not the way of advancing intelligent discussion of the Kyoto accord.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that we have always been in favour of a quick ratification of the Kyoto protocol. However, we cannot support such a motion for closure, which would fundamentally interfere with debate.

Earlier, the minister told us about investments in renewable energies. But the reality is different. From 1970 to 1999, \$66 billion were invested in the oil industry, compared to a measly \$329 million in renewable energies.

Will the minister admit that we cannot simply be content with ratifying the Kyoto protocol, but that we must go further? We must invest one dollar in the renewable energies industry for each dollar invested in the oil industry. This is the only satisfactory way to implement the Kyoto protocol in Canada.

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the principle mentioned by the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. It is true that we must go further. The hon. member indicated a specific means, that is levelling the playing field between the oil and gas sector, and the other industries involved in renewable energies. I do not know if that is the best solution. However, the main point and the principle raised by the hon. member is that we must go much further as regards renewable energies. I fully agree with him.

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my question has to do with investor confidence or, in this case, the lack of investor confidence.

A recent survey of Wall Street investment fund managers shows that foreign investor confidence in Canada's oil and gas sector would be crippled by Kyoto. Of those who have an interest in Canada's energy sector, 90% said the industry would be hurt, while 60% said they would re-evaluate investing in Canada's energy sector.

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In the Liberal government's race toward ratification it has failed to alleviate the fears of those investors, both Canadian and foreign. The extra costs the energy sector will face under Kyoto will not promote investor confidence. Not only will foreign investment be threatened by Kyoto, but Canadian investment threatens to go south.

I would like to ask the minister what specific steps he and his government have taken to try to ensure that foreign investment will remain in Canada during this period.

●(1235)

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, we have in fact guaranteed for the major emitters that there will be a 55 megatonne cap. We have, as indicated in this morning's *Globe and Mail*, entered into discussions with them with respect to a cap on price of carbon, so it is quite clear that we have been working with the large emitters, including the oil and gas sector, for quite some time to deal with some of the uncertainties which they have indicated they have concerns over and to make sure that those uncertainties are reduced to the minimum.

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the government would have us believe that no one region or industry sector in Canada would be unduly burdened by its made in Japan Kyoto scheme. In spite of the minister's promises to use taxpayers' dollars to lighten the burden of industry, here are the facts. In Alberta, TrueNorth, Petro-Canada, Husky Oil, EnCana, Nexen, ConocoPhillips and Canadian Natural Resources Limited have either limited or cancelled plans for new development and expansion because of Kyoto.

Petro-Canada's chief executive officer, Ron Brenneman, has stated that "Canada must provide opportunities" to keep Canadian investment from heading south. I will quote him: "It is so easy to screw up and the Kyoto protocol is an example of how Canada could screw it up". He has also stated that the Kyoto protocol is clearly discouraging investment in Canada. In light of the devastation that Kyoto is already having on investment in Alberta, what specific steps is the government going to take, starting today, to keep investment, energy investment in particular, in Canada?

Hon. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I indicated in the answer to the previous question some of the measures that are being taken.

I point out to the hon. member that the major problem we currently face in the tar sands development is cost overruns. These cost overruns are going up to 70% of original estimate. That is the major issue. Second, there is the uncertainty over price, uncertainty that is exacerbated by concern over what is happening in the Middle East.

These are major issues, and unless they are taken into account, to simply list what is probably the least important of issues affecting them is just simply not a rational approach to what is indeed, for the energy companies concerned, an issue of taking everything into consideration. That has been shown time after time by the business pages and by the statements by the energy spokespersons themselves.

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Madam Speaker, it makes no sense to blindly ratify any accord without knowing the impacts. Moreover, it is disingenuous to ratify an accord when the government knows it cannot even do it, because it cannot implement

an accord of this nature without the active participation of the provinces. That is what we did when we painstakingly earned bilateral agreements when we were able to build a provincial consensus on acid rain.

My question is for the environment minister. Before the government proceeds with any kind of an implementation strategy, given that it has sat on its hands for the last five years, will the government commit to developing a bilateral agreement with each and every province before it implements any kind of program?

Hon. David Anderson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member has raised the issue of agreements with each and every province. We know full well that if we guarantee to pick up the bill for everything they do in the climate change area, we will get their agreement, each and every one in turn.

An hon. member: There is only one taxpayer.

Hon. David Anderson: But as the Alliance members are now shouting out, there is only one taxpayer.

An hon. member: You got it.

Hon. David Anderson: Got it, and this is the problem with the Conservative member's approach, that is, it is quite easy to get agreement as long as one gives away the shop. We do not intend to do that. We have to protect the Canadian taxpayer.

We believe there should be a common movement forward by all 14 governments. We intend to negotiate agreements that are fair to all concerned and that also at the same time do not penalize any section of the country unduly.

●(1240)

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, on October 24 the government voted unanimously on an Alliance motion that required a full implementation plan outlining the costs and the impacts. What have we seen? Nothing but a slide show: no cost, no plan, no legislation.

What are the minister's own cabinet colleagues saying? The member for Edmonton West said, "An awful lot of countries have ratified Kyoto without a plan and that to me is irresponsible and frightening". The member for Vancouver South—Burnaby said, "It makes no sense to sign a contract before we understand its full impacts". Of course there is the member for LaSalle—Émard, who said, "...before there is a vote we have to have a plan. And it has to be a plan that Canadians can understand. One that sets out the benefits, one that sets out exactly how we're going to hit the targets and one that sets out the costs".

The minister continues to stand up and deny Canadians their right to find out what the costs are. He refuses to tell us. He says, trust me, believe in me. We have seen what happens when Canadians do that: a billion dollars on the gun registry and more scandals.

Why should one single Canadian trust the government on the future after its dismal, pitiful record?

Hon. David Anderson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member has a real problem. Having decided that there is no plan, he therefore has taken no time to read the plan.

S. O. 57

An hon. member: This isn't a plan.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Order. It makes it very difficult for the Chair to hear the answer of the hon. member. The hon. Minister of the Environment.

An hon. member: Where's the plan?

Hon. David Anderson: The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, who is still shouting after your warning, Madam Speaker, has failed to understand that there is a plan. If he looks at page 31 he will see listed in the body of it the information concerning illustrative costs for selected industries, et cetera. If he turns to the annex on pages 57 to 67, he will find 10 pages dealing with cost analysis. He will also learn that the basis for the cost analysis was done by agreement with the provinces and territories and that all 14 governments agreed to the approach for analyzing costs.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, regarding the minister's implementation plan for the Kyoto protocol, I have in my hands a document detailing changes in emissions between 1990 and 2010 for various industries.

For thermal electricity, the increase is 47%; for fossil fuel, 131%; for tar sands, 310%; and for manufacturing, 3%. I would remind the minister that manufacturing is the cornerstone of Quebec's economy.

Will the minister recognize the fact that placing the same burden on the fossil fuel industry as on manufacturing would mean penalizing Quebec, without consideration for its past performance?

Hon. David Anderson: Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked about various burdens, but the burden must be considered in a specific context. How can any industry reduce greenhouse gas? It is not simply a matter of level. It is a matter of knowing what that industry can do to reduce its emissions.

This is a difficult decision. Obviously, we did this for the heating oil industry. It was beneficial for that industry.

I am waiting for other industries to indicate that they also have special interests that must be considered. It is clear that we did a few things for the oil industry, including a 300% increase in tar sands production and a 400% increase in production off the coasts of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

[*English*]

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the environment minister says that he and his government are real good financial managers. Do members know that is what the justice minister said to us about the gun registry? There are 500 times increased costs due to the gun registry.

Here we have a minister that stands up and says he has a plan and he has illustrative cost estimates for industry. How can anyone in Canada trust that sort of jargon?

Let us now go from this portion of the debate, the portion of the debate that talks about the ratification of Kyoto, and let us talk about the next step after the government's rush to ratify, and that is implementation. What is the environment minister's first step in implementation of this gross mistake for Canada?

●(1245)

Hon. David Anderson: Madam Speaker, the first steps will of course be to continue with the discussions we are currently having with the provinces and territories to ensure that we do in fact move forward collectively as 14 governments, and to continue with the discussions we are having with industry which, as the hon. member is well aware, took place as recently as last weekend.

We will continue with that to ensure that what we do has minimum impact upon the economic future of Canada and achieves the goal of greenhouse gas reductions at the minimum cost to the Canadian economy.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the government has now established itself as the most undemocratic ruling party in Canadian history. It has shut down debate on issues that are important to Canadians some 80 times, and today marks number 81.

The choking off of debate today is the latest example of the disrespect the government has for Canadians, their jobs, their opportunities and their futures. Furthermore Canadians, the provinces and industry, have no idea what the actual cost of the Prime Minister's so-called green legacy would be.

Public support for the latest Liberal debacle is falling faster than a finance minister from the Peace Tower. Is this not the real reason the government decided to use closure today, and end the debate before there is no support left out in the real world for the latest Liberal debacle?

Hon. David Anderson: Madam Speaker, I do not know whether that is just an assertion of the hon. member or a question. I will take it as a question.

We decided to proceed with ratification in the year 2002. That decision was made in June 2001, some 18 months ago. There is nothing rushed about this. It was confirmed that there would be a debate and a vote in the House. That was confirmed two months ago. As has been mentioned frequently it is not essential prior to ratification but it is important to have the views of members.

I wish to comment on the original point of the hon. member. When we have one member out of the 301 members of the House speaking for eleven and a half hours in debate, it is a filibuster.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. David Anderson: Yes, the Alliance members applaud the filibuster. They like the filibuster because they know the inevitable result of a filibuster must be a time allocation motion like the one we are discussing at this time.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): There is no more time for questions and comments, unless the House would like to give unanimous consent for one more question.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Bakopanos): It being 12:48 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the main motion before the House.

[*English*]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Call in the members.

• (1330)

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

(*Division No. 29*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Anderson (Victoria)
Assad	Assadourian
Augustine	Bagnell
Barnes (London West)	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bertrand
Bevilacqua	Binet
Blondin-Andrew	Bonin
Bonwick	Boudria
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Bulte
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Cannis
Caplan	Carignan
Carroll	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chamberlain	Charbonneau
Chrétien	Collenette
Copps	Cotler
Cuzner	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dion
Dromisky	Drouin
Duplain	Easter
Efford	Eggleton
Eyking	Farrah
Finlay	Frulla
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Grose
Harb	Harvard
Hubbard	Ianno
Jackson	Jennings
Jordan	Karetak-Lindell
Keyes	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laliberte

Lastewka	LeBlanc
Lee	Leung
Lincoln	MacAulay
Macklin	Mahoney
Maloney	Manley
Marcil	Marleau
Matthews	McCallum
McCormick	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
O'Brien (London—Fanshawe)	O'Reilly
Owen	Pacetti
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Patry	Peric
Peschisolido	Pettigrew
Phinney	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pillitteri	Pratt
Price	Proulx
Provenzano	Redman
Reed (Halton)	Regan
Robillard	Rock
Saada	Savoy
Scherrer	Serré
Sgro	Shepherd
Simard	Speller
St-Jacques	St-Julien
St. Denis	Stewart
Szabo	Thibault (West Nova)
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)	Tirabassi
Vancilief	Whelan
Wilfert	Wood— 132

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NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)
Asselin	Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska)
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)	Benoit
Bigras	Borotsik
Breitkreuz	Brien
Burton	Cadman
Casey	Casson
Chatters	Clark
Comartin	Cummins
Day	Desjarlais
Desrochers	Doyle
Duceppe	Duncan
Elley	Epp
Fitzpatrick	Forsyth
Gagnon (Champlain)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gallant	Gauthier
Godin	Goldring
Gouk	Grewal
Guay	Guimond
Hanger	Harper
Harris	Heam
Herron	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hill (MacLeod)	Hilstrom
Hinton	Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lafamboise	Lalonde
Lebel	Loubier
Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
MacKay (Pietou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Marceau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayfield
McNally	Meredith
Merrifield	Mills (Red Deer)
Moore	Obhrai
Pallister	Penson
Picard (Drummond)	Proctor
Rajotte	Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Reynolds	Ritz
Schmidt	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
Spencer	Stinson
Stoffer	Strahl
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Toews	Wasylycia-Leis
Wayne	White (North Vancouver)
Williams	Yelich— 92

Government Orders

PAIRED

Members

Alcock	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bennett	Bergeron
Bourgeois	Cardin
Coderre	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	Discepola
Dubé	Folco
Fontana	Fournier
Fry	Galloway
Girard-Bujold	Harvey
Karygiannis	Lanctôt
Lincoln	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Ménard	Neville
O'Brien (Labrador)	Paquette
Parrish	Perron
Peterson	Plamondon
Rocheleau	Roy
Sauvageau	Scott
St-Hilaire	Torsney
Tremblay	Valéri— 38

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I declare the motion carried.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, there has been consultation among House leaders regarding the order of the day that you are about to call and I believe, if you were to seek it, that you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice, when the question is put on the sub-amendment to Government Orders, Government Business No. 9, divisions shall be deemed to have been requested on all questions necessary for the disposal of the said Government Order and the said divisions shall be deferred until 3:00 p.m. on December 10, 2002; and

That after 6:30 p.m. on December 9, 2002, the Chair shall not receive any quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent to propose any motion.

• (1335)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent of the House for the following motion. I move:

That during the remainder of the debate on Government Motion No. 9, any member, after notifying the Speaker, may divide his or her speaking time with up to three other members.

In other words, any member can divide his or her speech into two 10 minute speeches or four 5 minute speeches.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

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.): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to note that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik.

I am grateful to have an opportunity to make a brief contribution to the debate about climate change, a global issue that involves some of the toughest economic and environmental challenges we have ever known. I have a strong personal interest in this topic partly because of my western roots in the climate sensitive and energy intensive province of Saskatchewan and partly as a former minister of natural resources.

I spent a lot of time on this file and I fully appreciate the anxiety that many western Canadians feel. They are truly worried and we must deal with that. A way to begin is to underscore the huge long term importance of our energy industries. They include conventional fossil fuels and hydro power plus heavy oil, the oil sands, new frontiers in the north Atlantic and in the Arctic, plus nuclear power, plus a growing portfolio of renewable and alternative fuels like ethanol and fuel cells, plus the most sophisticated energy transportation networks in the world, plus world leading science and technology in Canadian energy innovation.

All this accounts for more than 7% of the nation's GDP, at least 200,000 high quality jobs, new capital investments in the order of some \$20 billion every year, exports valued at some \$50 billion annually and some \$15 billion in revenues to various levels of government. Clearly the energy sector is a major engine of Canadian prosperity and clearly that prosperity must not be endangered.

In all my personal consultations about climate change, one common point repeated over and over was that Canadians did not want to have to choose between a clean environment and a successful growing economy, as if the two must be mutually exclusive. Canadians want both together and any acceptable climate change plan for Canada must achieve these two ends simultaneously or it simply will not do.

One more absolute imperative is that any acceptable plan must be fundamentally fair. That, I believe, is our most important obligation. If the action we take is not seen to be fair and rational, it will run the risk of driving wedges between different groups of citizens, different parts of the economy and different regions of the country. That would be the worst possible consequence. We will not let that happen. We must not.

Government Orders

Our commitment to fairness and to economic common sense is on the public record. We have said repeatedly at the highest levels, no region, no province, no sector will be called upon to bear an undue burden. We cannot, must not and will not put our hard won economic success, the best in the western world, at risk, not nationally and not in western Canada either. We will safeguard Canadian competitiveness and an attractive investment environment. Our climate change plan must not export Canadian jobs.

Now having made those commitments, how will they be brought to life? This will be the key test, not so much the politically charged rhetoric of the past few weeks, but all the steps meticulously taken over the coming months to live up to that rule of fairness. If we fail on that score, we will have failed period.

To date, some important progress has been recorded which the private sector has welcomed. For example, the government would proceed with the heaviest emitters by means of industrial covenants. In other words, negotiated solutions with maximum flexibility, solutions that incorporate the principle of emissions intensity to recognize the imperative of ongoing economic growth.

This group of emitters, the biggest ones, must have and will have a firm cap on the volume of emissions that they will be expected to deal with over the next 10 years; 55 megatonnes, that is it, that is all and no more. On the cost side or the price per tonne of CO₂, work is also underway to provide a price cap to go along with the volume cap so these industries can fully understand their maximum possible exposure.

We can and we must do more in this regard, all designed to achieve certainty for business and investors as quickly as possible. In my province such certainty is crucial for the oil and natural gas sectors, for the heavy oil sector in particular, because Saskatchewan has the nation's biggest reserves of heavy oil which are no less important than the oil sands. Also, for coal fired electricity generation and for big industrial operations like IPSCO steel, certainty is crucial.

• (1340)

Let me quickly mention three other issues that carry special Saskatchewan significance. One of these is ethanol and the greater use of bio-fuels in Canada where Saskatchewan can be a true champion.

As a result of the steps that we have taken to date, Canada is now on a path toward 10% ethanol in about 35% of our transportation fuel by the end of this decade. That is an improvement over the mere 7% of market penetration today. However we are still only scratching the surface. In my view the goals are too timid. We should have a definitive year over year schedule, including a formal mandate if necessary, to get Canadian ethanol into at least 70% of our fuel supply within a decade. That will likely require significant public investment in further science and technology, in tailored capital tools, in strategic infrastructure and in production and blending incentives, all aimed toward rural Canada, especially rural Saskatchewan, to generate new markets for farmers, diversification, value added processing, business investment, new jobs and economic growth.

Second, from the point of view of Saskatchewan, I want to emphasize innovation beyond bio-fuels. The Government of Canada is already an important supporter of the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Research Council and at the University of Regina, the Petroleum Technology Research Centre, the International Test Centre for CO₂ Capture and the Greenhouse Gas Technology Centre. We need to expand that investment in three fields in particular.

First, carbon dioxide capture, transportation to and storage in deep geological formations such as the aging southeast Saskatchewan oil patch. It is estimated that western Canada could dispose of up to 50 megatonnes of CO₂ per year by this method. Second, clean coal technology to find greener ways to utilize this vast and low cost energy source that is so important to western based utilities. Third, heavy oil extraction with the least possible environmental footprint, including lower emissions.

If we want to find the climate change answers that work, then we need to make these types of investments in a province like Saskatchewan.

Third, for Saskatchewan, I need to mention green cover land use incentives for both agriculture and forestry, for more acreage dedicated to permanent cover, conservation cover, shelter belts and tree cover projects, all good for farmers and foresters and all legitimate carbon sinks. Finally, in the limited time available, I want to mention four international points that must be part of our planning.

First, just as we have fought hard to get what we needed from the world on carbon sinks, we need to keep fighting to get proper credit for Canada's clean energy exports. We should never give up on that.

Second, nuclear power is 100% CO₂ free. Canada should work persistently to get nuclear technology back into the definition of what counts in terms of international action against greenhouse gases.

Third, we have lesser developed economies. While it makes some sense for wealthier countries to move first, if big emerging economies like China, India and Brazil do not undertake emission reduction targets within a reasonable timeframe, then there is little practical value in the rest of us struggling with ours.

Fourth, we have the United States. For any global plan to work, the Americans must ultimately be real players. I witnessed the bizarre U.S. behaviour in Kyoto and its total flip-flop since. Still some U.S. states are indeed moving. Canada must be ever alert, both to American action and to its inaction. The critical issue for us is our competitiveness which we must not undermine.

Government Orders

I conclude with a simple but crucial proposition. When it comes to how Canada will implement its climate change plan, because of the extraordinary importance of the energy sector to western Canada and because of the fundamental importance of the west to the nation, the plan must work well for western Canadians or, in my judgment, it simply is not good enough. I am determined that my government will deliver the former and not the latter.

• (1345)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Madam Speaker, what is fascinating today in the Kyoto debate is primarily to be able to convey the views of my constituents and the point made by the president of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, following the conference, which was held this year in Kuujuaq and where resolutions were submitted concerning Kyoto.

On November 27, I received in my office a letter which reads as follows:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to urge you to support the resolution that the Government of Canada is about to present to the House of Commons to have the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations framework convention on climate change ratified.

This issue has raised a great deal of interest among politicians and the public, particularly over the past few months. Some provincial governments see the protocol as a threat to their economy. However, the federal government primarily sees it as a measure to protect the environment. Inuit have a third way of looking at it, a very interesting one in my opinion, that I am asking you to examine before taking part in the debate and voting on the proposal.

The climate change caused by human beings not only threatens northern Canada's economy and environment, but also our culture and way of life. It is a well known fact that this change will be more significant at higher latitudes: the media regularly show images of the permafrost that is melting and of emaciated polar bears. However, what is truly at stake in northern Canada is the survival of the Inuit culture. We are a flexible people and we are well known for adjusting to changes to the environment and the economy. However, the magnitude of the anticipated environmental change, based on computer models—essentially the disappearance of the summer sea ice in the Arctic by the middle of the century—will significantly impact on our ability to survive as a society of hunters.

We know that this global problem requires a global solution, and this is why we are recommending that you support the ratification of Kyoto. A “Canadian” approach more permissive than expected as regards volumes, and delays in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada is not the solution to this urgent problem for the Arctic.

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference brings together Inuit from Canada, Greenland, Alaska and Chukotka to discuss climate change in the world. We refuse to adopt an alarmist attitude regarding this issue, but we firmly believe that all those responsible for Canadian policy must base their choices on science, on Canada's long term interest in the areas of health and well-being, and on the precautionary principle that Canada and other countries accepted and adopted at the 1992 earth summit, in Brazil. It is for these reasons that I am asking you, on behalf of our people, the Inuit of the northern Arctic and circumpolar Arctic, to support the ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

Sincerely yours.

It is signed Sheila Watt-Cloutier, president.

• (1350)

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am indeed very happy to add my voice to the many who have spoken to the Kyoto protocol. I support ratification of the Kyoto protocol and I think we must do it as quickly as possible.

However, there is one thing that bothers me a bit. Once the agreement is signed, I wonder when it will come into effect. We have

heard talk of 2010, but this is a very urgent matter. This urgency should move us to act more quickly. In order to comply with this agreement, we will need to take certain measures. These measures will need to be taken by everyone. Also, we will need to follow the polluter-pays principle. Everyone knows that Quebec has taken care to protect the environment.

It is imperative that the protocol come into effect and that we forget about money for a minute. I am tired, and people in general are tired, of the fact that whenever the Kyoto protocol and protecting the environment are mentioned, money always comes up. It is as though money were more important than a healthy planet. As a grandfather, I would like to leave a healthy planet as a legacy to my grandchildren, instead of a planet that is more polluted. Unfortunately that is what is happening.

When I was an MNA in Quebec, I was assistant to Quebec's first Minister of the Environment, Marcel Léger, in 1976. I had the opportunity to get involved in important environmental issues. The problem remains the same: when the environment is the topic, so is money, but people forget that we are also talking about health and our future. We are also talking about the pleasure of living on a healthier planet, rather than one that is deteriorating.

In the 1980s, the pulp and paper industry experienced a major crisis. I was the member in charge of the issue for the Government of Quebec. We told the industry that it needed to clean up its act, and modernize. They claimed that the industry would go bankrupt. More than 20 years later, there is not one company in the pulp and paper sector that would want to go back to its old ways, when waste was dumped into the St. Lawrence and into lakes. The industry itself has said that cleaning up its act has paid off.

When I hear arguments that focus solely on the dollar sign and on the economy, when what is at stake is the future of our planet, I find that demoralizing. Not just for myself, but for those who will come after me, my grandchildren, your children perhaps, and those who will form the next generations. It is high time a decision was made to do something, and made promptly.

I have lived through the Saguenay floods and the ice storm in Quebec in the late 90s. I was in Europe when a hurricane cut a terrible swath through the forests of France.

• (1355)

I had an opportunity to work with and drive some of the forestry workers at that time. Similar things are happening again. This year we again heard news reports of hurricanes, of destruction leading to loss of lives and possessions. This is because greenhouse gas emissions are warming the planet at a terrible pace.

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I think that this is what ought to be of concern to us. At the same time, of course, it must not be a matter of making the same people, the same province, foot the bill every time. For example, Quebec has for years been making efforts to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. Clearly, the energy developed in Quebec is less polluting than that developed in other provinces. I think, however, that agreement must be reached between the provinces on the most logical possible solution, and the costs must be allocated as honestly as possible. The costs must not be feared, however. Returning to the example I gave just now, the pulp and paper industry's investment in protecting the environment is paying off, particularly since it is a matter of protecting the planet on which we live.

The Kyoto protocol is the subject of a debate that we have not heard the end of. This agreement must be ratified and then action must be taken as soon as possible.

I was looking at a magazine featuring cars this morning. For the past 20 years, we have had the technology to make car engines more energy efficient. In 1980, I personally saw a Cadillac that ran on a small four cylinder engine. The car operated and carried its passengers beautifully. There were not any problems and it was comfortable. Today, we have gone back to driving gas guzzlers. It is almost scandalous. There are vehicles that use 18 to 20 litres of fuel every 100 kilometres. It does not make any sense. I hope that with agreements such as Kyoto, we will surely find a way to decrease energy consumption and to develop clean energies. It is possible.

There has not been as much investment in developing renewable and clean energies as there was for developing fossil energy such as oil. Since 1990, that is, 12 years ago, \$66 billion was invested in developing fossil and polluting energies, whereas only roughly \$350 million was invested in clean energies. Could we possibly become logical enough again to create employment not only in the oil industry, but also in the development of clean energies? We will still enjoy all the comfort we need, but without polluting the planet, like we are now.

It is simply a question of being honest with people and with future generations, my grandchildren, your children and anyone who will inhabit this planet, so that it will remain habitable.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I apologize for interrupting the hon. member, but you may continue after oral question period. We will now proceed to members' statements.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is time for a reality check on the government's changes to the child porn law. Soon it will be okay in Canada to write child porn, just be prepared to defend it in court, just like John Robin Sharpe did with the backing of the Civil Liberties Association, and he won.

How can the government not see that there will be no end of deranged people willing to write porn and defend it publicly, and to

use the courts as a stage for their twisted view of children as sex toys.

The government has not closed loopholes. It has opened the door to non-stop public defence of child porn. It had a chance. It could have used the notwithstanding clause but it chose not to use its most powerful weapon against child pornography.

The question that Canadians should ask themselves now is, why? On behalf of the Canadian Justice Foundation, Mad Mothers Against Pedophiles and others, I say, shame. To Canadians, I say do not count on the government to defend children. It is time for Canadians to take action of our own, to put the safety of our children ahead—

• (1400)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

* * *

CONVENTION CENTRE

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, December 4, the Prime Minister and Premier Campbell of British Columbia announced \$495 million for the expansion of a convention centre in Vancouver.

The convention centre is expected to generate over \$1.5 billion in economic benefits to the industry, over 6,700 person years of employment during construction and 7,500 full time jobs throughout the province once the expanded facility is operational.

For many years the federal B.C. Liberal caucus worked closely with the Prime Minister and cabinet ministers to develop this much needed expansion to the convention centre. The agreement brought the three levels of government in British Columbia together to solve the need for a larger convention centre that will benefit all British Columbians.

* * *

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents of Ottawa Centre, as well as Canadians, remain deeply attached to the core values found at the heart of health care and they want health care to remain a publicly funded and operated system that offers universal service to all Canadians.

Last week I received a call from one of my constituents who grew up in P.E.I. at the time when health care was provided on a private basis and based on a person's ability to pay. He reminded us that our society has already experienced private health care and that any return to the past would effectively end the principle of universal health care for all Canadians.

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On behalf of Ottawa Centre, I thank the Prime Minister for taking this excellent initiative and adopting a long term view to preserving our health care system. I also congratulate Mr. Romanow for a job well done.

* * *

[*Translation*]

RADIO NORD COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Madam Speaker, a labour dispute has been dragging on at Radio Nord Communications in Abitibi—Témiscamingue since October 25. As a result, the population there is being deprived of a source of information provided by real reporters.

This company is in a monopoly situation as far as regional television coverage is concerned, being affiliated with TVA, Radio-Canada and TQS.

The services provided by Radio Nord are deteriorating and this has a direct impact on the people living in communities far removed from major urban centres.

Radio Nord no longer has any reporters assigned to the Abitibi West region, or even in the Témiscamingue area.

Radio Nord is gradually disengaging from Abitibi—Témiscamingue by centralizing its operations in Gatineau.

Radio Nord has applied to the CRTC to reduce the length of its regional news broadcasts on each of its stations.

Both parties need to return to the bargaining table and reach a negotiated agreement.

* * *

ÉDUKO-POP DES BOIS-FRANCS IN VICTORIAVILLE

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Éduko-Pop des Bois-Francis in Victoriaville will be receiving financial assistance between October 21, 2002 and March 2003 for its project Stratégie 2003.

In conjunction with the Commission scolaire des Chênes and two other school boards, this organization is working to improve the availability of literacy services in the central Quebec region.

Their intended approach is to develop an action plan in order to design communication tools and get all stakeholders in the region involved.

I wish them all the best in their undertaking.

* * *

[*English*]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the former finance minister seems to have twisted himself into a knot once again on the Kyoto file. He has been for Kyoto, with conditions; he has been against Kyoto, with conditions; and now he is telling Premier Klein, "Trust me because I'll straighten it all out later when I win the Liberal leadership race".

Why should anyone trust him? In the period of a few short weeks he has managed to betray both the pro and anti Kyoto forces. He said that we would never support Kyoto if it would create investment uncertainty, damage our economy or punish a single region. Kyoto has already done all those things and the contortionist former finance minister just watches with amusement and pats himself on the back with his own left foot. But then practising extreme yoga, turning oneself into knots, and being all things to all people is only difficult if one happens to have a spine, something that the member for LaSalle—Emard is missing.

* * *

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

LITERACY

Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to inform the House of two initiatives supported by the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada in the riding of Lotbinière—L'Érable.

The organization ABC Lotbinière received \$19,000 for a study on distance education using the Internet. The next stage will be to develop a distance education Internet site to enhance access to literacy services.

In Sainte-Sophie de Lévrard, the Centre d'action bénévole of the Bécancour RCM received \$12,000 to develop a communication plan designed to raise public awareness of illiteracy.

It is through such community initiatives that the people of Lotbinière will be able to address the problems associated with illiteracy and build empowerment on a day to day basis.

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ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today is the day when the dean of the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe has to produce his report to meet the requirements of the American Veterinary Medical Association, confirming whether or not the funding is available to make the required improvements. The Government of Quebec did its share months ago, with a \$41 million investment.

But the dean has received nothing from the federal government. He will have nothing to report because of the failure to act of this government, which is still refusing to fund the only French language veterinary college in North America.

Instead, the dean will have to announce to the college's 400 French-speaking students that the validity of their diplomas may be questioned and that this government would rather keep its billions to fund sponsorship programs exclusively designed to reward friends of the Liberal Party of Canada, or that the federal Liberal members from Quebec prefer to engage in petty partisan politics, rather than deal with issues that are fundamental to Quebec.

Ottawa has no money to spare for a jewel in the crown of education in Quebec and a vital part of our scientific heritage. Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Quebecois will not let the federal government sabotage this institution and, once again, weaken Quebec.

