



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, March 20, 2003**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

## **CONTENTS**

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

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, March 20, 2003

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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•(1000)

[*English*]

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among House leaders earlier this morning and I think you would find unanimous consent that at the conclusion of routine proceedings the House suspend until 10:30 a.m. in order to permit the party leaders to react to the situation in Iraq. That would be to suspend at the conclusion of routine proceedings, perhaps in five or ten minutes from now, until 10:30 a.m.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## 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 11 petitions.

\* \* \*

•(1005)

### CANADA AIRPORTS ACT

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-27, an act respecting airport authorities and other airport operators and amending other acts.

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

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

**Mr. Tony Valeri (Stoney Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

[*Translation*]

### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10<sup>th</sup> report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts relating to the May 8, 2002 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, relating to three contracts awarded to Groupaction Communications.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

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[*English*]

### SPECIAL ECONOMIC MEASURES ACT

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-414, an act to amend the Special Economic Measures Act (no foreign aid to countries that do not respect religious freedom).

He said: Mr. Speaker, religious freedom is an issue we take for granted in Canada. It is a fundamental freedom guaranteed in our Constitution. Yet our government gives taxpayer money to nations that do not share these same values.

Millions of dollars through CIDA go to regimes that tear down churches, burn bibles and imprison church leaders. I do not believe the taxpayers would approve of their money being used to prop up governments which wilfully ignore this basic right.

My bill would limit CIDA funding to intolerant nations that do not respect religious freedom.

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

\* \* \*

### NUCLEAR LIABILITY ACT

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-415, an act to amend the Nuclear Liability Act.

*Routine Proceedings*

He said: Mr. Speaker, the Nuclear Liability Act, as it stands, now calls for operators to carry a minimum of \$75 million in liability insurance. If damages beyond that amount occur, the federal government must cover the costs.

The amount of coverage is far below international standards. In its report dated June 2002 entitled "International Aspects of Nuclear Reactor Safety", the Standing Committee of the Senate on Energy recommends:

—the government take immediate action to amend the Nuclear Liability Act, and increase and maintain the mandatory operator held insurance coverage...at an amount in line with the Paris and Vienna Conventions "over 600 million [Canadian] dollars.

The revised Paris convention would require that the minimum liability amount for operators be 700 million Euro dollars.

Therefore, in line with the Senate committees recommendation, international standards and in recognition of the unique risk associated with the nuclear industry, the bill seeks to amend the act to \$1.1 billion Canadian.

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

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**PETITIONS**

CANADA POST

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present signed by a number of constituents in my riding.

The petition refers to the working conditions and the pay of rural route mail couriers in Canada who, if their pay is measured on an hourly basis, often earn less than the minimum wage and whose working conditions are perhaps not what they ought to be.

The petitioners ask and pray that the House consider giving rural route mail couriers collective bargaining rights now or to allow their working conditions and their pays to be raised to levels that are equitable with those of other postal workers.

CANADIAN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COLLEGE

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of the people of eastern Ontario, in particular White Lake, Braeside, Kinburn and Nepean, requesting that Parliament recognize that the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College is essential to training Canadians for emergency situations; that the facility should stay in Arnprior; and that the government should upgrade the facilities as promised in order to provide the necessary training for Canadians as first responders.

• (1010)

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present this morning from a significant number of constituents in my riding calling upon Parliament to protect our children and take all necessary steps to ensure that all materials that promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

I think it is extremely important that Parliament recognize the concerns of our citizens and act accordingly.

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**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Question No. 125 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 125—**Mr. Bill Casey:**

With respect to the Canadian Pension Plan and the Disability Pension (CPP): (a) what was the percentage increase for the year 2003; (b) how is the increase calculated; (c) what is the inflation rate for the year 2002; (d) is there a correlation between the inflation rate and the CPP increase; and (e) if not, what criteria does the Department of Human Resources and Development Canada use to justify increases and decreases to the CPP?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** In January 2003, Canada pension plan, CPP, including disability rates increased by 1.6%. This increase was based on the monthly average change in the Consumer Price Index, CPI—All items, compiled by Statistics Canada, for the 12 month period November 2001 to October 2002.

Although consumers paid 3.9% more in December 2002 than they did in December 2001 for the goods and services in the CPI basket, it should be noted that the CPI is a "snapshot" and the 3.9% quoted above reflects the change in the CPI between the index in December 2001 and the index in December 2002. The CPI experienced monthly increases and decreases during the year, i.e. goods and services became less expensive or more expensive throughout the year. CPP benefits are adjusted, increased, to even out fluctuations and take into account the average change, increase, in the CPI over a full 12 month period.

According to the latest release from the CPI, published by Statistics Canada on February 27, 2003, "...the annual average All items CPI increased 2.2%, a slightly slower rate of increase than the 2.6% observed for 2001".

Canada pension plan benefit increases have a direct correlation to the CPI and are calculated in the following manner in accordance with the Canada Pension Plan Act and Canada Pension Plan Regulations: Every January, CPP benefit increases are based on the average CPI increase over the 12 month period, November to October, as compared to the same preceding 12 month period.

To determine the CPP increase for 2003, i.e. 1.6%, we calculated the average CPI between November 2001 and October 2002, 118.2, and divided it by the previous year's average CPI. Between November 2000 and October 2001, the average CPI was 116.3. One hundred and eighteen point two, 118.2, divided by one hundred and sixteen point three, 116.3, equals 1.016. Expressed as a percentage, there was a 1.6% increase in the average CPI between 2000-01 and 2001-02 and this percentage was used to escalate the CPP rates.

It should be noted that where there is a decrease in the average CPI year over year, this will not result in a decrease in CPP benefits. Rates would not change for the year following the decrease. Rates are only adjusted upwards.

In a time when the rate of inflation is increasing, such as now, the resulting adjustment in benefits may be less than if a December to December comparison had been used. But this is not always the case. For example, if the December to December increase in the Consumer Price Index had been used for CPP benefits in January 2002, the benefits would only have been increased by 0.7%. Instead, using the method set out in the CPP legislation, the increase was 3.0%.

[*English*]

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

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The House is suspended until 10:30 at the call of the Chair.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 10:12 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 10:30 a.m.)

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

●(1030)

[*Translation*]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—MILITARY INTERVENTION IN IRAQ

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ)** moved:

That this House call upon the government not to participate in the military intervention initiated by the United States in Iraq.

He said: Mr. Speaker, today is a terribly sad day. We are forced to admit that diplomacy has failed and that hostilities were begun late last night. Not only is this war unjustified, as the Prime Minister has said; it is illegal and illegitimate as well.

Our thoughts go out immediately to the innocent civilians, the men, women and children who do not deserve what is happening to them.

War is always an admission of failure, particularly since the inspections were making progress. Mr. Blix made his report to the Security Council yesterday.

By far the majority of countries wanted peaceful disarmament to continue. Yes, Iraq must certainly be disarmed, but peacefully. Thus this war is not only pointless, it also represents a serious mistake.

Today is also an important day, because the House of Commons will get to vote. That is the role of the elected representatives that we are, men and women who represent the people in our respective ridings.

### Supply

There are two important occasions when this House must express itself, when we must vote as parliamentarians. First there are the budgets, obviously, since they set out the priorities for the year to come, but then there is also, and above all, the matter of war or peace. There is nothing more important in life for Parliament, for the elected members that we are, than deciding whether to opt for the logic of war or the logic of peace. This is the most important question we can be asked. And today we will be able to vote.

The government's position on this question of whether or not to hold a vote was untenable. The Prime Minister told us it had to be assumed that he had the support of the House, because he was proposing to refuse to take part in this war, and a vote was not necessary. I repeat, he always presumes he has the House's support, for Kyoto and for the budget, yet votes must be held, so that argument does not hold water.

Second, it is false to claim that, in our parliamentary tradition, in a British-style system, the executive, with the undisputed authority to make such a decision, is not required to consult the House. As recently as the day before yesterday, Tony Blair was doing just that under very difficult circumstances. I do not agree with Tony Blair, but we must admit that he at least respected the democracy of the House of Commons.

During today's debate and through the vote to be held at its conclusion, we will be expressing the opinion of Quebeckers and Canadians. We witnessed those peace and anti-war protests, and I am speaking, in particular, about Quebec, since I am a member from Quebec. Three major protests were held. At the last one, some 250,000 people gathered in Montreal. There were another 18,000 in Quebec City. Protests were held in Trois-Rivières, Gatineau, Rimouski, and Sherbrooke. Some 5,000 protesters gathered in Alma, a city of 30,000 people.

People do not want war. They want peace. Not once have I heard someone say, "We support Saddam Hussein". Wanting peace does not mean supporting that dictator. We must not buy into that absurd logic. We must disarm the regime of Saddam Hussein, but through peaceful means.

We must be clear about the principles underlying our position. The conditions that authorize war, that justify resorting to such a terrible step, are as follows: the first condition is legitimate defence. A country under attack has the right to defend itself, no argument there. The second is a significant threat to international security, supported by an explicit United Nations Security Council resolution. The third is a threat of genocide.

●(1035)

We were right to intervene in Kosovo. There was a risk of genocide. We should have intervened in Rwanda. Our position is a peaceful one and we understand—as pacifists in Quebec have also told me—that unfortunately, in some situations like in Rwanda or during the Second World War, we have to take the terrible step of resorting to war.

However, none of the three conditions I just mentioned apply to the situation in Iraq. That is why we agree with the Prime Minister that this war is unjustified. But we would add, as Boutros Boutros-Ghali said yesterday, that it is also illegal and illegitimate.

### *Supply*

All our actions and interventions have to be based on law. This means multilateral action within the framework of international institutions. No country should set itself above international institutions.

Today the Security Council is paralyzed. There is a major division, although a large majority of countries within the Security Council—11 out of 15—have refused to declare war. The U.S., Britain and Spain were unable to convince nine members of the Security Council to launch hostilities and with good reason, since the weapons inspectors were making progress. We were on the way to peaceful disarmament. I repeat, we have to pursue the peaceful disarmament of Iraq. This is difficult, given what took place yesterday.

No one supports Saddam Hussein. He is a dictator who committed atrocities not only in 2003, but in the 1990s, 1980s and 1970s when he had the support of some western powers, including the U.S. This is the same man who used biological and chemical weapons. Yet at the time, no one talked about disarming him.

Disarming Iraq is not the same as changing the regime. It is not that we want the regime to stay, far from it, as I said earlier. But changes in regime have to be carried out by the people themselves, or by an international coalition respecting the conditions and principles of international law.

This happens through a number of treaties that have been signed since the second world war, since the UN was formed. Take the international criminal court, for example. This is one of the means that countries have to try war criminals, to try those who took certain actions, who initiated genocide. That was the case in Rwanda; it is the case with Milosevic. Unfortunately, it must be pointed out that the United States refuses to support the international criminal court, as well as the Ottawa treaty on landmines. We need to go the route of international institutions and conventions that favour diplomacy and cooperation over force.

The Bloc Québécois opposes the war, like thousands of Quebeckers and like thousands of men and women across Canada and around the world, like the National Assembly, where all of the parties unanimously voiced their opposition.

And now for Canada's position. Canada hesitated for a long time, but we completely support the Government of Canada's refusal to take part in the military intervention by the U.S. in Iraq. On this issue, we are solidly behind the government.

• (1040)

However, there appears to be some inconsistency in Canada's position. There are still Canadian ships in the Persian Gulf. There are soldiers who are integrated with American and British battalions. There are still officers at the American and British headquarters in Qatar. This seems completely inconsistent, to me, not only with Canada's principled stand, but with the position expressed and chosen by Canada not to participate in this military intervention.

This makes me think of the case of Spain. They support the military intervention, but President Aznar was forced to back down because of the objections voiced by Spanish parliamentarians, and to refuse to send troops. Spain supports the intervention but is not

taking part; Canada does not support it, but some of its soldiers and ships are there.

I think this is a mistake. It is hard to imagine that at the headquarters in Qatar, they are going to discuss the fight against terrorism with officers, then ask Canadian officers to leave to discuss the situation in Iraq. That does not make sense.

I agree that there should be Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan; we supported Canada's position at that time. However, Canada should be more consistent and withdraw all military equipment and personnel.

I also disapprove of Canada's fatalistic attitude these past few days, with the Prime Minister saying that every effort was made and that nothing more can be done now. Diplomatic efforts must continue.

We brought up resolution 377, which was first used during the Suez crisis in 1956. The conflict had begun, yet the U.S. convened the UN General Assembly to discuss the issue and bring greater pressure to bear on the two belligerent states that were occupying the Suez Canal area at the time, namely France and Great Britain. This effort was successful. It led to the creation of a peacekeeping force, at the instigation of Lester B. Pearson, who was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize that same year.

Canada should take an active approach to diplomacy. It should not lapse into fatalism and make the American position its own, as if nothing more could be done, but rather continue its diplomatic efforts and fully support non-governmental organizations involved in humanitarian relief and the inevitable reconstruction of Iraq.

In this respect, we should learn from the experience in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, promises were not kept, women are still suffering, and freedom has yet to be restored. There are very real efforts that need to be made, right away in Afghanistan, and tomorrow in Iraq.

Canada must also make every effort to ensure that the Geneva conventions concerning prisoners are followed, which was not the case in Afghanistan; they must be followed in Iraq.

I am raising the Afghanistan conflict again because it would seem, as President Bush indicated on several occasions, that this action in Iraq is a consequence of the events of September 11, 2001, even if the Americans' evidence of ties between al-Qaeda and Iraq are not conclusive.

There are more al-Qaeda members in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait than there were in Iraq. One must not jump to conclusions and be trigger-happy. It is important to learn the lessons of September 11.

At the time, people said that the attack against the United States was not an attack against the Americans, but an attack against all democracies. People here said it. I said it and many of my hon. colleagues said it. The government also said it, and it is true. But if it is true that is an attack against all democracies, should there not be a response from all democracies, an international response? Is this not the lesson to be learned? Is another lesson—and we were drawing these conclusions the day after the sad events in New York and Washington—that we must not fall for Osama bin Laden's arguments and not bring God or Allah into the wars of men? Unfortunately, we have fallen into that same trap. This is another mistake that will lead to religious fanaticism and that should be avoided at all costs.

This is the false logic of the good guys and the bad guys. Those using this good guy, bad guy logic are no better than Osama bin Laden; the logic is the same and so are the consequences. This is not the conclusion we must draw.

There is another lesson to be learned. How many times over the past several decades have we heard this false logic that my enemy's enemy is my friend? Saddam Hussein was the Americans' friend in fighting Iran; we see what this has led to. Osama bin Laden was the Americans' friend in fighting the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan; and we see what this has led to. We must break with this false logic and instead put our faith in the principles of international law.

We must condemn at all costs this new theory of pre-emptive war. What are the implications for the future? What dictator will say tomorrow, "I am declaring war, because I think that one day, that guy will declare war on me"? What are the consequences for the world? This is an erroneous theory, a theory that can only lead to increased conflicts around the planet.

Nothing can justify terrorism, as we have so often said. We have also said, however, that terrorism does not just crop up out of nowhere, just by chance. There must be fertile ground for it to develop. Terrorism is rooted in poverty, the lack of democracy, the maintenance of dictatorships. These are what must be attacked. Denying cultural and national identities, denying the rights of men and of women, this is where the roots of terrorism lie. We have not taken that lesson to heart, but today we must. We must take it to heart in the reconstruction. We must take it to heart in the provision of humanitarian aid.

• (1045)

In conclusion, today's vote is important. It will make it possible to strengthen the Canadian position and to make it known to all of the member states of the United Nations that not only is this the position of the government and the Prime Minister, but it is also that of the great majority of us parliamentarians. It will bolster the credibility of international institutions, which is why we are calling for the government to intervene, through its ambassador to the United Nations General Assembly. This vote will strengthen the pro-peace camp.

In closing, I wish to say how proud I am that our party, the Bloc Québécois, is the one making it possible for the House to express itself on this major question, the most vital and important of questions, whether to have peace or war. We are proud to have this opportunity and we trust the government will ensure that the vote in question is held this very day.

### *Supply*

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the leader of the Bloc Québécois for a speech that is in keeping with the best traditions of the House, as we have come to expect from the leader.

However, I have two questions for him. He spoke of the need for an international response. I hope that he would agree with me that this is exactly what this government has been working on for months and weeks, and especially in the last few days, which have led to this unfortunate conflict. I hope that he will acknowledge this fact, in the spirit of generosity of the House.