* * *

MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, violence only leads to violence. All violence, no matter what kind or who perpetrates it, must be roundly condemned.

This is why, as a parliamentarian, I must speak out against and strongly condemn the remarks made by the leader of Hezbollah's political wing, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah. Last week, he called upon young Palestinians, encouraging them to become human bombs around the world.

This call for suicide bombers will only increase terrorism and the number of innocent victims worldwide. Furthermore, these senseless remarks will only delay negotiations to re-establish a dialogue aimed at finding a fair, equitable and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

For this reason, I am urging the Government of Canada to take direct action to intensify efforts to rapidly renew peace talks and ensure an end to all this needless violence.

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[English]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today the Prime Minister confirmed his legacy. Was it a cure for Canada's ailing health care woes, a solution perhaps for the problems plaguing the firearms registry, or a bold initiative to bring about peace in the Middle East? No, it was none of these. It was the stifling of the free and open debate on the Kyoto accord.

Earlier today the Prime Minister closed off debate on this important issue. If used on occasion closure is a distasteful practice but this Prime Minister has taken this undemocratic tactic to a whole new level. Today, as a matter of fact, marks the 81st time that the Prime Minister has muzzled debate in the House, a total that would make even the previous record holder, Brian Mulroney, blush.

Through actions such as this there can be no doubt that the Prime Minister will go down in history as the most dictatorial and arrogant Prime Minister of all times. Now that is a legacy.

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[Translation]

MICHEL BERTHIAUME AND ALLAN LONEY

Mr. Serge Marcil (Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to underscore the courage of two individuals in my riding of Beauharnois—Salaberry, Michel Berthiaume and Allan Loney, who received the Medal of Bravery today for an act of bravery under dangerous circumstances.

On September 10, 1999, they came to the rescue of a colleague who was seriously injured during an explosion at a chemical plant in Saint-Timothée, Quebec. Alerted by the sound of the explosion, they

S. O. 31

ran toward the victim, who, despite his injuries, had managed to escape the burning building. Despite the risk of collapse of the brick wall, next to which the victim was lying, and the shower of explosive debris, Messrs. Berthiaume and Loney carried the victim a distance from the building where hundreds of kilograms of explosive powder could have ignited at any moment. They then laid the man down in a van and administered first aid until help arrived.

Congratulations.

* * *

• (1410)

[English]

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is no end to the government's wasting of taxpayer dollars: the billion dollar boondoggle by HRDC, millions of untendered contracts to Groupaction, millions more to Attractions Canada to promote tourism when we already fund the Canadian Tourism Association, and now the 400% cost overruns of the gun registry.

Under the direction of the former finance minister from LaSalle—Émard, the Liberals slashed health care funding and cut EI benefits while raking in a \$40 billion surplus.

The Liberal government pretends to care about Canadians while wasting dollars that could go to health care funding.

The Prime Minister has received the Romanow report. Canadians have spoken but is the government listening? Is the Liberal government promoting Romanow's recommendations? No, it is silent. Canadians wanting to review the report must pay \$49 to get a copy.

Canadians want a publicly funded, publicly delivered system. Canadians agree that there should be accountability by the provinces but how can the Liberal government ensure that accountability when it misuses and abuses taxpayer dollars?

S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Ms. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this government has had too many scandals to count. On Saturday, we learned that certain Liberal cronies were awarded contracts of close to \$150,000 to surf the Internet. Some devoted supporters of the Liberal party tried to convince us that they worked more than 10 hours a day for 365 days of the year, for the benefit of Canadians and Quebecers. Others appear to have submitted somewhat padded bills as well.

However, it is unfortunate that the revelation of these scandals was depended on leaks, reports from the Auditor General and informed but usually anonymous sources.

Time passes, but the names remain: Gosselin, Everest, Groupaction, Lafleur, Polygone, Coffin. Unfortunately, while the players are the same, the sums of money involved continue to grow.

How long will it take to finally see the light at the end of the tunnel? How long will it take before we really find out the true extent of the damage? Will we have to rely on Groupaction to get the study done?

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[*English*]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 54 years ago today, the United Nations adopted the genocide treaty, sometimes referred to as the never again treaty, to prevent and protect against this most unthinkable and unspeakable of crimes.

Regrettably, and incredibly, genocide became the paradigmatic form of armed conflict in the 1990s, including the advocacy and perpetration of genocide in the Balkans and Rwanda.

The enduring lesson of the Holocaust is that Nazism succeeded not only because of the industry of death but because of the ideology of hate. It was this teaching of contempt, this demonizing of the other, this is where it all began.

Fifty years later we have witnessed an appalling trafficking in state sanctioned hate, which led us down the road to the unthinkable, ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, the unspeakable, the preventable genocide in Rwanda, and the demonizing, once again, of the Jews.

What is needed at this point is a strategy of prevention, a culture of human rights in place of a culture of hate; a culture of respect in place of a culture of contempt, of respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and the equal dignity of all persons everywhere.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. John Herron (Fundy—Royal, PC): Mr. Speaker, last week the Auditor General said that the government misled Parliament by hiding an unprecedented \$700 million.

The Liberal government's accounting has been a prodigy of slyness and concealment. The safe handling of firearms is needed. All Canadians support this, but a cost overrun of \$700 million is not

a break in procedure but a break and enter on the Canadian taxpayers.

We all know the program got off to a rocky start by the founding father who originally guesstimated the cost to be \$2 million. Seven years later the cost is over 400 times that figure.

Next up we have the Minister of Health, another player in the firearms fiasco. I think all members are curious over the fact that these numbers were kept secret during an election year. How was it that justice officials were saying that the program would cost \$300 million, then simultaneously asked for half a billion dollars in supplemental estimates?

Then we have the revisionist finance minister. He now says that the firearms registry needs to be fixed. He fixed it all right, by approving supplemental estimates of half a billion dollars.

Why does the government not cut its losses for the taxpayers and scrap this bureaucratic billion dollar blunder?

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• (1415)

QUEEN'S JUBILEE MEDAL

Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge 20 deserving citizens of Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia who have been selected to receive the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in recognition of significant achievement or outstanding service to the community.

They are: Jean Ammeter, Colonel Bert Cheffins, John Datzkiw, George Elliot, Lauren Flynn, Jeanne Gitzel, Gwen Hatch, Howard Holtman, Beth Ilott, Robert Irving, Dr. Jagdish Khatter, Dr. Michael Moffat, Connie Newman, Paul Robson, William Scott, Jim Stewart, Jeff Stroughton, Verna Van Roon, Alf Warkentin and Myrtle Zimmerman.

The presentation of the medals was made by Lieutenant Governor Peter Liba of Manitoba on November 14. I invite the House to congratulate these fine people. They are truly outstanding Canadians.

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ACTS OF BRAVERY

Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on December 7, 2000, Mrs. Jody Kuntz of Prince Rupert risked her life trying to prevent a suicidal man from jumping from a small aircraft some 3,000 metres above the Hecate Strait on the northwest coast of British Columbia.

Oral Questions

Deputy Sheriff Kuntz was escorting a prisoner to Prince Rupert when, 20 minutes into the flight, he lunged out of his seat toward the emergency exit, opening the door and partially exiting the airplane. Bracing herself against the door frame she managed to hold onto the back of the prisoner's clothes with one hand. Determined to end his life, the man freed himself from her grip and, despite Deputy Sheriff Kuntz's desperate attempt to pull him back, he eventually fell to his death.

The Governor General's Medal of Bravery is awarded for acts of bravery in hazardous circumstances. I am proud to congratulate Mrs. Kuntz today as she is presented with her Medal of Bravery.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the Prime Minister could have actually found a good reason to fire his former finance minister this past summer. We have now learned that backroom deals have allowed the government to hide another \$1 billion in GST losses. By law, Parliament is supposed to be informed of GST losses, theft and fraud.

My question is, exactly who in the government is responsible for the illegal cover-up of \$1 billion of losses in this boondoggle?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are as follows. CCRA is more transparent than ever. We regularly report all bad debts to the public accounts committee. We put on our website all of the 700 convictions of which last year 70 were for GST alone.

We pursue every last dollar to see if it can be collected. Only when we have exhausted every effort to collect those dollars do we then write them off and report to—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have already had a hat trick of mismanagement. We had a billion dollar boondoggle at HRDC, criminal investigations in public works on sponsorship, another billion dollars squandered on the gun registry, and now the fourth wheel is off the bus. We have these billion dollars losses regarding the GST. The reporting of them and the law have been sidestepped since 1994.

I ask the government, and I expect the Prime Minister to get up and answer the question, why have these not been reported under public accounts for the past eight years?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are as follows. We have had double the number of GST convictions and every time we get a conviction it is posted on our website with a media advisory.

When it is written off as a bad debt, we report to public accounts where we answer all questions. We are more accountable than ever and I would point out that the public accounts committee is chaired by a member of the official opposition.

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is going to retire early he should give up his salary too.

Foreign tax experts warned the government that GST fraud would be a problem. The government's answer was to disband special teams of auditors and investigators. Today in the newspaper we see a quoted multi-billion dollar scheme to subsidize the implementation of Kyoto by big companies.

How can anyone believe the government claim of implementing something on the scale of Kyoto, when it screws up program after program on a much more modest scale?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is one fact that is very clear. It is that the administration has provided such a government that this year we have—for the sixth year—a surplus. It is because our administrative operations are very good.

There are always problems in a big administration, and when we are informed by the Auditor General or even by committees of the House, we work very hard to bring about a report to the House and to do the right thing. In this case, the chair of the public accounts committee is a member of the opposition and he has not yet reported on that to us as far as I know.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, with the government, the bigger the surplus the more it thinks it can waste, and that is sad.

Coming back to the GST fraud artists, the government reported that fraud in 1994 and in 1995 it was absent from the public accounts. I am asking the Prime Minister to explain that to Canadians. Why the sudden change?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the facts are as follows. We report all bad debts to public accounts. It can take us up to five years before we write those off because we try to recover every possible penny that we can. We are doing better because we are able to work with international partners.

I would point out to the hon. member that it is not fraud until there is a conviction. As soon as we have a conviction it is posted on our website with a media advisory. Last year we posted 700 convictions and notified the media.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have seen what happens when the government chooses secrecy over accountability: a billion dollar boondoggle in HRDC, millions of dollars lost in an advertising problem, a billion dollars with the gun registry, and now untold millions from GST fraud. With the government there are lots and lots of cheques, but very few balances.

My question is, exactly why is the government hiding GST fraud from Canadian taxpayers? Why is that?

Oral Questions

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the truth is we post these on our website and we report to public accounts. The opposition is giving out the wrong impression. I have heard the leader of the official opposition say that we had disbanded a unit to track this fraud. In fact, we have expanded it to 1,000 people. That is why have doubled the number of convictions. Those are the facts.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, by only releasing a 5 page section of the investigation report into the sponsorship scandal, rather than the full 16 page report that he had in his possession, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services kept it under wraps that ad executive Gilles-André Gosselin had billed the government for 10 hours of work per day, seven days per week, for one year, all of which came to a mere \$625,000.

How can the person who was supposed to be sorting out the sponsorship affair and cronyism justify keeping this report from us?

[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, the report that was released clearly identified that there were difficulties with the time of billings of certain firms. It indicated that time verification audits were to be undertaken to verify what those difficulties were. That process is underway. We are enforcing the rules as we said we would.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are told about enforcing rules and audits. It seems to me that it would have been simple to produce the full report.

Is the reason that the minister only produced part of the report not to hide a certain number of facts that would have been embarrassing for the government, and for some of his colleagues? If they are going to talk about transparency, they should not hide 11 pages. Why did he hide these pages?

[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, there is one final report and that report has indeed been released. The department, in preparing that report, identified a number of difficulties having to do with billing procedures and other matters. The report indicated that every one of those allegations was being properly followed up. The appropriate action will be taken either by the police or through legal action to recover the money. All proper steps are indeed being taken.

● (1425)

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the 16 page report became public, the minister said that he had hidden it to respect the principle of privacy.

How is the right to privacy violated if taxpayers know that, once again, Groupaction Marketing, received \$147,000 to do a study but never submitted any report, if they know that, on average, Polygone received eight times too much money to organize the outdoor shows for which it was responsible? Whose privacy does the minister want to protect?

[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 the material that the hon. gentleman referred to there were a number of allegations and questions raised. All of those allegations and questions are being pursued, as I indicated they would be when I released the material on October 10. When the process results in specific action that too will be released.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister was supposed to provide us with all the details of the internal investigation, not just tell us what he wants to tell us.

How does the minister justify that he hid this report from us to respect the right to privacy, when we are talking about public funds, about people working for the public, about a government that is accountable to the public and to whose Minister of Public Works I am directing my questions? What is private in all this?

[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, indeed I am responsible to the public. I promised to investigate every one of the allegations that was brought to my attention that merited either legal actions, references to auditors, time verification audits, or a review under the Financial Administration Act. All of that activity is underway. I would note that I have brought forward the final report of the file review process voluntarily, without being required to do so.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government is rewriting defence and foreign policies on the fly. We asked a couple of months ago about the deal and about the terms and conditions of the agreement signed today with the United States with absolutely no input from Parliament or, for that matter, all Canadians.

We know what happens when the government operates in the dark. The mismanagement of Bill C-68 is a classic example.

Why was this deal signed with the Americans with absolutely no input from Parliament and, for that matter, all Canadians?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we did speak to parliamentary committees. Parliamentary committees have produced reports recommending, some of them, to go even further than we have gone today in terms of Canada-U.S. military cooperation.

Oral Questions

I would just add that this is a great deal. It is in the historical tradition of when we joined with the United States to defend the continent against Nazi Germany 60 years ago. Against the Soviet Union, we created Norad more than 40 years ago. Today I am very proud to say that faced with a third external threat, terrorism, we have joined together with the United States to once again defend this continent.

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am on the defence committee and we never once discussed this agreement before that committee.

The fact is, we have major differences with the United States when it comes to military issues. We have differences over nuclear arms, landmines, the international court and our Arctic sovereignty. The United States still has not recognized Canada's Arctic sovereignty.

Again I ask the Minister of National Defence why he enters into these agreements without input from Parliament and, for that matter, all Canadians.

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is true that we have important differences with the United States over such things as landmines and the International Criminal Court. This is obvious. We have said this many times, but this agreement today has nothing to do with that. Indeed, the hon. member may have forgotten, but as it says right here in my briefing notes, I recently discussed planning for this agreement when I appeared before the committee of which he is a member on November 27.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, on June 12, 1991, the Prime Minister said:

...every minister in the cabinet that I will be presiding over will have to take full responsibility...If there is any bungling in the department...The minister will have to take the responsibility.

Which minister will take the full responsibility for the \$700 million bungling on the gun registry? Will it be the current Minister of Industry, who started the scheme, or the current Minister of Health, who hid the costs from Parliament, or the present Minister of Justice, or will the Prime Minister himself take responsibility, and, Sir, what will the penalty be?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice, who is handling the file at this time, is a very competent minister and he is doing what is needed at this moment.

Obviously the Auditor General indicated very clearly to us that we have some problems with this program and we are taking the steps to correct them.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Then, Mr. Speaker, my next question is for the chairman of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Will the chair seek agreement of the committee to conduct early public hearings on the report of the Auditor General concerning the overspending on the gun registry and the failure to report that overspending to Parliament?

In addition to hearing from the President of the Treasury Board and the Minister of Justice, will the committee seek evidence from the current Ministers of Industry and Health, who are directly involved in these cost overruns, and from the member for LaSalle—Émard, who on at least five occasions as a member of the Treasury Board had an opportunity to put an end to this billion dollar fiasco?

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the right hon. member for his question.

I will say that I will place this question before the public accounts committee and if there is agreement from the Liberals as well as this side we will be glad to hold these investigations and table a report on what we find.

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GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have a brand new trend here: an actual answer in question period. Will wonders never cease?

In 1997, Public Works endorsed a proposal from Claude Boulay, owner of Groupe Everest, to create Attractions Canada. Taxpayers were already on the hook for the Canadian Tourism Commission. Its former president said, "...there's no real reason to have Attractions Canada up and running", none at all.

The minister is clearly dragging his feet on cleaning up this abuse of \$27 million in taxpayers' money. Is the job too big for him or do these programs simply serve the Liberal Party too well?

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, the project known as Attractions Canada is now in the final year of its previous commitments and it will not be renewed.

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the final year was 2001, but in 2002-03 it got another \$3.5 million pledged to it, so the problem is that the Liberals have created a system that funnels tax money through their friends' ad firms and then back to the Liberal Party.

Why will the minister not just stand today and say that all of these self-serving programs are gone forever, not delayed, not set aside, not under review, but gone once and for all?

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 have indicated that the Attractions Canada program is now in its final stages of initially a five year period. That period has virtually now expired and it is not my intention to renew the program.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Agriculture claims that December 9 is not an important date for the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe, does he not realize that he is contradicting the assistant dean of the faculty, Mr. Dallaire, who is categorical on this issue? According to him, the school must have all the information today to meet the deadlines imposed by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in order to clear this up once and for all, I would like to read from an e-mail of this morning from Dr. Don Simmons, director of the education and research division, American Veterinary Medical Association.

In response to your request, the AVMA Council on Education, the accrediting body for schools/colleges of veterinary medicine in the United States and Canada, require accredited programs to submit annually an interim report addressing the 11 Standards for Accreditation. The 2002 reports are due in my office by January 20, 2003. This date is later than usual because the Council meets in late spring this year, rather than earlier. I hope this information will be useful.

• (1435)

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is because the veterinary school must prepare that report. Unlike the government, it will not have it done by Groupaction. The minister should realize that.

When the minister tells us that veterinary colleges are all in the same situation, he is again mistaken. The cut-off date for Saskatoon is 2003. For Prince Edward Island, it is 2004. For Guelph, it is 2009.

How could the minister claim that everyone was in the same boat, when the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe, which now holds partial certification, must begin writing that report today to get back its full certification at some point in time?

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a known fact, and it is clarified in this letter as well in what is said, that every year each veterinary college has to submit information to the accrediting association. Every college has to do that every year, and for Saint-Hyacinthe and for any of the colleges, that does not have to be there until January 20, 2003.

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GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the scandals plaguing the Liberals have left the government's reputation as competent managers in tatters.

This latest unbelievable twist has the Minister of Public Works forming a quick response team to look into the mismanagement in the sponsorship program. However, the minister tables only the *Reader's Digest* condensed version of the report, and this incredible quote is from the minister himself, as he says, he did not release the

full report because it raises "questions, allegations, suspicion". Well, duh.

The minister promised transparency. Why has he broken that promise by helping to cover up the real problems in his department?

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, there is indeed no cover-up. The quick response team was put together to review every one of the files that was under question, about 721 of those files altogether. The team prepared a final report. That final report described the nature of the problems, such as overbilling, for example, that needed further investigation.

That final report was released on the 10th of October, together with a statement by me indicating that in every case these allegations were being followed up and the appropriate action would be taken, whether that was a reference to the police or a recovery action or a reference to the Department of Justice or whatever. Each one of them is being pursued.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the minister is good at editing; he is not so good at auditing.

Let me read what the complete report actually says: there is "systemic and egregious overcharging". There is an "extreme nature of...overbilling". There is "no" final "report or post-mortem". One lucky advertising executive charges 10 hours a day, 365 days a year, for a total of \$625,000.

We have had boondoggles from the government. We had the gun fiasco last week. It goes on and on. Is not the real reason the minister does not like to talk about the full report is that the rot from the government goes from one end of that front bench to the other?

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.): Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. What the hon. gentleman has referred to are the questions, the allegations, the suspicions, that have been raised by the internal review team. That review team recommended that these matters be referred to auditors for time verification audits to determine whether or not the allegations were founded. That is in fact the exact action that we have taken.

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[Translation]

ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister's attitude as far as the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe is concerned is not only inexplicable, but also absolutely regrettable. Regardless of what the minister may think, a report of that magnitude is not going to get written overnight between January 19 and 20. The process needs to start today, if the American association's deadline is to be met.

Is the minister aware that, thanks to his behaviour in this matter, Quebec will no longer be able to turn out accredited French speaking veterinarians in the very near future? It will be all over. And he will be the one responsible.

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of attitude, I can tell you the attitude of the caucus and the government has been one all along. Not only do we want to help the veterinarian college at Saint-Hyacinthe achieve its accreditation, we have been working on that all along and we intended to work on that because we know the importance of not only that veterinary college in Canada but all veterinary colleges in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, they have been doing a good job all right. They are supposed to have settled this problem two years ago, and Quebec has already done its part. It has already put in \$41 million. Moreover, the minister has been misinformed on this issue, and continues to be misinformed.

How is he going to explain to the people of Saint-Hyacinthe and the rest of Quebec that, faced with an urgent situation and despite the \$41 million Quebec has contributed as its share to save the accreditation of Saint-Hyacinthe, he is doing nothing and is allowing the veterinary school to die? How is he going to explain that?

• (1440)

[English]

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that this caucus and the members of the government are showing a lot more mature attitude on this than the hon. member has been recently.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, another week, another spending cover-up by the Liberals. Months ago they decided on a new \$20 million immigration detention centre, but the minister did not breathe a word about his massive new project when he reported to the immigration committee a few days ago. It is not in the government's spending estimates passed just last Thursday. The departmental performance report, released barely a month ago, also hides this initiative. Why the cover-up?

Mr. Mark Assad (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no cover-up in this file. The department is proceeding as usual with its obligations. There is no problem whatsoever. I believe that the member is completely adding more confusion to the problem.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it was not reported by the minister when he appeared before the committee, it was not in the spending estimates and it was not in the departmental performance review.

To quote the Auditor General, "What's...inexcusable is that Parliament was in the dark". She said that when the Liberals hid

their astronomical cost overruns for the gun registry, but it applies here too.

Canada deserves better than a government that does not tell us what it is up to and hopes no one will dig deep enough to find out.

Why do the Liberals prefer to govern by stealth?

Mr. Mark Assad (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member has mentioned here is completely false. The department is doing all it can on this issue. There is no cover-up whatsoever in this. It is just in preparation by the department's officials and we will be in a position to answer all those questions.

* * *

[Translation]

FRANCOPHONIE

Mr. Claude Duplain (Portneuf, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it happened in Bamako in the fall of 2000. At the time, Canada had agreed to a resolution intended to spearhead a political initiative to introduce democracy, human rights and good governance to member states of the Francophonie.

Given the situation in numerous countries of the Francophonie, could the Secretary of State for the Francophonie tell us, two years after this agreement was ratified, what concrete actions have come out of Bamako?

Hon. Denis Paradis (Secretary of State (Francophonie), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, delegates at the Francophone Summit of Heads of State and Government reiterated the principles in the Bamako declaration.

This week, a ministerial meeting following up on the Francophone summit is scheduled. We have proposed a mechanism, enabling the implementation of Bamako, which will allow us to quickly apply this declaration where there are problems with specific Francophonie countries.

Whenever the Bamako declaration and its principles are mentioned, I think of Haiti. This is a place where Bamako could be truly meaningful in terms of democracy, human rights and good governance.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, just a few moments ago the Prime Minister told the House about his fiscal accomplishments and bragged about six years of surpluses.

I want to say to the Prime Minister, on the most critical issue facing Canadians, the health care of this nation, he has been offering platitudes and generalities.

I ask the Prime Minister today, what is his specific plan of action in response to the Romanow commission and is he committed at least to achieving the 25% share of federal financing recommended by Roy Romanow?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thought the hon. member would keep on complimenting the government because she started to compliment us on the surpluses.

She should have complimented us for asking Mr. Romanow to table a report that is being studied by us at this time and by all the provinces. There will be a meeting with them at the end of January or early in February. I hope we will make a lot of progress to ensure we maintain a good health care system for all Canadians.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, time is running out and we are squandering an opportunity.

As we suspected, the government went to the health ministers meeting last Friday with no plan and no strategy. It gave no indication of how it intended to implement the Romanow blueprint.

Does the Prime Minister have a plan in the works and will it be ready for the first ministers conference?

• (1445)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know we are working in partnership with the provinces and the territories. They are primarily responsible for the delivery of health care.

On Friday we had a very good first discussion around the Romanow report and other reports, some provincial reports, Senator Kirby's report and then of course culminating in Commissioner Romanow's report. We were able to agree on a list of priority areas where we all know we need to redouble our efforts if we are to renew the health care system.

These discussions will continue. I think Friday's discussion was a very promising start.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): We will all sleep easy tonight, Mr. Speaker.

We know that Liberal largesse extends to the firearms registry. Evidence links the firearms contracts to the government's friends in Groupaction.

One blatant example involves Gilles-André Gosselin billing over \$625,000 for 3,673 hours of work, a mathematical impossibility in the same calendar year.

Will the Minister of Justice request the RCMP to extend its investigation into the advertising contracts awarded as part of this firearms fiasco?

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, this particular matter is at this moment the subject of a time verification audit to determine the exact facts.

Depending on the results of that audit the appropriate action will be taken, either of the direct recovery of funds that were overbilled or a reference to the police if that is appropriate.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, the minister must be in a time warp if he does not see the need for an RCMP investigation.

We know from the feigned wide-eyed innocence of the member for LaSalle—Émard that all the spending on the firearms registry should be frozen until this mess in the justice department has been cleaned up. He said that this weekend. He also claims in a Janus faced position that it is the same position as the Minister of Justice.

Will the Minister of Justice confirm that it is his government's position that all the spending will be frozen on the registry, and if not, why not?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member has read the report from the Auditor General, as I have. We have accepted all the recommendations.

Last week I said that there are problems that we recognize and we want to fix them. I announced last week that we have frozen all major spending in the program, which we have done.

We have legislative responsibilities. We are running the program at minimum cost, but of course we will respect our responsibilities.

Having said that, we are all saying the same thing. We want to proceed with the registry. We want to make sure that we offer Canadians a safer society.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is getting even worse. I have in front of me a report from a former Liberal justice minister, Ron Basford, saying that in 1976 there were 10 million guns in Canada with a quarter of a million guns being added to that stock every year. That means there are 16 million guns in Canada today and only one-third of them have been registered; \$1 billion and only one-third of the firearms have been registered. The firearms fiasco is becoming an even bigger boondoggle.

I ask again, how much will it cost to complete the registry?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, about the costs, let us be clear. If we read the report of the Auditor General, she mentioned that all spending was approved by Parliament. We came back to Parliament and reported through the main estimates and through the supplementary estimates. As I said, if we read the program carefully, all of the numbers have been reported through Justice Canada and all partners involved in the program delivery.

The question now between the Auditor General and the Department of Justice is to what extent we should report. We are working on that. We will report to Canadians because we believe in transparency.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the cover-up continues. The government has not answered the question. Listen to this.

The Auditor General reports that about 90% of licence and registration applications contain errors. The RCMP says that there are so many errors in the gun registry that criminals could be issued firearms licences. This Goliath of a gun registry has been dealt a mortal blow and now the Liberals have put it on life support. Why do they not just pull the plug?

How much more is it going to cost taxpayers?

• (1450)

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have said many times that the gun registry is indeed a very effective tool. Police forces access the registry online 1,500 times a day.

The member is raising a question about the quality of the data. The RCMP is fully aware of that and has been working on that question. When we are talking about the quality of the data, it is a question of technology. They are working on that.

The difference is that on this side of the House we believe in safety. We will proceed with the registry. Yes, there are problems. We will fix it.

* * *

[Translation]

ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week and again today, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food was bragging about what his colleagues, the federal Liberal members from Quebec, had done in connection with the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Marcel Gagnon: Yet, they have done nothing; they do not deserve commending, they did nothing.

Will the minister admit that the work done by his colleagues on this has been pitiful and has led to his being mistaken regarding the facts and deadlines, thus contradicting the assistant dean of the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe, Mr. Dallaire?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to respond, because the member made a statement that I would like to correct.

The first time I heard about this problem was in the Liberal caucus, before Bloc Québécois members ever raised any questions in the House of Commons.

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, he may have heard about it in caucus, but nothing has been done for the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe. This is a repetition of what happened with the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean.

Will the minister admit that if Quebec were sovereign, it would not need to come on bended knee to Ottawa for money and permission for its institutions?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here we go again with stories of humiliation. The members have

spoken about the issue here and you will soon see that when they tackle a problem, they get results.

* * *

[English]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the more we look at the Kyoto fiasco, the worse it gets.

The environment minister claims he will be able to buy emissions credits for \$10 Canadian a tonne. Before ratification even happens, the international price has jumped in the last three months from \$1 U.S. to \$7 U.S. Some even predict that it will go as high as \$80 per tonne.

Canadian taxpayers want to know how much Kyoto is going to cost them.

Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, today we have capped a price for industry. It is something we have been working with for many, many months to say that the cost would not go beyond \$15 a tonne. It is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition just a few minutes ago said that we are now subsidizing the industry, when he stood up every day here saying that we should protect industry and make sure that we deal with the risks and uncertainties. Now he is saying we are subsidizing it. What is it? The members of the opposition should make up their minds.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the truth is the government really has no idea what Kyoto is going to cost. From job losses and investment chills right down to the shabby plan it has for paying for emissions credits. By capping the cost of credits, the government will simply be passing the cost on to the taxpayers as a disguised carbon tax.

What is this going to cost the Canadian taxpayer?

Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been working closely with industry. There were three important issues we had to deal with. The first one was to give them certainty on quantity. Second, we had to make sure that we gave flexibility to the covenant. Third, on the price, we have capped that at \$15 a tonne. The opposition members have stood up every day and told us to deal with those risks on price but now they have changed their minds. Now they are saying we are subsidizing it.

I think the industry will be very interested to see how the member and the Leader of the Opposition keep changing their position every single day.

Oral Questions

●(1455)

COAST GUARD

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in February a fully loaded tanker was travelling in American waters near Victoria. An earthquake shut down the American vessel traffic control in Seattle. The Canadian Coast Guard took over and averted disaster, clearing a passage for the huge tanker through a narrow channel. But not any more. The agreement to backstop one another's traffic control has been cancelled because Canada can no longer do the job. Supertankers are now on their own.

How could the government contemplate a fully loaded supertanker operating on Victoria's doorstep without any—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is often quite selective in his facts. The other day he was talking to us about the "Russian spy ship" that was off our coast that we had no knowledge of. I checked into the matter as it was tracked all the way along our coast by the Coast Guard, by the Department of National Defence and we were in communication with them.

We have a very good marine communications system and traffic control system. We will improve it and make it better. We give Canadians a great service.

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the minister does not get it. The agreement to backstop one another's vessel traffic control was put in place because of Canada's concern about supertanker traffic in American waters adjacent Victoria and the Gulf Islands. The agreement is now cancelled because Canadian Coast Guard personnel lack the training and equipment to take over in the event of an American system failure.

Why has the government decided to risk supertanker collisions and oil spills on the west coast? Why has the government allowed the system to deteriorate to the point where supertankers could be playing bumper cars in the Strait of Georgia?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Coast Guard works in close cooperation with every other federal agency and with our international partners. It provides a great service and keeps our coasts safe. It keeps transportation going.

* * *

*[Translation]***MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION**

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the film industry is impatiently awaiting the finance minister's decision on improving the Canadian film production tax credit.