I also hope that he will acknowledge with me, that despite his criticism of the United States, he must admit that it was the action of the United States and the Americans' promise of the use of force that led Saddam Hussein to recognize that he had the duty to disarm. As neighbours of the United States, we have to recognize their merits as well as their faults.

• (1050)

[*English*]

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I heard just a minute ago that the leader of the Bloc seems to value the impact of having U.S. and British soldiers massed on the border of Iraq. The impact, of course, was that there were actually some weapons inspectors allowed back into Iraq, so I would think that out of fairness he should acknowledge that this actually moved the whole process of peaceful disarmament closer to becoming a reality.

Unfortunately, because Iraq would not disarm completely and because troops cannot be kept on the border forever, it strikes me that the logical conclusion is that at some point troops have to be sent in to ensure that there is some kind of disarmament. Why does the member not recognize this?

If he does recognize the benefit of massing troops on the border, why did he not call for Canadian troops to go to the border to spell off the Americans so that they could be there for a longer time? Why did he not call on French troops and German troops to go to the border of Iraq so that there could be peaceful disarmament?

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe:** Mr. Speaker, let us follow that through to its logical conclusion; there is no place for half-measures with logic. If indeed the presence of U.S. and British troops helped move the disarmament process along and allowed weapons inspectors to make progress, I imagine that we can agree that the outbreak of hostilities is what made the inspectors leave. It seems logical to me; either the logic is applied or it is not, and it has to work both ways.

That having been said, should inspectors stay forever? I think not. Dr. Blix said it was not a matter of weeks or years, but certainly a matter of months. And there was progress being made.

**An hon. member:** That is ridiculous.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe:** I listened to you without commenting about you being ridiculous. But if you go on, you will be proving that you are.

### Supply

The demonstration is being made that, should the inspections be allowed to continue, disarmament could take place within a matter of months. But if everything is destroyed in the bombings, it will be possible to suggest later that no weapons were found, of course, since they have been destroyed. That kind of logic does not hold water.

Bear in mind that President Bush spoke of a military presence in Iraq for a number of years. There will be forces on site for a number of years, supposedly to maintain democracy, because of a man whom we put in power in the 1970s, but we could not stay a few more weeks because, all of a sudden, there was this big emergency.

Let us leave it up to time, and give peace a chance. It is far better to take a peaceful approach and stay a little longer than to start bombing and withdraw completely.

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the leader of the Bloc Québécois for two reasons. First, for giving us the opportunity to debate this most important issue today and also for his very clear stand against this illegal and immoral war.

I want to ask him a very specific question. So far, we do not know exactly what kinds of weapons have been used by the Americans and the British. We know, for example, that depleted uranium could be used, as well as fragmentation bombs. All these weapons are extremely dangerous. I would even say that they are illegal and violate the Geneva convention.

I would like to ask the leader of the Bloc Québécois whether he agrees that the use of these weapons is totally illegal and that, even though we are not taking part in this war, Canada should ask those who are, including the Americans and the British, never to use such illegal and immoral weapons.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe:** I am in total agreement with the member on this issue. We have done this repeatedly in previous wars, including in the Persian Gulf, in Kosovo and in Afghanistan.

When I was talking about Canada's active role on the diplomatic and humanitarian fronts, these are avenues that seem valid to me and on which we should insist, even more so in light of the troubling remarks made by Mr. Rumsfeld, who said that he regretted not being able to use certain chemical weapons. However, the President could allow it. I find it somewhat inconsistent to think of using chemical weapons to remove a leader and destroy his chemical weapons. Mr. Rumsfeld even mentioned the possibility of using the atomic bomb. This is not very reassuring, as members will certainly all agree. For this reason, I say that Canada must not take a fatalistic but a proactive attitude with regard to these issues as well as the issue of convening the General Assembly.

[*English*]

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Erie—Lincoln.

This is, I believe for all of us in the House, a solemn day. I believe it is a sad day, a day in which we gather as those elected by our peers in this country to discuss an issue that has been the scourge of mankind and a destroyer of civilization since our very beginning, the scourge of war.

It is for me, and I am sure most of the other members of the House, a source of great irony that so much of modern humankind's intellectual efforts have been consecrated to trying to end the conditions that draw us into war. We saw in the last century what modern war can bring to people and to civilizations, yet at the same time so much of our energies have been engaged in creating yet more terrible ways to wage war.

As we watch these terrible events unfold, it seems to me, as it did, I believe, to the leader of the Bloc Québécois who just spoke, that we owe it to ourselves, to our country and to our constituents to consider what lessons we can draw from them and how we can contribute to ensuring that they are not repeated, for as Schiller once said, "War nourishes war". In today's world of the dangers posed by terrorism, we all, including our colleagues in the United States, our colleagues around the world and all our allies and friends, were guided by that thought as we sought to avoid the conflict. And we must not cease our efforts because it has begun.

What lessons do I draw from the events of the past few months that have brought us here today? The first lesson is that I believe we must recognize we have come to this point because of the continued intransigence of the Iraqi government. For over 12 years, the international community, working through the UN Security Council, insisted that Iraq meet its obligations to the international community to disarm itself of weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, it refused to do so.

From the beginning, Canada steadfastly supported the United States effort and the United Nations efforts to secure Iraqi compliance. Last fall the Prime Minister encouraged President Bush to return to the Security Council, which he did. This led to the adoption of resolution 1441, giving Iraq one final chance to answer questions convincingly and to co-operate with the inspectors in disarming itself.

[*Translation*]

Canada did not spare any effort to obtain the full and complete implementation of resolution 1441. We wanted this process to conclude with the disarmament of Iraq, failing which there would be serious consequences. Unfortunately, Iraq did not take this opportunity, and the members of the Security Council were not able to agree on a course of action.

To try to bridge the gap within the Security Council, Canada presented a proposal that was discussed up until the last minute. It proposed the explicit authorization of force if Iraq did not respect various deadlines. In our opinion, this approach would have led to the disarmament of Iraq or to the Security Council's support of the use of force.

We know that Canada's proposals were very seriously considered in New York and by the various governments. Unfortunately, the members of the Security Council were unable, ultimately, to agree on a solution to this impasse.



Consequently, the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries decided to form a coalition to disarm Iraq. They believe this measure is necessary to protect their national interests. We know that, as with any decision to go to war, it was a difficult decision for them to make. We can only hope that the number of victims will be minimal.

• (1100)

[English]

As we know, Canada will not be taking part in this military campaign. We have always sought the approval of the Security Council for a military coalition against Iraq. Our position was articulated clearly and consistently throughout the difficult six months leading up to this point. As all countries do, we have taken a position consistent with our principles and with our interests and those of our citizens in mind.

The decision we took does not reflect any illusions about the brutality of Saddam Hussein and his regime. It was a decision based on our judgment about the interest of Canadians in accordance with our principles and our deep and longstanding commitment to the United Nations and multilateral system and to the Security Council process.

I passed this message on to my U.S. counterpart, Secretary Powell, when we spoke on Monday evening. He understands the Canadian position and our reasons for it. We have agreed to stay in close touch in the difficult days ahead.

Like our friends in the U.S., Secretary Powell is well aware the Canada-U.S. relationship is robust and profound. It does not hinge on this or any other single issue since it rests on a broad foundation of shared values, history, geography and countless family and other ties.

Secretary Powell also appreciated our assurances that notwithstanding the fact that we will not be a part of the Iraq military coalition, we remain one of the strongest allies and friends that the United States has. Canada stands firmly with the U.S. in the campaign against terrorism. We share its determination to ensure that terrorists find no home in Iraq, and we are making good on this commitment through our ships and planes stationed in the gulf area and through our role in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Together, these operations will involve roughly some 3,000 Canadian forces personnel.

To help the people of Iraq, we have already committed some \$35 million in recent years to humanitarian relief in the region, and we will be participating in the UN post-conflict reconstruction.

As the Prime Minister pointed out this morning, we will join in a multilateral effort that will rebuild an Iraq capable of taking its place in the community of nations. Just as we did in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, we will continue the Canadian tradition of providing support to those who need it in the wake of conflict.

While the council was divided on the means of disarming Saddam Hussein, we believe that it can and must come together in approving a United Nations mandate for the post-conflict situation in Iraq.

The calls around the world for the UN to take a constructive role in the Iraq crisis reaffirm, in my view, the unique significance of this

### *Supply*

institution. The United Nations is certainly not perfect but its failures are the failures of its members, of which we are one. That said, it remains invaluable in bringing legitimacy to multilateral efforts in the realm of war and peace.

As for Canada, we will retain our longstanding commitment to strengthening international peace and security. In the difficult days ahead, we will put our full energy into these constructive efforts.

What then are the lessons that I draw from the past few days?

First, I would say that Saddam Hussein acquired weapons of mass destruction. This is clearly what started this and what brought us to where we are. Colleagues, we must increase our efforts against the proliferation and possession of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world.

Second, I believe it is only by strengthening the international institutions and multilateral institutions that we can help prevent future conflicts of this nature. It was a failure of the Security Council here but it will be essential for reconstruction.

The third lesson is that of the strength of our friendship and alliance with the United States which, in spite of those critics, we all recognize will survive and I believe increase through our work together on building a better continent and on building a better world, and in struggling against common causes, such as terrorism.

Fourth, I believe it shows that we must continue our common efforts in the war against terrorism.

Fifth, I believe it shows that we need to bear in mind the needs of the Iraqi people for humanitarian relief and for reconstruction. We need to bear in mind those elements in other countries of the world, in other places in the world such as Africa and other regions where problems are developing which will lead to lack of security for us and inhumanity for man.

In conclusion, these are lessons which I draw from these events. Other members will draw other lessons, based on their experience, based on their traditions and based on their approach.

• (1105)

I am sure that whatever differences we have among us, we are all united today as Canadians, united in our determination to protect our citizens in these circumstances, as the Prime Minister emphasized this morning, and united to work together to create conditions in this world which will lead to peace and not to conflict.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I came into this House right now because I was absolutely appalled to find out that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada was splitting his time on this issue. We know that it is parliamentary possible for the minister to give away part of his time, but the Canadian public is looking to this minister to be eloquent and to give us an idea of which end is up. What lessons are we supposed to learn; that he is too lazy to do a proper speech?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** The rhetoric is getting to be a bit strong. I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the last words.

*Supply*

**Mr. Jim Abbott:** Mr. Speaker, out of respect to the House I will withdraw the last words.

Does the minister consider this debate to be irrelevant? We may disagree with the Bloc and we may disagree with the NDP, but at least they are here and are bringing this topic to the floor of the House. The Prime Minister of Canada will not.

I find it appalling for the foreign affairs minister to stand up, when he has a full 20 minutes to express to Canadians what the position of his government is and why, and simply split off his time. I find the arrogance of the Liberals and the arrogance of the government to be absolutely amazing. I just cannot understand it.

• (1110)

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. The hon. member started out by saying that he regretted what had happened, then he took a great deal of the five minutes that I had to reply by arguing about a process issue. I cannot let this go by without a response.

I am splitting my time with an hon. member who has important things to say to the House. I was asked if I would ensure that as many Liberal members as possible would have an opportunity to speak and to participate in this debate.

I resent the suggestion that this is some sort of laziness on my part. I have worked long hours. The Prime Minister and I have been engaged in nothing but working on this for the past few weeks. I would love it if I had more time to speak in the House and to spend time with the hon. members from both sides. I know hon. members on all sides have many things to say.

Please believe me that my desire to split my time in the House was a constructive desire to ensure that we hear from as many hon. members as possible. I believe that on an issue as important as this that also is an important principle, and I beg the House's indulgence to recognize that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, speaking in the House this morning is a sad occasion for me. I would like to remind all the hon. members in this House that I am opposed to the war and that I represent people in my riding, young people, who have taken a stand against the war.

I also want to remind the Minister of Foreign Affairs that, last week, I tabled a petition signed by 1,162 young people from the Polyvalente Deux-Montagnes, distributed by Ms. Marie-France Phisel. Also last week, I went to the Lake of Two Mountains English high school in my riding. Students at this school asked their elected representative to come hear them voice their opposition to the war.

My concern is what happens after the war, and I would like to hear what the Minister of Foreign Affairs has to say about this. This war is already dividing the European community and is the source of serious division within the UN. This war is sowing the seeds of future terrorism. I would like to know what the Minister of Foreign Affairs has to say about my concerns.

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for tabling these petitions because it is important for us, the

members of the House, to know the opinions of our fellow Canadians.

What happens after the war is obviously a concern to us all. I began my speech by quoting Schiller, who said that war nourishes war. War nourishes war by causing divisions, frustration, death and animosity. I agree completely with the member that we must now determine what measures are necessary to ensure the reconstruction of Iraq and to ensure that this will not cause worse problems than the existing ones. I totally agree with him. I especially urge my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois to listen to what we have to say vis-à-vis our American colleagues. We have to start working with our American friends because they have the power and the resources to contribute to the post-war effort. We are going to work with them and not criticize them.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie—Lincoln, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to follow the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this debate. I wish to thank him for his efforts on behalf of Canadians and the world community in attempting to preserve peace on this globe and avoid hostilities. This has been going on over the last several months leading up to today.

Canada has a long and respected tradition of working for peaceful and lawful resolution of disputes. In the current situation, Canada worked very hard to broker a compromise position through diplomatic channels. We tried to bring the Security Council together. We tried to find a bridge between those who felt Saddam Hussein could be disarmed over a reasonable period and those who demanded an extremely short period and immediate response. Unfortunately, and sadly, we were unsuccessful.

The Prime Minister confirmed earlier this week that, as a result of a lack of consensus among the United Nations Security Council and the lack of a resolution authorizing armed intervention, Canada would not join with the United States on its attack on Iraq. For my part, I accept this position.

First, I believe that Saddam Hussein, while a terrible person, a despot, a tyrant, and a dictator, has been effectively isolated and contained thanks in great part to the sanctions and work already done by the United Nations.

Second, I have a great difficulty with any nation or group of nations launching a military offensive without the support of the global community through the United Nations.

Over the years, the operations of the United Nations have been good for international affairs and the resolution of conflicts from a multilateral perspective. Unilateral unsanctioned actions fly in the face of such success.

I question if this action is even legal under international law when this offence is clearly not the result of a direct attack, the only basis for aggression under international law. It is also a stretch to suggest that the actions are further to the war on terrorism. At best, the link established between Iraq and the September 11, 2001, attacks is weak and speculative. I have deep concerns for the economic and political stability in the entire Middle East region during and after the conflict.

*Supply*

Finally, I am appreciative that this offence may only serve to exacerbate tensions with Arab nations and may even result in an increased risk of terrorism around the globe. We may have an entirely new generation of young Arabs who see the west as an unjustified aggressor. How do we then break the cycle of hatred and misunderstanding without first giving diplomacy and peace a longer period of time to work?

I question if President Bush has some greater knowledge that makes Saddam Hussein a more severe threat than what we observe. Is there a pre-eminent threat that can justify the toll of tremendous civilian and military casualties that will inevitably come?

Our veterans tell us that war is hell. They rarely provide us with the details because of the pain that these memories bring.

I suggest that there are other parts of the world where there is a clear and imminent danger more so than Iraq. Let us think of North Korea, Israel and Palestine, India and Pakistan, just to name a few. Why Iraq? Why now?

We wonder if this conflict will claim Canadian lives, not only to the limited military personnel in the Middle East, but also the Canadian civilians who may still be in the region for whatever purpose they have chosen to remain. We fear for collateral damage to the Iraqi population and the citizens of Kuwait, Turkey and Israel, to name a few. If attacked, will Israel retaliate with tremendous military force and will this draw in other Arab nations who are currently on the sidelines in yet further retaliation against Israel? Will it be apocalypse now?

I appreciate the argument that we need to stand by our friends, the Americans. But I do not agree that we should do so at any cost. We must feel free to pursue our own policies and our own values. Let us not forget that Canada is a sovereign nation and made an independent decision on behalf of all Canadians.

Canada continues to support the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom, the war on terrorism, and will in fact supply Canadian troops to relieve U.S. forces in Afghanistan later this year. Three Canadian frigates continue to patrol the Persian Gulf and have no plans to abandon these duties. There are also 31 Canadian military personnel in an integrated force already in Kuwait which are not being removed from the area.

These military units are to concentrate on the fight against terrorism, not to participate in the war on Iraq. Canada has also stated that it will assist with humanitarian projects in Iraq after hostilities are concluded, in essence, to help Iraq and its people rebuild. Indeed, I have heard of an estimated immediate cost to the international community for humanitarian basics such as food and shelter may entail up to \$124 million.

We in Canada are not isolated by this conflict in far off lands. There are serious domestic implications at home as well. We in the Niagara Peninsula are very sensitive to the friendship between our two countries. Almost everyone can count an American friend, relative or neighbour among their acquaintances. To say that we jeopardize these relationships, when I am not even certain that many of our American friends support their own government's position, is debatable.

●(1115)

We will work through this with the sense of mutual respect that we have for one another. Americans are our friends and allies today, and they will be tomorrow. We fear for the safety and security of their military personnel.

Longer than usual waits at our border for commercial traffic have already started but is not a crisis. Yesterday I spoke with a representative of a horticultural company who was concerned that lengthy delays would adversely affect getting his product to the United States market in a saleable condition. If the problem extends for a long duration, it could be devastating for his business and employees.

Unlike September 11 however, we are prepared for the effects of increased surveillance and inspections on both sides of the border. In fact, we are conducting exit inspections for outbound traffic at our borders as a further measure to assist our American friends with security measures. Our customs and immigration officers have risen to the occasion. There may be some delays but our border will not close. It may not be business quite as usual for a brief period but it will be business. Trade with the United States, which is the lifeblood of our country, will continue.

I am concerned that our fragile airline industry may be dealt a knockout blow as business travellers, tourists and vacationers may understandably cancel flights. An industry which has many participants teetering on the brink of bankruptcy can ill afford interruption of any substantial consequence. We have lived through the impact of this on our airlines and aerospace industry during 9/11. It could be a long road back. As well, rising fuel costs may restrict the use of the family vehicle and normal family activities. The auto industry may also be impacted.

All that being said, Canadians must not withdraw in fear and apprehension, otherwise the terrorists have won. The foregoing domestic concerns are insignificant when compared to the potential loss of life and devastation in Iraq but nevertheless cannot be ignored.

Canada worked diligently at the United Nations to help members reach some kind of compromise. In addition, the Prime Minister went on U.S. national television recently and suggested that the U.S. had effectively already won this war. His thoughts, that are shared by many in the international community, gave the U.S. administration a gracious way to tone down the rhetoric without losing face. I personally think that we should be proud that our role has been true to the Canadian values of consensus building.

There is undoubtedly a gamble involved in this situation and, as with many serious situations that will result in death and casualties, it might only be through the lens of history that we will be able to say whether or not we have chosen the right course. It may take years to really ascertain if there has been a victory in Iraq. However, in my mind, the risk of allowing the United Nations additional time to disarm Saddam Hussein outweighed the risk of killing innocent Iraqi citizens and U.S. military personnel.

### Supply

A post-war Iraq deserves some sober consideration. Can warring factions within the country be governed in peace and stability when the tyrant is gone? Can a people who have never experienced democracy suddenly make it work? Let us be firm that Iraqis must be governed by Iraqis and Iraqi oil must be for Iraq. How will other oppressive regimes in the region view and treat their new democratic neighbour? Will they consider it a threat to them and their lifestyles as well? Difficult times will still be ahead when hostilities cease.

Peacekeeping operations will lead to long term commitments which are difficult to speculate. Will they be for two, four or maybe six years? I have no doubt however that Canada will be a participant in such deployments.

In discussions and correspondence with my constituents, the overwhelming majority have been in support of the government's position. In the days, weeks and months leading to events of today, opposition to this position in my riding was negligible. Admittedly, since the decision has been made, I have heard from some constituents who oppose it. I respect their opinions but disagree with them.

The disarmament of Iraq has begun with the U.S. forces launching a surgical attack against leadership targets in Baghdad last night. I ask all members, those citizens who are watching here today and indeed all Canadians, to take a moment for a short prayer or silent reflection for all those, from both sides, who will become involved in this conflict. As I indicated earlier, in the words of many veterans, war is hell. Let us pray for a quick end to hostilities and a lasting, productive peace.

• (1120)

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my Liberal colleague across the way said that Canada must set its own course with regard to foreign policy. That is not what his own Liberal government is doing.

The government has abdicated Canada's sovereign independent choice about whether or not to defend our national security interests to the United Nations. Had France not said that it was going to veto any decision by the UN Security Council, and had the UN Security Council voted eight to seven in favour of war, the government's position would be to go to war. Had the Security Council voted eight to seven opposing going to war, we would not be going to war. The government has totally abdicated its moral responsible leadership to decide whether or not Canada goes to war to the United Nations.

How can the member opposite stand there and say that the government is charting its own course, that Canada should chart its own course, and have an independent foreign policy when it has no guts whatsoever to decide for itself—

• (1125)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. I would ask that comments be addressed to the Chair.

The hon. member for Erie—Lincoln.

**Mr. John Maloney:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has gone on at great length on his speculative comments on what could or has happened. That is not correct.

We are an independent country and have an independent foreign policy. We have reflected the opinions and values of Canadians in making this decision. Let us look at the polls. There is no question that we have done the right thing and we will continue to do the right thing. We are a friend of America and we will stand by the Americans. We think their position in this specific action is not the right position.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member would be aware that there have been in previous wars, in Afghanistan and in Kosovo, serious questions about violations of Geneva conventions of UN treaties with respect to the use of various military methods and armaments. What comes to mind most recently is the use of cluster bombs in Afghanistan and the use of depleted uranium in the 1991 gulf war which has continued to cost lives and plague people's lives ever since that time in terms of health considerations.

Could the member address the question of what his government will do to ensure that there will be no use of illegal military tactics and armaments in the war that is now underway that thumb their nose at international covenants and conventions?

**Mr. John Maloney:** Mr. Speaker, it is my personal opinion that Geneva conventions should be respected at all times.

I can appreciate that there must be an effective response to aggressors, but certainly, there is a humanitarian aspect that we cannot have our troops or allied troops incurring atrocities or subjecting their opponents to atrocities, nor do we accept enforcing that on any other party.

The weapons that the member has suggested, if they are in violation of the Geneva conventions, I strongly feel that those violators should be brought to task. We certainly did that with our own armed forces when there were inappropriate actions far exceeding what was necessary under the circumstances. I can recall some of those events. We acted firmly with our own troops and we expect the international community to do the same with any violators in this conflict or any future conflict.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the member said that the Americans will be our friends tomorrow, but I remind him that if we are not going to stand beside them in their hour of need, at some point, they are not going to be our friends any more.

The foreign affairs minister said that Canada did not spare any effort at all to bring about peaceable disarmament. Will the member please admit that it did spare an effort when it refused to put Canadian troops on the border with Iraq to show that we were serious about following up if Iraq did not peaceably disarm? Will the member admit that the government did not do the most important thing it could do, which is to demonstrate it was serious—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Order, please. The hon. member for Erie—Lincoln has 30 seconds.

**Mr. John Maloney:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's interest in our relationship with the United States. He has had a very active role with the Canada-U.S. parliamentary association and can appreciate the mutual respect that politicians at our level have for each other.

If we were to have placed troops on the Iraqi border with the United States we would be perceived as the same type of aggressor as the United States. We wanted to bring this situation to an end through consensus, through a peaceful means, and not through violent military means. We were unsuccessful and it is very sad that this happened.

• (1130)

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I stand today to speak to a matter of the gravest importance that Parliament can address: the matter of war and specifically the resumption of war against the regime of Saddam Hussein.

We appreciate that our colleagues in the Bloc Québécois have brought this motion forward today. It is appropriate for two reasons. The first is that it is not from the government, which has consistently acted without vision and values during this crisis, and even today I understand resists a timely vote on these matters.

It is also fitting that this historic motion, which calls on us to abandon our closest friends and allies at this critical time, comes from the Bloc Québécois, a party that does have values and visions but whose values are different than the traditions that built this country and whose vision is a country where our country as we know it would not continue to exist.

Let us review how we came to this crossroads internationally. In 1991, after the invasion of Kuwait, the world judged the Iraqi regime to be a dangerous aggressor. In the interests of world peace and regional security, the community of nations expelled Iraq from Kuwait; required Iraq to surrender its offensive arsenal, its chemical and biological weapons; and to abandon its nuclear weapons program. Iraq agreed to comply with these demands as an enormous and victorious force of allied troops and personnel, not just American and British but Canadians as well stood ready to invade.

We have waited 12 years for Saddam Hussein to give action to those commitments. With the threat of renewed action from the U.S., the U.K. and others, on November 8, 2002, the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 1441. It was the 17th Security Council resolution regarding the threat Iraq posed to international peace and security. The resolution, which was adopted unanimously, gave Iraq a final opportunity to demonstrate immediate compliance with its disarmament obligations and it promised serious consequences otherwise.

Over the last four months we have seen no evidence to suggest that Saddam Hussein will willingly comply with resolution 1441.

Iraq's continued defiance of the community of nations presents a challenge which must be addressed. It is inherently dangerous to allow a country, such as Iraq, to retain weapons of mass destruction, particularly in light of its past aggressive behaviour. If the world community fails to disarm Iraq we fear that other rogue states will be encouraged to believe that they too can have these most deadly of weapons to systematically defy international resolutions and that the world will do nothing to stop them.

As the possession of weapons of mass destruction spreads, the danger of such weapons coming into the hands of terrorist groups

### *Supply*

will multiply, particularly given in this case the shameless association of Iraq with rogue non-state organizations.

That is the ultimate nightmare which the world must take decisive and effective steps to prevent. Possession of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons by terrorists would constitute a direct, undeniable and lethal threat to the world, including to Canada and its people.

As we learned, or should have learned, on September 11, having no malice toward these groups will not absolve the citizens of any country from the hatred they direct toward us and toward our civilization.

The principal objective is the disarmament of Iraq but it has now become apparent that objective is inseparable from the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Earlier this week President Bush requested the support of his key allies in the participation of a coalition of nations that would be prepared to enforce Security Council resolutions by all necessary means. That same day the allies delivered an ultimatum to the Iraqi leadership: Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours or face military conflict.

These allies did not seek a military conflict today any more than they sought it 12 years ago. The world has tried other means for years but to no avail. We cannot walk away from the threat that Iraq's continued possession of weapons of mass destruction constitutes to its region and to the wider world.

In the final analysis, disarming Iraq is necessary for the long term security of the world, to the collective interests of our historic allies and, therefore, manifestly it is in the national interest of this country.

• (1135)

I want to briefly address some of the counter-arguments to this position in support of the coalition of the willing led by President Bush and Prime Minister Blair.

First, this coalition lacks the legal authority to act. Existing United Nations Security Council resolutions have long provided for the use of force to disarm Iraq and restore international peace and security to the area. Security Council resolution 678 adopted in 1990 authorized the use of all necessary means, not only to implement resolution 660 demanding Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, but also to implement all subsequent relevant resolutions and to restore international peace and security to the area.

Resolution 687, which provided the ceasefire terms for Iraq in 1991, a ceasefire not an armistice, affirmed resolution 678. Resolution 1441 itself confirmed that Iraq has been and remains in material breach of its obligations, a point on which there is unanimous international agreement.

Iraq's past and continuing breaches of the ceasefire obligations now negate the basis for the formal ceasefire. Iraq has, by its conduct, demonstrated that it did not and does not accept the terms of the ceasefire. Consequently, authorization for the use of force in Security Council resolution 678 has been reactivated.

### *Supply*

I would point out that this view of international law is not new. In fact, our own Canadian deployment of troops to the gulf in 1998 in Operation Desert Fox, strongly supported at the time by the current Prime Minister, was undertaken on the same legal basis. The Clinton administration clearly understood and argued, as the Bush administration does now, that existing Security Council resolutions clearly allow for the use of military force.

Another objection is that we need only more time, that the inspection process is working and that diplomacy should be given another chance. Let me address this. The inspections process has been a failure. It has not resulted in disarmament. However, more important, the inspections process is not intended to force or compel disarmament. It is only intended to monitor compliance. To the extent that Saddam Hussein has complied, it has only been through the constant threat of force. Force has been the only language that Saddam Hussein's regime has ever understood. Yet even the threat of force has only convinced Saddam Hussein to engage reluctantly in the token, piecemeal destruction of weapons, and only the most reluctant revelations of the existence of weapons and weapons programs.

Even with over 200,000 coalition troops massed at his borders, he quibbles about how interviews are to be conducted with his scientists and how many of the reconnaissance aircraft supporting the inspectors can fly at one time. He simply plays a game of cat and mouse, and he will play it indefinitely. After 12 years he does not believe that the international community has the will to act. He clearly believes that ongoing diplomacy will ultimately be hijacked by those who simply want to delay and who ultimately want inaction.

In recent months this party, the Canadian Alliance, has been strongly supportive of these diplomatic efforts. However it is clear now that in some cases Saddam Hussein has guessed right. For example, Jacques Chirac and the Gaullists of France have once again been preoccupied more with agendas targeted on the Anglo-American word than on the regime of Saddam Hussein. In other cases, however, Saddam Hussein has clearly made an error in judgment, a final misjudgment. He underestimated our American and British allies and their many friends around the world.

That leads to a final criticism, that the coalition is somehow inadequate because it is not unanimous and because it is led by the United States of America. Ironically, as even our Liberal government has acknowledge, America, with Britain in particular, has given strong leadership to the world on the issue of Iraq. What has been accomplished in recent months has only been accomplished solely because of the American-British coalition and their allies and their determination to act. Indeed, without strong leadership of leading powers, usually the U.S.A., the failures of the United Nations are too numerous and too grisly to even mention.

• (1140)

We in the Canadian Alliance support the American position today on this issue because we share its concerns and its worries about the future of the world if Iraq is left unattended. Alliances are a two-way process. Where we are in agreement we should not leave it to the United States to do all the heavy lifting just because it is the world's only superpower. To do so, I believe, will inevitably undermine one

of the most important relationships that we have. In an increasingly globalized and borderless world, the relationship between Canada and the United States is essential to our prosperity, to our democracy and to our future.

The coalition assembled by the United States and the United Kingdom is now ready to act. It is now acting. It will bring this long run conflict to an end once and for all. It will bring to an end the regime of Saddam Hussein and the militarism, brutality and aggression that are the foundations of his rule.

Since Saddam Hussein came to power in 1979, more than one million have died as a consequence. They have died through killing and torture as individual opponents, real and imagined. They have died from acts of civil war and mass genocide in the north and south of the country. They have died in invasions launched against his neighbours. Now his final bloody chapter is being read. As it is being written, make no mistake, this party will not be with Saddam Hussein. We will not be neutral. We will be with our allies and our friends, not militarily but in spirit we will be with them in America and in Britain for a short and successful conflict and for the liberation of the people of Iraq.

We will not be with our government, for this government, in taking the position it has taken, has betrayed Canada's history and its values. Reading only the polls and indulging in juvenile and insecure anti-Americanism, the government has, for the first time in our history, left us outside our British and American allies in their time of need. However, it has done worse. It has left us standing for nothing, no realistic alternative, no point of principle and no vision of the future. It has left us standing with no one. Our government is not part of the multilateral coalition in support of this action and it has not been part of any coalition opposing it; just alone, playing irrelevant and contradictory games on both sides of the fence, to the point where we go so far as to leave military personnel in the region without the active and moral support of the government that sent them there.

This is not an act of independence. In fact, as we find ourselves isolated from our allies, we find ourselves under the government more dependent on them than ever before, economically, culturally and, of course, militarily.

My great fear: A country that does not embrace its own friends and allies in a dangerous world but thinks it can use them and reject them at will. Such a country will in time endanger its own existence.

However, to have the future once again of a great country, we must do more than stand with our friends in the United States. We must rediscover our own values. We must remember that this country was forged in large part by war, terrible war, but not because it was terrible and not because it was easy, but because at the time it was right.

In the great wars of the last century, against authoritarianism, against fascism and against communism, Canada did not merely stand with the Americans, we, more often than not, led the way. We did so for freedom, we did so for democracy, we did so for the values of civilization itself, values which continue to be embodied in our allies and their leaders and are represented in their polar offices, embodied and personified by Saddam Hussein and the perpetrators of 9/11.

Therefore, we will not merely vote against this motion today, we will tell the Americans and the British that we are with them.