Film productions, in particular foreign productions, are a source of significant income for all involved in this industry.

Will the Minister of Finance tell us whether he plans to help this major industry or whether he intends just to sit back and enjoy the show?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that I have received representations. All representations will be closely examined during budget preparation.

* * *

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week the federal Minister of Labour and minister responsible for New Brunswick announced that \$90 million was available for highways 11 and 17 in the northern part of the province.

While the province was also committed to matching the amount, the minister is now saying that she can contribute only \$77 million.

My question is for the Minister of Transport. Is the minister prepared to make up the difference, so that together, the federal and provincial governments can provide the \$180 million announced at the outset to give the economic development of these regions a chance?

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a program in place to improve the highway system across the country. We have signed an agreement with New Brunswick. There are plans to improve the highways. I will review the situation and see if the hon. member is right.

* * *

*[English]***KYOTO PROTOCOL**

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Will the government's estimates on the costs of Kyoto be as reliable as the government's estimates on the costs of the gun registry?

Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is a very good chance that, after 10 years of implementation of the program, neither the leader of the fifth party nor myself will be able to reply to this question.

* * *

ORGANIZED CRIME

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on Saturday five young Indo-Canadian men were gunned down in a Surrey parking lot. They were lucky. They could have been added to the list of 70 already dead. Today's suspect is tomorrow's victim and the RCMP, with limited resources, can do little but wait for vigilante justice to prevail.

While this weak Liberal government mismanages a billion dollars on a gun registry, the RCMP watches helplessly as violent tit-for-tat gangs have shootouts in busy neighbourhoods.

Will the Solicitor General admit that the RCMP needs better resources to tackle organized crime?

Routine Proceedings

●(1500)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I reject the allegations that we have done little. Let me outline for the hon. member some of the things we have done to improve policing of organized crime.

We have implemented anti-gang legislation. We have created 13 integrated proceeds of crime units. We have renewed the national anti-smuggling initiative. We have improved cross border law enforcement cooperation. We have renewed the Canadian police information centre. We have increased RCMP presence at major airports. We have increased the RCMP budget significantly. We have improved the national DNA data bank. We have created new—

The Speaker: Hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie.

* * *

[Translation]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is reported in this morning's *Globe and Mail* that the federal government might provide financial assistance to industries, including polluting industries, if the costs arising from Kyoto were higher than expected.

Could the Minister of the Environment confirm this? Does he realize that taking this approach could be tantamount to abandoning the polluter pay principle?

[English]

Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we have been working with industry closely to ensure that we deal with the risks and uncertainties that exist in Kyoto. We want to ensure that we protect jobs and protect investment in Canada. By dealing with the risks by saying that we will cap at \$15 a tonne carbon, we are ensuring that investment will stay in Canada and that jobs will be protected.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

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 20 petitions.

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[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association to the fourth part of the 2002 ordinary session of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe, held in Strasbourg, France, from September 23 to 27, 2002.

[English]

GUN CONTROL LEGISLATION EXPIRY ACT

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-330, an act to provide for the expiry of gun control legislation that is not proven effective within five years of coming into force.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am reintroducing this bill for the fourth time. I would like to thank the member for Prince George—Peace River for seconding my firearms law sunset act.

Never in the history of ill-conceived gun control laws has the need for this legislation been more obvious. The firearms law sunset act guarantees that scarce tax dollars will only be spent on gun control measures that actually improve public safety.

My sunset law would require the automatic repeal of any gun control measure five years after it has been implemented unless it can pass a public safety test administered by the Auditor General for Canada which proves the measure is cost effective at achieving its stated purpose. I believe all laws we pass in the House must be cost effective at achieving their stated goals. Sunset provisions are the only way of guaranteeing it.

In conclusion, maybe we cannot repeal Bill C-68 right now, but by passing this bill we can ensure that all ineffective measures like Bill C-68 imposed on Canadians and the billions more it will waste in the future are redirected to fighting real crime and curtailing the activities of street gangs, organized crime and terrorists.

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

* * *

●(1505)

PETITIONS

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions signed by more than 500 individuals from my riding. In two of them the petitioners ask Parliament to protect our children by taking all steps necessary to ensure that all materials promoting or glorifying pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

Routine Proceedings

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a further petition signed by 30 individuals in my riding of Vancouver Island North. The petitioners ask Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illness and diseases of suffering Canadians.

BILL C-250

Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present to this House three petitions on behalf of my constituents. The first two petitions relate to Bill C-250, formerly Bill C-415. One is signed by 1,769 people and the second has 154 signatures.

The petitioners recognize that freedom of speech and religious freedom are guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Thus, they call on Parliament to oppose Bill C-250.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the third petition is signed by 25 people and has to do with stem cell research. The petitioners recognize that thousands of Canadians suffer from debilitating illnesses and diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, spinal cord injury, diabetes and cancer.

They call upon Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illness and disease of suffering Canadians.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present. The first one I am honoured to present on behalf of the people of Saanich—Gulf Islands. 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.

I will reiterate my statement of last month. We, as legislators and parents, have a duty and an obligation to protect our children.

COAST GUARD

Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the second petition has again been endorsed by hundreds of constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands, the majority on Salt Spring Island.

The petitioners request that Parliament make the Coast Guard an independent body, separate from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, with all the necessary resources for staffing and equipment, including a new hovercraft to enable it to perform rescues of those in peril.

DIVORCE ACT

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Ottawa—Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by over 100 Canadians requesting that the government reform the Divorce Act to make changes in matters of family law as it affects the manner in which child support is decided.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by constituents

from as far away as Barry's Bay, Palmer Rapids, Renfrew and all points between. The petitioners ask this once again, especially on this very important day when the mayor of Arnprior received notice that the Arnprior college is closing. They request Parliament to recognize the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College as being essential to training Canadians in emergency situations, that the facilities stay in Arnprior once they are renovated and that the government upgrade the facilities to provide the necessary training to Canadians from across the country.

• (1510)

IRAQ

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present. The first is from the citizens of the city and county of Peterborough who oppose war against Iraq. The petitioners point out that a pre-emptive strike to overthrow the government of Iraq would be a flagrant violation of international law. They also point out that it would result in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians.

The petitioners suggest that by rejecting violence and lifting the sanctions against the Iraqi people, we would win the good will of Iraqi citizens and open the door for them to promote political change themselves.

Therefore they call upon Parliament to refuse to cooperate in any way in a war against Iraq and to use Canada's diplomatic efforts to convince the United States, Britain and the United Nations to choose the tools of diplomacy, not the weapons of war, for establishing peace in the Middle East.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is from other citizens in Peterborough who point out that the creation and use of child pornography is condemned by a clear majority of Canadians and that the courts have not applied the current child pornography law in a way which makes it clear that such exploitation will always be met by swift punishment.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that materials that promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my third petition is from people in Peterborough similar to one that was presented earlier. The petitioners point out that many citizens of Canada, who suffer from debilitating diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, cancer, muscular dystrophy and so on, support stem cell research. However they point out that the focus of such research and the focus of legislative support for such research should be adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary for the illnesses suffered by these Canadians.

COAST GUARD

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today. The first one has to do with citizens concerned about the Coast Guard. The petitioners point out that there is an ongoing list of problems with the Coast Guard; the failure of the government to provide it adequately with the equipment to do the job, the questions arising from the *Cap Rouge II* sinking and the failure to provide a hovercraft from the Vancouver airport.

The petitioners have an additional concern that the Coast Guard be separated from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

SHRIMP FISHERY

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my second petition has to do with petitioners from Powell River. The petitioners are concerned for the shrimp fishery on the west coast of British Columbia.

The petitioners note that in the terms of union of British Columbia with Canada, they require the federal government to assume and defray costs for the protection and encouragement of fisheries. They say that the fee structure the department is putting in place for shrimp fishermen will prohibit or make it financially impossible for people to fish this year. They suggest that the issue should be addressed in light of the terms of union.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have two petitions which are very similar to the ones already tabled in the House today.

The first deals with child pornography. The petitioners have a great concern that the government must take every action possible to preserve and prevent our children from being abused.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my second petitions deals with embryonic stem cells. The petitioners ask that the concentration of study on stem cells should be on the basis of adult stem cells.

CENSUS RECORDS

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions to present today. The first one is on the release of the census records. The House has probably heard me speak about this before.

The petition contains 2,100 names. I have currently presented 17,000 names of people who would like to see the census released.

The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to take whatever steps necessary to retroactively amend the confidentiality clauses of the Statistics Act since 1906 to allow the release to the public, after a reasonable period of time, the post-1901 records.

•(1515)

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the next petition contains 960 names and concerns child pornography. The petitioners are concerned that the

Routine Proceedings

courts have not applied the current child pornography law in a way which makes it clear that such exploitation of children will always be met with swift punishment.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the third petition contains 160 names and is on stem cell research. The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to focus its legislative support on stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat the illnesses and diseases of suffering Canadians.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fourth petition, with approximately 100 names, concerns same sex marriages. The petitioners call upon Parliament to pass legislation to recognize the institution of marriage in federal law as being the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present two petitions. The first petition concerns child pornography.

The petitioners say that the creation and use of child pornography is condemned by the clear majority of Canadians and that the courts have not applied the current child pornography law in a way which makes it clear that such exploitation of children will always be met with swift punishment.

The petitioners are asking for parliamentarians to protect children.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the second petition that I wish to present has over 450 signatures so far. This one is with regard to the Bronze Star. It states that our Canadian troops fighting the war on terrorism have not received medals recognizing their heroic and meritorious achievement in battle because of bureaucratic delay.

The petitioners are calling upon the government to, without delay, remove the bureaucratic obstacles preventing our soldiers from being awarded the Bronze Star and the Bronze Star with distinction for their heroic performance in the war on terrorism.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions. The first petition is on the subject matter of stem cell research. The petitioners include constituents of mine from Mississauga South who share my view that human life begins at conception.

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The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that they support ethical stem cell research and that adult stem cell research has shown significant progress without the immune rejection problems or ethical problems associated with embryonic stem cells.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to support legislative initiatives with regard to adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary for Canadians.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition refers to the definition of marriage.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that they believe that social matters or social policy should be decided by elected members of Parliament and not by the judiciary. They also support the current legal definition of marriage being the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

The petitioners therefore call upon Parliament to use all possible legislative and administrative measures, including invoking the notwithstanding clause, section 33, if necessary, to preserve and protect the definition of marriage.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, you will recall that last week my hon. colleague from Delta—South Richmond rose on a point of order and asked about Question No. 17 regarding salmon farming.

In relation to that, if Questions Nos. 17 and 38 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 17—**Mr. John Cummins:**

With regard to the establishment of salmon farm operations in Canada's coastal waters and the requirements of the Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act: (a) how many net pen salmon farm operations are located in the coastal waters adjacent to (i) British Columbia, (ii) New Brunswick, (iii) Nova Scotia, (iv) Prince Edward Island, and (v) Newfoundland; (b) what is the location and who is the owner or operator of each of these sites; (c) how many net cages are in operation, what is the weight or level of biomass and what is the annual amount of wastes or debris deposited on an annual basis at each site; (d) how many authorizations or approvals under section 5(1) of the Navigable Waters Protection Act have been issued for net pen salmon farm operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (e) what is the location of each of these authorizations; (f) how many net cages were approved for each of these sites; (g) how many authorizations or approvals under section 5(1) of the Navigable Waters Protection Act have been denied for net pen salmon farm operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (h) what is the location of the salmon farm applications that were denied; (i) how many net pen salmon farm operations have been established without first seeking the authorizations or approvals under section 5(1) of the Navigable Waters Protection Act for operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (j) what is the location of each of these operations; (k) how many Ministerial orders have been issued under section 6 of the Navigable Waters Protection Act with regard to unauthorized salmon farm operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (l) what is the location of each of these operations; (m) how many authorizations or approvals under section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act have been issued for net pen

salmon farm operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (n) what is the location of each of these authorizations under section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act; (o) what is the approved weight or level of biomass and the approved annual amount of wastes or debris deposited on an annual basis at each site; (p) how many applications for authorizations or approvals under section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act have been denied for net pen salmon farm operations in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); (q) what is the location of the section 35(2) application for authorizations or approvals under the Fisheries Act for salmon farm operations that were denied; (r) how many net pen salmon farm operations have been established without first seeking the authorizations or approvals under section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act for operations in the coastal waters adjacent to the provinces listed in part (a); (s) what is the location of each of these operations; (t) how many orders under section 37(2) of the Fisheries Act have been issued requiring modifications, restrictions, or the closing of salmon farm operations that could result in harmful alteration to fish habitat, or the deposit of deleterious substances in the coastal waters adjacent to each of the provinces listed in part (a); and (u) what is the location for each site where an order was issued under section 37(2) of the Fisheries Act?

Return tabled.

Question No. 38—**Mr. James Rajotte:**

For each year from 1993 to 2001, what was the total amount billed to the government and its agencies by: (a) Ipsos-Reid and its affiliates; and (b) the law firm, Stewart McKelvey Stirling Scales?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE VÉTÉRINAIRE DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

The Speaker: I am in receipt of a notice of motion under Standing Order 52 from the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have sent you a formal application for an emergency debate, this evening, to deal with the issue of the request for federal funding by the École de médecine vétérinaire de Saint-Hyacinthe.

Today is the day the dean of this college of veterinary medicine has to start writing his report. There is precious little time left before the American Veterinary Medical Association decides either to maintain the college's accreditation, give the college an extension or simply remove the accreditation.

This is a matter of some urgency. I hope that you will grant my request for an emergency debate on this issue.

The Speaker: The Chair has considered the request of the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. I do not think this matter really warrants an emergency debate at this time. At any rate, I will review the request and remarks he made today, and come back to the House later, probably not today, but soon.

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•(1520)

[*Translation*]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

The House resumed consideration of the motion, the amendment, and the amendment to the amendment.

The Speaker: When the debate was interrupted for oral question period, the hon. member for Champlain had the floor. He has 10 minutes remaining for his remarks.

Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if I will use all of my remaining 10 minutes, but I want to reiterate that I am extremely interested in the Kyoto protocol issue, as, increasingly, is everyone else.

In oral question period, the leader of the Progressive Conservatives asked the Prime Minister a question. If I remember his question correctly, he asked him if, in ten years, Kyoto would be as successful as the gun registry.

The Prime Minister responded, “In ten years, neither the leader nor myself will be able to reply to this question”. I am sure that I will not be able to reply to this question either. I am almost the same age as the Prime Minister and the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

What interests me is that we are not doing this for ourselves. We are doing it for those who will come after us. As legislators, we are not here for our own good, we do not need to win debates; rather, we are here to hand down the most viable country and planet possible.

Fifty years ago, when I was in college, a teacher told us that in our lifetime we would be able to have breakfast in Montreal and lunch in Paris. We all laughed and said that it was impossible. Today, our planet has become so small that anything is possible. It is even possible to destroy it, and this is what we are doing. If I look at how things were 50 years ago, I can say that my father and my ancestors left us, to me and to people from my generation, an extremely clean planet, compared to what it is today.

Sometimes, I tell my children about the precious things that we had back then. For example, we could catch as many fish as we wanted in the small Sainte-Brigitte River. This was a small but rather extraordinary river. They ask me where that river is located and what happened to the fish. Not only have the fish disappeared, but so has the river. It is the case not just with that river. Considering what we are doing to the earth and to the environment, the legacy we are about to leave to future generations is not something we can be proud of.

The Kyoto protocol is a good thing and it is a beginning. We will ratify it, but then we will have to act. This is important. It is not only the foundation of our economy, but also the foundation of our life.

Before members' statements, I was saying that, personally, I was shocked to see that, whenever we talk about protecting the environment—we saw it again when we discussed GMOs this morning—we only discuss effectiveness in terms of dollars and in relation to the economy. The planet will outlast us, but it is not sure that mankind will continue if we do not develop our world in a more

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orderly and respectful fashion. We must develop our planet by respecting the environment and by ensuring that it outlasts us while being as clean as possible for our descendants.

•(1525)

As was said prior to oral question period, in the past 12 years, \$66 billion was spent on research into improving oil drilling and the petroleum industry in general.

During that time, only some \$350 million was spent on developing clean energies, wind energy in particular. It can provide every comfort we require, every comfort we need, while respecting the environment. Yet, there is certainly a great future for renewable energies. This is an area with an incredible job creation potential, and in regions where this type of energy is needed for regional development.

To take areas in Quebec for example, such as the Gaspé, the Magdalen Islands and the North Shore, these are all areas where windpowered generators could be installed in order to tap energy that would not pollute the planet, would not pollute the environment, and would make it possible for us to develop as we need to develop. We must not cop out by saying, “I won't be around in 10 years to see what has been accomplished”.

I would like to see the Prime Minister, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, myself and all the others of our vintage who will not be around this place in ten years be able to take pride in what we did for those who continue to live on this planet.

The Kyoto protocol must be ratified. I trust that we will reach an agreement with the provinces while respecting them. After all that Quebec has done to protect the environment, it ought not to be forced now to pay its share for what others did not do. Quebec has been vigilant; there is still work to be done, but it has been vigilant. Energy in Quebec is cleaner than what is used elsewhere.

However, I feel there is a problem in Quebec that we must address, and that is the automobile. There is another mindset today that means that we have to go around in vehicles that use two to three times the gas used in the 1980s. Back then, we could buy cars that used six, seven, or eight litres of fuel every 100 kilometres. Today, more and more people are going around in cars built like tanks. In the middle of the city we see four wheel drive, all terrain vehicles that were designed to navigate woods or steep inclines. Why? Where is the comfort in polluting the planet in such an unbelievable way?

I heard a survey on the radio last week, where people were asked, “Would you like to have an all terrain vehicle with four wheel drive that costs \$85,000?” The respondents said, “I would like to have one, but I could never afford it”. When asked, “If you could afford it, would you buy one?”, people said “Yes”. Then they were asked, “Even if the vehicle uses 20 litres of fuel every 100 kilometres, would you buy it anyway?” The answer was, “Yes, I would buy it anyway”. To some extent, that is what is happening now, as 75% of all cars on the road are unbelievable gas guzzlers.

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Maybe Kyoto could help us think about this. The obligation to reduce our share of pollution will probably lead us to make choices that would be more logical for all citizens and more logical with respect to the development of the planet and the legacy we leave for coming generations.

• (1530)

[*English*]

Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia.

It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on this issue of great importance, not only for us today but for generations to come. I wonder if there would have been so much debate on this issue if we were forced to be in this place during the long, abnormally hot summers that we now experience. I am sure that most of us would find it unbearable on several levels.

While some people say that the science is not there to support Kyoto, I say they should look out their window and ask themselves if the weather patterns are what they remember from when they were growing up. In my area of Erie—Lincoln, many of us did not even have air conditioning in the summer because we could enjoy the cool breezes coming off Lakes Erie and Ontario. I am sad to say that due to the long, hot, and humid summers that we now experience, the air conditioning business in our area has literally taken off.

We should ask ourselves how many people, especially young people, now have asthma, when it was almost unheard of when I was growing up. We can look at the Saguenay floods, the prairie drought, and the eastern Canada ice storm. Are these a sign of things to come? This is only in Canada. What about the natural catastrophes that are occurring all around the world?

I want to use the responses to the common questions that my Erie—Lincoln constituents posed to me as a basis for my remarks. Many of us, myself included, are not scientists and have difficulty assessing this plan based upon technical knowledge. It is like electricity or the Internet, we might not understand exactly how it works, but we know that it is a good thing.

My constituents have questions, like many other Canadians, about how this would affect them. Recently one of my chambers of commerce asked how the Kyoto protocol would affect jobs as well as taxes and the economy. The Government of Canada is working hard to predict what climate change, and our plan to fight it, would mean for our economy, our health and our environment. We must assess the costs and benefits of acting to stop climate change and weigh them against the consequences of doing nothing at all.

There have been various estimates on what ratifying the Kyoto protocol would mean for economic growth and employment in Canada. The most credible analysis comes from the analysis and modelling group, AMG, on the national climate change process. The AMG is comprised of officials from every province and territory. It consults widely with experts from industry, academia and the environmental community.

The most recent analysis by the AMG assumes that Canada would implement Kyoto using a mixture of targeted measures and market mechanisms like domestic emissions trading. Under this scenario

Canada's economy would be 30.4% bigger in 2012, instead of 31%. Another way to say this is that Kyoto may result in about \$7.2 billion in potential lost economic growth over the next 10 years, or about \$24 per year per Canadian.

It is important to note that this economic analysis does not include several important considerations that would lower projected costs. For example, it does not consider the economic benefits of implementing a climate change policy. The dollar value of the additional health and environmental benefits of fighting climate change is estimated to be between \$300 million and \$500 million a year. There are some estimates that are even higher. In Ontario alone, the Ontario Medical Association estimates that air pollution causes the deaths of 1,900 people every year and a cost of \$10 billion per year.

It is difficult for any economic model to capture the economic benefits of the technological growth that would result from companies innovating to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is therefore likely that the projected economic costs are over-estimated.

In considering the Kyoto protocol, the Liberal government must think about the cost of doing nothing. The AMG analysis does not include the cost of inaction, and yet the reason the Liberal government is committed to stopping climate change is because we are certain it would damage our health, environment and economy. The 1998 ice storm in eastern Canada was a dramatic demonstration of the kind of damage climate change could inflict. The ice storm left three million Canadians without power for varying periods and cost \$5.4 billion.

All things considered, we are confident that the overall benefits to Canada, such as reduced smog, improved human health, and a more innovative and efficient economy would far outweigh any costs.

Some people are under the impression that the government is rushing to ratify Kyoto without informing and consulting Canadians, but this is not the case. In fact, we are doing the opposite.

Canada first agreed to the Kyoto protocol in December 1997, almost five years ago. Since then we have been working with the provinces and territories, with industry and academics, with environmental groups and with cities, to find solutions to climate change. We are working with our partners to bring these solutions together in a complete, made in Canada plan.

Just how much has the Government of Canada consulted? Canada's federal, provincial and territorial environment and energy ministers have met twice a year since 1997 to debate our climate change policy and decide what actions to take. Their officials have met regularly in between. These ministers established the national climate change process to examine the impacts and benefits of implementing the Kyoto protocol and to consult with Canadians.

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• (1535)

The national climate change process has two main parts consisting of three working groups and 16 issue tables. These working groups and issue tables are comprised of more than 450 experts from different levels of government, industry, academia and non-governmental organizations. They have produced tens of thousands of pages of analysis and have spent thousands of hours in ministerial meetings, public consultations and technical workshops. Stakeholder meetings were held in every province and territory in 2000 and again in 2002.

Every sector of Canadian society has contributed to Canada's climate change policy. Our careful decision to ratify the Kyoto protocol is a result of these years of consultation and debate. The message we have heard is clear. As the effects of climate change become more severe, Canada, as the third largest per capita greenhouse gas emitter in the industrialized world, cannot afford to remain part of the problem. We must be part of the solution.

As a border community, many of my constituents have a very close working relationship with our friends in the United States and wonder why we are signing a deal that our largest trading partner, the United States, is refusing to ratify.

As of September 2002, 93 countries have ratified or acceded to the Kyoto protocol. Mexico, Japan, Great Britain and France have ratified. Russia is in the process of ratifying. While the Bush administration has signalled that it does not intend to ratify, it has launched its own global climate change initiative. State governments in the United States are far ahead of our provincial governments in Canada in implementing greenhouse gas reduction measures. Canadians risk making a huge mistake if they look only to the current position of the U.S. government to justify a decision not to ratify the Kyoto protocol.

Frankly, the United States is not a signatory to many international protocols and conventions concerning things like the protection of refugees, the rights of children, the International Criminal Court or the landmines treaty. I do not see this as a reason to automatically discount our own participation and our known policies on important international issues. Although we are friends with the United States we have the right and responsibility to take a different path when it is the right thing to do.

My chamber of commerce also asked, why would Canada commit to an unachievable target that also requires us to make payments to countries without targets?

How we address climate change may still be open to debate but not whether we address it. Canadians want action and we are committed to formulating a made in Canada contribution to the global climate change problem to meet our made in Canada Kyoto objectives. We are confident we would meet the objectives we negotiated.

There is nothing in the Kyoto protocol that requires Canada to make payments to countries without targets. However the protocol does allow Canada to work cooperatively with developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and get credit for doing so. Should we use these mechanisms the Liberal government is

committed to investing primarily in projects that are consistent with our international development and trade promotion goals.

My constituents want to know what effort has the government made to create a best for Canada plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while protecting our economic prosperity?

We have been working on a best for Canada plan with the provinces and territories, with industry, academics and environmental groups, and with over 450 Canadian experts since 1997. The Kyoto protocol is part of Canada's made in Canada plan to fight climate change. We have a stake in having others take action to solve our Canadian problem and therefore we must do our share. Climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. The Kyoto protocol is the only internationally agreed framework for global action. A fundamental principle of Kyoto is that each country has to address the issue according to its own unique circumstances. This is precisely what we are doing.

International agreements reached on the details of the Kyoto protocol over the past year reflect Canada's priority that taking action on climate change must be both cost effective and environmentally credible. The result is an international agreement that strongly reflects Canadian interests.

Under the national climate change process we have been working with our partners across the country to develop a strategy that makes sense for Canada. The result of the work is presented in the federal discussion paper on Canada's contribution to addressing climate change released on May 15, 2002. It identifies at least 40 targeted measures we can take to reduce emissions by up to 175 megatonnes which could at least meet 70% of our Kyoto target. It outlines how to achieve further reductions through market based measures like domestic emissions trading and by working cooperatively with other countries under the Kyoto protocol. This is what a made in Canada plan looks like.

• (1540)

In conclusion, I want to comment briefly on Canada as an important world leader in this area. If we want the rest of the world to act responsibly and protect the environment, then we need to be part of a global agreement.

Developed under the auspices of the United Nations, the Kyoto protocol is the only internationally agreed upon framework for action. It is the beginning of an international regime to tackle the issue. It is a first step in the right direction.

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Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Kyoto protocol. I also want to thank the government for the vote on the accord. I say thanks because under our parliamentary system the government is not required to hold a ratification vote on an international treaty. That is the sole prerogative of government. However the government does understand the need for members of the House to express themselves on the accord. It is the democratic thing to do and it makes for good politics. Members of the House have opinions on the accord and those opinions should be heard.

I want to say right off the bat that I will be voting for the accord. For me, it is the right thing to do.

Scientists, I believe, have made the case for action around climate change. The time for action is now, before it is too late or before the challenge becomes much more daunting.

I know that there is a minority of scientists who see no need for Kyoto type action at this time. They think that climate change has been overestimated. They could be right but they are very much in the minority. About nine in ten scientists do not agree with that minority.

I am putting my money on the overwhelming majority. They simply cannot be ignored. After all, I have to look at myself in the mirror, decide with a small minority and then lose on that wild gamble, and that, to me, would be irresponsible in the extreme. I will not do it. So, I will support the accord. I see it as an insurance plan, at the very minimum, and if future developments show that it was not needed, then the cost of that insurance will not be out of order.

We have an obligation to our children and grandchildren. We owe that much to those who will inherit this planet from us.

Will there be some costs in some areas of our economy when Kyoto is implemented? The short answer to that is, yes, but let me quickly add that I am an optimist and believe that any bad flowing from the accord will be outweighed by the good. Economic models suggest that the economy will grow over the next eight years or so at about 17.5%. That is with Kyoto. Without Kyoto, it may have gone to about 18%. I suspect that most Canadians would agree that is a tolerant level of investment for protecting the environment.

We are a proud and very successful nation. We have built one of the best economies in the world and in what some people believe to be a cold and inhospitable climate. Well, our winters are long, but we have never let that deter us. We just dress warmly and get on with it.

Ours is a proud history. We have invited people from all around the world to come here and pursue their dreams. Millions have taken up our invitation and have helped build our country to what it is today.

Well over 100 years ago we built a railroad from coast to coast. Some said at the time that it could not be done.

We fought in two world wars. Our nation matured in that process and the world recognized that Canada's soldiers are second to none.

We have built our country on two founding languages and, if that was not enough, we proudly proclaimed ourselves a multicultural nation about 30 years ago.

Why do I say those things in a debate about the Kyoto protocol? It is simple. We Canadians can do anything we set our minds to. We are up to the Kyoto challenge.

I truly believe that when ratification happens, Canadians will realize that there is no going back. I believe that it will be cathartic for our country. It will help us throw off our fears and march forward.

I think we will see innovation in this country like this country has never seen before. We will see our business community take up the challenge. It already has in some quarters. I will speak more about that in just a few minutes.

• (1545)

Canada has a dynamic private sector. It will not be left behind. Those in the private sector are smart, resourceful, competitive and are hungry for success. I have complete faith in them. Our government has already promised a strong partnership with the business sector to get the job done.

Our government is committed. It is committed to all concerned to do everything possible to meet the Kyoto targets by 2012. It will be a strong challenge but the government is in for the long haul.

The government has also committed to a plan that will not impose an unfair burden on any industry or region of the country. That is important. This is a responsible approach. If there are any national burdens they must be shared. I know, for example, that there are concerns in Alberta where the oil and gas industry is concentrated, but our government is committed to working with the Alberta government and with the Alberta people. Alberta will be treated fairly, as will all provinces and all territories.

Common sense tells us that the federal government must be fair to all regions, and it will be. There can be no other way. This great country was built on cooperation and partnership and that rule will be followed in Kyoto.

The federal government has been consulting widely with stakeholders, provinces, territories, municipalities and NGOs for several years. That will not stop. In fact, it will intensify. We are committed to getting things right. Canada is turning a corner on Kyoto. It is the right corner. Turning this corner takes us toward more opportunities and, in the long run, toward a more competitive economy.

That has already started. The environment minister reminded us of this when he kicked off the debate several days ago. It is worthwhile repeating what he said. He said:

Many companies are making the first important step of making their operations more efficient when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions. DaimlerChrysler Canada has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions for each vehicle it manufactures by 42%. DuPont Canada set a 10 year goal that would reduce energy use by 25% per unit. It reached that goal in less than half the time it had put aside to do so. Syncrude Canada has reduced greenhouse gas emissions per barrel of production by 26% since 1988.

That paves the way for the next step, which is to cut total emissions through wise energy use. We have examples, such as Weyerhaeuser Canada's Prince Albert, Saskatchewan plant which is energy self-sufficient and which has drastically cut its greenhouse gas emissions. Interface Inc. reduced energy consumption at its Belleville, Ontario plant by more than 35% between 1993 and 1997 while production increased 58%. Mountain Equipment Co-op's new store here in Ottawa has reduced its energy consumption by over 50%.

As members can see, the great work has already begun. It will not stop. In fact, it will only accelerate. This is why I see the glass half full when it comes to Kyoto. We can do it and we will do it. I am sure there will be some bumps on the road. That is inevitable. However those bumps will not feel so bad if we work together. Working together is one of the keys to success.

To do that we will all have to make a special effort to avoid playing politics with Kyoto. I know it is tempting for some politicians to fearmonger and endeavour to pit one region against another to put the federal government, or any other government for that matter, in a bad light. That is a dangerous game. It can damage the economy and threaten national unity.