• (1145)

We will of course pray for the innocent people of Iraq and hope that they may have a better future than the one they have had under this tyrannical regime, and we will wish that they may have a future where they have the democratic freedoms that we enjoy, that every man and every woman, yes, even in the Islamic world, is entitled to in every part of this earth. We will stand, and I believe most Canadians will quietly stand with us, for these higher values, which shaped our past and which we will need in an uncertain future.

Mr. Speaker, in the days that follow may God guide the actions of the President of the United States and the American people; may God save the Queen, her Prime Minister and all her subjects; and may God continue to bless Canada.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on a thoughtful and powerful presentation of his party's case. I would like to feel that we too on this side of the House, in spite of his comment that we stand for nothing, do stand for one important value at this time, I believe. We stand for the support of and beside the citizens of Canada who in the majority are largely, emphatically and determinedly opposed to military action at this time and in these circumstances, not under any circumstance, but under these circumstances.

To suggest people are cowardly because they choose to work through the multilateral institutions that are the sole possibility we have of avoiding conflicts like this in the future is in my view a mistaken approach, but let me ask the member a question because this is an important debate. We do have to get down to some differences we have. We can have legitimate differences in the House, but we must address them.

I want to ask a question of the Leader of the Opposition because he has thought a great deal about these issues. He put the proposition that dealing with Saddam Hussein in this fashion is the only way to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Have he and his party given thought to the fact that there will be countries that will today decide to acquire weapons of mass destruction because of threats of this kind?

Have he and his party thought of the analogy of North Korea and that North Korea today stands determined to threaten the use of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons precisely because of threats of this kind? Does he not agree with us that we need multilateral institutions to address these issues or we will fall into a chaos where everybody will search for weapons of mass destruction and we will be in a more dangerous place than where he seeks the security for the Canadian population that we are working for today?

### Supply

**Mr. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, let me address the preamble to begin with. I do not know whether the polls the minister cites represent the opinion of the Canadian people or not, but what I do know is that in these matters we judge the national interests of the country, not at this time, not today and not tomorrow, but we stand by the permanent national interests of the country. This country and many around the world made tragic errors in the 1930s by underestimating the threats that we faced. We on this side will never do that again.

Just to reply briefly to the minister's substantive question, I must say that our interpretation of events is completely the opposite of his. North Korea has not acted because of the invasion of Iraq or the boldness of allied action. It has acted as it has because of the increasing uncertainty and lack of determination to act that was apparent on the part of so many countries over the last few months. It is not a coincidence that what North Korea has done occurred in the shadow of international bickering and indecision over Iraq. That issue is obviously with us. It will have to be addressed. It is a serious one, but I believe we are strengthened today in taking decisive action.

I would just point out to the minister his own contradiction. He said they stand for values. I do not know what they are. The only reference has been to other members of the United Nations Security Council, which frankly have not historically shared our aims and interests. He quotes the desire for peaceful resolution but he concedes that Saddam Hussein has been unwilling to act. The contradictions mount. I believe the government has no coherent policy, but if it does, I ask it to join with us and the Bloc Québécois and allow on a vote on these measures today.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the Leader of the Opposition's speech. He should know that this is no time to judge whether the Bloc Québécois' motion reflects Canadian values or not.

The Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Quebec, who have diametrically opposing positions on the future of Canada, agree. They think that things need to go through international institutions, that there needs to be respect for the legality of things, and that the future world in which we will have to live must be considered.

I think it is important for the Leader of the Opposition to take into consideration the following question: why did the U.S.—which did not manage to put win over a majority of UN Security Council members—decide to adopt behaviour which, on an international level, is illegal and illegitimate, and which will have major repercussions on the future of international relations?

Can the opposition party, instead of—

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

**Mr. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, in my speech, I did address the issue of the legality of this action. We firmly believe that this intervention is legal under international law.

*Supply*

We are disappointed—and our take on this is completely different from that of the Bloc Québécois—that some of the permanent members of the Security Council, including France, have decided to back out of their commitments pursuant to resolution 1441 and previous resolutions. It is unfortunate, but it is now up to our allies, our historical allies, namely the Americans and the British, to act. We support their action.

[English]

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to use this opportunity to make a brief comment. The leader of the official opposition did not actually reference this in his speech, I think, but on a number of occasions in the last several days a number of his members have been actively misrepresenting the history of the NDP and the CCF with respect to questions of peace and war. In particular, the Leader of the Opposition's foreign affairs critic has on a number of occasions, and so have some other Alliance MPs, claimed that the CCF, the predecessor of the NDP, did not support the second world war, that somehow we had not voted in favour of armed intervention to resist Adolf Hitler and Naziism.

For the record, I want to urge the Leader of the Opposition to acknowledge that this is empirically not the case. The leader of the CCF at the time—

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

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** I am being heckled here, Mr. Speaker. I guess they do not really want to hear the truth.

The leader of the CCF at the time, who was a pacifist on principle, voted against the declaration of war on Germany in 1939, but the rest of the CCF caucus at the time voted for it. I think that should be put on the record. The CCF also supported the government in Korea, and in fact this caucus supported initially the actions in Kosovo. So to characterize the NDP position as being against the use of force in any circumstance is quite wrong.

• (1155)

**Mr. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, I will not debate every historical point. I will just point out that the NDP's tradition of pacifism has a tendency to go much farther than that. The NDP missed Saddam Hussein in 1991, just as it is missing him today. We all remember that. For much of the cold war, that party missed or downplayed the evil represented by the Soviet empire. As the member concedes, the NDP leader of the day did miss the threat posed by Adolf Hitler. I would concede the CCF voted for the war at the very end. I do not know what it did during the 1930s, but I do remember well my father and grandfather and relatives telling me how during the 1930s people of that persuasion ignored the evils of Adolf Hitler and told them that Adolf Hitler was just helping the German working man and this kind of thing.

And it is even today. The NDP has a history of this. At these kinds of moments, it not only has a history of being on the wrong side of the issue, but as it has done in the House today, it targets all its criticisms at the good guys and all its criticisms at what they may do. I urge the NDP to reconsider, to consider how serious the threat of Saddam Hussein is for the world and for Iraq and to stand by the removal of that regime.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could just pick up on where the leader of the official opposition left off when he said that the NDP likes to target the good guy.

We are critical of the good guys because we do share their values and we want them to act according to the values that we share. We want the good guys to keep on being the good guys. We do not want them to act like the bad guys. That is called the prophetic perspective, by which many people over the centuries have been more critical of the people who share their values when those values are about to be departed from than they are in an active way of those who do not share their values in the first place.

I do not expect Saddam Hussein to be a good guy. I already know that Saddam Hussein is a bad guy. What we are disagreeing with here is how we deal with the bad guys and whether we deal with them in the way that the United States has proposed to do in this instance, through the instigation of a pre-emptive war that sets brand new precedence with respect to how international affairs are to be conducted. That is the debate here.

This is not a question of who is the good guy and who is the bad guy. We know who the bad guy is. The bad guy is Saddam Hussein. The question is how do we deal with that in a way that ensures the long term security and safety of the planet. That is the debate.

I make no apologies for the fact that the NDP and the CCF before it, and many others, have been willing to take whatever heat comes from the likes of the Leader of the Opposition by willing to be critical of our own side. It seems to me that we do not check our values in at the door whenever a war starts or whenever there is a conflict. We do not check our brains in or our values in. We keep those active and we are willing to be prophetically critical of our own side when we think it is doing something wrong. That, it seems to me, is the mark of true statesmanship and good politics, and that is what we are about here today.

I want to thank the Bloc for bringing forward the motion, but again express my regret that we do not have a government so confident in its own position that it would not come into the House, like Tony Blair did, albeit with a different position, put down a motion and have a debate. I have yet to see the Prime Minister deliver a speech of any length or substance with all his members around him supporting him in the way that other prime ministers have. Why can we not have that kind of debate in the House? Why does it have to be an opposition party that brings forward a debate in the course of these opposition day opportunities? Why could the government not have done that? It is an insult to Parliament. It betrays a lack of conviction on the part of the government with respect to its own position that it is unwilling to do this. It certainly does not do anything for the respect that Canadians have for Parliament to have the absence of that kind of occasion persist, even in the face of the circumstances that we now have before us.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Halifax.



*Supply*

It seems to me that we could have had a motion but I do not want to dwell forever on the procedural end of it, although I find the Bloc motion to be a bit odd in the sense that it calls on the government to do something which I think the government has already done. In that sense, I think it could have been better worded to have said that it affirms the government's decision to not participate in the war on Iraq. In any event, it is substantively the same and I certainly hope that the government intends to support the motion.

On a number of other occasions, when this kind of issue has been before the Canadian people, there have been votes in the House of Commons. I recall the gulf war, what might come to be called the first gulf war, when on three different occasions we had three different motions before the House, put forward by the Conservative government, on which we had debate and a vote. It seems to me that is the kind of thing that should have been emulated. The Prime Minister has emulated almost everything else that Brian Mulroney did. The one good thing that he did while he was here, the Prime Minister takes a pass on. It is unfortunate.

What we see here is the persistent ambiguity in the Prime Minister's position with respect to the possibility of a war in Iraq. I sometimes felt that the goal of the Liberal government was not so much to prevent a war on Iraq, but to make sure that the war on Iraq had the sanction of the United Nations.

• (1200)

The real failure, as the Liberals experience failure in this case, is not the failure to prevent a war but the failure to prevent a war not sanctioned by the UN.

When push came to shove, the Prime Minister had to choose, and I think he made the right decision, but it seems to me that the goals and aspirations characteristic of the government's behaviour leading up to that certainly were not the goals and aspirations that we shared on this side, because we saw the goal as not wanting to have a war in the first place.

This ambiguity persists. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are not willing to say that this war, by many authoritative accounts, is illegal. Why is the Prime Minister not willing to say that or to comment on whether he thinks it is illegal or not? Perhaps he thinks it is a legal war and there are other reasons why Canada should not be participating. Perhaps he thinks it is an illegal war and that is the reason Canada is not participating.

We have not had any of that kind of explanation from the government. It seems to me that Parliament and the Canadian people are owed that kind of explanation as to what is the reasoning behind the government's position.

We have more of this kind of ambiguity in the way that the Prime Minister has refused to be clear about how he intends to prevent the undermining of his own position. When I say the undermining of his own position I am speaking of the possibility that Canadian Forces now in the gulf region under the auspices of Operation Apollo may well be drawn into the war on Iraq.

Yesterday, for instance, I raised the issue of the Minister of National Defence being reported to have said that Canadian ships in the gulf might well escort American ships heading toward the theatre of war. I did not get a straight answer on that. Are Canadian ships

operating in Operation Apollo forbidden from escorting ships into the theatre of war? If they are not, then it seems to me that this could very well be an inconsistency on the part of the government.

There is of course the very real, and I think already established inconsistency, of leaving Canadian officers, who are on exchange with American units, leaving them participating in those units, particularly when those units might be participating in the war on Iraq. Is the government not concerned about the integrity of its own position?

We are not asking the government to uphold the NDP position. We are asking the government to uphold its own position, that Canadian troops should not be part of the war on Iraq.

We are concerned that the Prime Minister, and it would not be the first time that the Prime Minister has tried to do this, is trying to have it both ways. He is trying to have the politics of not participating in the war on Iraq, and we applaud that decision, but at the same time we feel that the Prime Minister and Canada should not get away with undermining its own position by permitting circumstances that would have Canadian Forces in the gulf participating in the war on Iraq indirectly, either through surveillance aircraft that are providing information to the fifth fleet that is to be used in the war on Iraq, or our ships escorting American ships to the war on Iraq, or in the various other ways that we might become involved. We are very concerned about that as I know are the Bloc Quebecois, and others may be as well.

We ask the Prime Minister in this instance to be more clear and express to President Bush a broader criticism of the war than just non-participation. All the Prime Minister has offered so far is Canadian non-participation. We think that more is required of the Prime Minister in this case. Certainly what is required of the Prime Minister is that Canadian Forces not undermine what has been a good political decision in the best sense of the word "political", not just in the partisan, pejorative or seeking political advantage sense of the word political, but a good political decision not be undermined by Canada surreptitiously or inadvertently participating in the war on Iraq.

• (1205)

We are now in the irony that Canada actually has more military forces in the gulf that are open to this kind of participation, although we hope not, in the war in Iraq than most of the other countries that have been listed as supporters of the war in Iraq. This is a situation that poses great danger for the integrity of the government's position and I urge the government to act on it.

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was quite taken by the comments by the member for Winnipeg—Transcona. I think most of us in the House respect his opinions.

The analysis in his dissertation about Canada's commitment or lack of commitment to this war is based on the premise of the difference between a legal and an illegal war. I was kind of captivated by that thought process.

I wonder if the member could explain to me under what terms and conditions he feels that war is legal. By definition, if he believes the war is illegal there must be, in his definition, some thought process that a war is legal.

*Supply*

What kind of process says that a war is legal? At what time is it legal for a nation to invade, strike, maim people or kill people?

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, there is certainly a wide body of opinion that would contend that this particular war is illegal, that it does not meet any of the traditional tests of what constitutes a legal war.

Iraq is not in a position to attack the United States or to attack the United Kingdom. There is no imminent threat from Iraq. Even if there was, there has always been a reservation against pre-emptive attacks.

This is a whole new doctrine that President Bush is introducing into the geopolitical world order; the idea of pre-emptive war. Even people like Henry Kissinger have expressed concerns about the precedent setting nature of what President Bush has embarked upon. He may embark upon it out of a heightened sensitivity about the security of the American people in the post-September 11 context. He may embark upon it for all the best reasons in his own mind but we should not be complacent about the dangers that this particular initiative on the part of the president poses for the security of the world in the long run if other countries take it upon themselves to act according to the same principles that the president has set out as acceptable for the United States to act on.

• (1210)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in the 10 years that I have been here this particular member is one for whom I have had a great deal of respect. The member has impressed me a great deal with his wisdom in parliamentary procedures and his ability to guide many of us who were new here at the time in a lot of things that we did. The member and I have even agreed I am sure on a few issues, although basically not on a lot.

Therefore, I have to say to the member that I was absolutely shocked when I read his comments during the leadership of the NDP. He said:

I find it strange... that a pro-life politician like George Bush is planning every minute of his life to kill as many Iraqi children as he can in the name of oil or whatever it is that's really on the agenda.

I was absolutely shocked when I read that the statement came from this particular member.

George Bush is the commander-in-chief of the United States military. The soldiers that are in the military reflect their commander-in-chief. My son is in the military of the United States. He is on the front lines this day as we speak. He is not there to kill children for the sake of oil or anything. He is reflecting the will of society at large, that in the long run this will bring a great deal of protection in the future for our children, my grandchildren, his kids and many others.

I would like to hear this member take back those words of absolute ridiculousness.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I understand and appreciate the intensity of the emotion that the hon. member must feel if he has a son in the situation that he describes. I am sure that all members here pray for the safety and security of the hon. member's son in the armed forces, just as we do for everyone who may be affected by this war.

With respect to what I said during the leadership race, I have had many opportunities to clarify what I had to say, but I do not apologize, and never did, for the main point I was trying to make, which was that I find this strange. I do not think that President Bush spends every minute of his life, or whatever it was I said, trying to plan how to kill Iraqi children. The point I was trying to make was that I find there to be an inconsistency, and I maintain this, between a great many politicians, not all, because there are pro-life politicians who do not have a predisposition toward war, but there are many pro-life politicians who do have a predisposition toward war as a means of solving problems.

War kills children. That is the link between that predisposition to war and the way in which war kills children. I left out the second link and I should not have, because I do not really believe that President Bush lies awake nights thinking about how to kill Iraqi children. I think he spent a lot of time planning a war on Iraq and that war on Iraq may indeed have the effect of killing a lot of children. That is one of the reasons why we are against it.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on this very sombre occasion of the commencement of U.S. bombing in Iraq, our first thoughts are very much with the Iraqi citizens, with the men, women and, as my colleague from Winnipeg—Transcona has expressed, especially the children, whose already beleaguered lives have just taken a sharp turn for the worse.

We must also acknowledge that there are many other people in harm's way. Regardless of whatever partisan divisions may exist among members of Parliament, it is absolutely appropriate that we acknowledge that there are members who have family, sons and daughters, in harm's way, in particular the foreign affairs minister, the member for Wild Rose who has just spoken, and the former prime minister of the country, Pierre Trudeau, whose sons are now, as a result of the events that have unfolded in the last 24 hours, very much in harm's way in an absolutely tragic war.