In conclusion, I believe that all Canadians want us and every level of government to set aside partisan political differences and pull together for the sake of this great country. We can do it. We must do it. Canadians are counting on us.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to ratifying the Kyoto protocol.

The Canadian Alliance supports the policies that contribute to creating a healthier environment and economic growth. The Kyoto accord on the environment is an international agreement with grave deficiencies, and it does not advance either of these objectives.

We oppose the Kyoto protocol and, instead, advocate the adoption, together with the provinces, of real Canadian policies to meet our environmental objectives.

[*English*]

In discussing Kyoto today, I have to point out, first and foremost, that we are debating this in an atmosphere of closure. Why? Is it because we have a real deadline to implement concrete plans to achieve national or international targets? The answer is, of course, no. It is precisely the opposite.

We have closure today precisely because there is no deadline and there are no plans. Instead of having deadlines, plans and goals, we must insist on moving forward because the government is simply increasingly embarrassed by the state of the debate and it needs to move on.

In many ways this is like gun control, the sponsorship program, GST corporate rebates and the HRDC scandals. The government does not know what it is doing but it must proceed to pretend that it does know what it is doing. And to show that it is moving on, it must of course spend money, and not just Monopoly money. We have

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talked about this and have thrown figures around as if they were just accounting abstractions. This is the money of ordinary, hardworking people, that was taken off their paycheques.

We will waste in this protocol, not hundreds of millions of dollars, not billions, but the potential wastage of tens of billions of dollars and perhaps the destruction of the economy itself. If this pattern continues, not only will we waste that kind of money but the government will engage in an elaborate cover-up as long as possible to ensure that the costs are not known until a true crisis is reached.

So far what has the debate on Kyoto revealed, not just in the House but in the public over the past few weeks? It has revealed the following, and I will go through these step by step.

First, the Kyoto protocol does not deal with critical environmental issues. Second, it does not even deal sufficiently with those it is actually supposed to address. Third, it unfairly penalizes Canada. Fourth, the costs, if implemented, will be astronomical. Fifth, I will review the actual state of the plan to achieve these targets and, in particular, look at the implementation status in light of the coming to office of a new prime minister some time within about a year.

Let me start first with the fact that the accord does not deal with critical environmental issues. It is time to tell the truth about the Kyoto accord. I have been saying this across the country and I understand full well that this is politically difficult. Kyoto has been sold as a motherhood issue; the simple good of the planet versus economic greed. It is far easier to stand for the simple moral certainties of Kyoto's environmentalist rhetoric than to understand the messy reality of the accord's contents and their effects on our economic lives.

The truth is that many people who should have known better have been all too quiet for all too long as fearmongering, myth making and, on the part of the Prime Minister, legacy building, have seen the country stumble blindly toward implementing the worst international agreement the country has ever signed.

We have all no doubt seen the TV images that Kyoto has refuted to address. The huge plants and factories billowing great mushroom clouds of poisonous smog into the air. It is little wonder that a large percentage of the public thinks we should do something about this. We should, except that this has nothing to do with the Kyoto protocol. Missing in this utterly bogus sales job is one inconvenient little fact, the Kyoto accord has next to nothing to do with controlling pollution. Kyoto does not target particulate matter, sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxide or any number of other pollutants. A couple are mentioned but none are targeted.

Kyoto simply does not target air quality. It is designed instead to address the so-called greenhouse gas phenomenon. The hypothesis is that the increase of certain gases, not necessarily pollutants, contribute to a long term global warming trend.

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• (1555)

I will not comment at any length about the science of this other than to say the science remains in flux and is controversial. This is not just about issues of global warming or how these gases contribute to global warming, but the very reality that there has been constant climate change in the earth's history. We know this and quite frankly science knows very little about why over the epochs and the centuries those temperature changes have taken place in the first place.

Second, it does not matter what view we have of the science in any case since Kyoto has little to do with that anyway. The accord focuses on only one greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is not a pollutant. It is a naturally occurring gas essential to the life cycles of the planet.

The Kyoto protocol targets only a small percentage of carbon dioxide. Man-made carbon dioxide is only about 5% of the earth's today. Even more significant, two-thirds of man-made carbon dioxide emissions occur in countries not ratifying or that are exempt from Kyoto's targets. Worse yet, it is not even intended in Kyoto that a handful of implementing countries will achieve reduction targets. Instead the accord provides for an emissions trading credit scheme that allows countries like Canada to simply transfer money to other countries, some with far worse environmental records than our own, instead of cutting CO₂ emissions.

The upshot is this. Canada's implementation will not lead to global reductions of CO₂. In fact, the transfer of wealth, jobs and emissions to non-target countries virtually ensures that carbon dioxide emissions will increase under the Kyoto Protocol.

My third point is that this unfairly penalizes Canada. The hon. member for LaSalle—Émard, the former finance minister, says that international problems require international solutions. He is right about that, except that under this accord there are very few countries that will limit CO₂ emissions and most will do so only marginally.

Let me just go through the list. There are India, China and Mexico, our trading partner. India and China, two of the five biggest emitters in the world, are exempt from the accord. The United States and Australia are not ratifying it. Japan has ratified it but apparently will not implement it. In the cases of the European Union as a group and Russia, only the most modest targets have to be achieved. In fact, not a single other country in the western hemisphere, that is to say the Americas, has accepted a target under the Kyoto plan.

This government negotiated for Canada the toughest standards in the world. By ratifying this accord, we will be obligated to reduce emissions by a whopping 30% over projected levels by the end of the implementation period in 2012. In setting this target, our government failed to get for Canada consideration of things that cause high energy consumption in our country. It utterly failed to get recognition of our cold climate, our large distances and our population growth.

Fourth, as I said, the costs of this accord if implemented will be astronomical. We do not know precisely what the costs will be because we have no implementation plan, but it is not hard to figure out that the impact of reducing energy emissions on the scale of Kyoto will be enormous.

Independent estimates suggest that to achieve our Kyoto imposed targets, Canadians could be looking at 50% increases in the costs of gasoline and heating, up to 100% or a doubling of the cost of electricity, the loss of close to half a million jobs and economic costs of up to \$40 billion for the economy. To put that in context, we are talking about \$2,700 per household.

The government's own estimates on this have varied wildly over the past two years. We have had report after report with estimate after estimate. None of them are as high as the independent estimates, but they are all shockingly high.

Something to remember is this. Most of these costs will be borne by consumers, since almost 80% of CO₂ emissions are produced from the consumption of energy rather than the production of energy.

Today the government ministers have confirmed that the government will cap the cost of CO₂ reductions at about \$15 per tonne for large emitters. The government thinks that this subsidization is somehow a wonderful thing and has attacked us for not backing it. However it has missed the point. We are not here, unlike the Liberal Party, to simply worry about the costs of this for business. We are here to worry about the costs of this for the country and for the ordinary people who will have to bear these costs.

• (1600)

Do not be led also, as the government would hope, that Kyoto's impact would be primarily regional in nature. Because it attacks energy consumption, much more so than production, the negative economic impact of Kyoto will be felt from coast to coast, which is why virtually every province began to balk as we began to move closer to ratification and implementation plans.

Let me talk about the state of the implementation debate, because that is really where we have to go. For reasons that are beyond frankly convention and legal practice, the government is intent on ratifying without a plan or without any implementation, regulations or draft legislation of any kind.

The state of implementation the last two years has been the most bizarre barrage of constantly revised draft reports, whether it is in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, or a comic book or whatever the latest thing is. There is no legislation, no regulations, few costs, no explanation of how it we will really meet the targets and no concrete actions.

In the latest version of the plan the government has said that it will meet its targets by taking three steps. I will go through them one at a time. Unfortunately I do not have as much time as the member for Red Deer to go through all this details, but let me summarize where we are at in the current implementation plan.

Government Orders

The first step is actions underway from action plan 2000 and budget 2001 from which some of the costs have been provided. However it is important to note that most of the measures mentioned are just demonstration projects, negotiations, incentive programs or cooperation with provinces rather than actual plans to limit emissions. It does suggest, and this is fascinating, that already the costs the government has agreed to, direct governmental costs to meet Kyoto, are running about \$1.6 billion. What has this achieved? The government claims it will achieve reductions in the order of about 80 megatonnes. Our review of this on a step by step basis suggests that a claim of any more than about 40 megatonnes is an exaggeration.

The second step is a list of actions for which no cost estimates of any kind have been provided. Many of the items on the list of upcoming actions, double count items that are already in step one. Our repeated requests to the Minister of the Environment to provide specifics on this list have been rebuffed. What are the likely achievements? My office went through the proposals on a step by step basis and we can find no more than about 45 megatonnes of concrete reduction measures.

The third step in the government's plan descends into complete wishful thinking. For example the government is still including clean energy exports to the United States, even though Canada's request to include these exports has been repeatedly denied by the United Nations. The government admits that there is a gap of about 60 megatonnes in terms of achieving the 240 megatonne target that Canada will accept by ratification. The bottom line is this. Our analysis suggest that this plan has no more than about 85 megatonnes out of 240 megatonnes where there is a concrete idea of how we will proceed.

We will soon be left by the Prime Minister and it will soon fall to the member for LaSalle—Émard, the former finance minister, to deal with this and to move us forward. I would like to spend a few minutes to try to assess the implementation plan and where the member for LaSalle—Émard may go with this. In his early days of course he was a disciple of Maurice Strong, the international Canadian environmentalist, who not only had radical views on this issue but had been very close to the minister and, I understand, to the amassing of his personal wealth. In 1992 the former finance minister wrote the following:

We can begin by pressuring for an international convention to reduce CO₂ emissions by at least 20% worldwide by 2005, using 1998 as a base year. We should set the example by exceeding that target at home.

● (1605)

He had no doubt back then. He was fearless. It was a proposal as radical, if not more radical than Kyoto. He was proposing to ram it down the throats of the provinces. He said in that period:

I am simply saying that if you are going to attack the problem of global warming, which is not only going to drown an island in the South Pacific but is also going to drown Anticosti Island, then you bloody well better understand that it is not going to be done from some provincial capital; it is going to have to be done at the federal level.

That is not just a very radical position, but radical terminology. Frankly it is the same line throughout his nine years as a cabinet minister.

However, recently the former finance minister has had many positions on the issue. I am tempted to say how many positions but I think I might exceed good taste here.

Two weeks before the Prime Minister went to Johannesburg to announce he would ratify the Kyoto accord, that was in September, the former finance minister said that he should do just that. Later he said that before Kyoto was signed there must be a comprehensive plan with a detailed study of the costs, benefits and impacts. Then he said that Kyoto should probably not be ratified unless and until all provinces were all side, the so-called national consensus.

Then he announced that he would vote for Kyoto when it came to this Parliament, as it will tomorrow, but the vote should be delayed. Then last week we had a virtuoso flip-flop performance in the House of Commons. I am tempted to call it, using the terminology of Rodney Dangerfield, a triple lindy. The former finance minister suggested that first, and I could read the quotes but I will not, that there would be great changes to our economy and lives because of Kyoto, but then suggested that he would ensure they would be absolutely costless.

He said that he supported ratification, but categorized the protocol as inadequate and rejected its centrepiece, the emissions trading scheme. Then he demanded there be investment certainty around the plan but said that the plan had been wrongly developed and must go back to the drawing board of public and parliamentary hearings. He said all this in the course of 10 minutes with his patented introduction "let me be very clear".

The former finance minister did have one concrete proposal. It was to lob a cool \$1.5 billion into green research technology and infrastructure. Let me quickly say that this reminds me of the first modern boondoggle, the scientific research tax credit that in 1983 exploded from \$200 million to \$3.5 billion in a matter of months. These programs are inherently difficult. It is inherently difficult to subsidize the development of cutting edge technology without subsidizing economically efficient technology that would be introduced anyway.

Let me summarize by saying that we will do this while the former finance minister stumbles around with his implementation plans. We will on this side of the House monitor the costs and the progress of this international agreement every step of the way. We will highlight ways of achieving modest CO₂ and pollution reductions and will make it very clear when we identify such reductions taking place. We will also monitor the costs closely and ensure that those costs do not fall inordinately on ordinary people.

We will highlight failures to achieve the outrageous targets until those targets are reduced. We will keep an eye on the government and an eye on its constant attempt to cover-up costs every step of the way.

On this side of the House we will do the only responsible thing, that is to vote not just against closure, not just against implementation, but frankly under the circumstance to vote against ratification of this accord without a plan.

Government Orders

I put the government on notice that this is only the beginning of the debate. We will fight this every step of the way. We will ensure that the government pays the price every step of the way either for the outrageous costs they have placed on Canadians or for its failure to achieve the targets to which it has unwittingly and irresponsibly committed the country.

● (1610)

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for St. Catharines.

It is a rare event when the nations of the world put aside their national interests, economic concerns and trade disputes and join forces to tackle a global challenge. Climate change caused by increasing levels of greenhouse gases threatens the world's industries as well as its people.

There is now legitimate concern that agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism will be impacted by changing weather patterns causing floods, droughts and other climate consequences over the decades to come. There could be few greater causes for the world to pull together.

When Canada signed the Kyoto protocol in April 1998, it was touted as a global solution to a global problem. Unfortunately, it is now obvious that Kyoto is neither global nor truly the solution we had hoped for.

The Kyoto accord is now an agreement between Europe, Japan and New Zealand. The largest polluters are not participating. Countries responsible for two-thirds of the world's emissions are not part of the deal or have no emissions reduction targets. The countries with the fastest growth in emissions, China, India and the United States, are not subject to any restrictions. Even if Kyoto participants meet their targets, the impact on global warming will be insignificant over the next 50 years at least. This is well known.

What is less well known is that those Kyoto countries which are subject to emissions targets are not required to reduce their emissions as a group. This strange reality is the basis for the agreement being signed in the first place. One might have thought that an agreement to which Canada signed in 1998 might seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from 1998 levels. This of course is not the case. 1990 was the base year. It is now obvious why that is. Between 1990 and 1998, many signatories had dramatic reductions in their own emissions.

Russia had 35% less emissions in 1998 than it did in 1990. Hence, its target of zero increase actually permits it to increase its emissions by 50% from the day it signed the treaty. The other former eastern bloc countries are in similar situations.

The European Union also had members that had dramatic reductions between 1990 and 1998. Germany's absorption of East Germany and the closure of coal-fired industries reduced its emissions by 15%. The widespread conversion from coal to natural gas in the U.K. reduced its emissions by over 8%. Overall, the European Union needs to reduce its emissions by only 4% to reach its target, not that challenging for a region with a very limited population growth.

The use of 1990 rather than 1998 as a base level was an effort to reduce commitments rather than reduce emissions. The absurd result is that when we take Canada, the United States and Australia out of the treaty, the remaining Kyoto participants as a group actually signed on to increase their emissions by 16% over 1998 levels. If they do better, they can sell credits to countries that have harder targets to meet.

While the United States and Australia want no part of that bargain, Canada will ratify the deal and will commit to reducing its greenhouse gases by 16% from the levels in 1998 when we signed on originally. That is the deal. Canada reduces its emissions by 16% from 1998; the rest of the Kyoto countries can collectively increase their emissions by curiously 16%.

Today Canada's target amounts to a 25% reduction from current levels. Our greenhouse gas emissions have risen because Canada has a growing population and because we have a growing oil and gas production industry.

Every year we take in over 200,000 immigrants. This requires some 80,000 more homes, homes that need to be heated, homes that use electricity. Our economy relies on this growth. We rely on growth in our oil patch. We watch auto sales and housing starts as key economic indicators. To restrain this growth will rob us of the economic strength we need to finance the transition to cleaner fuels and greater energy efficiency.

● (1615)

With the United States outside the deal, Canada is certain to suffer competitive consequences of any Kyoto measures that result in higher costs to producers or manufacturers.

The government has published a plan with some ideas as to how we might hope to meet our national targets. The total cost to Canadians of this revolutionary reduction in carbon emissions is predicted to be a rounding error in our GDP. We need a parliamentary review of our implementation plan to fully assess what this program will cost Canadians as consumers and taxpayers, something which our former finance minister has advocated religiously and which the Leader of the Opposition has failed to remember in his listing of what the finance minister has or has not said.

We need to determine whether the predicted economic benefits of energy efficiency can make a measurable difference nationwide. We need to identify all the industry sectors which may be most impacted. Most important, we have to let Canadians understand what we are committing to on their behalf. That has always been the role of Parliament and its committees: to guard the public purse and inform Canadians about what their government is doing.

Last Monday the Minister of Industry leapt before the cameras to lash out against the prudence of parliamentary committees studying government plans. He said:

I don't think that we can approach public life by saying every time there is a difficult decision to make, we'll send it to a committee. Sometimes you have to decide and sometimes everybody won't like it, but that's just too bad. You've got to make up your mind.

Government Orders

So said the minister. It is poetic justice that the very next day the Auditor General reported on a previous occasion when the minister voiced such an opinion.

The minister had promised Canadians that the gun registry would cost some \$2 million net to taxpayers. Sheila Fraser reported that in fact it burned an \$860 million hole in taxpayers' pockets, an error of some 40,000%. Yes, sometimes we just have to decide, but sometimes we should also make the right decisions, decisions that do not result in the worst cost overrun that the Auditor General has seen in her professional life.

One has to wonder what might have happened had there been a more careful review of cost assumptions. Had we known the true costs, we might have had the choice of whether we wanted to spend \$100 million a year on a database or, for about the same amount of money, invest in 1,000 more police officers to target organized crime, parole violators or illegal guns. Canadians should have had that choice.

We did learn that legislating platitudes without a well studied plan can be devastating to taxpayers who are left with the bill. Only an independent and thorough assessment of our Kyoto plan can give us the confidence in the cost estimates. Only by knowing the costs can we determine what else we might have been able to achieve for Canadians with the same amount of money.

Canada must do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We should invest in our future environment. We should invest in cleaner fuels and innovative ways to improve energy efficiency. We should aim to reach our Kyoto targets whether we are part of a treaty or not. We have a responsibility to ensure that Canadian inaction is in no way responsible for the future consequences of global warming.

We also have a responsibility to be honest with Canadians about the costs. We should know how many dollars will be sent to Russia to buy credits and how many jobs will be lost in the United States where emissions targets will not be a burden on industry. In essence, we need a fully detailed plan that would survive the scrutiny of a parliamentary committee and stand the test of time.

Kyoto is both a noble path and a blind alley. A parliamentary committee should be asked to light the way for Canadians.

• (1620)

Mr. Walt Lastewka (St. Catharines, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to speak in the House, especially at this time. It is the last opportunity to speak to the Kyoto protocol before members vote on the issue.

As a Canadian and as a member of Parliament I understand Kyoto must be implemented with the cooperation and consideration of all the provinces and territories. If we as Canadians want an agreement that will be adhered to, we must reach consensus with the provinces.

We must acknowledge our role as a leader on this issue. We must go forward with all the provinces and territories and work together toward a common goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions without reducing our economic efficiency. The federal and provincial governments, as some premiers have said, must work on the plan together.

Maintaining our strong economy is crucial. It would allow us to absorb any of the costs related to the implementation process and not have a negative impact.

By encouraging Canadians and Canadian companies to develop new technologies centred on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we not only develop a technology that is Canadian, we also create jobs in developing and sustaining that technology. Selling it abroad sustains our economy. In giving the world a leading edge with Canadian technology, we can help other countries, most certainly some developing countries, to meet their obligations.

Our mission should be that when the world looks for environmental solutions, Canada is the answer. If we want to share the best new technologies with the world, we must ensure that we obtain the highest level of cooperation in sharing our new ideas and technologies from around the country.

I travel across Canada as often as I can. This past summer I was on the east and west coasts visiting many small businesses with leading edge technologies, innovation and incubation centres. In considering my remarks on the accord, I realized that in order to meet our obligations under the Kyoto accord, we should establish a whole new level of cooperative enterprise across Canada.

For example, Iogen Corporation suggested a winning combination for Canadian public policy. On the environment: a greater than 90% reductions in net CO₂ emissions, uniquely bioethanol; improved air quality; and improved health of Canadians. On agriculture: new direct farm income of \$200 million to \$300 million annually; the creation of 1,150 direct plant jobs as well as on-farm baling, trucking and construction jobs; and crop diversity and the potential to invest in bioethanol facilities. Innovation and investment with the private sector is very important to develop uniquely Canadian technology, build a domestic industry with large export potential, and provide continued Canadian leadership in clean fuel technologies.

If we are going to encourage the cooperative efforts of business within Canada, we as a federal government must hold ourselves to the same standard. Those in industry must have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what they can expect from the federal government regarding emissions reductions. In establishing a cap on emissions which has been discussed recently, business has the assurance that the federal government will assist in the greenhouse gas reduction process. Businesses can remain within their operating budgets and continue to flourish.

Government Orders

We must work beyond Kyoto. Developing countries will continue to consume energy at unprecedented rates. Their emissions will most certainly choke our planet if we do not provide them with the means to substantially reduce them.

Canada must become the world leader as the most energy efficient, technologically advanced country. We can accomplish this through cleaner fuels and efficient infrastructure, which will make our cities greener, and new innovative technologies.

Canada can and should be the world leader in the movement of global economies that have reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

The solution to this problem is not a simple one. There is no one answer to the problem. All Canadians must consider themselves as part of the solution and our efforts must be focused accordingly. There must be a realistic approach to the task ahead of us and to the contribution that all of us will be required to make.

Just because the United States federal government pulled out of Kyoto does not mean that the American people pulled out. Just watch what is happening in many of the states. Many of the state governors are implementing projects today that meet Kyoto standards. It is interesting to note that the individual states are far ahead of the provinces. I only wish that the meetings over the last five years with the resources and energy ministers could have been more productive, and similarly with the environment ministers who met over the last five years.

•(1625)

I understand the environment ministers agreed on 9 out of the 12 principles. So let us finish working on the remaining three. We all agreed, for example, on 9 principles: first, all Canadians must have an opportunity for full and informed input into the development of the plan; second, the plan must respect provincial and territorial jurisdiction; third, the plan must include recognition of real emission reductions that have been achieved since 1990 or will be achieved thereafter; fourth, the plan must provide for bilateral or multilateral agreements between provinces and territories, and with the federal government; fifth, the plan must support innovation and new technology; sixth, the plan must maintain the economic competitiveness of Canadian business and industry; seventh, Canada must continue to demand recognition of clean energy exports; eighth, the plan must include incentives for all citizens, communities, businesses and jurisdictions to make the shift to an economy based on renewable and other clean other energy, lower emissions and sustainable practices across sectors; and ninth, the implementation of any climate change plan must include an incentive and allocation system that supports lower carbon emission sources of energy, such as hydroelectricity, wind power generation, ethanol and renewable and other clean sources of energy.

Nine of these twelve principles have been approved by the provinces and the federal government, and the other three require extra definition and clarity of financial risk, appropriately federally funded mitigation and recognition of the various sinks across the provinces and territories. We must continue to work on these and not give up.

The auto industry would like less variation of standards. I agree with it. Let us all move closer to California standards. This does not

require new technology. We have the technology today. What is required is some innovation to get the costs down. We should be learning from the California standards and proceeding.

I have heard the opposition say that the Kyoto process should be more voluntary. I say to take the solutions on clean fuel, for example. Credit should be given to Irving Oil who, over the three to five year program, reduced its sulphur in gasoline. It has reached its goal. It has helped the country to reach its goal and has remained very competitive. In fact, Irving is a leader not only in the Atlantic region but on the eastern seaboard. We should be saying, "Job well done", and proceeding to ensure that we have clean fuel right across the country.

I consider the approval in Parliament of the Kyoto protocol as the approval of a mission statement by Canada and Canadians. Let us work out all the initiatives to achieve our goal. We must be efficient, more open, more positive, and transparent going forward. Let us get on with getting the job done.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Lanark—Carleton, Official Languages; the hon. member for Etobicoke North, Securities Industry; and the hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst, Airline Industry.

Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this debate ranks among the very important debates held in this House. It is the prelude—unfortunately ended by a gag order—to a vote to ratify an international treaty. Even though we have requested this many times, it will be my first opportunity to actually do it since becoming a member in this House.

This debate will allow us to vote on whether to ratify Kyoto, which some say is too costly and will eliminate jobs. Others object to it because they say its objectives are too low. This protocol can only be implemented when it is ratified by 55 countries, representing 55% of greenhouse gas emissions. This protocol is a first. It is an imperfect first step, but it is one that Quebec and Canada need to take.

This protocol is currently subject to bitter debate in this House. I must say that in getting ready, I did not think I would be so incensed by the debates I have heard from all sides of the House. When you think of your children, your grandchildren, your fellow citizens, or the future of the world, you cannot help but worry about greenhouse gas emissions. We know that our lifestyle, especially in North America and in the western world in general, which has undeniable benefits for those able to take advantage of them, exists through the uncontrolled and increasing emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This impacts climate such that it undergoes changes as a result of global warming, for instance. Some regions become torrid and parched, others are changed by the melting of the ice cap, while other regions suffer tornados or ice storms. We have not seen the end of such tragedies, for this is what they are for many people at the mercy of the elements.

What is the status of the situation in Canada? What is the status in Quebec? And what is it in the European Union to which we often make reference? I have just returned from the European Union where an information session was held with the Canada-Europe Committee.

It is important to know that for Canada, the Kyoto protocol—when Canada ratifies it, and we already know what its objective is—means, the same level of emissions as in 1990, plus further reduction by 6%. It should be noted that the current level of emissions for all of Canada is 19.5% higher than it was in 1990.

•(1630)

The goal is to reduce emissions by 19.5% plus a further 6%. Is this a lot? Yes, but there are significant differences within Canada, depending on the province. Those listening will not be surprised to hear me talk about Quebec. The most recent figures indicated that Quebec's emissions were 4% above the 1990 levels. Therefore, there needs to be an additional reduction of 4% to reach the 1990 levels.

In per capita terms, this is the best result in all of Canada. In fact, the results demonstrate that from 1990 to 2000, the change was 0.8% per capita, as the Canadian emissions chart shows, which makes for a combined increase of 4.4%.

However, if we look at the results for other provinces, we see that Alberta is at 31%. This is hardly surprising, since that is where the oil industry and the tar sands have experienced rapid growth, and tar sands are the most costly form of energy in terms of greenhouse gas emissions.

The increase in British Columbia is 24%, New Brunswick's increase is 27%. Since 1990, the overall increase for all of Canada is 19.5%, this figure includes Quebec's mere 4% increase. The results are cause for concern. Incidentally, according to the OECD, Canada was the third biggest polluter in 1999. We can conclude that it has likely moved to number two, which is not an enviable position.

Given these conditions, it is surprising that there has been such vocal opposition to signing the Kyoto protocol. If we compare the situation to that of the European Union as a whole, there are certain reasons for this, right now, it is 8% above the 1990 levels, and not 4% as I just heard. Therefore it has an additional 8% reduction to make.

Government Orders

We met with the director of the EU commission on the environment, not the commissioner, who said that preliminary results are indicating that they must be cautious, because emissions have started to climb again, even though they were at the 1990 levels.

So, compared to the average for the European Union, Canada is in a situation that is not easy. However, there again, let us not forget that, within the European Union, countries such as Germany have reduction targets of 21%. This is a huge reduction target. I will get back to this issue later on.

So, the situation is serious. Of course, we could say that the Americans are worse off than we are, but this is small consolation, particularly since we know that if the outcome of the election in the United States had been different, it is highly likely, if not certain that the Americans would be among the signatory states that will ratify the Kyoto protocol.

In the United States, a significant number of people share these concerns, and particularly the determination to do something about climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

•(1635)

What is happening with the action plan? This is where we have a problem. This is where it is important to say, to loud and clear, as was done by my young colleague, the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, who did such a great job on the issue of climate change for us and for all parliamentarians here, that a plan is urgently needed.

The European Union countries needed only two years to agree on a plan that allows some of them to increase their production. A country such as Portugal, which needs to grow, which is less developed than the other European countries, got permission from its neighbours to increase its emissions by 27%, while other countries such as Germany—which is the most affected country—were given reduction targets of 21%.

These countries reached agreement. France has an objective of 0%, as does Finland. Overall, it is a matter of an 8% reduction. They reached agreement in the space of two years on what is called a triptych plan, and there were plans for its application here in Canada. This plan made it possible for the European Union, along with businesses, municipalities, groups of stakeholders and the general public, to create a plan and move on it. This does not mean that there are no European initiatives aimed at supporting the enthusiasm of those wishing to commit. They also set up such bodies as the European Environment Agency. They are already in operation.

Government Orders

The major problem here is that no decision has been reached. There seems no obvious leadership in this. Since the beginning we—and Quebec—have supported signature of the Kyoto protocol. We have repeatedly called upon the government to pledge to do so. We are pleased with its intention to sign and ratify Kyoto in the near future. We are, however, concerned that there is no plan. Why? For a number of reasons. The first of these is that business, which plays an important role in this plan to reduce emissions, is waiting to find out what is expected of it. That is hardly surprising.

In a number of areas, including for instance labour relations, which generally is not a federal jurisdiction, companies are starting to defend their interests. When a position is taken, and a law is passed, then they apply the law. In the case of emissions reduction, they need a deadline, because the commitments point to emissions reduction. Depending on the type of business involved, this means technological changes, changes in the way the work is done, or perhaps changes to supply. A certain amount of time is needed for this. They need to know what their objectives are. I know that, in my riding, which is one of three in Quebec where there are petrochemical plants, these industries fear we will go along with signature of the protocol before there is any plan.

I told them, “Well now, we will be in a better position to have a plan once it becomes clear that we are complying with Kyoto and energy is no longer focused on convincing us not to sign. We will also be in a better position to negotiate with others”.

•(1640)

Which brings me to the plan for Canada and Quebec. Once again, I feel compelled to talk about Quebec, which you know I enjoy.

Quebec has reached this level of emissions, 4% above the 1990 levels, which is noteworthy in Canada. How has Quebec done this? Mostly through its choice of hydroelectric power generation. This is a choice that was certainly helped by Quebec's geography, but several other provinces also share this.

The fact that 95% of our electricity is generated by hydro gives us a significant advantage in terms of emissions. There was some criticism along the lines that when large areas are flooded, rotting trees produce carbon dioxide. That may be the case, however right now, compared to electricity produced from coal, gas or oil, electricity produced from water is infinitely cleaner.

The advantage for Quebec is that this electricity is abundant, it is not expensive and Quebec has therefore been able to attract business, such as aluminum smelters, which operate in Quebec using hydroelectric power. These large-scale, productive industries, which benefit Quebec, produce few, if any, greenhouse gas emissions.

Once Quebec has made these changes, if its efforts are not taken into account and it is made to share a Canadian quota, without consideration for its own investments, what will happen? What will happen is that Quebec will be in an extremely difficult position. Quebec has already made most of the changes required. It still has to deal with transportation. Quebec is at a disadvantage compared to others in this regard, because car and truck transportation is an integral part of other businesses that I have not mentioned.