What is so heartbreakingly tragic about this war that is now underway is that it was preventable. The fact is that UN weapons inspectors have confirmed again and again that peaceful disarmament was happening, not at as accelerated a pace as we would have liked, not as proactively as we would have wished, but it was happening. For the U.S. in particular to take the position that it would slam the door on peace to open the way to war when peaceful disarmament was happening is not only a tragedy but a disgrace that does damage to the reputation of the U.S. and the U.K. It does damage to 60 years of building the international architecture of the United Nations, thumbs its nose at international law and creates immense instability in the Middle East that will have consequences for a long time to come.

[*Translation*]

I congratulate the leader of the Bloc Québécois for bringing forward this motion. Some would argue that it is not acceptable to bring this kind of motion before the House, since the government has already stated that Canada will not participate in the military intervention initiated by the United States in Iraq.

*Supply*

•(1215)

[English]

It is my view and very much the view of my party that it is appropriate on this day for us not only to debate this excruciatingly difficult issue but to have a vote on this issue so that each and every member of the House will be accountable for where they stood when the decision was taken.

I want to reinforce the point made by my colleague from Winnipeg—Transcona that it is disappointing that the federal government has not come forward and put its own motion before the House for a full debate, sponsored by the government, on which we would be voting today. Nevertheless, thankfully we are addressing the issue in the House and we feel that it is a credit to the Bloc Québécois that it has brought forward this issue.

No aware Canadian can be unmindful of the intense pressure that was brought to bear on the government to fall into line with the U.S. led war in Iraq. I think we have to be prepared to acknowledge that. One of the truly disgusting things about what has gone on in and around the United Nations in recent weeks has been the bullying, the virtual bribing, which would be found illegal in most contexts in this world, and the threatening by the U.S.A. in particular to bring to heel the non-permanent members of the Security Council and then the countries that now make up the so-called coalition of the willing. It is very apt that someone suggested that of those 30 countries many among them can be thought of not so much as being a part of a coalition of the willing but as a coalition of the coerced. It is no secret to anybody that this is in fact how they ended up in that so-called coalition.

It is in the spirit of the debate we are having today that we acknowledge that our government has stood up to considerable pressure from the U.S., with the knowledge that we are vulnerable to economic retaliation from our neighbours to the south. But we have stood on an important point of principle. I feel proud today to wear my maple leaf and to say that this Canadian government stood with the values of Canadians that have been expressed by tens of thousands of participants in rallies across this country.

If there were ever a clear example of where a government has been moved to take a stand and to have the spike put into their spine to stand on principle, it is the example of the mobilization of Canadians across this country asking the government to stand firm for peace and resist the pressures to enter a war.

To those who advocate that somehow it is leaving our military personnel in the lurch for us not to be enthusiastic about entering this war, I say that they absolutely misunderstand the depth of the dedication of our men and women in the Canadian military to the very first principle of the UN charter, which is to prevent future generations and today's civilians around the world from undergoing the scourge of war.

I ask those Alliance members who are sabre-rattling from that corner what they would say today to the Iraqi-Canadian couple who appeared at the rally in my city of Halifax to take a stand for peace. When asked what their family members in Baghdad were going to do in the face of the oncoming war, that couple said that after a great deal of consultation among themselves and with their family,

including family here in Canada, their family members decided to stay together in Baghdad and face death together. What would those members of the Alliance say to that family, which is suffering the most horrifying threat of their family being wiped out in Baghdad by bombs being dropped in the name of liberating the Iraqi people?

•(1220)

I just want to finish by saying that for me it was particularly heartening on Saturday when our new leader, Jack Layton, was in Halifax participating with the members for Dartmouth and Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore in inviting people to sign the petition to stand against the war. We came across a member of the armed forces. What that member said to us was, “I do not really feel free to sign the petition because I am in the military, but I want to thank you for taking the lead in Parliament and across this country, working with peace loving Canadians in every corner of Canada, to push the Canadian government to stay out of this war. I will do what I am called upon to do as a member of the Canadian armed forces, but I do not feel that I can sign on. I want you to know that I and many of my colleagues appreciate that you understand what the nature of our commitment is, and that is to prevent war when it can be prevented”.

This is an example of a war that could and should have been prevented.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as I stand here today I share probably as much pain as any of the other members here, I believe, over the thought that there are innocent people in our world who are being killed. That is very unfortunate. In a way we are debating here that old philosophical question that we are asked at university. There are five people in a boat. One has to be pushed over. Which one goes, the baby, the mother, the old grandmother or the wretched old man who is in the back? Which one is taken? Then there is debate on what the value of human life is and how one makes these choices. I think the dilemma we face is in evaluating whether the loss of life in a short mission to stop this very evil person will result in fewer lives lost than if we were to allow him to continue with the kinds of things he has been doing for many years.

I think, for example, of our lack of involvement in Rwanda. My own son and his wife were in Rwanda as relief agents providing shelter and homes for 400 children whose parents were needlessly killed in the conflict in Rwanda while the rest of the world sat by and let it happen. We should have moved in and stopped it to prevent all of those innocent folks from being killed, but we did not. Perhaps this time we are saying that this is a tyrant who must be stopped and, as unsavoury as it is, we will stand between him and his victims.

Unfortunately, in every war there are innocent victims. Members of my own family were innocent victims. How many of us in this place have fathers, uncles and grandfathers who lie in graves in a foreign land because they were fighting not for Canada's immediate interests but for peace, democracy and lack of tyranny, for stopping people like Hitler and others? That is why we die. We do not do it only for what is immediately good for Canada. I share that as a dilemma. I know that people here have come to a different conclusion. When attacked I will do everything I can to stop it, but if that person is attacking others I believe I have an obligation to stand in between.

*Supply*

● (1225)

**Ms. Alexa McDonough:** Mr. Speaker, I know I have a short time to respond to the hon. member but I want to make three quick points.

First, he has reminded me again of how absolutely repugnant it is for his party to keep portraying the notion that somehow the New Democratic Party, or our forerunner the CCF, failed to stand up against Hitler, failed to support the war against Hitler. I must say that I take great personal offence to that because my mother spent her years during the war as a single parent raising two babies while my father was serving in the armed forces. In fact, he proudly left his job with the CCF here in Ottawa on the Hill and went into the air force to serve proudly, and subsequently after the war ran in uniform for the CCF, with not a hesitation about having been so proactive in standing against Hitler. I take personal offence and so do a lot of other people at the misrepresentation that has wilfully been put forward again and again over the recent weeks.

Second, we are not debating some philosophical point. I cannot believe that the member said that this is a debate about some philosophical point. We are debating something that has to do with life and death, the potential death of millions of people. Let us be very clear. We are not only talking about a war that is illegal and immoral, but most importantly, we are talking about a war that was preventable. That is the tragedy of what is being permitted to happen in the name of disarming Saddam Hussein.

Third, of course, Saddam Hussein must be disarmed. Of course, these weapons of mass destruction are a threat to the people of Iraq, but so are weapons of mass destruction in the hands of many other nations. They are a threat to the future of the human family and to the future of the planet. We must begin dealing with that. The international multilateral architecture that has been built is the very multilateral institution against whom there has been a death blow dealt by the U.S. and the U.K. as a result of the decision to launch this preventable war.

**Mr. Rick Borotsik:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I have consulted with all the parties and I think if you were to seek it you would get unanimous consent to allow the Progressive Conservative Party to split its 20 minute time allocation, with 15 minutes to the member for Calgary Centre and 5 minutes to the member for Cumberland—Colchester.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is with some regret that I rise to address the only issue all parliamentarians wish to avoid during their political career.

Last night, the first bombs were dropped on Iraq. Diplomacy has failed, and we are now caught in a war that the whole world wanted to avoid. I regret the military invasion now under way. I regret that the United Nations was unable to bridge the gap.

But now we are before a *fait accompli*, and Canada must turn to the future.

● (1230)

[*English*]

Whenever a major international issue arises we must ask, what are Canada's interests here and how are they best served?

The conduct of the Canadian government on Iraq has severely damaged three of our most important interests. The most evident damage is that the government has gone out of its way to offend the foreign country on which the lives of our citizens most depend.

It is not wrong to disagree with the United States.

[*Translation*]

As foreign minister, I disagreed with them directly and openly on “star wars”, on Nicaragua, on South Africa, on our sovereignty in our north, on human rights, and other issues.

[*English*]

What is wrong is to deliberately insult the United States in the process, both by the intemperate statement of ministers and senior officials and by the Prime Minister's simple lack of courage in not calling the president himself to advise that Canada, in the Prime Minister's signature phrase, “would not participate” in dealing with a regime we know is deadly.

That was simply bad manners. One consequence is that ordinary Canadians will pay a high price for a long time on softwood, on wheat, and on other economic issues. They will pay a high price in discrimination, harassment, and suspicion along our most important border.

The government's carelessness has harmed two other fundamental Canadian interests. We were once known as a country that acted on principle, not just on polls or domestic popularity.

War is always inhuman. The real issue with this war is whether it is legitimate in international law. As the member for Winnipeg—Transcona and others indicated, serious scholars disagree on that issue.

In the absence of formal legal opinions from Canada's government—I asked but it would not provide them—I believe that existing Security Council resolutions give the legitimacy of the United Nations to this intervention. I accept the considered view of the government of the United Kingdom that the combination of resolutions 678, 687 and 1441 provide the authority required. However, for the Government of Canada the question of principle does not matter.

The foreign minister says, and repeats, that for moral, principled Canada “it is not a matter of determining whether military action is legitimate or otherwise”. What if we had said that about Tiananmen Square or about South Africa, or about human rights? Canada was once a country that set the highest standard of respecting international law, but the government does not care whether the action is legal or illegal. We have blown away one of Canada's most important and distinctive credentials.

Finally, in two world wars, and in Korea, and from Lester Pearson forward in diplomacy, Canada was a country which others could count on for international leadership. When Suez devastated the existing international order, Canada led in the creation of peace-keeping. When relations between the United States and Europe were strained and divided, Canada led in the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. We led in the Rio conference on the environment. We led in official development assistance. We led on South Africa. We took our place at the Organization of American States. We led in trade negotiations. We led in the gulf. That leadership gave us a status and an influence well beyond our power. However, the government does not lead and Canada pays the price.

Our military spending is a dangerous joke. Our foreign aid has been cut by the government to nearly the lowest levels in the developed world. We have become, on international issues, the invisible country.

The Prime Minister chose his words quite carefully in his statement Monday. He said, "Canada will not participate". His Canada does not participate. It sits on the sidelines without even a view as to whether a major intervention is legal or not. When it comes to pulling together what war has torn apart, the Prime Minister wants to wait for the bombs to drop. He wants to wait for more Iraqis to be killed before he takes any action on the reconstruction of Iraq.

• (1235)

We know that as a result of the tensions of the last two months, NATO is torn and the next meeting of the G-8 is in doubt. The United Nations and the Security Council are divided. The coalition against terrorism has been shaken. All of those are essential to Canada. Yet Canada is doing nothing to repair the damage. Canada, under the government, "will not participate". Lester Pearson would hang his head in shame.

I believe the United States and Britain should have given the UN inspectors more time. I believe the Prime Minister of Canada should have intervened directly with the presidents of France and the United States as former Prime Minister Mulroney did so effectively in the gulf war. I believe the reconstruction of Iraq is too important to leave to a Pentagon that wants to experiment with transplanting American values throughout the Middle East.

Most urgently, I believe Canada has a unique opportunity to shape the outcome of the drama by taking the lead right now to ensure the United Nations and not any single country has primary responsibility for the sensitive work of reconstruction. Reconstruction is more than building roads and dams. It involves bringing together different people and respecting those differences. It involves having the reputation of someone who can be trusted to respect differences.

There is only one organization now mounting to deal with reconstruction and it is the Pentagon of the United States. That is not adequate. The United Nations must be given the power to do that. It does not have that power now. Canada should be acting now to ensure that there is a consensus in the United Nations to allow a Security Council resolution that would establish the United Nations as the instrument of reconstruction in Iraq and wherever else devastation occurs.

### *Supply*

Let us get on with that future. Let us stop, if I may speak to the motion of the Bloc, pretending that this conflict was in the motion's words "initiated by the United States".

[*Translation*]

War is regrettable, but the United States did not initiate these actions.

[*English*]

One man is responsible for today's events. One man has defied the international community for over a decade. One man carries the burden of the suffering of his nation. That is Saddam Hussein.

That is where I believe my colleagues in the Bloc Québécois went terribly wrong. Their motion points the finger at the wrong man and lays the blame squarely at the wrong doorstep. Their motion would tie Canada's hands should a cornered Saddam Hussein do the unthinkable.

[*Translation*]

Let us stop pretending that Saddam Hussein is a victim.

[*English*]

Remember the Kurds he killed. Remember his war with Iran. Remember his invasion of Kuwait. Remember his slaughter of his own people. Remember his stark and steady defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations. Let us remember that blame is a game for the sidelines. Historically on international issues Canadians made hard judgments so we could act in the arena where history is decided.

The government's simple lack of courage and refusal to take hard decisions has meant we have had very little influence on the war. Let us now not squander our opportunity to help shape the reconstruction and the peace.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, coming from a member for whom I have the greatest respect, I would like to suggest to him that talking about lack of courage on the part of the government in circumstances that were extremely delicate and difficult for Canada is a total exaggeration.

To speak of Canada not taking part in the coalition on terrorism when we have sent additional troops to Afghanistan to help effectively in this war is another exaggeration. To say that we did not stand on principle when at the United Nations we acted so forcibly to find a bridge between the two extremes there and to say that the government did not stand on principle when for the first time, in the legacy of Pearson and Trudeau, we stood up against the United States in a difficult context, I think is totally exaggerated.

I think that Canada, and I ask the member if he would agree with me, by stating that we reinforce the presence and the sanction of the United Nations, has spoken eloquently by agreeing that only a multilateral decision would be sanctioned.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has spoken clearly. He has not gone so far as to say the war is illegal, but that it is the saddest day for the United Nations.

*Supply*

The Prime Minister has said repeatedly that Canada will take an active part in reconstruction. Does the member not agree that his rhetoric has been far too one sided, biased and not objective enough?

• (1240)

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary. I believe there are certain obligations in international affairs and, when one has to take a tough decision affecting another country, one has to have the courage to go and tell it.

When we took the tough decision regarding the United States not to accept the strategic defence initiative, we did not have a deputy minister phone the ambassador. We talked to the president directly. I talked to the secretary of state directly. That is what courage is about. That is not what happened in this case.

The hon. member, who pays very close attention to these matters, misunderstood what I was saying about the coalition of terror, and that was probably my fault. What I was saying was that the actions that have been taken, without assigning blame for who took them, has broken the consensus in the coalition of terror and we need to restore it. Canada has the unique role, I believe, of restoring the sense of that coalition as it does in NATO and elsewhere. That at least is what I intended to say.

The major point I want to make has to do with whether or not the action that has been taken by the United Kingdom, the United States and by others is an action that is within the authority of the United Nations. I believe it is.

I asked the Government of Canada to publish its own legal opinions, which it did not. I have noted that the foreign minister has said that the question of legitimacy does not matter. I think the question of legitimacy matters profoundly. I think this is an issue, and others can disagree, but I believe, as the British government and as others do, that this action is in fact consistent with a combination of resolutions that were taken by the United Nations and it is, therefore, a legitimate action under the United Nations.

Consequently, the Prime Minister is wrong to say that he alone is defending the United Nations. I think in fact he is stepping aside from an action that is legitimate under the United Nations.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I find the remarks of the last presenter to be somewhat regrettable in terms of an undertone that he will have to clarify. He has questioned the motives of the United States and of the President of the United States. There is a tradition among parliamentarians, albeit that it is now informal since it transfers across boundaries, that one accepts one's word until one is proven different.

The member for Calgary Centre very clearly questioned the motives, saying that it was not in the best interest of the people of Iraq in terms of reconstruction. That has to be clarified. It is unacceptable for him to be joining the pack of Liberals who continue this undermining on a personal basis. That has to be clarified.

With all the bluster around the member's comments, he has neglected to really zero in on the fact that his position is basically the same as the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister at least had the jam to stand up and say it and state it, although I totally disagree with his position. This member is putting bluster all around it and saying that

the Prime Minister is wrong when in fact the member and the Tory caucus voted that we would abandon our historical allies and that we would not take part in disarming Saddam Hussein unless we had the approval of the Security Council. He is trying to get around that by saying that we should find a legal opinion. As he knows, in law there at least two opinions on every matter. There is a preponderance of opinion saying that this is legal. It is simply a matter that the member will not decide to choose that opinion.