Our hon. colleague for Rosemont—Petit-Patrie, with many others in Quebec and Canada, is pleased to see this three-pronged European

model applied to Canada. If this plan were applied to Canada, Quebec would have a goal of 0% for 1990 and 5% overall. It is extremely important to mention this because, in the Canadian government's plan, what is expected of Quebec is more, much more, even if I am not putting a figure on it.

There must be a plan, and this plan must take into consideration what has already been done, all the more so because Quebec paid the full cost of developing its own hydroelectric industry, while the oil industry got \$66 billion in federal funding.

People have to be more environmentally friendly, but we also need an overall government plan that is territorially based so that businesses, transportation, and the actions of individuals are part of a movement to meet objectives in Canada. Otherwise, this situation will be unfair to Quebecers.

•(1645)

[English]

Mr. Bob Speller (Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise today to speak to the issue of Kyoto, particularly as the member of Parliament representing the riding of Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant, which has large emitters such as Stelco steel, Ontario Power Generation and Imperial Oil. Also, on the other side, I represent a very rural agricultural area that grows a lot of corn and provides a lot of opportunity in the agricultural area in terms of ethanol and biomass, which is also a product of this agreement and is particularly important within the action plan that Canada has put forward.

It is also a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, as you know, with both of us having been elected in 1988, to really come back to a similar debate we experienced after first being elected, and that was the free trade debate. Both of us sat through that debate and a lot of what is being said in this debate on Kyoto is not unfamiliar to me. It is very similar to what we heard in 1988, but from different sides. Back then it was really the business community, the manufacturers, that were saying that Canada had to look forward, to move forward on the issue and not be scared by all of the comments that were being put forward at that time, probably by many environmentalists. This time we are hearing from the other side. It is the environmentalists who are telling us to take a so-called leap of faith and move forward on these issues. It is a pleasure for me to delve into this sort of debate in this place.

We heard earlier in this debate from the Leader of the Opposition that the science on climate change is debatable. I would like to question that, because it is certainly an easy comment for the Leader of the Opposition to make that somehow not every scientist in the world agrees with this. That is probably the case. Not all scientists do agree with this issue, but I want to speak about a large majority of the scientists.

I want to speak about the scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That panel reported in 2001 that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years was attributable to human activities. Its credibility has been endorsed by 17 national science academies, which concluded, in a statement published on May 18, 2001, on the work of the IPCC that:

The work of the...IPCC represents the consensus of the international scientific community on climate change science. We recognize the IPCC as the world's most reliable source of information on climate change and its causes, and we endorse its method of achieving this consensus. Despite increasing consensus on the science underpinning predictions of global climate change, doubts have been expressed recently about the need to mitigate the risks posed by global climate change. We do not consider such doubts justified.

There is a large amount of science out there, and large numbers of pure science people who really do believe, and have done the science, to say that the world is changing, that our climate is changing. There is a strong consensus. It is generally accepted, in fact, that the average temperature of the globe has increased about 0.6° Celsius since the late 1800s, over both land and sea. This was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations environmental program, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The global climate is affected by many other factors, including solar output, volcanic emissions, aerosols and of course what we are talking about here today, CO₂ emissions. But none of these natural factors affecting climate change seem to easily explain why the globe is warming.

• (1650)

The majority of scientists now believe that the cause of the recent global warming is the human discharge in the atmosphere of large quantities of carbon dioxide or CO₂.

In Canada we are already feeling the effects of climate change. I ask those who question it to look out the window. The hon. member from western Canada who just spoke can clearly see the effects of climate change in recent years .

I know that many feel we might get a warm day here or a cold day there but they really do not see the impact. However, scientists around the world, who look at the numbers and study them, have definitively concluded that there is an impact and there is an impact here in Canada. We have had a larger number of heat waves with increasing intensity and the related health problems caused by them. The water levels in the Great Lakes have been declining. Fish migration has changed. The polar ice cap is melting. The forests in British Columbia have become infested with insects. We have had hotter summers and higher levels of smog in major urban centres. We have had more extreme weather events, such as droughts on the Prairies, ice storms in eastern Canada, and flooding in Quebec and Manitoba. As climate change related events such as these become more frequent, they will have a profound effect on our economy, our health and our quality of life.

The question, though, that we need to concentrate on is how to make Kyoto best work for Canadians. For me in my area, I need to know how this plan will deal with large emitters, in particular on a sector by sector basis. We said as a government that we do not want to disadvantage any sector. It is important that we remember this.

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One of the areas I have worked on, as a member of Parliament representing the steel industry, is a plan for the credit for early action of the industry because that is an industry that in fact has taken early action. I am glad to say that it is now sitting down and working with government to make sure that this is recognized and that it does become a reality. I feel that it would be important to encourage, and not discourage, these companies from taking early action and that this should be enshrined in any implementation strategy.

There was a question from many, particularly those on the other side, as to how we can rush into ratifying the Kyoto protocol when we do not know what its economic impacts will be. In this plan we clearly state that we do not need to, nor will we, export jobs or opportunities to meet our climate change goals. Our government is committed to the 1997 agreement of the first ministers that no province and no region will bear an unreasonable share of the burden for climate change and that business in Canada remains competitive in the global marketplace.

The plan, I believe, meets this test. Canada's gross domestic product will grow by about 17.5% as a result of the way the economy is moving over the next eight years. It is believed that will be about 0.4% less growth than we might have expected otherwise. The projected impact on employment is estimated to be about a five or six week delay in job creation. Approximately 1.32 million jobs are expected to be created over the period from 2002 to 2012. Using the most likely scenario, this would be reduced to about 1.26 million jobs. This means a forgone employment growth of not more than 60,000 jobs, which is about a month or a month and a half worth of job creation as we have created jobs now.

As I said earlier, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Burin—St. George's.

I will conclude by saying that there will be many opportunities also in Kyoto. Certainly within my community of Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant, the farming community can look forward to us promoting within this plan ethanol, ethanol related and bio-related answers to some of the problems we have today.

• (1655)

Mr. Bill Matthews (Burin—St. George's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the opportunity to share his time and to participate in this very interesting debate. I must say that I have been very impressed with the content and the research that has been done by various speakers in putting forward their opinions, the opinions of their constituents and, in most cases, the opinions of their provinces on this very important issue.

Countries around the world have recognized an urgent need to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to address the climate change challenge.

As has been said many times, in December 1997, Canada and more than 160 other countries met in Kyoto, Japan, and agreed to targets to reduce emissions. The agreement sets out targets and the options available to countries to achieve them.

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Canada's target is to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels by the period reaching up to the year 2012. It is Canada's intention to create a Canada for this and future generations with clean air, clean water, liveable cities and healthy people. Canada's climate change plan helps us all to rethink the way we use energy. It balances the challenge presented by climate change with opportunities to create a strong Canadian presence in new markets.

My colleague and others before him have talked about the devastating impacts that we see in the west on our farmers with the drought and with the difficulty in cultivating soil. I do not think anyone will deny that climate change is a global problem affecting all countries.

While greenhouse gas emissions form naturally, many human activities add additional emissions to the atmosphere: heating and cooling buildings, using energy at home and work, driving vehicles to move people and goods, and powering industrial processes. Anything that consumes energy contributes to the problem.

As my colleague and others have said many times before, there is a direct link among rising atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, particularly carbon dioxide, global warming and more frequent extreme weather events.

I have already mentioned the west but in my own part of the country, in the east, climate change already has affected fishing, farming, forestry, lakes, rivers, coastal communities and the north. When I speak of my own province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the riding I represent of Burin—St. George's on our province's south and southwest coast, we are predominantly a fishing people but we have had very serious situations develop with our fish stocks over the last 10 to 15 years. Some of these problems, no doubt, can be attributed to gear types and their destructive natures. Others can be attributed to predators, such as our seal population, but there is no doubt in my mind that climate change as well has had a serious impact upon our fish resources and our fish stocks. As my colleague before me said, it is no doubt impacting upon fish migrations. I think it is having a very serious impact on water temperature and on the nutrients in the water column upon which fish stocks need to feed.

In my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Premier Roger Grimes and the provincial government have raised specific concerns about the potential economic effects that Kyoto ratification may have on our evolving offshore oil and gas industries. We only have one oil refinery but that is very important and they are concerned about the impact on that. They are also concerned about our pulp and paper industry and our mining industry. I know full well the importance of these industries to my province of Newfoundland and Labrador. I share the concerns of the premier, his government and the industry on the impact the Kyoto ratification may have on those very important industries and the economy of our province.

● (1700)

In addition, the provincial government is very concerned that the plan has no well-defined mechanism to ensure that fair credit is given for clean energy projects, such as the Lower Churchill, or other new hydroelectric projects in our provinces or those being negotiated with neighbouring provinces.

I share the concerns that the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the premier have put forward. We do not want to see anything negative happen to those very important industries and the impact that it will have on employment and the economy of our province. However, having said that, I think it would be totally irresponsible not to address the issue of climate change. As a matter of fact a majority of Canadians say that Canada should live up to its international commitments even if there are associated economic costs with that.

The debate has been ongoing now for some five years. No doubt the debate has certainly heated up in the last few weeks, particularly driven by Parliament, which is very good. I think it is quite interesting that after all of this debate still a majority of Canadians say that we should live up to our international commitments even if there are associated economic costs. I think that is a very important point.

As well, a majority of Canadians still place a better and cleaner environment as the core to our Canadian values, which is another very important point that we should take very seriously in Parliament.

I will conclude my remarks by saying that it would be totally irresponsible not to address the issue of climate change. Regardless of what region of the country we come from, in some way we have seen the impacts. For the people in the west, the centre of the country, the north; and in my region of the country, the east, in Newfoundland and Labrador, there are definite negative impacts as a result of climate change.

I have thoroughly enjoyed listening to the debate over the last few weeks. It has been very intense. I want to thank all members who have contributed and say that I will be supporting the ratification of Kyoto Protocol.

● (1705)

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the members for Peace River, North Vancouver and Fraser Valley.

I want to start by asking, Mr. Speaker, that you permit me to entertain a fantasy, and I do not want you to get nervous. Let us imagine for a moment that the Minister of the Environment decides that as part of his job he feels he should consult Canadians, door to door, about the Kyoto protocol.

Now let us imagine that the environment minister arrives at the door of my neighbour, Dave Neilson, on his acreage just outside of Brooks, Alberta. Dave is a welder and works for a company that makes oil rigs. Apparently he is pretty good at it. He and his wife Linda have a very nice home. They have raised a very nice family.

Let us also imagine that the minister has been given some medication that compels him to tell both sides of the story. I want the House to listen in with me on this imaginary scenario as the minister talks to my neighbours, the Neilsons, about Kyoto.

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First, the minister would clear his throat, as he is wont to do. He would say, "Mr. Neilson, the drugs force me to be candid with you. I know that a generation ago scientists predicted confidently that the world was headed for a global ice age. And they had the data to prove it, just like today. Sure, it would have been the end of our civilization as we know it, but imagine the skiing. Anyway, we all stocked up on thermal underwear, but it seems that the scientists were all wrong. I also know that at the time of the oil shortages in the 1970s scientists reached a consensus that the world would run out of petroleum in 25 years. That was a good one. Obviously all that data that they had so much confidence in proved to be wrong".

The minister would go on and say, "Meanwhile, many scientists at the UN, using the most sophisticated computer modeling known to man, have told us every 10 years or so that we are on the brink of overpopulating the world and that we will soon be in the grip of worldwide food shortages. That appears to be a tad alarmist".

The minister would continue and say, "But now we have conflicting reports about the degree and source of global warming. Land based weather stations seem to indicate some increase in global temperatures, but other scientists question this because too many of the earth stations may be affected by urban heat pockets. Meanwhile, satellite temperature readings indicate no increase in temperatures at all. And yes, there is a dispute about the cause of warming, if there is any warming, because the increase in temperatures does not correspond with the increase in man-made CO₂ emissions and some speculate that the warming, if it exists, may have to do with solar activity. Yes, of course the earth has warmed up at periods and points in the past when obviously it had nothing to do with man-made CO₂ emissions".

The minister would then go on to say, "Mr. Neilson, you should also know that this multibillion dollar plan is not, I repeat not, a direct attack on the smog problems in our biggest cities, nor will it clean polluted waters or the hundreds of hazardous waste sites recently identified by our Auditor General".

At this moment I imagine the Minister of the Environment clearing his throat once more and going in for the big finale. "Mr. Neilson", he would say, "you should also know that our largest trading partners, the United States and Mexico, will not be part of the treaty. Therefore, Canadian businesses would be asked to bear the costs that our trading partners will not have to bear. Meanwhile countries like India, China and Indonesia are exempted from the treaty. The bottom line, Mr. Neilson, is that based on what I have just told you, it seems that some people will probably lose their jobs because of Kyoto. Because your work is tied to the oil and gas industry, you will probably be one of those people, but given what I have told you about the evidence in support of Kyoto, I know it is a sacrifice that you will be willing to make for your children and grandchildren and country".

At this point, I imagine that my friend would do what any normal person would do. He would grab the environment minister by the scruff of the neck and throw him out of his house, perhaps through the door, perhaps through the window. In this fantasy of mine, I imagine the environment minister hitting the ground and all that pent up gas causing him to explode, releasing CO₂ and other gases into the air.

This scene of course does not need to be confined to Alberta. It could be played out in any one of tens of thousands of homes, throughout southern Ontario, for instance, in the manufacturing belt, in the home of a steelworker or an auto worker, whose livelihoods are just as threatened by Kyoto.

• (1710)

Is it possible, I wonder, that the science of climatology is too young and imprecise a science to say with any certainty where the climate will be in the future? After all, if we are now in the grip of global warming caused by man-made CO₂ emissions, then why did these scientists not predict it? Why in fact did they predict global cooling? If it is in fact quite possible that climatology is not yet advanced enough a science to be a foundation for predictions, then is Kyoto itself not just a wild scheme premised on a fantasy? Canadians deserve better.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today I want to address the Kyoto issue from the perspective of investment, or in this case, lack of investment, because I will make the case today that entering into the agreement at this time, at a time when our major trading partners are not entering into the same agreement, will certainly affect the amount of foreign investment in Canada. In fact, I would even put the case that it will probably affect the amount of domestic Canadian investment in Canada, which will be looking for a home elsewhere.

Prior to becoming the finance critic for this party, the Canadian Alliance, I spent three years as the critic for industry. During that time we conducted three separate studies in terms of Canada's productivity and competitiveness. I see some members on the other side who were on that same committee. What we found was a longstanding decline in Canada's competitive position in the world. This goes back some 25 years. Twenty-five years ago, the United States was the number one country in the world in terms of productivity and Canada was number two. Unfortunately, public policy, which in many cases originated right here in the House of Commons, had the effect of dragging Canada down so that we are now 13th in terms of productivity in the world and our competitiveness has been greatly affected.

I will put it to the House that this has not been an accident. Public policy of the very Liberal government that was in power during most of that time and of a subsequent government had a great influence in dragging down Canada in terms of standard of living. That is really what it comes down to: Our standard of living has declined to only 70% of that of the United States during that 25 year period. Not only that, even in this tough time of last year when the United States economy has been bumping along, it managed to squeeze out a 4% increase in productivity, again widening the gap with Canada.

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Why do I raise that as an issue? I raise it because the fact of the matter is that the Canadian dollar is bumping along at about 62¢. It has gone down dramatically during the time the government has been in power. The Canadian standard of living has really declined. One of the reasons for this is that as a home for direct foreign investment, Canada has seen that investment decline dramatically as a percentage of overall world investment during that same 25 year period.

In addition to that, Canadians are looking increasingly outside our borders, particularly to the United States, as a place to invest. Why would that be? One would think they would want to invest in their own country, but they are finding they cannot get the same rate of return or the rate of return that they need to invest in Canadian factories. We have too many problems for and too many barriers to business in Canada. The Kyoto accord, in my view, is just one more nail in that coffin. I suggest that the Liberal government had better take a long, hard look at the fact that we are going to be increasingly looked at as a backwater for international investment.

Just today, investment bankers in the United States, people who make their income doing analyses of where the best place is to invest, are saying that Canada, by entering into the Kyoto accord, will not be looked upon well for investment, particularly in the oil and gas sector. Of course the United States is not part of that same Kyoto agreement and we already have problems, as I have just said, in terms of barriers to investment in Canada, which existed before the Kyoto agreement. This is just one more thing that is going to be a very serious downturn for the Canadian economy in terms of overall investment.

As I said earlier, I think the Canadian oil and gas sector itself will be looking outside of Canada to invest, just as our mining industry did in the early nineties when land use and heavy taxation drove our mining industry into countries such as Chile. I was there a few years ago. We have something like \$8 billion to \$10 billion of Canadian mining investment in Chile. Why is that? The companies found that they could not make a good rate of return in Canada, that there were too many barriers to investment.

We have Premier Klein of Alberta travelling to New York talking to investment bankers, I think today. How is he going to explain that the government is throwing up another barrier to investment? I heard him the other day saying that the former minister of finance would correct all that when he gets in, but no one knows where the former minister of finance stands. Every two weeks he has a different position.

● (1715)

I would think that investment bankers in New York looking to invest in the Canadian oil patch, for example, would be pretty nervous about endorsing a policy of a former minister of finance who now wants to be the prime minister of the country and who cannot tell us clearly where he stands on the issue. In fact, he was not even in the House today for the vote on closure, which I think is deplorable.

I want to wind up by saying that if an automotive plant were choosing to establish in Ontario or Michigan, where would it establish given the uncertainty that Kyoto provides for Canadians these days?

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the most frustrating thing about this debate so far, perhaps even the most pathetic thing, is the wilful ignorance that has been displayed by many of the members of the House who are supposed to be intelligent people representing their constituents.

Over and over I have heard urban myths about things like extreme weather events, for example, like blaming the ice storm on global warming when in fact Canada's most severe weather events happened between 1935 and 1965. If any one of these members bothered to take the time to go to any one of the weather related websites that show meteorological events for the last 100 years, they would see for themselves that there is nothing unusual happening now. In fact, it is a very calm period in terms of weather events.

Then we hear these other myths coming from the other side. I heard one member saying that she wants to get rid of her asthma, so this Kyoto accord is the way to get rid of her asthma. With every breath that she breathes out she is breathing out carbon dioxide, so how does she think she will lose her asthma by getting rid of the carbon dioxide? She would have to be dead. It is absolutely ridiculous and, as I said, it is pathetic to hear that sort of nonsense coming from people who are supposed to be representing Canada. It frustrates me greatly to hear that sort of nonsense.

The Prime Minister put out a press release two weeks ago urging his frontbenchers to get cleaner burning engines in their cars, to get cars with better gas mileage and fewer emissions. That is a great goal, but how does the Prime Minister think that he is going to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by adding 30 more cars to the population of Canada's cars? It is just ridiculous. It is nothing more than an excuse for the ministers to get themselves brand new cars at taxpayers' expense.

Then the Prime Minister had them all trot down to the Sunoco gas station to fill up their cars with 10% ethanol gasoline. Well, duh, what happens when ethanol is burned? We get carbon dioxide and water vapour. Those are greenhouse gases.

The real message in this is that the Prime Minister is either deliberately trying to deceive Canadians or he does not understand the science himself.

An hon. member: That's a given.

Mr. Ted White: If that is the case, what a sad commentary we have in the country, where the dictator in Canada, the man who can do anything he wants, is forcing this through and he does not even have the basic understanding of the science of this issue.

Almost every day in question period, I see the Minister of the Environment wave his book around saying it is his plan for the Kyoto thing. He always says that if only we on the opposition side would read it. I have read it from cover to cover. It is the most vague, meaningless piece of nonsense that I have ever seen in my life. All he is doing is posturing when he waves it around.

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Do we know what he suggests in the book? This is his plan for the people of Canada. Each of us has to reduce our emissions by one megatonne for the next year. How are we going to do that? We are going to drive our cars one day less each week and catch public transit. Duh again: We tried all that back in the 1960s. It did not work. It still does not work. This plan is a load of nonsense.

I promised my constituents, in writing—

An hon. member: What about the minister of SUVs?

Mr. Ted White: One of my colleagues has just mentioned the minister of SUVs from south Vancouver who still has two SUVs and is driving them around, emitting plenty of carbon dioxide.

I made a promise to my constituents in writing, in both of my north shore newspapers. I said:

During the parliamentary debates I will continue to ask the Prime Minister to show us a scientifically sound proposal with specifics on what we want to accomplish, why we want to do it, how much it will cost and what the impact will be on our economy and our environment. If the proposal makes sense I will support it wholeheartedly, but I will not support what we appear to have right now—an illogical, expensive, vague, politically correct, and emotion based proposition which seems to have been designed to appease noisy special interest groups.

We should not even be voting on this, and I wish the Prime Minister would delay the vote.

• (1720)

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, because of the closure motion these speeches are short. I will present the Coles Notes version with what is wrong with several of the claims on the Liberal side. I will go through them and debunk them, because it is difficult, as the member from north Vancouver said, to find any honesty in the debate on the Liberal side.

Liberals claim they had to invoke closure today because they must get this thing passed this week. That is nonsense. The parliamentary secretary to the House leader said this vote means nothing because the government has the power in cabinet to approve and invoke this with or without Parliament. Closure is the first of the lies. There is neither a need for closure nor this vote.

The Liberals claim to have a plan on implementing Kyoto and that they have consulted. However, there is no plan. This is a sleight of hand slide show of the worst order. This is a complete public relations war. It has nothing to do with facts, implementation, credible to do lists, financial instruments or any ideas in concrete measure on how this would take place. As the health minister said during a presentation last week, she cannot explain this plan to the oil business in her riding. She cannot explain it because it is unexplainable. No one knows how it works.

Given what the government has done to the gun registry this last week and the revelations about that, this should strike fear in everybody's heart. The government does not have any dollar figures in place and there is no plan. It is just bad from the word go. It claims to have consulted the provinces but the provinces say that is not the case. The provinces are not on side. Eight of the ten provinces say there has been inadequate consultation. What they want is a first ministers meeting to sit down with the Prime Minister to ask how this would work, but that has been denied. There has been inadequate consultation.

The government says it has consulted Canadians. That is not true. I put out a household survey in my riding where 1,100 people responded rather quickly. Approximately 80% said they did not support Kyoto, 15% supported it, and 5% said they did not have a clue what was going on. In every case the more information people get about Kyoto, the less the support. In other words, when they know more, they say no more to the Kyoto agreement. It is a case in point.

Liberals say it is about pollution but it is not. We should be clear about that. It is primarily about CO₂ emissions. It is not about air pollution nor about particulate matter. It is not about the stuff that causes asthma nor about the smog that bothers people in Toronto or Vancouver. It is not about stopping the SE2 project in the Fraser Valley. It would have no effect on that. It would have no impact on pollution. It would not clean the water nor clean the soil. It would not preserve the environment. It is about CO₂ emissions. Let us be clear, it is not about all the nonsense we have heard the Liberals spew.

The Liberals claim the economic impact would be small but that is not the case. In fact, let us be charitable and say they do not have a clue how many jobs would be lost but the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters say anywhere from, taking the Liberal number, zero to 450,000 jobs. The impact would be large, not as the Liberals are saying. They claim our national competitiveness would not be hurt but that is simply untrue.

Our major trading partners are not signing this accord. They will not sign it because of loss of sovereignty and because they say it is unworkable. That is why we are the only country in the western hemisphere that is signing on, the only one in north and south America. The United States is not signing. The major polluters of the world, China and India and many others are not signing because it will not work. They will not sign on and it will affect Canada's competitiveness we can be sure.

The government says the costs are affordable but again, it has a plan of the day. Today's plan is that it would cap the price of emissions trading credits at \$15 a tonne. Now it cannot be more than that or else what? Or else the taxpayers would subsidize businesses to continue polluting. It is ridiculous. Of course there would be costs to this and they are huge.

Liberals say they are united on that side. That is a good joke. Watching the environment minister and the natural resources minister at the same conference when the environment minister said that we should ban SUVs. The Minister of Natural Resources said, whoops, he had four of them. Every Canadian should know there would be an impact on what we drive, on how we heat our homes, and the size of home we can afford. There would be huge impacts. That side over there does not have a clue. The Liberals do not have their act together even among the cabinet.

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•(1725)

The government's environmental policy is a sham of the worst order. As an economic policy it is a disaster from coast to coast, not only in energy producing provinces, but in every consumer's home. As a Liberal political strategy this is a dead end loss. I guess I should be thankful for that except for the damage it would do to the country.

As a feel good Liberal policy it is typical of what I expect from the government. It is a disaster for the country. We should vote against it. I will be proud to do that when the opportunity comes tomorrow.

Mr. Rick Laliberte (Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to speak about the Kyoto protocol which I was fortunate to see at its inception in Kyoto in 1997. The debate has come a long way. It has taken five years of consultation which according to the opposition has been fruitless with the provinces.

It is time for Canadians to stand behind our leader, the Prime Minister. He has taken this opportunity to point us in the right direction. This is a global matter and an issue for us to address on the state of how much energy we are selfishly using when compared to a global perspective.

In terms of the science that has been presented before us, such as climate change, the United Nations has worked on it. The scientific debate took place for many decades before it came to fruition in 1997. Scientists did not all of a sudden flick on the light in 1997 and say here is the situation in the world. Scientists, over numerous decades, have been pointing out to us that we are selfishly using energies that are limited on the planet.

My riding is in the wilderness and I want to speak from that perspective. In my region we have huge opportunities for resource development. I am talking about northern Saskatchewan which is a relatively untouched region of Canada. My region straddles the border with Alberta and the tar sands. I am sure there is an equal amount of opportunity and resources in my region as in the province of Alberta. We must raise the issue of sharing resources which was done in the Canadian debate at Kyoto. When I addressed the issue at the provincial level I always viewed Canada as being able to deal with climate change and the Kyoto protocol, and to be put in a bubble. The European Union addressed and symbolically put its emissions in a bubble so it could look at its calculations, emissions and commitments within the European bubble.

This is the way I view Canada as well, in a bubble, from the east coast and the west coast, right up to the northern coast. We have huge responsibilities but also huge benefits. It is not only the burdens of Kyoto that fall upon our shoulders. We also have an ample amount of benefits.

We can look at the carbon sinks as part of the Kyoto protocol. Carbon sinks are now being recognized and counted as part of our Kyoto emissions and the sequestering of carbon.

In terms of looking at the opportunities for the forest industry and the people that occupy and live in the forest, here is an opportunity to start measuring what kind of carbon sinks and sequestration takes place in our regions. We know when new growth happens with saplings, trees, grass or grains or any kind of agricultural practices that take place there is a sequestration of carbon.

There are huge tracts of bog and muskeg in northern Canada that is an important life source for our planet. We must be careful on how we deal with and use these important regions of our country. The boreal forest that stretches from Labrador all the way across the northern half of all the provinces and into Yukon is a vital part of the equation.

The other part I wish to speak about is the present day resource extraction and the benefits that would take place within those regions, and how the regions are not sharing those benefits. We know the debate in Alberta has been quite selfish. However, I would like to see some national vision of what the impacts would be for our energy and the proper sharing of our resources within those regions.

•(1730)

I come from a region that has huge deposits of uranium. Uranium has been used for the generation of power in many parts of the world.

We must also be conscious. The word conscious is an incredible word because science is a part of the word conscious. When I was in Kyoto I had an opportunity to attend a gathering of all the scientists who declared climate change as an opportunity for humans to correct their mistakes. They said that before the industrial age was off and running the scientists were connected to the spiritual community of the world.

When the industrial age came about, the scientists and the moral, spiritual community split. Ever since then scientists have been on their own without necessarily the consciousness, the moral questions of their discoveries, and the repercussions of the science they are working on. The scientist who addressed the Kyoto convention said that it was time that the planet began bringing consciousness back to science. That is what I am talking about.

Today we talk about investments. We are concerned about investments that would not come our way. I am sure that in the whole global picture of investments there are people who have a consciousness of their money and where it goes. In the whole global picture of science, there are scientists who have consciousness. This is what I am saying. It is time for Canadians, and with great recognition to our leader the Prime Minister, to recognize that there is consciousness in this country. We are aware that we are disrupting the climate of future generations. This climate that we call sacred, that we call life, is a life preserver for us. The atmosphere holds all our oxygen and life space. If we are not cognizant that we are damaging this life space, we must make corrections.

Government Orders

Scientists have told us that we are making mistakes. We have made mistakes and it is time we made corrections. The Kyoto protocol is a small measure toward addressing climate change. Canada, as a huge emitter, is small compared to the global emissions. If we can start being a role model to people who dream of being citizens of Canada, people from all over the world, the overpopulated regions, the underprivileged regions, and the people who do not have food and basics of water who want to be in our society, let us have the decency as a society to give them a role model that is worthy of generations to come. The generations to come are the children and their children who we will never know. They will be our descendants. Our ancestors before us may have made mistakes, but the consciousness that we carry tell us that we can correct those mistakes.

This is a great opportunity for us. One of the greatest opportunities I had was revisiting how our communities function. I always thought, living in the bush in a northern aboriginal village, that the ideal situation was an urban centre having: a remote control left and right; SUVs and 4X4s parked outside; the biggest outboard engine; and the biggest Ski-Doo engine. That is what we aspired to. However we have hit a caution sign, a stop sign. Let us not dream of these high tech, high powered, and high energy units that we are using.

I became aware that maybe the solution is back where we came from. Just a few years ago there was a village opened in Quebec called Ouje-Bougoumou. The village was designed for low energy use where one stove heated the whole town, the whole community. The cost savings from which they benefited and the savings on emissions by utilizing a district energy system for an entire village brought them to an international exposition in Germany as the village of the future.

● (1735)

I live in northern Canada. I used to think that my village was a village of the past. However now the latest world expo is pointing to our northern villages as being villages of the future. Why is that? Let me use our clotheslines as an example. Why are we abandoning our clotheslines? When I grew up there were clotheslines in everyone's backyard. Today people use heavy duty washers and dryers that have a heating elements that suck power to dry our clothes. Maybe it would be better to use a low tech clothesline in the basement or if allowed in backyards.

Maybe this debate should started five years ago when we came back from Kyoto. Individuals who are now five years old and entering school maybe can realize that we did make a mistake with our industrial age and with our heavy use of energy.

Maybe it is time for the Americans to be given an opportunity to see that there is a better way of living. Canada probably is the worst example of a country taking on climate change. Canada has the harshest climates. Canada has the highest cost of energy than any other area in North America. We have the highest cost of living compared to anywhere else in North America. However we are willing to take on this challenge and that should be a message to our neighbours, the United States.

Maybe we can show that Canada can take the full benefits of Kyoto, that we can take our technologies to and challenge our young

people with our innovation agenda. Let us take it to our young people who are now going into universities. Maybe they can find technologies to correct our housing use, our energy use and our manufacturing.

All this is about efficiency and a healthier and productive future for our country. We are looking at the betterment in terms of savings from our mining industry and our oil and gas industry. I do not mean to preach to the converted over there. We do care about what happens in Alberta. Canada with its Kyoto commitments should be viewed like a bubble. This is an opportunity for the whole country to take an issue that is global and show that we can excel and improve our social structure.