Therefore, will the member please clarify how he differs from the Prime Minister, because he has also voted to abandon our historical allies subjecting our sovereignty—

• (1245)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I want to give other members an opportunity also. The right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, I will not argue legal opinions with the hon. member. He has far more experience in that regard than I do.

He raised two questions. My position has always been that I would support action within the context of the United Nations. I made very clear in my remarks today that, on the question of the interpretation of the resolutions of the United Nations in 1990 and again resolution 1441, I believe the action that has been taken by the United States, by the United Kingdom and by others is legitimate under the United Nations. I would support the legitimacy of that action.

With respect to the question of reconstruction, this is a very important issue. It is important on two fronts. First, there is a question as to whether or not we should leave the pooling together of what has been torn apart to the superpower that was principally responsible for the tearing apart. I think that superpowers have unusual capacities but reconciliation is not one of them. We need to have an instrument that can carry out reconciliation. I would like to see that done by the United Nations.

With respect to motives, I am concerned about some of the thinking that exists in the pentagon with respect to the re-creation of society along American values in the Middle East. I believe that is a very risky undertaking and certainly I would not want Canada to sign on blindly to that sort of notion.

However, in order for there to be an alternative to the pentagon as the instrument of reconstruction, then some respected nation has to start the process right now to put the United Nations in a position to authorize reconstruction under United Nations auspices. It does not have that power now. Nobody is seeking to do it. It is an ideal role for Canada and we should be on it right now.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I respect the hon. leader of the Progressive Conservative Party a great deal and on many occasions I have agreed with him, particularly on matters of international relations and foreign policy. In fact, on many occasions it is probably true that he has been more in agreement with the New Democratic Party than he has been with many of his own colleagues on matters of foreign affairs.

There were two things that I was utterly dismayed to hear said this morning by the former prime minister and former foreign affairs minister who served very nobly in the government. The first thing he said was that he was prepared to take the view of the U.K. with respect to the question of the legality of this war as his authority or as his bible for declaring that this war is a legal war.

There is nothing more related to the sovereignty of one's nation than making a decision to go to war. Has the member consulted, for example, the United Nations Association in Canada and the World Federalists of Canada? Did he consult the committee of 78, a committee of distinguished international affairs experts, diplomats and former personnel involved in senior positions, and capably chaired by Canada's former ambassador for disarmament, to seek an opinion before he, in my view, uncritically embraced the self-serving opinion of the U.K. government to declare this to be a legal and moral war?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, to answer the question very specifically, I did not consult them but I am certainly aware of the diversity of opinions on the question of the interpretation of the resolution.

I am persuaded by the U.K. interpretation, which begins with resolution 678 passed in 1990 that authorized all necessary means, which is the euphemism in the United Nations for force. It was then suspended by resolution 687. Resolution 687 required certain conditions to be met and those conditions have not been met. Therefore Saddam Hussein is clearly in breach of that.

This brings us back to resolution 678 which authorizes the use of force and which resolution was referred to specifically in resolution 1441.

Next to the member for Okanagan—Coquihalla, I am the most prominent non-lawyer in the House of Commons and I do not pretend to argue the legality myself. There are a variety of views and one has to come to judgments about them. I believe that the argument made by the British and by others is a compelling argument that brings legitimacy to these actions.

• (1250)

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak to a subject to which I wish we never had to speak. Last night I watched the short one liner by the spokesperson for the President of the United States who came on television to say that the disarmament of Iraq had begun. We are in it. It is underway. We have started.

I will move to the comments made by the member for Lac-Saint-Louis, who said that the government has been involved with this and it has tried really hard to build a bridge. That is true. It did try to build a bridge, but it was at the very end.

The problem is that the government was invisible for the first six months of this operation. We should have been involved from the very beginning, trying to influence some of these decisions and directions where other parties went that are now active in this war.

If we turned on the television we could see the position of Belgium, Portugal and Spain, but we never saw the position of Canada unless it was changing one direction or the other night by night. The problem is Canada was invisible.

### *Supply*

However now we have another opportunity and we should not be invisible. We should be very active in helping the countries that will be involved in the restructuring to develop a plan to reconstruct the country and provide aid to the people who will starve. As one member of our committee pointed out this morning, 16 million people in Iraq will be depending on government services for food and medicine. They have no access to that food and medicine and no one is there to help them.

We can play a role here. We missed the first part of this. We were not involved in developing policy. We can be involved right now and we should be. Every indication is that we once again are invisible.

Right from the very beginning we said that we would follow the United Nations and respect the United Nations resolution 1441 and that we would do everything we could to see that the parties complied with it. We directly communicated with senior leaders in Iraq to encourage and demand that they comply with 1441. We went as far as we could go to convince them to do that.

Resolution 1441 is the unanimous resolution that engaged Hans Blix and his weapons inspectors to go to Iraq, do their job, complete their job and report back to the United Nations with a final report. The Security Council was authorized to take steps then and only then, and no one else. We still support that. We think Hans Blix should still be there and should still be allowed to complete his job for the very people that supported the resolution in the first place. All the countries that supported him in the first place should continue their support and allow them to continue. However, that is gone now. It is over. Hans Blix and the weapons inspectors are gone.

The awful thing is that there was an agreement by all countries about the problem. There was probably even a consensus on the eventual strategy, if necessary. The problem is in the way it was invoked and in the way it was approached: no consensus was sought or found. Now we find ourselves in a split world which, to me, was unnecessary in many ways.

I do not believe the war has to be now. There should not be a war and there should not be the split in the international community. There could have been a consensus on a strategy if the countries on both sides of this debate had been just a little flexible. However they were not flexible and here we are with a split world, a split United Nations and a very dangerous situation.

Once again I will say that we were invisible in the beginning of this process and we should not have been. We should have been involved from the beginning, trying to encourage the British, the Americans and other countries involved to restructure their proposal and seek a consensus but we were invisible.

We should not be invisible now. We should be very active in helping the people. We should be very active in helping to formulate the procedure to reconstruct and help the people of Iraq.

I hope the government will be very active and proactive in that field and take a leadership role, and not be invisible again.

*Supply*

•(1255)

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am almost speechless, but since I am in questions and comments, not quite. I find it incredulous that the hon. member can describe Canada and all the efforts it has made consistently through this entire crisis as being invisible.

It was the Canadian initiative at the United Nations that brought movement from two hardened positions, if not to the fruition we all would have hoped for, by reactivating dynamics that had ceased to be in any way productive.

As far as having been invisible, I was fortunate enough to have been to The Hague last week for the inauguration of the International Criminal Court which this country led. Often the conversation in all of the groups, with the British, the French and the Belgians, was about the Canadian initiative.

I find it appalling that the hon. member has somehow missed that when he sits on the foreign affairs committee.

Finally, when the member's hon. leader made mention of the fact that when he was in the position of prime minister and foreign affairs minister he spoke to his counterparts, I might recall for him that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have been in constant dialogue with President Bush and with Secretary of State Powell doing exactly what he advocated.

These gentlemen should be a little more careful about observing what is happening. It will be very helpful in their future analysis.

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I did not hear a question but I am happy to respond anyway. She said she was incredulous that I suggested the government was invisible. She is right. It was not invisible. It just changed positions so many times that it neutralized every comment it made. One minister would say that Canada will participate and then the next time that it will not participate. Then it will participate with UN resolutions and then it will not. Then it will no matter what, and then maybe it will.

The fact of the matter is that it was visible, but it neutralized all of its points. The media recognized that and finally gave up on reporting the position of the government. It was visible but it was a shame. No one has to take my word for it: they can just read the editorials.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, excuse me for reacting on the last comment. I was with the member until he said that if we do not believe his opinion we should read the editorials.

On this question of invisibility, I think the member actually has just characterized it very well. The government changed its position so many times that it was as if it did not have a position and therefore it became invisible. I would say to my Liberal friend who just posed the non-question that even her phrase would apply. She said the Liberals actually were visible and she described it as them reactivating dynamics which have now ceased to be productive. That is a euphemism for invisibility, I guess.

The Progressive Conservatives continue to talk about reconstruction and to say that there is only one nation or one group involved. There is a number of nations that are involved in discussions on

reconstruction in a post-conflict Iraq. They are working with 14 groups right now, comprised significantly of Iraqi exiles and expatriates, in terms of plans for rebuilding civil society in Iraq. The former leader of the Progressive Conservatives and now the member who has followed him are suggesting that the cry of one's heart for freedom and the cry to have control over one's own destiny is something uniquely American. As a Canadian I am insulted by that, because this is a universal cry built into the heart and nature of every man and woman.

Will the member for Cumberland—Colchester please address this fact? Where did he get the idea that there is just one group, just some Americans, planning the reconstruction in a post-conflict phase? It is ongoing now with a number of groups. Quite rightly Canada has been shut out because of its invisibility or whatever one wants to call it. Where do he and his former leader get this idea that this cry of the heart for freedom and a sense of one's destiny are uniquely American? They are not. Where does he get that idea?

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I do not have that idea. What I said was that Canada is not involved. I did not say that one group was involved. I did not say that there was only one country. What I said was that Canada is not involved. It is not at the table. It is not at the United Nations trying to develop a resolution. The British and the Americans are, but Canada is not there. We are not part of this formulation of a resolution to develop reconstruction.

The member suggested that we do not support freedom and the destiny of the people of Iraq. That is absolutely not true. We agree with the goal. We disagree with the strategy. We believe there were still steps that could have been taken and that did not involve a military conflict. The world did not exhaust every option before military conflict was resorted to. That is our position.

•(1300)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Mercier.

Today is a sad day. Many people are telling us that this is the first day of spring, starting at 8 p.m. We can see outside that even Mother Nature is sad.

I must tell you that, last night, when I was watching CNN to know if, after 8 p.m., there would be a military intervention, I left the television on until 9.30 or 10 p.m. This is when it began. I must tell you that this was heart-rending, because I was thinking about all the children, women and men who were at the mercy of American and British bombs.

It is when these kinds of events happen that we are able, I believe, to put ourselves in their place. The same thing happened when I witnessed the attacks against the World Trade Centre. At these times, we say that the people who are going through such situations are thinking about their families. I have a daughter and I would certainly hold her in my arms during these bombings, and I would also pray God to take me before my daughter.



Thus, as law makers and decision makers, we have a very important role to play. We, in the Bloc Québécois, have shown that we are playing this role very well. Indeed, we are playing this role well in favour of peace, because, from the beginning—and I challenge everyone here to check—we have always promoted peace. We have always done so, we continue to do so and we will be doing so again this afternoon. For us, it is quite simple: one more day of war in Iraq will be one day of war too many.

What is the situation now? Diplomacy has failed. The UN is completely paralyzed. Even some international organizations I belong to, such as NATO, are. There are divisions between Europe and the United States.

The UN has shown its inability to settle the issue. In my opinion, once the first bomb has been dropped, diplomacy has failed. It does not mean that diplomatic efforts must stop. We must not be fatalistic, as the Prime Minister has been over the past few days, and say, “We tried everything and there is nothing left that we can do now. From now on, the bombs will do the talking”. This is being fatalistic. And we cannot accept that the Prime Minister and this government being fatalistic and saying, “We are turning the page and we will wait for this to end”.

We must continue to be proactive. We must see to it that this war ends as quickly as possible, and I think that Canada has the means to achieve that goal. It is really unfortunate that the Prime Minister did not seize the opportunity before the first bombs were dropped.

When one looks at this war, one wonders if it is justified. Is this war justifiable? In my opinion, this is debatable. It is unjustified and it is unjustifiable, if only because of the \$200 billion it could cost. Just think what we could do with \$200 billion in Iraq and in the Middle East. We have been saying from the beginning that bombs are not the solution to terrorism. It is through understanding, kindness, solidarity and international cooperation that international issues will be solved. It is not by acting like bullies and saying, “We have the biggest planes; we have the biggest missiles; we have the biggest bombs, and you will do as we say or we will bomb your country”. Such an attitude is morally unacceptable.

That is why this war is unjustifiable and unjustified, particularly because before the United States, Britain and Spain put an end to the diplomatic process, the inspections were working. Hans Blix himself said it was working. He said yesterday that he found the decision to withdraw inspectors unfortunate. Why? Because there is real evidence that these inspections were working. They might not have been working as quickly as some would have liked, but they were working. There is proof. Inspectors could move freely wherever they wanted in Iraq, at any time.

The chief inspector, Hans Blix, asked that the Al-Samoud missiles be destroyed. Iraq started destroying them. Blix said they needed highly specialized U-2 planes over Iraq. They got them. In fact, the Americans in Iraq, just like in Afghanistan, even said, and I quote, “They cannot blink without us knowing it”.

•(1305)

So, the inspections were working. Therefore, this war is unjustified and unjustifiable.

### *Supply*

Now, what has Canada's position been? Canada has hesitated in taking sides until recently. In fact, I would go so far as to say that we are still hesitating, because the Prime Minister's announcement that we will not be taking part in the conflict in Iraq has not made his position clear. He is saying one thing and doing the opposite with all of the military materiel and personnel that is currently in Kuwait.

Take, for instance, the Canadian ships. Admiral Buck appeared before the national defence committee. He told us that our ships have considerable defence capabilities, particularly the *Iroquois*, which is a flagship. What are the *Iroquois* and our ships doing? They are escorting ships in the theatre of operations. They are not taking part. We have been told that these ships are there for defence purposes.

This is like the driver of the getaway car who later proclaims his innocence, arguing that he did not rob the bank, he only drove the car. This is not a reasonable argument and it is confusing. It weakens the Prime Minister's message. He said, “I am for peace. We will not join the Americans and the British in the theatre, but we already have troops over there and they will stay there”. There may not be many, but the fact is they will join them.

It is the same thing in Qatar. We have military personnel who have been working on scenarios for the war in Iraq with the British and American officers for weeks. Some are still over there. Some are said to have been recalled, but some stayed behind as observers. This too should be discussed.

The issue of interoperability and personnel on exchange with American combat units is a problem. The fact that we have 20 people in a combat unit is not the point. Numbers do not matter; it is the involvement that matters. When these units enter into Iraq and get shot at, what will they pick up? A body wearing a uniform with a Canadian flag on the shoulder. And this, after the Prime Minister said we would not get involved. It is very dangerous to be pussyfooting around as the government is currently doing.

It is the same thing with the air personnel aboard the AWACS. We are told we will not be participating in the war, that we will just be observing it. Except that we are sending information. I call that participating in the war as well.

And what about the joint task force known as JTF2? Its operations are somewhat covert. No one knows what it is doing. Last time, in Kosovo and Afghanistan, we found out about them when they took Afghani prisoners back. They got off the plane with them.

There are some fundamental questions. Canada must absolutely pull out all its equipment and all its military personnel, as otherwise our position is confusing.

I think it is time the Prime Minister and his government stopped talking and started taking action. Fine words about our not going now or in future need to be connected to some concrete actions. The equipment and military personnel have to be withdrawn. Otherwise what he is telling us is false. He must be consistent. Now is the time to act, to withdraw all the military personnel who are there.

*Supply*

I therefore have an amendment to the motion to propose, seconded by my colleague from Mercier. I move that the motion be amended by adding after the word "Iraq" the following:

and, consequently the government repatriate all soldiers and military material in the region that could be used in a war effort in the conflict in Iraq.

• (1310)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment in order.

We will now move on to questions and comments and continue the debate on the motion as amended.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Saint-Jean, who has just spoken, says that the Bloc members are very serious in this debate, and I believe him. I also believe he is a serious and honest man, and I respect him.

I have a question for him. Today we have received a report stating that Saddam Hussein launched Al-Samoud missiles at Kuwait. Such missiles are forbidden in Iraq. How can he, with that evidence, say or think that the inspection process has been successful?

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, I must say that what my colleague just said is true, but I want to remind him that Baghdad was the target of 40 missiles and 40 bombs at 5:30 a.m., that is at about 10 p.m. in Montreal.

There is some form of self-defence when a country is under attack. It must be clearly understood that we do not want to show Saddam Hussein as a victim. Right now, the victims are the women, children and men of Baghdad, the Iraqi people. They are the victims of the attack by the Americans.