If we are willing to share the burden of Kyoto, we must show that we are also willing to share the benefits. We must share the benefits throughout the country. I am speaking as a person who comes from the bush, from the forestry industry, where we do not have high economic opportunities. Maybe Kyoto will afford us these opportunities. Maybe this is an opportune time for us to put research centres along the mid-Canada corridor of the northern half of each province so we can look at what is happening in northern Alberta and northern Saskatchewan and see if the same thing is happening in northern Manitoba. We can share opportunities. We can find better ways to build our houses and our villages. Maybe we can find better ways to improve our travel.

I come from a region where we do not have public transportation. There is no bus service available to service the northwest region of my province. We are faced with a very big challenge in terms of development. Speaking as someone from an undeveloped region of Canada, this is an opportunity that will allow us to look at our basic society and challenge ourselves so we can live in a better and healthier environment by improving our carbon dioxide emissions.

All races of the world were in Japan representing many different countries. We listened to the debates that took place there. The United Nations had its fullest representation there. We heard the rhetoric that there was no need for Kyoto and no need to act on it while there.

● (1740)

It was suppressed because then vice president Gore had a strong view on the environment and spoke soundly for the White House and its administration. However we heard the strong rhetoric from the right wing, the Republicans, in protection of oil and gas. That still permeates today.

I ask Canadians to take a serious look at our climate change plan is for Canada. Let us look at what we can do in our own communities. Let us look at what we can do for our homes, for our provinces and for our country. Most of all, let us look at what we can do for our planet because our future generations are at stake.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak in this very important debate on the motion to ratify the Kyoto protocol.

Government Orders

When debating this issue, we must think about those who will come after us, that is, young people. We must think about the distant future. That is why in Quebec, few people have criticized the fact that Canada has pledged to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels, by 2008 or 2010.

We are talking about the future. In Quebec, there is another reason. The Government of Quebec and all Quebecers have already made an effort to use hydroelectricity, which has less of an impact on greenhouse gas emissions of course. Many things have been done in this respect.

Nonetheless, there is still a lot to do. We must think about developing new energies such as wind energy. Canada does not have a very good track record in this respect, compared to other countries.

In Germany, 35.8% of energy used, or 8,753 megawatts, comes from wind power. Germany is a world leader in this form of energy. In the United States, 4,245 megawatts, 17.3% of their energy, were wind-generated. In Spain, the figure is 13.6%; in Denmark, it is 9.9%; in India, which is not a rich country, it is 6.2%; in China, it is 1.6%; and in Canada, it is 0.8%. Half of Canada's wind energy is produced in Quebec.

In Quebec, regions such as Cap-Chat and Matane have already developed wind energy. Nonetheless, there is extraordinary potential in eastern Quebec, the North Shore and Îles-de-la-Madeleine. There are people, researchers who think and seriously consider that this could be installed on off-shore platforms.

I listened to researchers speak of how blowy these regions are—and they might well blow their own horns as far as tourist attraction is concerned as well—how exposed to the wind they are.

The wind does not blow equally everywhere, on all shores and all hills. Where there are hills, mountains or other elevations, this affects wind direction, as well as strength. According to the researchers, there is room for improvement, although it is very good at present. For instance, in areas where the river is shallow, platforms and pillars could be constructed. There are major possibilities.

The whole goal of this is to emphasize a certain aspect. I may be faulted for looking out for my riding, but that is precisely what I was elected for. The platforms I am referring to are very much like the oil drilling platforms required to exploit offshore oil.

Now, as for the type of construction required for such platforms, the Lévis shipyards are one of the main companies that have developed expertise in this area in Canada. Obviously, then, there are many possibilities as far as platforms and turbines are concerned.

● (1745)

I raise this point because I believe it is in keeping with research and experimental trends for further development of this technology. It already is quite efficient, as can be seen from the list of countries I have given. More use could be made of it in Canada. I see that the Minister of Natural Resources is listening carefully and I appreciate that. He has already indicated that he too has an interest in this matter, as does his department. It is not something far-fetched, when such countries as Germany, the U.S., Spain, Denmark, India and China are involved. They are leaders as far as this type of energy is concerned. I think it is worthwhile taking it further.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, wind power creates more jobs per dollar invested than any other technology, more than five times the figure for thermal or nuclear energy.

The European Wind Energy Association has calculated that for each megawatt of wind energy that is installed, some 60 jobs are created per year, and another 15 to 19 direct and indirect jobs. Therefore, in 1996, the 3,500 newly installed megawatts in Europe would have created 72,000 jobs. Obviously 72,000 jobs would be welcome anywhere. Some regions are better suited to it than others. The creation of jobs in resource-based regions such as the Lower St. Lawrence, the Gaspé Peninsula and the North Shore would be one solution. We must think about development in the regions and about young people leaving. We know that every province in Canada is experiencing this problem; we must think about it.

Many people are critical of certain interventions. For example, Davie. This fall, there was a great media flurry criticizing the fact the Government of Quebec and the federal government for intervening in the case of Davie, by awarding it a contract. People said that the decision was a bad one and that we had to let free markets decide. However, everyone agrees that there is a role for the government to play in job creation in big businesses in certain sectors, including wind energy. Not only does it create jobs, but it also has an impact on our desire to leave a better environment for those who will come after us.

There was a time when industrialization created a great many jobs. Unfortunately, it also affected the environment. It affected the climate. In Quebec alone, for example, the levels of the St. Lawrence have changed more quickly in recent years than in any other period. We are not talking about returning to the ice age, but there has been more change than at any other period. Global warming is causing glaciers in the Arctic and Antarctic to melt. All of this is causing an upheaval that is producing more severe and more frequent natural disasters.

All we have to do is look at what happened in the Saguenay, what was called the Saguenay flood. It caused dams to collapse and there was damage caused by the flood. There was also the ice storm in Quebec.

In the United States, some regions are more susceptible to tornadoes and hurricanes. Observers around the world have noticed that there have been an increasing number of strange meteorological phenomena and that some regions are getting warmer, while others are getting colder. Nothing is black and white, but there are sufficient observations that people are increasingly surprised and worried about the issue.

● (1750)

Everybody recognizes that there is a reason the Kyoto summit led to a protocol to control greenhouse gas emissions.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I reaffirm our support to the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. Tomorrow evening, we will not be voting on the implementation of the Kyoto protocol, but on its ratification. We support ratification of this protocol.

Government Orders

Of course, when the time comes to implement it—negotiations between the federal and provincial governments have already begun; some rather interesting discussions are taking place and concerns are being voiced—some conditions will have to be complied with.

Again, we agree with ratification of the Kyoto protocol. However, as regards its implementation, the Ottawa plan uses 2010 as the reference year, that is the year when each province or sector of the economy will have to begin to make specific reduction efforts. We feel that this approach is unfair, because it does not take into account past and current efforts, and because it encourages polluters to pollute even more between now and the year 2010.

Polluters should not be rewarded, nor those who are already making efforts penalized. Ottawa—that is, of course, the federal government—says that it is prepared to fund projects in the hydrocarbon industry. In the past, the federal government gave 20 times more money in direct subsidies to the hydrocarbon industry than to renewable energies.

The Bloc Québécois is asking the federal government to pledge to give one dollar to renewable energies for each dollar invested in the hydrocarbon industry.

The federal government has developed an unfair plan that benefits the industries that pollute the most. The principles that make it worthwhile to ratify the Kyoto protocol call for another way of doing things.

Again, the polluter pay principle, whereby those who pollute the most are the ones who must reduce their emissions the most, is not being applied adequately. This is a matter of fairness. The Bloc Québécois has made proposals that are, in our opinion, the most equitable and beneficial.

As far as respect of provincial jurisdiction over the environment is concerned, there must be an acknowledgment that the federal government has jurisdiction over the environment, if only for certain phenomena such as the air and water that move from one province to another. There we have to recognize federal jurisdiction. But there are also provincial jurisdictions over the environment, natural resources and manufacturing, and these must be taken into consideration.

In short, we make a clear distinction between ratification of the Kyoto protocol and its implementation. We are convinced that it needs to be ratified, based on a number of principles to which we are deeply attached and which need to be reflected in implementation.

I would like to remind hon. members that all parties in the Quebec National Assembly also agree on ratification of Kyoto. There is a consensus on this in place in Quebec.

I personally agree with the approach of the Quebec minister of the environment, Mr. Boisclair, who wishes to see a bilateral agreement between the federal government and Quebec. Obviously, we have no objection to the same thing being done between the federal government and the other provinces.

This would be desirable, because as we watch this debate evolve in the House, we can see the regional differences that exist as far as interests, and potential problems, difficulties and constraints relating to application of the Kyoto protocol are concerned.

But for Quebec, when we refer to taking past efforts into consideration, we are thinking of the entire matter of credit allocation for past efforts, for which there ought to be recognition.

At the same time, this is a debate in which it might be hard to avoid partisan politics.

• (1755)

Personally, I think that ratification of the Kyoto protocol will require efforts from everyone, particularly when it comes to consumption. Without meaning to judge or criticize those who drive SUVs too harshly, when I see big vehicles in downtown Quebec City or Montreal, I have to wonder what the use is of having such a big, gas-guzzling engine to drive on city streets, at reduced speeds. The roads are smooth and even. It is not as if they were driving in the forest.

I represent Lévis, but I come from the Lower St. Lawrence, where there are a lot of forests. I can understand that this type of vehicle is useful for forestry workers, but in the city, one has to wonder.

In order to reduce traffic problems in the downtowns of cities, whether it be Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto or Vancouver, I think we need to take this opportunity to think more about public transit. The ideal would be to have high speed trains for longer distances, but I am also talking about commuter trains. I know some people from Mont-Saint-Hilaire, in Quebec. A commuter train was added there to allow them to get out of the downtown area. There are a number of commuter lines on the North Shore, near Montreal. It is an idea that works and that contributes a great deal to easing traffic congestion downtown.

People in Quebec City are starting to talk about the idea. I am from the South Shore, but there could be public transportation to connect the South Shore, which would reduce the number of cars on both bridges and on the ferry. I mentioned these two cities because that is where there is the most urban transit and traffic jams.

During the week, I live in the Outaouais, in the riding of Hull—Aylmer. There is a great deal of traffic there. Why is there no commuter train between the Outaouais and downtown Ottawa?

I know that all the members from the Toronto area could talk about rush-hour congestion. This is a major problem. It is also a problem in Vancouver. I imagine it is the same in Calgary or Edmonton. This is a common problem, and we should all give it some thought.

Hydro-Québec did a lot of research into electric motors for vehicles. Research is advancing rapidly, but it will not be applied for a long time. In the meantime, I think it is important to have a debate like the one we are having tonight.

I know that not everyone agrees. In a democracy, however, diverging opinions need to be respected. I realize that Alliance members have expressed concerns. They are looking after the interests of their constituents, and I think we must respect that. At the same time, the debate allows us to disagree, but also to move in our thinking towards consensus.

Government Orders

We will never exhaust the subject, but I want to draw a comparison with firearms. Yes, it is one thing to control guns, but the Firearms Act led to a debate. This debate increased awareness. People thought that money needed to be spent to change the attitudes to violence.

The same is true for the environment. I am pleased to have been able to speak on this issue. I hope that my non-partisan suggestions will be heard. The Minister of Natural Resources is nodding a yes, which I appreciate.

• (1800)

[English]

Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak on this extremely important topic for Canadians as well as our future generations. This is not a new topic. I have been in the House since 1993 and debate and discussions on it have been happening for many, many years. People have many concerns about it.

I remember sitting in the House when a former leader of the reform party, Preston Manning, said that the science was wrong. He said that climate change was a natural phenomenon and that it had happened for years before and really the science was not there. He said that the science did not support the position that through human activity, through the use of fossil fuels, we were increasing the temperature on Earth and therefore we were having climate change.

Canadians and the world community recognize that we have gone past that now. Every credible scientific organization has said that we are creating this problem through human activity and unless we respond as a global community, the problem will get worse and we and future generations will have serious problems. That is why the world community came together. People from every country came together because this was seen as a serious global problem. There have been many years of discussions and conference after conference after conference. Everyone understands that it is very difficult to get the world community to agree on something. To bring all the countries together and agree on something is very difficult.

However, in Kyoto it was agreed that we as a global community have to deal with the global problem of climate change. That is why they agreed on the protocol.

The developing countries have said that those in the western world, the industrialized societies that have benefited from their developments should be the first to make sure that they play a role. No one country can do it; it requires the resources of all countries, of everyone coming together. No one sector and no one individual can deal with climate change. We need to do it as a global community and we need to do it as a society.

Originally the debate was about whether there really was a climate change problem. We have gone past that now. I think that members in the House of Commons have recognized that we have a climate change problem and something needs to be done. I have heard everyone say that. Nobody disagrees with that. We have all said that there is a problem and we must respond to it. Everybody says they want to do their part.

With the Kyoto protocol we wondered whether it could be done on a voluntary basis. Did we really need an agreement for the world

community to come together? Over the years it was determined that we could not do it on a voluntary basis. Therefore Kyoto developed a framework wherein all countries under the protocol would have to reduce their emissions levels by 6% below 1990 levels so that it was consistent and fair. Of course some countries have a bigger challenge depending on their own internal economies. They agreed on it.

We were there. Canada played a very important role in developing it. The government played a very important role in making sure that Canada got credit for such things as sinks, which recognize the way we manage our forestry and the way we manage our agriculture. We were able to contribute to the Kyoto protocol.

Then we had to decide whether we would be able to fulfill our requirements as a country. We wondered if it was reasonable for us to fulfill our responsibilities in dealing with climate change.

I must say that this is only the first step. This is a very small step of the many more steps required to truly deal on a long term basis with climate change. We as a country had to come together and decide if it was cost effective. Is the cost manageable for us as a country? Is it realistic? Do we have a realistic plan to deal with climate change? That was when the discussions started taking place with the provincial and territorial governments and with industry.

• (1805)

We had ongoing meetings with them asked them to work with us on a detailed plan to see if we could really deliver on our part of the bargain in terms of the Kyoto protocol. Provincial and federal working groups were established. They came and brought modellings. This is a very complicated issue. It is not that easy. They looked at all sorts of modelling, including macro-modelling, as to what it would cost for Canadians.

The modelling, which was done both federally and provincially, came to the agreement that the costs would be .3% to .7% of our GDP over a 10 year period of time. If we break that down on a per year basis and average it to the middle of those two numbers, which is .5%, it is about .05% a year, a number that they round off whenever they talk about growth in the economy because it is not very significant.

These numbers were developed by federal, provincial and territorial governments when they did the modelling on what it would cost the country. They did not take into consideration all the other areas such as technology which would also help us. I think Canadians would agree that the costs over a 10 year period of time, if we take the average of the two points which is .5%, is a reasonable cost for our future generations and for our children.

I, like a lot of other people, when I became of Minister of Natural Resources, had some concerns. I said that we had to do a due diligence, that we had to ensure that we had an understanding of what the costs would be, that any plan would be reasonable and would not create an unfair burden on any one part of the country or one sector of the economy. We have moved on that and for the last year we have been doing our due diligence. We have been doing our consultations. We have been looking at the modelling.

Government Orders

As a country, we can manage the numbers that have come out. The costs are reasonable for our future generations as well being important from a global perspective as well. We set out a detailed plan as to how we would deal with these costs, a plan that would be affordable and would outline what we could do, whether it be municipalities in terms of the building code or whether it be industry.

One of my responses as the Minister of Natural Resources is to look at the large emitters and companies. We want to ensure that they can still compete and that they can continue to sell their products to other parts of the world. We need to have a clear understanding of what it will cost the industry. We need to deal with the risks. We need to deal with the uncertainties because, as someone from the business community, I recognize that if we cannot deal with the uncertainties people will not make investments.

We started meeting with the large emitters and they said that they had a number of concerns. One was they wanted certainty on the quantity. They wanted to know exactly what large emitters and industries we would be required to do. They did not want to hear it would be one figure one day and another in two years time. We said that was a very good point. What we have done is given them the certainty. We have said that the large emitters will be required to do their part by reducing by 55 megatonnes.

They also said that they needed assurance that they would have some flexibility because different sectors would be affected differently. We asked how we could deal with a situation that did not affect everyone and they asked for that flexibility.

We have said yes. If we want to do covenants, which is something other countries have done, such as Britain, we are willing to leave the door open to that. We are willing to sit down and discuss covenants so we have the flexibility to deal with the different needs of the different sectors and different industries. We have said clearly in our plan that covenants are something we are willing to sit down and discuss.

The third item they were very concerned with was if the price per tonne of carbon was way above the cost of what we were predicting. The government had said that it thought the costs would be between \$5 and \$10 a tonne for carbon. Many of our models are based on moving from \$10 to higher levels, but we essentially have said as a government that we think it will stay that way.

Industry said that it thought it would be a lot higher and that their numbers were different. They said that if the federal government thought it would be within that range, then the government should give the industry some certainty and if the price was higher, the government should give industry some certainty.

• (1810)

Just today I announced that we would cap it at \$15 per tonne. We are very confident, because the international community has shown what it could be and we believe that it can be done within that. This is another uncertainty. The business community had some legitimate and bona fide concerns. As a government, we sat down, we listened to its views and we responded.

We also said that some companies did a lot of work in the past and that we should recognize that. We have said that we would ensure that if companies have done work in the past, they will not be

disadvantaged in any way. Companies have done it in some ways because it benefits them and it makes good business sense.

I remember in the 1980s, when I was in the business world, we converted our fleet to propane. Why? We were saving 50% on fuel every month, our payback was a period of 12 to 18 months and there was a reduction in maintenance costs. That is why we had people on alternative fuels, natural gas and propane. It helped to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and also helped our environment. It was also good business, where businesses were saving money, were becoming more efficient and energy was being used more effectively.

We have tried to listen to the industry and we have responded in a way that will deal with the uncertainties and the risk.

There are a lot of opportunities, as well. Too often we have not talked about the opportunities for Canadian businesses. Let me outline some of those.

In British Columbia, we have Ballard Fuel Cells which is one of the leading companies in the world on fuel cells. Whether it is in vehicles or in stationary energy, we have a source of energy that does not pollute; the end outcome at the pipe is just water. We are leading in that area. This will create new opportunities.

Another example is Westport Innovations. I visited its facilities recently. It was stated in the paper that just recently it entered into a contract with China to convert its diesel buses to liquefied natural gas. This is a Canadian company, competing with the best in the world, and China picked it to convert its diesel buses. We can assure there will be Canadian companies out there that will be taking advantage of this.

General Hydrogen Corporation was started by one of the most renowned scientists in the world, Mr. Ballard. He was recently given an international award. He is working on how we can develop a hydrogen infrastructure.

If we look at Canadian companies, many of them can take advantage of these opportunities.

The federal government has already made a huge commitment of \$1.6 billion on behalf of Canadians to ensure that we start to do the work. Let me give an example. Just in terms of wind energy, I announced earlier this year \$260 million to ensure that we take advantage of wind energy and that we encourage Canadians companies to look at alternative forms of energy.

Some companies already have moved ahead even before we vote on ratification. For example, stated in the energy plan of the province of British Columbia is that 50% of its new energy needs will come from renewable sources. Originally it was 10%.

Government Orders

•(1815)

We have companies, provinces, municipalities and Canadians recognizing that if we all do our part we can contribute to the global community in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and play our role. We have tabled a detailed plan that outlines how we will accomplish that.

I am confident that when Canadians are engaged they will want to fulfill their duties to future generations, to their children and their grandchildren to ensure that we do not take away from their quality of life or their opportunities. That is the fundamental reason why I got into politics, to ensure that my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren would have the same opportunities and that we would never take away from those opportunities or their quality of life in the future. Kyoto is all about that. It is about the future and our future generations. It is about a global problem that needs global action.

As a Canadian, I am very proud that we are taking a leadership role. I am very proud of what we are doing as a government in supporting this. I know that decades in the future when we look back we will say that we did the right thing for our future generations and we did the right things to ensure that we played our role to deal with climate change.

I am proud of what we have done as a government and what we have accomplished in the years. I will be proud to vote in favour of Kyoto in tomorrow's vote.

•(1820)

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my esteemed colleagues, the member for Surrey North, the member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, and the member for Blackstrap.

I believe that climate change is a reality. I believe that global warming is occurring and I believe it is due to greenhouse gas emissions. Some would disagree with that, but I am prepared to associate my comments with the precautionary principle. I am prepared to err on the side of caution.

I am opposed to the Kyoto accord because it is a shell game. Why is it a shell game? Because of the emissions trading credit scheme which would allow us to give money to another country, such as Russia, in exchange for the ability to produce greenhouse gases. This does not achieve our end objective which is the reduction of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases.

According to the International Panel on Climate Change, carbon dioxide content in the atmosphere has increased a whopping 31% since 1760. Methane gas has increased by 151%. Global temperatures have increased .6°C in the last 100 years, the largest increase we have seen in 1,000 years.

The question we have to ask is, will Kyoto accomplish the objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions? The answer is a resounding no, because the accord allows money to be given to countries such as Russia in exchange for the ability to produce greenhouse gases.

Now we come to the issue of how to reduce those emissions. It has to follow a few precautionary principles. We have to follow a few key policy principles in order to reduce those emissions.

The first principle is that energy developed must be in response to demand and not produced just for its own sake.

Second, an emissions reduction strategy should be based on existing technologies that have been shown to be effective and economical, not what we may believe will exist in the future.

Third, the implementation plan should not rely on punitive energy taxes. However any changes that should occur should reflect the true cost of energy options.

Last, energy from local small scale sources should be encouraged to produce greater self-reliance. That would insulate us from the geopolitical crises that can affect our energy sources, particularly those in the Middle East.

Given those existing principles, what can we do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Based on current assumptions we can double the thermal efficiency of residential and commercial buildings. We can double the fuel efficiency of our truck fleets and triple the efficiency of our passenger car fleets. We can double the average efficiency of electrical devices, including lighting, motors and appliances. We can achieve a 1% per year improvement in the energy efficiency of industrial outputs. We could see a phasing out of coal powered electrical generating plants and produce an increased demand for new cogeneration and renewable energy opportunities.

The plan would enable us to reduce greenhouse gas emissions beyond the required 6% from 1990 levels. In actuality this is 22% from our current levels. We have to reduce greenhouse gas emissions a whopping 22% if we are going to meet the agreement.

The government's plan will not do that. The Prime Minister said, "We will come out with a plan by the year 2012". The reductions must be done by 2012. We need a plan now.

If we ascribe to the key principles that I have given along with using existing technologies, we will be able to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The most important source of new energy, the most important tool that we have to improve our energy output and reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions is our ability to improve productivity through conservation. Conservation has been and will be the most powerful tool to reduce our energy dependence on coal and other sources of energy that produce greenhouse gas emissions. If we ascribe to the principles and the tools that we have today, we can go beyond Kyoto and meet those commitments by 2030 which is what our end game is supposed to be.

•(1825)

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the constituents of Surrey North to speak in opposition to the government's impending ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

Government Orders

The government has mismanaged this issue from the beginning and it continues to do so. Since the Prime Minister announced that Canada would ratify the Kyoto protocol, the government has continued to proceed without information concerning what Canada will have to do as a signatory to this international agreement.

What is the plan for implementation? What will be the cost? What do we expect to achieve? Canadians do not have this information. In fact, there is a great deal of conflicting information flying around, yet soon, in fact tomorrow, we will be asked to vote on this matter.

We believe that Canada should reduce real pollution. We should also work on adapting to climate change, whether natural or man made, through advanced technology and social policies. The federal government should be helping Canadians to achieve these goals.

Instead, the Liberals have sold the country out. They would have us chase the requirements of an international agreement written by others and amounting to the transfer of wealth from richer nations to poorer ones. Countries like Canada, with developed economies and modern industries, are going to have to pay cash to poorer nations with developing economies and very little industry. We are going to actually pay these other countries so that they can have the opportunity to develop their industries and to pollute.

News broadcasts are misleading Canadians when they show dirty, belching smokestacks as a backdrop to a news reader talking about the Kyoto accord. The government itself is financing commercials of similar content.

Kyoto is not about reducing pollution. Scientists around the world are not unanimous that human activity is actually causing global climate change. There are arguments on both sides of the issue.

Yes, our climate is changing, as it always does. In fact, growing up not too far from this place, during the 1960s we experienced some extremely cold winters, -50°F for days on end. I recall that because I remember playing outside with no hat and catching a lot of flak from my mother for doing so. Many scientists in those days, the 1960s, predicted that we were heading for another ice age.

We have seen small increases in the planet's average temperature over the past century. However, no one knows definitively whether or not this is caused by our emission of greenhouse gases such as CO₂. Other factors, such as variations in the sun's output, are considered by many climate specialists to be far more significant drivers of Earth's climate than the changes in human production of carbon dioxide.

Kyoto is primarily about reducing CO₂, not air pollution.

A quick review of the scientific literature shows that only a small fraction of climate scientists are prepared to actually commit themselves to the idea that humans are causing significant climate change. The vast majority of specialists in the field admit they simply do not know and that it will be some time before they are able to competently predict just what influence human activities have on global climate.

In the meantime, these scientists do agree that they need to continue to conduct the necessary research to properly understand this complex field. Clearly today's climate change science does not

provide a foundation strong enough on which to base a significant and costly international treaty such as the Kyoto protocol.

The Kyoto accord does not deal with environmental contamination in general or air pollution in particular. The Kyoto accord will not cover countries producing two-thirds of man-made carbon dioxide emissions. Therefore global production of carbon dioxide is extremely unlikely to fall under Kyoto as production and emissions simply shift to countries not subject to the targets.

The Kyoto accord does not even require Canada, or any other country for that matter, to actually make CO₂ reductions. Kyoto establishes an emissions trading credit scheme allowing countries to buy credits toward their targets by transferring money to other countries, in some cases countries with worse environmental records. In this way, a country can pay rather than make CO₂ reductions.

Canada's Kyoto target requires Canada to reduce CO₂ emissions by at least 30% below projected levels, or to buy emissions credits. This will impose enormous stresses on the Canadian economy, including the possible loss of thousands of jobs, a possible reduction in economic production by between \$25 billion and \$40 billion, and substantially higher energy costs for ordinary Canadians.

Of course, there are those who do not agree with some of these predictions and I respect that, but that is precisely what the problem is. The government has not worked with industry or the provinces to determine the impact. It has no implementation plan because it does not know what to plan for. Above all, as I said, there is no implementation plan.

● (1830)

At a minimum, the government should make it clear to Canadians which targets will be met. Is the government going to ratify and then rescind the Kyoto accord? The strategy to knowingly accept an investment chill and later renege on its own commitments would be even more irresponsible than ramming through the accord without knowing how to meet its targets.

The Canadian Alliance does not believe we should ratify a deal with the effects of the magnitude of Kyoto without being able to explain how it will be implemented.

Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise during this important debate on the Kyoto protocol. I am also very pleased to be part of the only party voicing the growing sentiment of Canadians, which is that they want to discuss this issue fully and they want the government to stop pushing it down their throats.

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If we are going to commit all Canadians to higher energy costs, higher energy taxes and a more expensive economy, should members of the House not have more than a few hours of mock debate to resolve these concerns? Does it not deserve a serious debate with all Canadians with an honest vote?

We all support protecting the environment but as with anything, there is a wrong way and a right way to do it. Unfortunately, the government is building on its record of doing things the wrong way. The government does not want to hear what Canadians have to say and neither does it want the truth about the protocol.

The Kyoto protocol is not about preventing air pollution or smog. The Kyoto protocol is primarily concerned with carbon dioxide or CO₂. However CO₂ is not a component of smog and is not considered a pollutant or a toxic. Reducing CO₂ will not reduce air pollution or smog in Canadian cities.

Kyoto does not include the world's largest contributors of greenhouse gases. The United States, which produces 40% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, will not be subjecting its businesses and citizens to this poorly composed agreement. In addition, the world's developing countries, such as China, India and Mexico, are exempt too. Canada only produces 2% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions. Why are we jeopardizing our economy when our largest trading partners are not?

Kyoto is not about consultation with Canadians. The government does not want to hear what Canadians have to say, even though they have to pay. Canadians deserve to be consulted on Kyoto before it is ratified by the government.

What are the likely consequences? Studies indicate that up to 450,000 jobs could be lost. Because the Americans have not signed on, Canada will become less competitive with the United States. Income tax will rise as government revenues drop. Consumer prices will rise. Rising prices, rising taxes and a fall in the standard of living will be the Prime Minister's legacy. Up to \$45 billion could be lost to the economy.

Can we afford to cut government revenues so drastically when our health care and defence budgets and every other department are in need of attention? Seniors will be forced to pay more to heat their homes as electricity costs could double and natural gas could increase as much as 60%. It is ironic that global warming will continue globally as Canadians are expected to freeze in their homes.

Kyoto will drive up the cost of public and private transportation as gasoline and diesel fuel prices rise. Every Canadian will suffer from a weaker economy. Perhaps the Prime Minister is retiring but the rest of us will still be left to work harder to pay for his mistakes.

While all parents want to do what they can to protect their children's future, they do not have bottomless pockets to pay for the government's good intentions. The government that falsely promised to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000 will actually be contributing further to the problem.

We may argue who will pay for Kyoto, the government or the consumer, but really are they not the same person, the taxpayer? Who cares who writes the cheque in the end; it will be the taxpayer that must foot the final bill.

Canadians want the federal government to wait until it has a real plan. They want the federal government to be a team player, not a bureaucratic bully. They do not want to rush into this and then pay for the government's mistakes.

Canadians want to be heard. They want to be consulted. They want to make a difference. They want to protect the environment with a well thought out plan. They want that plan made in Canada by Canadians for Canadians.

Let us work with our Canadian neighbours to achieve these goals. What is so difficult about this? Why do we have to rush this through Parliament? Why can we not do this responsibly?

● (1835)

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has pledged to ratify the Kyoto protocol before the end of this year, endorsing an international treaty before a comprehensive study has taken place, before the opportunity for meaningful dialogue with all affected parties and, most important, before a detailed plan has been presented. This all begs the question: why the haste?

This agreement has inspired more concern than confidence. The scientific data upon which the government is relying is ridden with uncertainty and speculation. We have heard how different models have resulted in different climate scenarios. It seems no one can agree on what will happen. Despite this uncertainty, the Prime Minister is willing to endorse a treaty committing all Canadians to find a solution to a yet to be clearly identified problem.

Putting aside the scientific arguments, ratifying Kyoto as it now stands could be financially devastating. There are multitudes of numbers coming forward and none of them are encouraging.

My home province of Saskatchewan is Canada's second largest oil producer and third largest gas producer. We have the second highest per capita carbon dioxide emissions in Canada. What is the cost of compliance for us?

The president of SaskPower recently estimated that Kyoto could cost our provincial power utility as much as \$250 million each and every year. If so, one of the top industrial companies in our province has said that ratifying Kyoto could be the move that would send them south of the border. The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce has called the protocol fatally flawed and has made similar statements at the city level.

One internal government study has pegged the impact of Kyoto on Saskatchewan's economy at 4% of GDP by 2020. That is my province. What about each and every other ordinary Canadian?

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Electricity bills are predicted to jump 50% or more and home heating could double as energy producers are all anticipating additional costs for compliance. Industries, such as steel production, aluminum production and cement production, have all said that their costs would increase substantially. Gasoline prices are predicted to increase from \$1.10 to \$1.30 per litre over the next three years. One does not need an economics degree to figure out what this will do to our national financial picture.

As of mid-November, 97 countries have ratified the protocol. This includes 25 developed countries that account for 37.4% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Perhaps more important, the total includes 72 countries, such as India, China and Mexico, which do not have to make emission reductions. Together with the United States, which has refused to ratify Kyoto, they make up 60% of man-made global greenhouse gas emissions.

In contrast, Canada produces only 2%. Even if Canada could achieve its lofty targets under Kyoto, the impact would be negligible. Our two largest and closest trading partners, the United States and Mexico, are not signatories to the Kyoto protocol. How can we as Canadians compete?

Each and every person I have heard from wants to do his or her part to be a responsible global citizen. What they question is whether the Kyoto protocol is the proper channel by which to achieve this goal. I ask members to keep in mind that this is not a case of Kyoto or nothing. There are other options. In Saskatchewan there are countless initiatives, from agricultural production to energy related activity, all aimed at fulfilling a goal to secure and protect our global environment.

There is a conservation cover program, operated by Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization, which will significantly increase carbon sinks in agricultural soils. There is the innovation science fund to assist in the establishment of the international test centre for carbon dioxide capture at the University of Regina. There are two wind turbine projects that represent the third largest wind power developments in Canada. Provincially, Saskatchewan recently passed new laws to provide grants to offset fuel taxes on ethanol produced and used in this province. Finally, the City of Saskatoon will be using canola based fuel in some of the city buses as part of a two year project studying the use of biodiesel.

Those examples are proof that meaningful environmental change can be brought about without compromising the fiscal integrity of Canada. I urge the government to reconsider its position to ratify the Kyoto protocol and instead build a plan that allows us to help our environment while also protecting our economy.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Churchill.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak on the long awaited ratification of Kyoto. We have a responsibility in this connection.

I have listened to what our colleagues in the Canadian Alliance have had to say about profit and impacts on the economy. The question that needs to be asked is what the impacts will be on our planet. This is an important question that must be asked.

The earth does not belong to us. We were not told "Here is a piece of the earth to do with as you wish". It also belongs to the generations to come. It is important to be able to take concrete actions to save our planet.

The New Democratic Party agrees on ratification of the Kyoto protocol. It is a start, a beginning. I used to be a union rep and this reminds me of negotiations with a company on a collective agreement, when there is an agreement in principle. This is at least a start toward the goal of a collective agreement.

I think that ratification of the Kyoto protocol and the vote that will be held on this is a first step in a lengthy process, but a start at least, a step in the right direction. It commits governments and individuals to move in the right direction in order to be able to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which are causing global warming.

For example, the other evening, a man called to talk to me. Fifteen years ago, he bought a house at Pigeon Hill, on the Acadian peninsula of New Brunswick. At that time, he had a 220 or 250 foot lot. Now, 15 years later, he has 125 feet. This shows what is happening as a result of rising water levels. Everyone is talking about it. All of shores of the peninsula are in danger at this time. People have to put rocks along their shores to try to stop the soil from washing away. This is connected with global warming.

It is like I said earlier, the planet does not belong to us. We cannot come here and simply say that we cannot do anything because it will slow down the economy, because it will bother the Americans, or because we will not be able to compete with the Americans. Many people even used the United States and other countries as examples. Someone has to do this. If we only did what the Americans wanted, and if everyone on the planet decided to do and say the same thing, then we would never make progress on anything.

We have got to set an example. There are real steps to take. So, we must take them. However, at the same time, we cannot only think about the effects Kyoto will have on companies and large corporations. We also need to think about the effects it will have on workers. What kind of a formula can we come up with for the transition, to stimulate job creation while lowering greenhouse gas emissions at the same time?

We must act smartly. It is not enough to simply help the big companies who are looking for credits. They will sort it out and their bank accounts will be just fine. We must also think about fate of our workers and see how to make the transition while saving jobs.

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I have listened to the speeches made by Alliance members since this debate on Kyoto began, and basically, the only thing that counts for them are profits. What good will profits do to the generation that follows us? As legislators, we have a responsibility. As members of Parliament, we have a responsibility. And the government also has a responsibility.

I am proud that we are ratifying Kyoto. Our party is proud, because it is a first step. All will not be done overnight. Greenhouse gas emissions will not be reduced overnight. However, this is a long term program that ought to be pursued.

• (1845)

[*English*]

It is a commitment that will be made and a commitment that we will do things. If we are not ready to sign on to Kyoto then we are not ready to make a commitment to work toward that. It is important because the planet does not belong to us. It belongs to all the world and the generations to come.

For too long companies were cutting down trees and not replacing them. It is unacceptable now. We cannot accept that type of attitude. It is unacceptable that our fishermen with big boats and fishermen from the other countries emptied the seas. They did not look after the species for the future. It is not acceptable.

It is not acceptable that we are driving equipment today that creates unnecessary gas emissions. We could have cleaner gas. The government has a responsibility to promote the use of more natural gas in the country. There is no reason for northeastern New Brunswick not to have natural gas to create jobs and at the same time have a cleaner environment. It is not acceptable that we are not going that way.

I believe that with the ratification of Kyoto it will force governments and people to go in the direction of having a cleaner planet that will be better for people and for generations to come. We have the responsibility of leadership. We are not allowed to dirty the planet the way we have been just because of money. We have to find a solutions to bringing gas emissions down. That is our responsibility.

At the same time we can look at the leaders of our country who are supporting the ratification of Kyoto. I lift my hat to them because it is not easy for them. They have workers they represent. The CLC represents over 2.5 million workers in our country. It took a stand. I hope too that members of Parliament will take a stand in the House to save our planet. That is our responsibility. Other unions across the country have also taken a stand. They are the ones who will be affected. They represent the working people but they believe we can do it. We are intelligent enough to do it and we have the responsibility to do it.

[*Translation*]

As I was saying earlier, I am proud that the major labour unions in our country, such as the CLC with more than 2.5 million workers in Canada, have said they agree with ratifying Kyoto, but that solutions need to be found for workers.

The major unions decided to support ratification. Credit is due to representatives of Canadian workers who have made this decision,

and major unions throughout the country that are starting to head in the same direction.

To me, the hon. members of this House have no choice but to ratify Kyoto and set an example for countries worldwide. It is said that Canada is the most beautiful country in the world. Imagine the message we could send to the nation and to the entire world.

• (1850)

[*English*]

If we say that Canada is the most beautiful country in the world, just imagine the message we could send across the world, the message that we care about our planet. We have the responsibility in the House of Commons to send the message across the world that we will not tolerate continuing to dirty our planet for future generations, for the children of our children. We do not have the right to dirty the planet the way we have been. We have the responsibility of working toward cleaning up the planet.

Canadians will judge the performance of members of Parliament in the House when the time comes for the vote. I hope they do judge our performance on behalf of what should be done for human beings. I will say again that the planet does not belong to us. It belongs to all generations to come and we have that responsibility.

Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Acadie—Bathurst. He always puts forth such an extreme amount of passion when he speaks. He truly has commented on a number of perspectives about how the Kyoto ratification can work.

This debate is probably unlike any other debate we have had in the House to date. I think of the items we have discussed over time, and I see that the ratification of Kyoto will produce positive results that will take place within the world, certainly toward addressing the issue of climate change. Those results will have the most lasting effect on Canada, but also on the world.

Although it certainly will not be a quick response where we see everything fixed overnight, without question it will be a commitment we make which will be of lasting benefit to the generations throughout the world, not just in Canada. A number of speakers have commented on that today and quite frankly that is the real background and hope behind the Kyoto ratification process: that there will be those long term changes and we will ultimately see the benefits.

Certainly as far as climate change goes, we would be hard pressed to find too many people in Canada who do not think there are some really strange things happening with the climate. There are those who think that maybe getting warmer weather at certain periods of time and longer spouts of warmer weather in northern Manitoba might be a great thing, and we do enjoy it while we can, but as a result of those types of weather changes, we as well have seen some strange things happen that are not very good, such as the effect the changing weather pattern is having on wildlife. Most obvious to most people at this point is the effect on the polar bear populations, with the decrease in weights and the risk that they are now at as a result of the climate change. It is certainly one of the key factors.

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As well, in my own time as a member of Parliament I have seen changes in weather, with times when winter roads could not be put in because it was just too warm at certain periods of time. The length of time that those warm periods stayed with us and shortened the opportunity of certain communities to have access to the rest of the world via land transportation has been quite apparent. So we do not have to go out there and sell this, because most people are seeing it and the effect is it having first hand.

As well, in spite of the warm weather and in some cases where we get a lot of moisture, in other areas there is absolute drought. Whole weather pattern changes are happening. It is not just a matter of global warming making everything wonderful. It is changing weather patterns around the world, so there are consequences all around the world.

I recall one of the first conferences I ever attended. It was then that I first realized there was a country called Papua New Guinea. I had probably heard about it somewhere along the road, but I actually sat with representatives from Papua New Guinea and listened to their great concerns over climate change, because for the first time in their history water had come over their sea wall. They were literally at risk of being totally wiped out if things did not change, because of the warming and the increased water levels that were affecting this small island country.

There are lasting consequences, and there are lasting benefits to the Kyoto ratification process. They are very achievable benefits.

I will go now to my own province of Manitoba and what I believe are extremely fine examples from the province. Without question, the Manitoba government believes the Kyoto ratification process is an absolute must. It is committed to Manitoba meeting its targets and maybe even exceeding those targets. The Manitoba government has done a fair amount of investigating into how this will affect jobs. Some will be lost, but a good number will be gained as a result of the Kyoto process. The Government of Manitoba is quite confident that there will be a greater increase in jobs than there will be jobs lost.

• (1855)

One of the most recent projects in which the Manitoba government has become involved to help address the climate change in a meaningful way is a cleaner form of bus transportation. This is a situation where we see the involvement of numerous different industries working together to come up with a different form of transportation. I will read a bit about it to the House, because it does exemplify that industry is out there promoting cleaner industries as well. There will be the testing of a hybrid fuel cell technology “to promote research and development of cleaner, renewable and more fuel efficient forms of transportation” to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is a time when we can actually have some partnerships involved. The article states that the Province of Manitoba, in conjunction with the Government of Canada, and along with “Hydrogenics Corporation, New Flyer Industries, Maxwell Technologies, Dynetek Industries and ISE Research... announced a new \$8 million hybrid fuel cell transit bus project”.

Manitoba is committed to promoting research and development in new, efficient technologies and clean, renewable forms of energy. That is what a province can do when it works to reduce greenhouse gases and to meet the Kyoto ratification process.

As well, without question I think Manitoba has been a wonderful example of clean energy with hydro power. The fact is that Manitoba Hydro is a crown corporation. It does not have to go out there solely to say that it will try to sell, sell, sell to make a profit. It can go out there as a hydro company and promote energy savings processes.

It is not that Manitoba will abuse hydro energy solely because we have it. Manitoba Hydro will promote energy saving methods even within hydro development.

The Manitoba government believes that the Government of Canada can succeed with the Kyoto protocol by adopting Manitoba's approach. The number one approach is hydro. Federal studies have shown that developing Canada's hydroelectric capacity is the single most cost effective way of using existing technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. I am proud to say that each and every hydro project in the province of Manitoba falls within the Churchill riding.

There have been some ups and downs, but I can tell the House that there have been more ups than downs. Manitobans are proud that we have a publicly owned hydro corporation and that it is there to meet our needs in giving us some of the lowest cost energy in the country, if not the world.

Notional estimates show, for example, that if the federal government supported an east-west power grid, more than 20 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year would be displaced, creating as many as 175,000 person-years of employment in construction alone. The project would also create significant economic development opportunities for Canada's first nations. I can tell the House that the Government of Manitoba has been a partner with first nations in hydro development and will continue to be so. Those first nations have supported hydro development in their areas or it would not be happening.

Ethanol is another way. Mandating the use of ethanol across Canada and providing incentives at levels similar to those available in the U.S. would cut emissions by 3 tonnes per year and create 5,000 jobs.

The third method is energy efficiency, which I have already touched on. In January 2000, Manitoba Hydro launched enhancements to its Power Smart program to help Manitoba families and industries save energy. If Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart programs and benefits were emulated across Canada, greenhouse gas emissions would be cut by roughly 50 tonnes per year and up to 5,000 jobs could be created.

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These are only three of many initiatives the federal government could sponsor across Canada to create jobs while helping the environment, so it is not as if we have to see the Kyoto ratification as the end of the earth. Quite frankly, I strongly believe that each and every province needs to be there to support each other so that no one province is detrimentally or unjustly affected. We need to be there to understand that if some industries are stronger here and they will be affected a little more we will be there to support them. That is what Canadians do. That is what a group of countries and territories together, united as a country, will do to make the Kyoto ratification process work.

● (1900)

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the members for Kootenay—Columbia, Calgary Southeast and Kelowna.

I will start with a couple of quotations. Approximately 500 years ago a fairly intelligent man said that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I have heard a lot of passion about the environment and the need to take action, whether it will work or not, to deal with the problem, that it is urgent and must be dealt with. I cannot help but think of what that fairly intelligent man said when he said the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

I also came across a quote from Warren Buffett the other day. I have heard a lot of models and forecasts on economic projections from the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment. Mr. Buffett said we have economic forecasters so that fortune tellers look smart. I think there is a lot of truth in what he had to say.

I want to focus on Saskatchewan. There are a number of areas in which Saskatchewan would be devastated by the Kyoto protocol. For the benefit of all the government members who are here tonight, let me explain that in Saskatchewan we have a government owned crown corporation that provides all our public power. Seventy per cent of our power comes from coal generating plants. Reducing dependence on that by 30% within 10 years would have a devastating effect on that crown utility. The only way it could be done is through major capital investment, with money the province does not have, to find other energy sources. In the interim what it will have to do is drive up the power costs to very high rates. It is going to be hard on seniors, farmers, businesses and everybody who is dependent on power in that province. It is going to be devastating.

I want to focus in on one business alone, IPSCO. It directly employs 1,500 people in Regina. It is a green industry and is probably the North American leader in scrap iron. Everyone wants to recycle, but IPSCO has looked at the implications of the Kyoto protocol and has made it clear. If it passes, IPSCO will be closing its operations and moving out of Saskatchewan. That will have a devastating effect on the province. I have talked to the CEO and he has said it is not a manageable problem. It is an unmanageable problem and is insurmountable for them. It will be moving its operations to Davenport, Iowa, with the rest of its operations and that will be another industry out of Saskatchewan.

Let us look at government revenues. The Government of Saskatchewan is going through rough times with fiscal imbalances. It is projecting a deficit heading into the next year. We are back into

deficits. The federal government may not know that, but if we look at the provincial level it is coming. Saskatchewan is into that territory. Over 10% of its revenue is derived from petroleum royalties. If we are going to decrease our reliance on petroleum by 30% of fossil fuels, it is pretty easy to see that the imbalance will get worse in that province, not better. What does that mean? It means that health care, education, highways and other important government services will be shortchanged as revenues dry up. That is another area of concern.

A third area of concern is farming and transportation. Both those industries in Saskatchewan are totally dependent on diesel fuel and they will be hit hard. One thing I am amazed at is how the government totally neglected the uranium industry in Saskatchewan. We are sending uranium to France, Japan and other places that are going to find it much easier to meet the Kyoto standards because they are using atomic power, but we get no credit at all for being the major exporter of uranium to these other countries. To me that is either incompetence or something else, and I do not want to get into problems like the Prime Minister did with George Bush and use other words, but it really makes me wonder what the government was doing when it was negotiating this agreement.

● (1905)

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, at times, as members of Parliament, we get thoughtful letters from our constituents. I received a letter from Mr. Jack Pitter of Elkford, British Columbia. He wrote it on October 9 and he asked a number of questions. First, how will the Kyoto protocol affect his job as well as taxes and the economy; second, why is the government rushing to ratify Kyoto without informing and consulting Canadians; third, why are we signing a deal that our largest trading partner, the United States, is refusing to ratify; fourth, why would Canada commit to an unachievable target that also requires us to make payments to countries without targets; and fifth, what effort has the government made to create a best in Canada plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while protecting our economic prosperity?

I would suggest to Mr. Pitter and others who are watching that there is an even overarching question. The real question is, if we were to ratify Kyoto, would it make any difference at the end of the day?

With respect to the first question, the answer is that the Prime Minister, the House of Commons, and the entire government does not know the answer to that question. They simply do not know how the Kyoto protocol would affect jobs as well as taxes and the economy.

I should explain that Elkford is a community in my constituency along with Sparwood, Fernie and Cranbrook. The latter acts as a bedroom for the people who go to work in the metallurgical coal mines in the Elk Valley. Elkford, of all places, would be hit by this question. We simply do not know. For example, if 85% of our exports go to the U.S. and we are not as competitive on price because of higher energy costs, what will happen to the trade relationship? We do not know the answer to that question.

Furthermore, over 25% of all the world's metallurgical coal comes from the Elk Valley in my constituency. Our metallurgical coal price would be in competition with the Australians who had more than enough common sense to not ratify the Kyoto protocol.

Along with the United States and other exporters I am unaware of there being any exporter of metallurgical coal in the world that will ratify the Kyoto protocol. What does that do to the companies and the workers in my constituency when all of a sudden they are faced with an added cost that none of their competitors are faced with? Again, will it make any difference?

Ottawa has not kept its promise to consult with the provinces on the issue. Just how arrogant is the government? As if that question actually needs an answer. One of the most amazing things about the entire process is that we are debating this issue today in the House of Commons where the Prime Minister is looking for a rubber stamp from his backbenchers because he made up his mind, when he was in a friendly environment in South Africa, that part of his legacy would be that he would ratify the Kyoto protocol. When he made that announcement back in August or September, he said this will be through by December.

The Canadian Alliance is aware of the patent danger that the Kyoto protocol would present to our economy but again, will it make any difference in the long term whether we ratify or whether we do not ratify as far as the actual problem is concerned? We are aware that many people believe that the Kyoto protocol has something to do with smog, pollutants that are going out into the air, and sulphur and commodities like that. It has nothing to do with that. Because the government is rushing so headlong into this, I will answer Mr. Pitter's other question, why is Canada committing to an unachievable target that also requires us to make payments to countries without targets? That is the reason why we will not be able to make any difference in the long term to the production of CO₂ in the world. We will be shipping billions of dollars and now taxpayer dollars out of Canada over this false attempt by the Prime Minister to leave with a green legacy.

● (1910)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I want to express my regret that I have merely five minutes at the tail end of a debate and that I had to cajole colleagues to get on the Speaker's list for what ought to be a matter of serious debate in both Houses of Parliament.

The motion and the consequent ratification of the Kyoto accord would have a profound impact on my constituents, their livelihoods and standard of living, than probably any other business brought before Parliament. I regret that I am not able, more seriously and at greater length, to speak on behalf of their interests.

I represent a constituency where the largest industries are those involved in, who work in, or provide supply and services to the energy industry in Alberta. It is an industry which is much maligned but an industry which is absolutely essential to the economic growth of Canada. No industry in the country, none of the primary industries, none of the manufacturing or service industries could operate without the energy that is needed to fuel this economy.

Much of that energy comes from my province of Alberta and from an industry, which has been an enormous contributor to economic

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growth and prosperity in this country, based in my home city of Calgary. I received hundreds of communications from constituents expressing disbelief and outrage with the government's rush to ratify the dangerous Kyoto accord. Of the several hundred negative communications I received about Kyoto from my constituents, two were in support. That is some honest indication of the lay of the land of public opinion where I come from.

Much has been said in this debate yet I have not heard from the government a compelling response to the basic objections raised by the opposition to the ratification of the Kyoto accord. If the government were to demonstrate that the implementation of the accord and the achievement of its objectives, which are unrealistic, a reduction of emissions to 6% below the 1990 levels, could be achieved, that would do virtually nothing, nothing appreciable, and nothing significant, to reduce overall international carbon emissions.

Canada contributes less than 2% of carbon emissions. A tiny fraction of that is from man-made, human produced carbon. This is in the context of an accord where some two-thirds of worldwide emissions would not be affected by or governed by the accord. By the time the accord is fully implemented in 2012, 80% of world carbon emissions would not be governed by the accord. In other words, this accord is an act of economic suicide. It is the unilateral imposition of an enormous unparalleled regulatory burden on the Canadian economy to achieve no appreciable or detectable environmental gain. This would go down in history as one of the most irresponsible economic decisions ever taken by any western government.

Why is it that Canada alone is binding itself to massive absolute reductions without even having a clear road map as to how those would be enforced? Why is it that we are the only country in the entire hemisphere, in the Americas, that is binding itself to emissions reductions? Why is it that the world's heaviest emitters would be left outside the agreement whereas Canada, which is making serious strides toward emission reductions, would be the most severely penalized? There is only one reason. It is because of the prideful desire of the Prime Minister to have some legacy at which to point to in order to justify 10 years of incompetent government.

The economic consequences of this would be devastating, I have no doubt. It has already begun in my home province with \$9 billion, at minimum, of capital investment put on hold, representing tens of thousands of jobs and representing the hopes and dreams of thousands of my fellow Albertans.

● (1915)

People in my province remember the history of the national energy program, the tens of thousands of people who lost their homes, their businesses, and their opportunities, and still suffer from the consequences today. They will not let this happen to them again.

I regret that one of the most unfortunate and unforeseen consequences of this accord, if it were ratified and implemented, would be a dire consequence in terms of national unity in my province of Alberta. That is unfortunate, but I will stand with my constituents and the government of Alberta to fight this accord and its implementation tooth and nail.

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Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we are debating the Kyoto accord which is an economic disaster and an environmental fraud. I cannot understand how any government, that respects itself and wants to represent the people, could perpetrate on a trusting group of electors something that is economically unsound and environmentally fraudulent.

I am opposed to the ratification of the Kyoto accord. Someone might say that means I do not want to have the environment cleaned up. Nothing could be further from the truth. We know that the environment must be cleaned up.

I want to pay special tribute to one of the businesses in Kelowna that has done something of its own volition. It did not need the Kyoto accord to have geothermal energy and heating in its building. It built a brand new, high tech building for high tech people coming to Kelowna. All of the heating in that 12 storey building is by geothermal power. It did not have to be told that the Kyoto accord was necessary. It cleaned the environment in its area and did it of its own volition.

It is terrible to think that someone should dare to come forward and say that we must do this. I ask Canadians, what good would it do? Even if we agreed to this thing, what good would it do if Canada approves it but the United States does not? And the United States will not.

It reminds me an awful lot of when the law came in that restaurants needed to have smoking and non-smoking sections on their premises. Guess what? If people went into the non-smoking section of a restaurant, eventually, and it did not take too long, the smoke from the other section came over to the non-smoking part.

The whole idea behind the Kyoto accord is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. That is good. Now we are going to buy some hot air from Russia. What does that do to the total emissions from Canada or anywhere else? It does nothing. The total carbon dioxide emitted is still the same as it was before. The only thing that has happened is that the wealth has shifted from one country to another country. That is the effect of it.

The government, in its wisdom, has said as recently as yesterday or this morning that there would be a \$15 a tonne limit on the amount that would be charged to industry. Where would the rest of it go if it goes beyond \$15? It would either go to the consumer or to the taxpayer. What is the difference between consumers and taxpayers? Are they not the same people? In many instances they are, so will they get hit twice. They will pay for it either directly as they purchase various items or they will pay for it through taxes. Either way we will be paying for this.

The suggestion has been made that this would clean up the environment. Can we bet on that? Because it does not deal with pollutants, it primarily deals with carbon dioxide. It is really a bad thing to do that.

Something that intrigues me more than anything else is that there seems to be a debate about the number of scientists who are for it and the number of scientists who are against it. If we add up the number of scientists on the one side and the number of scientists on the other side, we would discover that on the pro side there is one more scientist than there is on the nay side. So it must be a good

idea. Are the scientists here to tell us what the facts are or what their opinions are?

It reminds me of the kindergarten teacher who had show and tell, and one of the students brought in a little rabbit. One of the bright guys in the back asked, "What sex is the rabbit?" The teacher did not know anything about determining the sex of a rabbit and said, "Let us vote on it". It is a ludicrous kind of situation to determine the sex of a rabbit on the basis of who thinks it is a male and who thinks it is a female.

This is the kind of nonsense that goes on when we do the same kind of thing here, when we debate science on the basis of how many are on one side and how many are on the other side. It is wrong. We need alternative sources. We need businesses like the one that I mentioned a moment ago. We need sources of energy like wind power and various other things. We have a business going up right now in Winfield, in my constituency, which will be producing ethanol, a beautiful fuel source.

In conclusion, I hope everyone remembers that the Kyoto deal is an economic disaster and an environmental fraud.

● (1920)

Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

In 1998 the United Nations created the intergovernmental panel on climate change, or IPCC, involving 2,500 top climate scientists from around the world. As early as 1995, in its second report, the IPCC stated, "the balance of evidence suggests that there is a discernible human influence on global climate".

In December 1997, industrialized countries agreed to the Kyoto protocol, committing to reduce their emissions and setting out a framework for long term sustainable development.

In 2001, in its third report, the IPCC said, "there is new and stronger evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities".

Unlike some of the members opposite, I do not purport to be an expert on climate change, but I do know a few things about our changing environment. For example, I know that Nova Scotia never used to have smog. In the last two summers we had several days of smog warnings, not just in Halifax but also in the Annapolis Valley. I did not grow up in Nova Scotia with smog, and I do not want my children to do so either.

I recognize that smog and climate change are not exactly the same problem but they are related. The measures we must take to solve them are substantially the same, as my friends ought to know. I believe it is time we acted.

The real questions are the following. Do we think that these environmental problems are real? Do we think they are serious? Do we accept that we have to change our behaviour? Do we think that we should opt out of the only major international effort to combat pollution or global warming?

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I am concerned about the impact of global warming, the impact it is likely to have or is already having on my province of Nova Scotia. For example, we have the situation of farms. We are seeing more droughts and we can expect more droughts. With milder winters we can expect more pests to survive those winters and become more of a problem.

We have the issue of rising sea levels, which is a concern in Nova Scotia. We seen increased erosion. We can expect to have smaller or even disappearing beaches. We can all imagine the impact that would have on our tourism industry.

We have impacts on coastal infrastructure. We have to be concerned about things like wharves, breakwaters and even bridges that are close to the ocean.

We have the issue of smog. Members talk about there being no connection between pollution and climate change. However we know that when there are more hot days there are more bad air days. They should know the connection between hot air and ozone creation and heavy smog. There is a strong connection and they know that but they are going to deny it.

Smog causes impaired lung function, increased hospital admissions and premature death. So this is also about the health care system. It seems so obvious to me that healthy Canadians would not need to use the health care system. If fewer Canadians are using the health care system because they are not breathing polluted air, there will be more money available for those who truly need the system.

There is the issue of forestry and that industry in my province. Again, with more mild winters we will have more insects surviving those winters and creating problems for the forest industry. With long hot summers we have the increased threat of forest fires, another threat to that important industry in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotians want to act to confront these challenges and they want Canada to play a leading role in that action.

I want to share a quotation from the CBC program *The National*, which aired on October 28: "She can easily reduce her gas bill by 15% and her greenhouse gases by more than a tonne and a half by insulating the attic, sealing the drafts and upgrading the furnace. And if she upgrades her fridge, she could cut her greenhouse gases by another half a tonne, saving money and easily meeting her Kyoto target at the same time".

Those sorts of simple innovative solutions are what I hope to see brought forward in the coming months. That is why I am supporting today's motion.

It is not surprising that the Alliance is opposing the motion. That party has long been in denial when it comes to environmental problems. However I must say that I am disappointed, as I know many Canadians are, to see the PC Party members opposing the motion for they should know better.

●(1925)

It was the Conservative government that helped create the intergovernmental panel and now those members choose to ignore its advice. Their government negotiated the acid rain treaty. They know that the overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that

human activity is changing our climate, but they that say we should deal with it some other time. If not now, then when? If not this agreement, then what agreement?

Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to this very important issue.

The public debate has been very useful. It really brings into focus something on which all Canadians need to focus. All sides of the House have had an opportunity to speak and I would like to hearken back for a moment to the hon. member for Red Deer who claimed at great length—and I do not have to remind anyone in the House at what length he did go on—that the action on climate change would not help address Canada's other environmental issues. On this, as well as on so much more, he simply missed the mark. I am pleased to have the opportunity to stand and correct some of this misinformation because I hear some of his colleagues repeating this misinformation.

Once again he showed Canadians why they should not trust his party on environmental issues. I could go through the work that the government is doing across the environmental agenda to point out how empty his claims truly are but, like Canadians, I will not be fooled by his focus on anything else other than the real issue. The real issue is achieving clear, timely action on climate change.

Since the hon. member is knowledgeable about science, as he went on to point out in his remarks, I am sure he will not mind if I try to help him understand why some of his fundamental points in his speech were wrong. He claimed that action on climate change would not help Canada get cleaner air. I would like to quote him. He said in the House:

Kyoto is not about those smog days in Toronto. It is not about particulate matter. It is not about all those other things that we call smog. The government conveniently has meshed those two together, and I believe the people in Toronto think that Kyoto is a solution to those smog days.

On this matter, as well as on so many more, the hon. member is just plain wrong.

Let me comment first on what causes smog so that the Alliance can be clear on the scientific facts. Then I want to discuss why the kind of inaction on climate change that the Alliance would like to see would mean more smog days. Finally I would like to point out how the "Climate Change Plan for Canada", that the government tabled in the House, will address, not just our climate change priorities but will also make a real difference to cleaner air.

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Let me start with what causes smog. Simply put, if we burn fossil fuels we get many different kinds of emissions. Nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds are two types of these emissions. These emissions can also come from other sources but scientists estimate that about 90% of nitrogen oxide emissions arise from fossil fuel combustion. If we add sunlight and heat to nitrogen oxide and volatile organic compounds we get ground level ozone. That ground level ozone is the primary ingredient of smog. The hotter it gets the more smog we are likely to suffer.

There are many other emissions as fossil fuel burns. For example, there is fine particulate matter, of which our learned colleague from Red Deer spoke. That fine particulate matter is linked to heart and lung diseases such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema. About 35% of primary emissions of fine particulate matter is due to fossil fuel combustion. We get many more emissions, including those related to acid rain and other environmental issues, but I believe I have made my point.

I will summarize in this way. If we burn fossil fuels we get the substances that are at the heart of smog in communities and regions right across Canada. We get substances that scientific and medical experts clearly link to heart and lung diseases, and we get other contributions to other environmental concerns.

Let me go back and look at the science of climate change just for a moment. What does the consensus among scientific experts say about climate change? Their analysis and the evidence they have gathered says that as we burn fossil fuels we add to the emissions of greenhouse gases that help enable our atmosphere to trap heat. Their analysis, in fact, says that fossil fuel combustion accounts for more than 80% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions from actions by people. That combustion happens as we use coal, oil products and natural gas in our industries. It happens as we use fossil fuels to move people and goods. It happens as we use those fuels for heat and light, as well as other uses.

● (1930)

What does that have to do with clean air, the Alliance members may ask. As the Alliance does so very often, it is missing the big picture, and there are two major elements in the big picture.

First, if we experience continued climate change, we will experience higher average temperatures. Add more heat from a rising average temperature to more ground level ozone, which is what we will get if the Alliance has its way, and we will have more smog. It is that simple.

The second element of the big picture that the Alliance is not getting is that clean air goals and climate change goals have one important element in common: emissions from fossil fuel combustion. Once again, it is that simple.

I would also like to correct the assertion that I heard just a few minutes ago by the members opposite saying that this was just about CO₂. Carbon dioxide represents about 78% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon dioxide is not the only gas that contributes to climate change. There are six gases in the Kyoto basket: methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. These other gases are important in terms of climate change because of their global warming potential.

The "Climate Change Plan for Canada" recognizes this reality even if the official opposition does not. The plan proposes for a national goal: for Canadians to contribute in a more sophisticated and efficient way as consumers and producers of energy in the world and leaders in the development of new, cleaner technologies. It recognizes that we can get more out of the energy that we use.

Let me offer some examples. The plan includes a focus on renewable energy sources, such as wind energy. Those will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and will not add to the chemical mix that leads to smog.

It looks to support for clean coal technologies that will eliminate all emissions from coal. That would mean the greenhouse gas emissions and the emissions that lead to smog.

The plan recognizes the value of improving the impact of transportation on fossil fuel use. It anticipates more focus on improved urban transit, and not just urban transit in general but the use of ethanol fuel that would create fewer greenhouse gas emissions and fewer of the other emissions associated with smog and fine particulate matter.

It is the same across the board.

Canada can take action to reduce, make cleaner and more efficient our use of fossil fuels in electricity generation as well as building operations. That will help us reach our climate change goals. It will help us reach our air quality goals and address the rising incidence of asthma and other respiratory diseases.

I want to make one last point now that we have had a little bit of a science lesson.

Some people have claimed that we should do nothing about climate change because the impacts seem too far off in the future for them. They are not particularly interested in the benefits to their children or their grandchildren. I urge them to focus on the more immediate health and environmental benefits of reducing air pollution that will come with the climate change plan for Canada.

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As we move forward we will be able to add other actions that will cut emissions of particulate matter. We will be able to add to those actions when we address ground level ozone. All of this means that we will, in part, generate significant health benefits for Canadians much more quickly.

Let me quote the member for Red Deer who told the House:

There has been a real skilful job of mixing health and Kyoto, of mixing pollution and Kyoto. It has been very well done. Most people really do believe that signing Kyoto will have major health results.

On that point, he is actually correct. Canadians do believe that signing Kyoto will have health results, and Canadians are right, which is why I will gladly support this motion. I urge all my colleagues on all sides of the House to support the motion.

● (1935)

This plan is anchored in past successes and builds on our current strengths. It is a vision of responsible, innovative and high efficiency society. These goals are achievable and Canadians will achieve them.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the members for Calgary Northeast, Crowfoot and Dewdney—Alouette. I had the opportunity to speak before on Kyoto and its effects on agriculture. I may get back to that although the time is short tonight.

Tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians which has been passed on from generation to generation says that when one is riding a dead horse the best strategy is to get off. We heard all day about the dead horse that is Kyoto. Tonight, for Kyoto, I have some suggestions, a list of what to do when one finds oneself riding a dead horse.

Number 13 is that one can find a stronger whip. We saw that today. We had members in the House on the Liberal side, including the member for LaSalle—Émard, seemed to indicate that they would not vote for closure. The Prime Minister went out and found himself a stronger whip and was able to ensure that they fell into line.

Number 12 is that one can always change riders after finding oneself on a dead horse. We heard that all day today. We saw the riders changing on the other side but riding the same horse, using the same Liberal talking points all throughout the day.

Number 11 is that a committee can be appointed when one finds oneself riding a dead horse. I am surprised the government has not done this. It did it with other bills, particularly the species at risk bill where it shipped the bill off to committee. When it came back with some good recommendations, it completely gutted it and ran the bill through anyway. It is not prepared to appoint a committee to take a look at what would happen with Kyoto.

Number 10 is that if one finds oneself riding a dead horse, one can always arrange to visit other countries to see how other cultures ride dead horses. I am sorry to say that our government did that. It went to Japan and came back with a dead horse.

Number 9 is that the standards can always be lowered so that dead horses can be included. Today we heard that the government would lower the standards for industry by cutting costs, but it would not answer the question of who would pick up the big bill. We know who it is. We have seen example of who pays the bill through the gun control bill, Bill C-68. The taxpayers will pay the bill.

Number 8 is that the dead horse can be reclassified as living impaired. I think we saw that in Johannesburg.

Number 7 is that outside contractors can be hired to ride the dead horse. I am sure we will have no shortage of that. We know that the Liberals have friends and they have rewarded them many other times.

Number 6 is that several dead horses can be harnessed together to increase the speed. It then goes the same distance we would have got anyway. We have a government that has gone nowhere and the debate today has gone nowhere either.

Number 5 is that additional funding can always be provided and/or training to increase the dead horse's performance. We expect to see multi-billions of dollars put into this bad protocol to try to increase this dead horse's performance. We already know that the cost is over \$1 billion and we know that the government will put many more billions into it, although it will not tell Canadians how much that will be.

Number 4 is that if one finds oneself riding a dead horse, one can always do a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance. We see that the government has been trying to make deals with the provinces. There was a 10 point plan. The provinces tried to agree on seven of them. The federal government has changed most of the plan. The minister in charge in Saskatchewan said that people now do not even recognize the points to which they did agree. The government has tried to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance. It is not going anywhere.

Number 3 is that since a dead horse does not have to be fed, it is less costly. It carries lower overhead and therefore contributes substantially more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses. We see that with this accord.

Number 2 is that the expected performance requirements for all horses can always be rewritten. We see the government's ever changing plan.

Number 1 is that should the government find itself riding a dead horse, that dead horse can always be promoted to a Liberal cabinet position.

● (1940)

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to have the opportunity to address the Kyoto question.

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First, allow me to place my personal opinion on the record simply and clearly. I believe that the Kyoto protocol in Canada and around the world is an expensive, counter-productive waste of time, money and political energy that could be better spent looking for solutions to human problems that are effective, realistic and positive.

This is the opinion of a parliamentarian, not a scientist. We have heard lots about scientific talk on all sides of the House. There are undoubtedly more in the House who are much more knowledgeable about the science of Kyoto than I am, but it is interesting to note that not too long ago a Gallup poll found that only 17% of the members of the American Meteorological Society and the American Geophysical Society thought that the warming of the 20th century was the result of the greenhouse gas emissions.

What does that really say? It says that there are 83% who never responded to this survey who obviously think something different. Many of them probably do not even look at it as being an issue to really effectively deal with in an aggressive manner, but 17% of the members of the American Meteorological Society and the American Geophysical Society think that the Kyoto protocol has some substance. I would rather err on the side of caution, looking at that result alone.

Only 13% of the scientists, responding to a survey conducted by none other than Greenpeace, believe that catastrophic climate change will result from current patterns of energy use. That is 13% of the respondents. That puts the numbers down in maybe 4% or 5% of the total scientific world that has some thought that, as the Greenpeace survey suggests, there will be a catastrophic climate change. Again, I would rather err on the side of the 83% of the scientists who never responded to the survey.

I think it was yesterday when more industry concerns were expressed. Many more in industry are expressing a concern about where they will end up within the Kyoto accord, if the Kyoto accord is implemented. Most recently, in *The Globe and Mail*, General Motors warned yesterday that ratification of the Kyoto protocol in Canada could create different vehicle standards from those in the United States and have a significant impact on the company's Canadian operations.

Guess what? Some 90% of GM's Canadian built cars and trucks are shipped to the United States. In other words, there would no longer be harmonization of the standards between Canada and the United States, which would result in a negative impact on the Canadian operation. That would mean jobs in real terms, and those are not directly related to chemical or the oil industry. They are on the emissions side of it alone, and the changing standards that would accompany that.

We have heard from other industries, too. Everyone in the House, I would suggest, has been visited by representatives of industry, whether the chemical industry, the oil industry or the gas industry. We have been given some substantial evidence and warning about what Kyoto would do to those industries. Despite that, the federal government is determined to push ahead with the ratification of the Kyoto protocol, shortening the time line and making this a confidence vote. Why? I do not know why it is so determined to do that.

I do not think this is really a debate about science, global warming, and Canada's ability to actually make a difference. This debate is really about securing a future for the Prime Minister.

I know my time is up, but I will be adding my voice by opposing the vote on the protocol.

● (1945)

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will pick up where my colleague from Calgary left off. For a number of reasons I too will not be supporting the Kyoto accord as it comes forward in the House tomorrow.

Many reasons have been outlined by my colleagues throughout the last few days of debate. I want to reiterate, as the time for debate draws to a close, that this may be the last word in the debate in the House. However, it will certainly not be the last word on the topic. It is just the beginning.

As the government moves ahead on ratifying Kyoto without a plan, without cost projections as to the cost to our economy and to our hard working taxpayers from coast to coast, it will hear further from people about how bad the plan is.

It will come to light that the government is sadly out of tune with this plan just as it has been with the gun registry; a billion dollar cost overrun for a plan that was supposed to be \$2 million. It is now hitting close to a billion dollars and no end in sight in terms of that program.

We had the HRDC scandal which again highlighted the incompetence of the Liberals in managing taxpayer dollars. These are not government funds. These are dollars held in trust by the government to be implemented wisely.

Over and over again Canadians have seen the Liberal government squander their hard earned tax dollars on programs that it has said would be effective. However, when put to the test and reviewed by the Auditor General, the programs have been shown to be sadly lacking. How can Canadians possibly trust this group to now say that it will implement the Kyoto accord? It is simply beyond the belief of most Canadians.

The most valuable commodity that a government has is trust. The Liberal government has lost the trust of Canadians through the repeated scandals in which it has been involved. We have seen repeated failures and incompetence demonstrated year after year in this place.

I am speaking out on behalf of the people of Dewdney—Alouette. Some people have phoned or e-mailed me who are in support of the accord. These people are very few in comparison to those who are opposed to the accord.

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In particular, a number of people from the cement manufacturers have contacted me and have asked me the following questions. How can the government implement the accord without a plan and without a projection of what it will cost not only their industry and the province of British Columbia, but the entire country? What will the accord mean for their families if they lose their jobs? How will these people cope if they have to pay higher costs for heating and if they have to bear the burden of the government's mismanagement on this file?

It is simply not acceptable for the government to ask once again for the trust of Canadians on this file. The government has lost the trust of Canadians.

As recently as today, we had the former finance minister say to the media that more time was needed to debate Kyoto. Yet today we were faced with a closure vote. It is my understanding that the government wants to scurry out of here as quickly as it can before the end of government business on Friday, another day on which we could have debated this further, another day on which other members could state their views on this important issue.

My colleague from Red Deer eloquently laid out a very detailed plan outlining the Canadian Alliance's opposition to Kyoto. Our leader also laid out his plan today and the reasons why the opposition would not stop here today. The debate may be ending quickly but the groundswell of opposition by Canadians to the accord, as they find out the details on how it will impact them, is just beginning.

• (1950)

It is just beginning and people across the country will pay the price unfortunately, once again because of the Liberal government. The Prime Minister is ramming this deal through without consulting with the provinces, without an implementation plan and without any idea of what it will cost in terms of the number of jobs and the cost to the treasury. That is simply not acceptable.

It is time for a change. Canadians deserve better. The Alliance will stand against the accord and the government for presenting no alternative until we take its place on that side of the House.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak against what I believe history will record as being one of the most irresponsible and reckless decisions every initiated by a government in the western world, the Kyoto accord.

If the 1997 Kyoto accord becomes a binding treaty, Canada will legally have to reduce its output of carbon dioxide 6% below 1990 levels or some 20% below today's levels. This country's annual emissions now stand at 694 megatonnes, meaning Canada will have to cut 129 megatonnes of emissions to meet its targets.

How will Canadians be asked to reduce their emissions? How will the gas and oil industry be asked to reduce its emissions? How will the agricultural sector be asked to reduce its emissions? How will the average Canadians, the individuals who go to work for eight hours a day, be asked to reduce their emissions?

It will not be done simply by asking companies and industries to reduce their emissions. Again it will be put on the back of the average Canadian taxpayers.

Although scientists believe that CO₂ emissions are increasing global warming to dangerous levels, many are unsure. In fact more than 17,000 scientists have signed a petition against Kyoto on the grounds that the science remains uncertain.

There is no guarantee that the Kyoto accord will solve the problem. If there is a marginal reduction in CO₂ levels, at what cost will that be? That is the question that has much of the country concerned. It has Alberta and the gas and oil industry concerned. It certainly has the agricultural sector concerned.

When the Minister of the Environment talks about driving big vehicles, gas guzzlers, pickup trucks and SUVs, he is talking to the farmers. He is telling them they will have to get by without driving those types of vehicles. The taxes on the fuel will make it next to impossible.

Others believe that Kyoto is fundamentally flawed because it does nothing to reduce emissions by China, India and other third world countries. We have mentioned before in the House, that out of six billion people on this planet, five billion are not covered by Kyoto. Five billion people in the developing countries are not covered.

The United States has refused to ratify the accord. After studying the impact it would have on the economy, it has refused to move forward, because it recognizes the results it would achieve would be at too high a cost.

The government has not come forward. It has not levelled with Canadians. It has not told Canadians the cost. The cost is not measured simply in dollars and cents. The cost of the Kyoto agreement is measured in jobs. It is measured in families that depend on that weekly paycheque, the people who work in the gas and oil sector in Crowfoot, in western Canada and in east central Alberta. The cost of Kyoto will be put on their backs. It will be put on the backs of the people in the manufacturing sector. The people in Ontario who understand how important manufacturing is to the economy are saying the cost is too high.

My plea to the government is to recognize that not always just moving for the sake of moving is what is important. Tonight the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands talked about 13 things to do if we are riding a dead horse. It is time that the government recognized that Kyoto is a dead horse. Please do not ratify this accord.

• (1955)

Mr. Paul Szabo (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, El Niño, La Niña, Winnipeg floods, the Quebec ice storm, the western drought are all climate change. Leading scientists around the world believe that these aberrant climatic phenomena are caused by the accumulation of greenhouse gases.

Adjournment Debate

Canadians understand that things are changing in our climate. They understand that there are consequences when our climate changes the way it has. We know that Canada is the highest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases in the world. Even though we only produce 2% of global greenhouse gases, Canadians also know that 9% of greenhouse gases produced globally affect our climate.

We have had a good debate on the Kyoto protocol. Members have informed themselves the time has come to vote. I will be supporting the ratification of the Kyoto protocol because it is in the best interest of the health and well-being of all Canadians.

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 motion now before the House.

Pursuant to order made earlier today, the question on the subamendment is deemed to have been put and recorded division deemed demanded and deferred until Tuesday, December 10 at 3 p. m.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

• (2000)

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today I am drawing the attention of the House to the fact that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is unlawfully enforcing Bill 101 in the national capital region, specifically on the Quebec side, in violation of the Official Languages Act. That is a pretty serious charge, so let me demonstrate the case.

First of all, I have and would be prepared to table, if there was a will for me to do so, a unilingual French language parking ticket issued by the RCMP.

With regard to services in the national capital region, section 22 of the Official Languages Act states:

Every federal institution has the duty to ensure that any member of the public can communicate with and obtain available services from its head or central office in either official language, and has the same duty with respect to any of its other offices or facilities within the national capital region—

In 1996 the current Liberal government signed an agreement with the Government of Quebec stating that all constats d'infraction, or tickets, issued by the RCMP in Quebec would be in French only. This agreement had the effect of causing these tickets which formerly had been issued by the RCMP in a bilingual format to be issued in French only. Under the watch of this government, we went from bilingual to unilingual tickets in Quebec.

This was despite the fact that the Commissioner of Official Languages was making the following recommendation around that time. I am going to quote from a report of the Commissioner of Official Languages who recommended:

That the Department of Justice undertake thorough consultations with the official language minority and jurists concerned in each province and territory before entering into any agreement with provincial or territorial governments pursuant to the Contraventions Act.

That agreement between the federal and Quebec governments I referred to was under the Contraventions Act. This had the effect of indicating that our chief guardian of official bilingualism in Canada was opposed to this course of action.

Moreover, the agreement itself was unlawful. That is because section 82 of the Official Languages Act states the following:

In the event of any inconsistency between the following parts and any other act of Parliament or regulation thereunder, the following parts prevail to the extent of the inconsistency—

It lists several parts, including part IV, "Communications with and Services to the Public". It includes section 22, which I quoted earlier and which requires that all federal services, including tickets, in the national capital region be issued in both languages.

Today I received confirmation from the Commissioner of Official Languages in committee that she agrees that the RCMP is in fact acting illegally in issuing tickets in both languages. However, on November 1 when I raised the issue in the House, the parliamentary secretary had a different take. In responding to my question on this subject, he stated:

The RCMP...is fully committed to official bilingualism and providing services in both official languages. The RCMP complies with provincial legislation regarding the issuance of tickets.

The point I am trying to make tonight is that the federal government and the RCMP cannot be in conformity both with provincial legislation and with the Official Languages Act. My question is, will the RCMP follow the Official Languages Act, as it is required to do by law?

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General, at the request of the member for Ottawa—Vanier, appeared before the Standing Committee on Official Languages just last week to address this very important issue, and he did so in great detail.

As the minister indicated to committee members, the RCMP operating in the national capital region is fully committed to official bilingualism and providing services to the public in both official languages. The RCMP works with the Commissioner of Official Languages and continually reviews programs and resources to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Official Languages Act.

The RCMP also ensures that bilingual staff are fully integrated into RCMP law enforcement where required, and this includes, obviously, the national capital region.

The RCMP complies with the appropriate provincial regime regarding the issuance of tickets. This compliance is not only applicable in Quebec but is equally carried out in all provinces across Canada. I have been assured that bilingual guidance is provided on tickets in Quebec and that RCMP officers enforcing traffic laws within the national capital region can provide full services as requested or needed in both official languages.

Adjournment Debate

The government is committed to public safety and service delivery in both of our official languages and to this end, the RCMP, as our national police force, provides bilingual law enforcement while respecting the requirements of both federal and provincial laws.

• (2005)

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I noticed that what the hon. parliamentary secretary did not say was that his department would issue instructions to the RCMP to stop violating the Official Languages Act and start issuing tickets in both official languages in the Gatineau Park of the national capital region.

That is a requirement of the law. This is not a matter that can be put off. It is a matter that requires action. It is a matter that has been clearly stated in the law and it is a matter on which I am speaking in conformity with our leading guardian of official languages, the Commissioner of Official Languages. I cannot understand why there is any ambiguity about this and why there is any avoidance of simply saying that we will enforce the Official Languages Act by issuing tickets in both languages on the Quebec side as we do on the Ontario side of the national capital region.

I will ask the parliamentary secretary the question again. If he could just give me a yes or no that would be fine. Will the government instruct the RCMP to issue bilingual tickets in Gatineau? Yes or no.

Mr. Lynn Myers: Mr. Speaker, as I have noted, the RCMP works in the national capital region in a variety of roles and functions. One of the roles of course is traffic enforcement in the Gatineau Park, a National Capital Commission property.

As I indicated at the outset, the RCMP complies with appropriate legislation regarding the issuance of tickets in a manner consistent with the law. While the RCMP complies with provincial legislation in Quebec, it equally complies with applicable legislation in all other provinces across Canada.

As I have said before, I have been assured that bilingual guidance is provided on tickets issued in Quebec, and RCMP officers enforcing traffic laws within the national capital region can provide service in both of our official languages.

SECURITIES INDUSTRY

Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 26 I asked the Minister of Finance whether or not he was planning any initiatives in the area of corporate governance. I asked this because I believe that Canada is certainly not immune from scandals like Enron and WorldCom which have occurred in the United States. Some have said the only difference is that our scandals are smaller. Of course here in Canada we have already seen the very negative effects of the collapse of companies like Bre-X, Livent and others.

I was reassured when the minister noted that he was very pleased with the cooperation that had been demonstrated to date by federal and provincial regulators and the private sector to implement an appropriate Canadian response to the issues highlighted by recent U.S. scandals. I would hope that the minister would sometime soon begin to consult with members of the House because corporate

governance is a very important public policy debate that deserves the attention of elected officials as well as regulators and bureaucrats.

What we have is a crisis of confidence in the markets and the financial statements and information that underlie these markets. The directors and managers of public companies in Canada and the United States and indeed around the world are under severe pressure to show a steady improvement in the reported earnings of their companies. Failure to do so results in declines in stock values and perhaps the value of executive stock options owned by these same executives. The quantity of earnings have always been important. Now investors have concerns about the quality of reported earnings. This undermines confidence in the markets and is not conducive to attracting investment and economic growth.

In the United States, in a rush to address market confidence, the response has been swift and multifaceted. The Sarbanes-Oxley legislation was rushed in south of the border to address corporate governance issues. It seems to be encountering difficulties as regulators attempt to implement these laws. In fact, the exact opposite of the desired result may be occurring. Companies are being scared away and initial public offerings are being shelved as a result of the legislation. When people's trust in the system is undermined, they stop investing. It is as simple as that.

We need a made in Canada solution that is geared to our own needs and our own institutions. A very positive first step is the Canadian public accountability board which was established by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, the Canadian Securities Administrators and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions. This board is designed to provide a new independent public oversight for auditors of public companies.

The board will provide: one, more rigorous inspection of auditors of public companies; two, tougher auditor independence rules; and three, new quality control requirements for firms auditing public companies. This board is a very important and valuable contribution to an improvement in corporate governance in Canada, but other questions remain.

For example, should corporate managers face heightened responsibility for the accuracy of company financial statements? Should sanctions be civil, criminal, or both? Should there be a greater number of independent members on the boards of directors of public companies? Could the role of the audit committee of boards of directors be improved and enhanced? Should the chairman and CEO role for public companies be separated?

Adjournment Debate

There are other broader issues, such as what is the scope of federal power in corporate governance? To what extent should corporate governance practices be legislated, regulated or made voluntary? To what extent should we differentiate the corporate governance requirements of small and large corporations? To what extent should securities regulators in Canada be offering greater protection for less sophisticated investors?

These are all very important questions. I hope that we can deal with them in the House or in committee at the earliest opportunity.

● (2010)

Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in today's debate and want to thank the hon. member for bringing this matter to the attention of the House.

As many of my hon. colleagues know, the government has made bolstering investor confidence in Canadian corporate governance regimes a priority. Public confidence in capital markets and our public companies is critical to a well functioning economy.

Canada has a strong tradition of fostering sound corporate governance. With the Toronto Stock Exchange's leadership, Canada was among the first countries to systematically study ways to improve corporate governance and implement comprehensive governance guidelines. In July, the Minister of Finance continued, and outlined five areas for action to bolster investor confidence: first, improving financial reporting; second, enhancing further the credibility of the audit processes; third, strengthening corporate governance; fourth, ensuring management accountability; and last on the list was toughening the enforcement process.

The government is pleased with the cooperation demonstrated to date by the federal and provincial regulators and the private sector to implement an appropriate Canadian response to the issues highlighted by the recent U.S. corporate scandals.

Considerable progress has been made. Let me provide some examples. As my colleague pointed out, first, the new Canadian public accountability board for public company auditors has been established to help ensure the credibility of the audit process. It will provide oversight of public company auditors and has the power to impose sanctions. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants has drafted new rules for auditor independence, due to be finalized by the end of this year. The Toronto Stock Exchange has announced new measures to enhance corporate governance practices at companies listed on the TSE. Ontario and Quebec have tabled legislation that will expand the powers of their securities commissions and increase penalties for securities violations. The Department of Finance is maintaining an up to date record of recent actions on its website.

Just recently, the International Monetary Fund noted that Canada has been "commendably proactive in strengthening corporate governance and preserving investor confidence". However, more needs to be done. Industry Canada and the Department of Finance are examining federal corporate law and financial institution statutes to assess whether changes are necessary to improve corporate governance practices in Canada.

The government is also reviewing the criminal law framework and the effectiveness of enforcement related to corporate fraud. In addition, the Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce is examining the issues surrounding the collapse of Enron and other large corporations.

I hope my remarks have helped to address the hon. member's concerns.

● (2015)

Mr. Roy Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the parliamentary secretary for his remarks. Certainly many of the initiatives he described are comforting and I think are very valuable.

The point I was trying to make is that I think there is a role for members in this Chamber, whether that be in committee of the whole, in the House of Commons during debate, or in committee, to study this in more detail, because I think it does affect every single Canadian. There are Canadians who have investments, either through pension plans, mutual funds or direct investments, and they want to have the confidence necessary to move forward. I think some of the initiatives that are developing are very positive.

Part of the debate, of course, is how interventionist the government should or should not be. If the right mechanisms are in place through the private sector or the various institutions within Canada and we get the desired results, then I am sure the legislators do not have to deal with it so comprehensively, but I think we need to work for results and I hope the minister will engage parliamentarians on this sooner rather than later.

Mr. Paul Harold Macklin: Mr. Speaker, the member has a good point and I believe that as we go forward with this study of the various statutes that need to be reviewed and as we start to see areas where we may go forward, once we have established an area where we can concentrate our efforts, then, I believe, we will go forward to the House for consideration.

What we are seeing here is a cooperative effort, from both the federal government and the provincial governments, and from the individual groups that represent various associations, accountants in particular.

I think what we are going to see develop is a coming together of ideas and the opportunity presented to us to ultimately avail ourselves of a number of potential solutions, not one solution but rather a number of solutions that will continue to support investor confidence in Canada.

[*Translation*]

AIRLINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on November 25 I asked a question in the House concerning cutbacks to the number of flights in my riding of Acadie—Bathurst. Air Canada Jazz is going to reduce the number of its flights effective January 5, 2003, the one in the morning and the one in the evening in particular.

Adjournment Debate

In my own experience, when I am in the House five days a week, when the House is sitting, I leave here Saturday and come back Sunday. That is the kind of service we will have in future in northeastern New Brunswick when a flight is cut, particularly the morning flight.

What is even more important is that the company itself says that one of its problems is related to the cost of taxes, Nav Canada, the harmonized tax, the security tax and the price of fuel. All this adds to the ticket price and means fewer people use the airport, which is the only airport left in northeastern New Brunswick.

The response I got from the Minister of Transport is a regrettable one. He said:

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the air industry has paid for all of the improvements in the various services over the last number of years, and of course air travellers are being expected to pay for the security charges.

The charges that are now being paid are going into the government's consolidated revenue fund. It is not all going to airline security, even though the industry is suffering and on the verge of going under.

It is always the rural regions that pay the price. It is not only in Acadie—Bathurst, in northeastern New Brunswick that this is happening. They have shut down in Yarmouth and in other areas and it is expected to happen in the west and across the north.

The Government of Quebec has even started to invest and give away full-fare tickets that it purchases from Air Canada Jazz, so that the company will continue to provide service in the regions. What is the federal government doing? It is doing absolutely nothing to help.

Instead, the minister said:

—usually another carrier comes in with a similar service.

Which translates as, “Close up shop, we're not helping you”.

When Air Canada was owned by the government, the company belonged to the country. Before being privatized, it had a role to play for the benefit of all Canadians, to provide service throughout the country.

Today we are seeing where privatization has led us. The company wants to make money; it chooses the best airports. It provides a service, makes pots of money, puts it in the bank, and you, Canadians, can forget about it, we are not going to give you any service.

If we go with an independent airline, what happens with the Official Languages Act, with which Air Canada is required to comply? The independent airline will wash its hands of the Official Languages Act; it will no longer need to respect it in our country.

We need to think about all of these questions. That is why I asked the minister a question. I asked him what he intended to do in rural regions to save the flights we have, to save our airports and keep our airline.

● (2020)

[English]

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to respond to the hon. member on this important point.

When Air Canada acquired Canadian Airlines in December 1999, there was concern that this transaction might have a negative impact on smaller airport communities within the country. To address these concerns, the Minister of Transport negotiated an agreement with Air Canada that it would continue to serve for a three year period the over 60 communities then served by Air Canada, Canadian Airlines or any one of the wholly owned affiliates.

Air Canada has honoured that commitment and only in September of this year did it give the required 120 days' notice of its intention to cease service to a few communities where low passenger traffic volumes no longer justify service after January 2003.

In Atlantic Canada there were only three points: Stephenville, Newfoundland, Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and St-Léonard, New Brunswick.

With respect to Bathurst, I would note that it is not being dropped from the Air Canada network. Air Canada Jazz is reducing its daily service at Bathurst from three flights to two. This is strictly a cost saving move, one that reflects the seasonal decrease in passenger traffic demand, and the service can be reinstated if demand returns.

There has been much in the press recently concerning the drop in traffic on short haul routes because of the proliferation of fees, charges and taxes that passengers are asked to pay. People are choosing to drive their own cars or take the bus or train in lieu of higher cost air services.

The excise tax on fuel, the GST-HST and the air traveller's security charge are the only costs borne by passengers that are directly attributable to government. The security charge and excise tax are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance, who is currently reviewing the security charge.

With respect to NavCanada fees, NavCanada is a not for profit company that charges airlines, not passengers, for air navigation services. These services were previously provided by the government and paid for in part by the former air transportation tax on passenger tickets. Airlines have been choosing to pass along their air navigation fees to consumers in the form of a surcharge. In addition, carriers collect airport improvement fees on behalf of many airports that use these funds for capital improvements.

Let me conclude by assuring the hon. member that we are continually monitoring this issue. The government is carefully reviewing it and monitoring the situation from the perspective of both the carriers and the airports. This will be an ongoing process.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the parliamentary secretary is saying, which is that the government is monitoring, but it is going to monitor so long that we will lose the planes coming to the rural regions.

Adjournment Debate

Let us look at what the government is charging. For example, Air Canada's Jazz was giving the example that \$95 of a \$230 ticket was costs from the government. Sixty-six per cent of the cost of the ticket is charged by the government to the client or in taxes directly to the airline. If the government continues to charge the way it is, we will lose the planes. The government must look at it and not just monitor or the opportunity will go by. We need concrete action to save our air travel.

I ask the government to seriously look at it and not just monitor it but take some action, because this service is needed and we do not want to lose it.

• (2025)

Mr. Lynn Myers: Mr. Speaker, the government remains committed to doing what it can in this very important area. Transport Canada, for example, remains interested in the issue of viability of small airports.

Building on viability studies undertaken on behalf of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, provincial ministers of transport and the Atlantic government caucus task force on Air Canada and air access in Atlantic Canada, the Minister of Transport, over the next 18 months, will also undertake an analysis and consultation with the rural secretariat of the viability of regional airports with a view to understanding the impact of federal government divestitures on the communities serviced by these airports. The minister will return to cabinet to report on the findings of this analysis.

This is an ongoing concern and one which we take very seriously.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 8:25 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:26 p.m.)

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