I must say that the essence of the debate has changed over the last few weeks. The proposal and the UN resolution were about disarming the Iraqi regime. Over the last two days, we have been hearing about the need to change the regime and to kill Saddam Hussein. That is what the Americans and the British are saying. Unfortunately, killing Saddam Hussein also means killing thousands of innocent civilians in Baghdad.

This is why we are saying that we will remain committed to peace and that one more day of war is one day too many. This is why we will continue our efforts. I think that our position reflects the views of Quebecers. Last week, 250,000 individuals took to the streets in Montreal. Two weeks earlier, despite extremely cold weather, 150,000 had done so.

We, in the Bloc Québécois, are very proud of the work that we do for peace. Contrary to what the Prime Minister says, our work is not done. It will continue day after day until we can find a peaceful solution to this conflict.

[*English*]

**Hon. Art Eggleton (York Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while Canada is not participating in the war against Iraq with any of its military personnel in that theatre of operation, we are committed to the campaign against terrorism and have been from the beginning. We were one of the largest and earliest contributors to the campaign in Afghanistan.

Do I take it by the member's amendment that he would have our troops withdrawn from Afghanistan? In the commitment that the government has made to Afghanistan in the campaign against terrorism, would he have us remove those troops? He has said in his amendment "the entire region". I understand he is trying to prevent any involvement in Iraq, but surely he is not suggesting that we would pull back our troops from our campaign against terrorism in the region.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the war on terrorism is being used as a cover for a full-fledged war in Iraq. That is the problem.

The ships I mentioned earlier, namely the *Iroquois* destroyer and the two accompanying frigates, are in the theatre of operation near Kuwait to take part in the attacks. Not that they will be the ones attacking, but they will protect the U.S. and British ships that will carry out the attacks.

There is so much confusion that some countries like Greece decided yesterday to make their position very clear and not take any chances. Right now, the number of ships in the Persian Gulf has not increased sharply because of al-Qaeda, but that is no reason to send three Canadian ships.

I personally find our role quite confusing. It is so obvious that our ships are there to support warships. We must avoid that. The best way to do so is to order these ships back home.

• (1315)

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the fact that the Bloc Québécois has moved this motion today. Frankly, I would have liked this opportunity to vote on the principle of participating in the military intervention in Iraq to be given to us, as it should, by the government. I am very proud of the fact that we are giving all parliamentarians in this House the opportunity to speak on this major issue.

I think that we are all on the same wavelength since the bombings started last night. The Iraqis have already lived through two wars and 12 years of embargo. One million children are malnourished and may die, unfortunately, depending on the course of the war. We are worried and upset.

This war has begun. Some people expect it to be a very short one. The fact that the opposing forces are so unequal might lead us to believe so. However, since occupation is supposed to be the second phase of this war, it is possible that, at that time, given the nature of the population and the nature of the occupation, the war may last longer than is desired, with everything that means, once again, for the population, which has suffered so much.

This war will also have consequences that are desired by the U.S. administration, geostrategic consequences with regard to the oilfields and better control of the region. There are all kinds of objectives the Americans are talking about or not talking about. I am still talking about the U.S. administration.

*Supply*

But what scares me the most are the consequences which are not desired by any people, undesired and undesirable consequences, such as those of feeding hatred and facilitating recruitment of martyrs, as they say in the Middle East, or of young people who agree to take part in bombings. No one can say that it is not any clearer, today and until who knows when, that hatred has been fed. It is for this reason and many others—but I do not have much time—that it is urgent to stand by the United Nations.

It has been said and deeply deplored that the Security Council had the door slammed in its face, so to speak, by the U.S. administration and the British government. Deep regrets have been expressed about this, but, on second thought, it does not mean that the Security Council has lost its purpose and credit. Quite the opposite. It is worth emphasizing that, during the four months and more spent on its proceedings, the Security Council has held a debate that was followed throughout the world. It has held discussions that individuals and peoples found very important.

● (1320)

In the end, if the majority in the Security Council could not make a decision because its decision was not to the liking of the administration of this superpower and its faithful supporter, Great Britain.

The chief inspectors said they needed more time, that the cooperation of the government of a despicable dictator whom nobody here is seeking to rehabilitate was guaranteed by a strong military presence.

Despite the extraordinary contribution of Dr. Blix and Dr. El Baradei, the Security Council was ignored. Yet, the Security Council had done its job. It was unable to prevent this war, but does that mean it cannot function? No. It is meeting, and it has taken on a new mandate.

But beyond this—and that is what we are expecting from the Canadian government—when the Security Council is unable to fulfill its functions and duties under the charter, the UN General Assembly is empowered to meet and make decisions on behalf of all the member countries.

Given the undesirable effects and the profound and important divisions between the peoples of the world, it is all the more urgent for them to rally round the United Nations.

The Bloc Québécois has made itself the proponent of that position. It did so as soon as it could, and will continue to do so, because there is no hope in unilateralism. Unilateralism, that is making decisions based solely on the judgment and the interests of the powerful, brought us straight to the catastrophes of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Peoples need to keep in mind that they are equal in right even if unequal in might.

The members of this House will have an opportunity to vote on the motion against authorizing the deployment of troops. Parliament will, I trust, say that there will be no Canadian troops, in all or in part, participating in the war on Iraq. This will be a step other parliamentarians before us have taken. I would point out that it is only since this government took office that parliamentarians have not had the opportunity to vote on troops being sent or not sent.

● (1325)

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my two hon. colleagues who just made speeches to say how concerned I am about the war that has just been declared.

Last week, demonstrations were held in Montreal, Quebec City and my hometown of Trois-Rivières. Today, I want to talk to you about a young man, a 12-year-old, who spoke to at least 1,000 people at a rally. Throughout his speech, there were moments of eloquent silence while he searched for the right words to raise the awareness of the world leaders. From time to time, he would take a few seconds and wonder, “How can I put this?” This eloquent young man was able to communicate the pain he shared with the Iraqi children. He was feeling the pain these children will be subjected to because of the war.

I thought I had to share with the House what I learned from this eloquent young man. The children we meet in the schools and the petitions we receive make us realize how senseless this war is. Canada however could play a key role for peace. In the past, our peacekeepers have played a key role.

I want to ask my colleague, the hon. member for Mercier, how she sees Canada playing a key role for peace, a role that would help bring nations together instead of dividing them? I am worried about the state the United Nations will be in after this immoral and illegal war.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I think that the nations of the world will feel the need, more than ever, to promote peace, as shown by public opinion in the various demonstrations that took place around the world. It was unprecedented. So there is a good side to globalization, which is taking action simultaneously and sharing information.

Canada, with its reputation, through the United Nations, can ask the secretary general to consult the other countries so that the UN General Assembly can meet and reaffirm the principles that will have to apply at the end of this war and beyond. This is the responsibility of the UN. Nations must not give in. The United Nations has international legality and legitimacy on its side. Canada, which, at various times in its history, found a way to be extremely useful and instrumental in developing international law, can play this role again.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have a specific comment and I will ask the member about it. A suggestion was made that this action somehow would create more martyrs and more terrorists in that country than continuing the previous stalemate. What kind of logic is that?

What feeds hatred is a regime such as Saddam's regime, his gang of 13 tyrants who have tortured, raped, executed, and intimidated their people since 1979, a regime where the rule of law does not exist. Will there be more or less terrorists created now in Afghanistan than there were before the rule of law was brought to Afghanistan? This multilateralism has become an excuse for doing nothing.

Does the member actually believe that somehow terrorism would be spawned by removing Saddam Hussein from power?

*Supply*

•(1330)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know how my remarks were translated by the interpreters, but I will repeat very clearly what I meant to say earlier.

[*English*]

This war is seen by many Arabs and Muslims as an anti-Muslim and anti-Arab war. This is what can spur other candidates.

[*Translation*]

This can prompt them to recruit what they call martyrs to commit attacks. If, like me, members like to get all kinds of information from different sources, they will see that this is one of the biggest threats. Of course, this is an unwanted effect, but many people are expecting this to happen.

As for comparisons with Afghanistan, we must be very careful because right now things are not going well at all in that country. If we read reports from ICG Group for example, we see that the warlords are back everywhere, that Kabul is the only place that is safe, that progress on human rights is extremely slow, if there is any progress at all, and that the status of women has not improved, except in Kabul.

Therefore, in conclusion, it is easier to win a war than to create the conditions for security and democracy.

[*English*]

**Mr. Steve Mahoney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Simcoe—Grey.

I have just received an e-mail from my office that tells me the second strike has already started and the ground troops are moving in as we speak here. This is obviously an extremely critical time in that part of the world.

Much of what I am about to say I am quite sure members opposite will not agree with, but there is one thing on which I think they would share agreement with me. We have one of our own in this place, the member for Wild Rose, who has a son in the war in the American military. On behalf of my party and everyone on this side, we just want to say we wish him Godspeed and safe return.

One of the things that upsets people is how words are used in this place and outside. There have been comments made by people from all sides of the House that have been inappropriate and send the wrong message to the people of the United States. The message that somehow Canadians do not support Americans is just not true. It is certainly not true that the government does not support the people of the United States or indeed the government of the United States, a duly elected government, properly constituted, and respected by this government.

Just because at times friends diverge or disagree with one another does not mean that they will not continue to be friends. It is somewhat offensive when people in Canada, in positions of such great responsibility as members of Parliament, on whatever side, stand up and say that somehow the government or our country is anti-American.

We have a long history with the Americans. That does not mean that we walk in lockstep with them. That does not mean that we agree with every policy, be it foreign or domestic. In fact, we had members opposite demanding that we fight against the Americans on the softwood lumber issue, that we fight and challenge the administration on the steel issue, and that we not allow the Americans to take our water. We hear that all the time. Now we have a situation where those very same people are standing up and demanding that we just simply do what President Bush says and go to war. We just do not agree that the proper process here is to launch an attack at this time. I think we have made that very clear.

For other members to suggest, as I have heard in this place, that we as a country, as a government, have done nothing in terms of contacting the heads of other states is an absolutely false statement. We know the work that our ambassador at the United Nations has done. We know the respect that he has in the United Nations and in the world community. Does anyone really think that he acted unilaterally, that somehow he was not in touch with our Minister of Foreign Affairs, with our Prime Minister, with officials in the government, that somehow he was flying solo? I do not think so. He represented our country with dignity and honour, aggressively trying to put together a compromise that could at the very least forestall the actions that we saw begin last night and that have just started up again.

The frustration that many of us feel here is that nobody around here supports Saddam Hussein and in fact I find it an insult that the Leader of the Opposition, a man who would stand in that office purporting to become Prime Minister of the country, would actually say, "If the Liberals are genuinely neutral or will be cheering for Saddam Hussein, then they should have the guts to say so".

•(1335)

That is the most outrageous statement for anybody to make, to somehow insinuate that the Prime Minister of Canada, or the Government of Canada, or the Liberal Party of Canada, or any individual on this side are actually cheering for Saddam Hussein. It is an absolute insult and destroys any dignity that individual should have in that office.

Are we supporting the Americans or are we not? There is another statement here that is quite remarkable. It says, "We are relieving allied soldiers in Afghanistan so they can fight in Iraq". Again the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition said that if the government really believed in its position it should pull out and that if it did not believe in that position it should not have people there. Talk about trying to have it both ways.

We have supported the United States policies on homeland security. Our Deputy Prime Minister is in touch regularly with Tom Ridge. We have supported the United States in its request to tighten up procedures at the border and to require that certain landed immigrants in this country who have not yet obtained citizenship apply for visas to go into the United States. We have said that we understand the fears of the United States. We do not, however, support targeting of people based on their race or their religion and we strongly oppose anything that leads to that. We do understand the need for the United States to feel more secure within its own borders and we will work very closely with it.

Any member who has had the opportunity to visit Norad in Colorado Springs would see the kind of relationship between the U.S. military and Canadian military, working hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder every single day running the facility that provides security for all of North America.

We have another operation in North Bay, Ontario, where the same thing exists, where American soldiers are working together with Canadian soldiers.

When we make a commitment to send 3,000 troops to Afghanistan, why would the Leader of the Opposition stand up and say we should not do that because somehow we do not support war in Iraq? We strongly support the war against terrorism. We have three ships in the gulf. The chief commander of the seven ships in the gulf patrolling the waters looking for terrorists, looking for subversives is Canadian. Should we withdraw him because somehow we did not run off to war?

The opposition members stood in this place and demanded that we go to war before it even knew where the war was going to be, for goodness sake. They wanted us to send troops, get them over there so that we are ready to go when somebody shoots a gun in the air. There is some real inconsistency here.

However, the point that I want to stress is that this country supports the United States of America, its people and government. What we do not support is war at this time. We have attempted to broker a peace, to use diplomacy. We have begged President Bush to hold off the dogs and allow for continued discussion in diplomatic negotiations. As a government it is our view that those negotiations may well have been successful if more time had been allowed.

Were we ever in danger of an attack coming from Iraq? We know North Korea has the capacity to launch an ICBM against North America, but we also know that Iraq does not. Therefore a pre-emptive strike in my view was what we were trying to avoid. A pre-emptive strike to go in for regime change was what the President of the United States clearly wanted to do. What we signed on for in resolution 1441 was not regime change. What we signed on for was

### *Supply*

disarmament, the elimination of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. This has elevated beyond that.

● (1340)

I believe that what our Prime Minister has done is taken a difficult but principled position, and as a result of that I am confident that the powers that be, including George Bush in Washington, will respect that decision and will understand that we are a sovereign nation with the responsibility and the right to make our own decisions, and that is what we have done.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the member started out by talking about how unfortunate it is when inflammatory statements are made in this place, when motives are wrongly attributed, and when positions are grossly distorted.

I have not heard anyone on this side of the House, not just from the official opposition, but I have not heard our Bloc friends or NDP friends or Progressive Conservative friends say anything negative about lack of hard work or diligence on the part of our ambassador or on the part of our officials in diplomatic service in the United States. As a matter of fact, knowing what it is to work with those officials, I believe we are served in a very fine and capable way by our Canadian officials in the United States.

Nobody was attributing that and nobody was making that comment. If there were inflammatory remarks made and if there were positions grotesquely distorted, they would certainly be by the member attributing certain positions to the House. I am glad he is smiling and nodding his head a bit. He got caught up in the fervour of his own debate and almost started believing himself.

Along the line of inflammatory comments being made, does he not believe that the Prime Minister has an obligation to publicly rein in, to publicly denounce, and even to take some disciplinary action toward his own ministers who continue this toxic stream of invective toward the United States?

It is one thing, as the member said, to debate with the United States on issues. We should be fighting them on issues like softwood lumber, steel subsidies, and on the U.S. farm bill, which hurts our own agriculture community. But when ministers of the Crown continue this toxic stream of invective toward the United States, does he not feel it would be appropriate for the Prime Minister to publicly make a statement, to rein in his ministers, to denounce them, and to take disciplinary action, especially at a time as sensitive as this?

● (1345)

**Mr. Steve Mahoney:** Mr. Speaker, I would not want the member to think I was smiling and nodding because I agreed with him. That would be a distortion that would get carried away.

Let me point out however, in reference to the member's first point about not criticizing the ambassador to the United Nations, I quite agree. I was not suggesting that. My point was this. Does the member think the ambassador was flying solo? That is exactly what I said. Does the hon. member think that our ambassador to the United Nations was not in touch with the Minister of Foreign Affairs on a regular basis, with the Prime Minister, and with officials in the government in an attempt to put together a compromise?

### Supply

When it was not members here it was members of the fifth party who were actually saying that the Prime Minister did not contact the presidents of France or China or whatever. He does not know that. The appropriate channel for that kind of work to take place is at the United Nations. That is where we were working diligently and I believe we gained tremendous respect on the world stage because we made those efforts.

Let me address the other point which I am sure people would rather I did not address. For members to stand here and suggest that there are ministers, plural, and members, plural—it is a small minority who make unfortunate comments. Those comments, I quite agree, are inappropriate, but does anybody talk about the comments that are made on a regular basis, such as those that I have made here about the position that this country has with the United States, about the longstanding relationship this country has with the United States?

I stood in this place and even said “God bless America” because I was trying to counter those negative comments made by certain individuals. It is not the government or the Prime Minister or the Liberal Party. It is not, by any stretch of the imagination, more than a small minority making inappropriate comments, and I think the member should recognize that.

**Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to address this critically important topic. I wish to thank my hon. colleague from Mississauga West for splitting his time with me. As I sat here and listened to his relevant remarks regarding this crisis situation we are facing internationally right now, I cannot help but take a certain amount of pride in many of the members who are sitting on this side of the House.

Many of these comments may be repetitive in nature, whether they are coming from this side or from some of the parties on the other side of the House, but the real issue here is that members like myself from Simcoe—Grey feel a responsibility to voice their support for the government and the Prime Minister's position. If that means repeating some of the facts that are out there, I think it does us well to do so.

I would like to take the time to congratulate the vast majority of my colleagues. The vast majority of my colleagues right up to the Prime Minister have taken a leadership role not only here in Canada, but a leadership role that is being recognized within the international community that is second to none.

We have a long history in this country of making our domestic and foreign policy decisions here in the House. We do not accept economic pressures or the perceived economic pressures to sway us one way or the other. We are a country that has a set of values. We are a society that believes in multiculturalism and multilateral support for various countries. That is exactly what we have been trying to do. I hear from some members on the opposite side as well as read in some of the stories in the media that there is flip-flopping and confusion. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Certainly, my constituents and I have had a clear understanding of where the government is coming from since last year. The Prime Minister could not have been more clear. He said that we want to work through the United Nations. He believes it is important as a representative body of the planet that we work through that

organization, that we source out consensus, and that the number one priority must be to exhaust all possibilities prior to going to war.

Hans Blix and his inspection teams were in Afghanistan suggesting that they did not have the unfettered or unencumbered access that they should have had. They reported that back and there was increased pressure put on Iraq. Then they reported back again saying that Iraq was becoming more open and giving them less fettered access to the places that they wanted to go. They were saying to the Security Council and General Assembly that this might work, but to give them more time.

President Bush, and I certainly understand his position based on some of the absolute tragedies the Americans have had to face in the last couple of years, made a comment along the lines that it was difficult to ever secure success because there were small numbers of people inspecting a country about the size of the state of California. Why then did he support these inspection teams going into Iraq in the first place? The international community is thinking that it was window dressing.

What Canada and other members of the international community suggested was that if the inspection teams felt there was an opportunity for success, if they required more resources and we had to double, triple, quadruple whatever the number might be to get the arms inspectors on the ground to pursue that option of success, did we not have a responsibility as political leaders to pursue that avenue prior to war?

The Bloc brings forward a motion by way of opposition day asking that we as a Parliament say we will not engage in war in Iraq. The Prime Minister has said all along that until such time as we are a signatory member of the UN General Assembly we would back whatever the Security Council said. There is rhetoric coming from the other side about how this will have such a massive impact on our relationship, friendship and trade with the United States. That is hogwash.

● (1350)

Let us look at the history. Let us look back and truly appreciate the relationship Canada has with the United States. I must say that I have cousins, aunts and some great friends in the United States and certainly I am there to help them whenever they need that help, but it is not unconditional. Let us look back in time to September 11, when that terrible tragedy and heinous act took place by way of al-Qaeda attacking the United States and the twin towers. What country was there first? It was Canada. What country was recognized by the United States over and over again? Canada. In my own constituency we had a condolences book as well as donations coming in from all across the riding and, for that matter, from all across the country. We had emergency service personnel, fine Canadians who dedicate their lives to the safety of Canada, volunteering their time to go to New York and help their brothers and sisters south of the border.

It was appreciated. I was in Washington this past July. I met with several members of Congress in one on one meetings and had the opportunity to meet with a couple of senators as well. Let me say that Americans do appreciate the relationship that they have with Canada. They do know that we are there for them and they know we have been there for them in the past.

Then we listen to the rhetoric coming from the other side as to how this will have a longstanding impact and longstanding consequences for the Canadian people because we choose a direction on international policy that is different from what the United States chooses. Nothing could be a more foolish statement than that. The United States does not buy from us because we do or do not support their foreign policy. The United States buys from us because we are one of the best manufacturers and one of the best producers in the entire world. We have one of the most competitive workforces in the entire world. That is why they buy from us. That is why so much of our product goes south of the border. Certainly proximity plays a significant role, but we have one of the most competitive workforces in the entire world. That is why the American people buy our product over other products around the world.

If anything has taught us in the House about how small the planet is with regard to accessing products or information, it is the last five years. Why is Canada the single largest purchaser from the United States? Because in turn the Americans make great products. It is not because we consider ourselves a big family. It is not because we consider ourselves best friends. Those things may be true. The reality is that business operates on both sides of the border. We are each other's largest purchaser because it is best for business.

I will say this, having been to Washington and having met with members of Congress. If any members in this House believe that the United States, the executive branch, Senate or Congress, is going to do anything to further disrupt its economy because a country such as Canada has chosen a different direction, I would suggest that they go and spend some time with our friends south of the border, because that is simply not the case.

In closing, I will say that the men and women in our military are playing a role in Afghanistan, and there are few countries as committed to fighting terrorism as Canada, but we have to put things in perspective when we are talking about this war on terrorism.

I mentioned this to my colleagues in Congress when I was in Washington in July. When we announce \$5 billion in homeland security spending, it does not necessarily resonate very well down there, but when we start talking about extrapolating that to the tenth, that is \$50 billion in the United States by the size of their economy. That is a huge investment on behalf of the taxpayers of Canada to ensure that our country is as safe as it can possibly be.

● (1355)

No party, no government, has a bigger responsibility than the security of its citizens and I am here to tell hon. members that the government, the Prime Minister and my caucus take that very seriously. We have demonstrated it by the significant amount of tax dollars we have invested in homeland security. We have demonstrated it by tightening our ties with the United States to rationalize the services that we will be receiving.

Regardless of the rhetoric that is going to come across from the gun-toting Alliance, I am here to say that the Americans clearly believe we are their best friends.

*S. O. 31*

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### CIS HOCKEY

**Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to remind the House that the University of New Brunswick, Canada's oldest university, will be hosting the 2003 Canadian intercollegiate sport hockey championships this weekend in Fredericton. This is the first of two consecutive years in which UNB will host this prominent intercollegiate event, one of the biggest on the CIS calendar.

The tournament features the University of Alberta, York University, Université de Québec à Trois-Rivières, Lakehead University, St. Francis Xavier, and the host UNB Varsity Reds. The Varsity Reds are the Atlantic conference champions and are ranked third in the nation.

This event is made possible thanks in part to municipal, provincial and federal support, including \$25,000 from the Government of Canada. I wish to express my thanks to the ministers of public works and sport.

I extend best wishes to the UNB Varsity Reds and wish good luck to all the teams in this event, which I am confident will be a national success and will leave a significant legacy of student scholarships.

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### IRAQ

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in these most serious of times, Canadians have no comfort in knowing that this Prime Minister cooks up foreign policy the same way one would flip a pancake.

In the January 31 edition of the Charlottetown *Guardian*, the Prime Minister said, "Resolution 1441 will authorize action" to disarm Saddam Hussein. On Monday of this week, he finally stood up and told the Canadian people that he wanted Canada to wimp out and not support our traditional allies.

Thank goodness he finally took a position on Iraq, but it was based on polls and going down the middle of the road, not on principles. Unbelievably, he made his statement only five hours before he knew that the President of the United States was going on the air, thereby undercutting the president and throwing up more obstacles for our allies. What is most shameful is that he made his statement without even having the common decency to inform the president of Canada's position.

This Prime Minister is leading Canada down a blind alley of mediocrity and irrelevance and I say shame on him.

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● (1400)

### DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while we are understandably occupied with the war in Iraq we might miss an inspiring and indeed historical development that has taken place in the Middle East.

*S. O. 31*

I am referring to the judgment just handed down by Egypt's highest court, the Cour de Cassation, acquitting Professor Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the leading democracy activist in Egypt if not all of the Arab world, of a series of trumped up charges which were utterly devoid of any legal authority or evidence. Indeed, the whole prosecution was an attempt to quarantine Dr. Ibrahim and intimidate the fledgling Egyptian democracy movement.

As one who had the privilege of acting as Professor Ibrahim's international legal counsel, I regard this judgment as a landmark event. In the words of Professor Ibrahim upon hearing the judgment, "I am grateful and hope that no other intellectual will go to prison because of his opinions. It is a victory for democracy and human rights".

I would like to express my appreciation to the foreign affairs minister, the secretary of state for the Middle East and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade for their support and assistance in this case.

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**POND HOCKEY**

**Mr. Andy Savoy (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second World Pond Hockey Championships were recently held in Plaster Rock, New Brunswick, and what a success they were. I wish to congratulate the organizers on their tremendous efforts.

Drawing media attention and interest from hockey enthusiasts around the globe, this 64 team tournament raised \$18,000 to help fund a new local arena. This is double the number of entrants from its inaugural year, and proceeds more than tripled.

Played on a postcard perfect lake and river, this puck party is pure Canadiana, recreating fond memories of open air matches from childhood. This tournament is a shining example of community spirit and Canada's passion for our national sport.

Again, I extend congratulations to everyone involved. The World Pond Hockey Championships have become an important annual tradition on the Tobique River and have put Plaster Rock, New Brunswick, on the map.

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**ENERGY INNOVATION**

**Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to congratulate Norwest Precision Limited, a business in my riding of York West that has registered as an industrial energy innovator under Natural Resources Canada's program for energy conservation.

The president, Sam Falcitelli, has made a long term commitment for his company to be an energy innovator and to support Canada's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through greater energy efficiency.

With the participation of Norwest Precision, the number of firms listed as industrial energy innovators has increased to 330.

Please join with me in applauding Norwest Precision Limited for its commitment and efforts to become part of the solution to address climate change. Its responsible contribution to support Canada's

implementation of the Kyoto accord can only benefit the environment and all Canadians.

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**TERRORISM**

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, security experts have been quick to point out that the Prime Minister's decision to break ranks with the United States will have a direct impact on Canada's intelligence gathering capabilities. Effectively, this country will be cut off from the world intelligence network we are so dependent on, given that CSIS has no power to operate abroad. Canada is the only G-8 country without a foreign spy agency.

Security experts are warning that without the United States to depend on, the likelihood of Canada being used as a staging ground for terrorist attacks against the United States increases.

Just this week, even one member from the backbench across the way recognized that there might be a growing United States reluctance to share information with us.

I therefore call upon the government to immediately seek to increase the power of CSIS to operate abroad to prevent terrorists from planning and launching their deadly attacks against our neighbours from Canada.

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**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

**Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, March 21 is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On this occasion we recognize the success Canadians have had in building an open and culturally diverse society based on tolerance and respect.

However we also know that too many of our fellow citizens still experience the sting of racism. That is why the Government of Canada sponsors initiatives designed to foster awareness and understanding of cultural diversity.

The "Racism. Stop it!" national video competition for students is one such initiative aimed at raising awareness about the harmful effects of racism in our society.

I am proud that of 10 teams from across Canada chosen as winners this year, one is from Norwich High School in my riding of Oxford.

I congratulate Jamie Jacques, Jeremy Gear, Adam Buck, Steve Wilkinson and their teacher, Mr. Jeff Overeem, on this special award. They are in the gallery and I welcome them.



•(1405)

[*Translation*]

#### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today, we are celebrating the Journée Internationale de la Francophonie. United by their shared desire to promote the development and expansion of French and continue the dialogue of cultures within the Francophonie, 56 states and governments are members of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. They have adopted a shared policy framework aimed at establishing cooperation between member states.

On March 13, the Secretary General of the OIF described the Francophonie as a force for good.

Today, let us celebrate this and not lose sight of the urgency of showing the political will to use our solidarity as francophone states as a means of continuing the Francophonie's efforts to, among other things, defend human rights, oppose threats to democracy and ensure respect for cultural diversity.

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#### KARINE DUMOUCHEL AND KARINE VAUDEVILLE

**Mr. Serge Marcil (Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to welcome to Ottawa two young women from my riding of Beauharnois—Salaberry, Karine Dumouchel and Karine Vaudeville, of Louis-Cyr high school in Napierville, who won a contest organized by the Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie).

This contest was aimed at French-speaking high school students in Quebec, including the ones in my riding, and its purpose was to promote the importance of French literary writing.

Today, as part of the Journée internationale de la Francophonie, these young women have been invited to take part in a ceremony highlighting the importance of French around the world.

I congratulate them on their participation and their desire to promote the beauty of the French language through writing.

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[*English*]

#### MEMBER FOR CALGARY SOUTHWEST

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton Southwest, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, a year ago today the member for Calgary Southwest was elected leader of the Canadian Alliance.

As the year has unfolded we have discovered just some of the skills our leader possesses. He can multi-task; he is already dealing with his second prime minister and the first one has not even left office yet.

He loves media relations; just ask the press gallery.

He is known as serious, cerebral, a straight talker. On top of all that, he is a family man and a true blue Canadian. If we want to get him really excited, we should ask him how his son, Ben, is doing in hockey.

*S. O. 31*

During the past year the member for Calgary Southwest has been the principled voice for Conservatives and Reformers across Canada.

He is the only leader to stand up against the Kyoto accord. He is the only leader to challenge the wheat board monopoly. He is the only leader who has called for an end to the firearms registry. Finally, he is the only leader willing to stand with our allies against the tyrant, Saddam Hussein.

Under our leader and with our team, the Canadian Alliance is strong, united, debt free and ready to provide the principled leadership Canadians so desperately need.

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[*Translation*]

#### COMITÉ DES JEUNES DE ROSEMONT

**Ms. Liza Frulla (Verdun—Saint-Henri—Saint-Paul—Pointe Saint-Charles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is nothing fawning about my motion.

As the Liberal member responsible for the riding of Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, I am pleased today to highlight the 50th anniversary of the Comité des jeunes de Rosemont, a hockey organization that does exceptional work with young people.

For half a century, thousands of volunteers have allowed more than 15,000 young people to participate in their favourite sport. Indeed, these volunteers have allowed people to make their mark in national and international hockey. Pierre Lacroix, Michel Bergeron, Richard Sévigny, and even Caroline Ouellet, of the national women's hockey team, are but a few.

In closing, I cannot neglect to mention the involvement of the founding president, Mr. Jean Trottier, whose dedication has been an extraordinary source of inspiration for the next generation.

Thanks to all the volunteers, and long live the Comité des jeunes de Rosemont.

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#### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today Canada is celebrating the Journée internationale de la Francophonie with 56 other states and governments that also use French.

I would like to welcome His Excellency Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary General of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, who is on Parliament hill for the Journée internationale de la Francophonie.

March 20 is a day to renew this pride in the French language as an element of identity and solidarity. Several Canadian provinces have used this day as an opportunity to declare their own Semaine de la Francophonie, punctuated with a number of activities to showcase this francophone pride, but also the francophone vitality that exists in our country.

I urge everyone to take part in the activities organized for the Journée internationale de la Francophonie. Get out and discover this rich and exciting world.

*S. O. 31*

Happy Journée internationale de la Francophonie to francophones and francophiles everywhere.

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●(1410)

#### WAR IN IRAQ

**Ms. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the stomp of blood-stained boots in the sand has drowned out the calls for peace. Why did the drums of war win out over the pleas of marchers around the world?

We cannot shape the world as we see fit. Shaping the world is supporting humanity in all of its beauty and fragility. Shaping the world requires us to temper our authority with generosity and openness, to promote our mutual desire for harmonious relations. It is a right we must earn.

There is a future for our world. This future belongs to children, the children of Iraq, the children of the United States of America, the children of Canada and Quebec, the children around the world that belong to us all.

To shape the world is to plant a garden of hope where we will allow our child at heart to lead the way.

Our prayers and tears are the reflection of our hope that love and peace will take root.

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#### INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACISM

**Ms. Yolande Thibeault (Saint-Lambert, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to remind everyone that Canada was among the first countries to support the United Nations declaration in 1966, which proclaimed March 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racism.

The campaign to eliminate racism is carried out through conferences, the arts, culture, music, literature and movies. These media are used to describe, expose and denounce racism.

Young people are at the heart of the annual campaign on March 21. They have the energy, commitment and creativity needed to advance the fight against racism. They are the voice of the present and the future and are among those most exposed to racism in their schools, on the street, in small towns and big cities across the country.

The March 21 campaign encourages young people to look beyond race and religion and to embrace diversity.

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[English]

#### CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, as we speak, an American led coalition has begun the business of forcibly disarming Saddam Hussein.

The Government of Canada has decided that we will not participate in this particular conflict, and I have no doubt that it meets with the approval of most Canadians.

However, that being said, now is the time for Canadians in positions of responsibility, including members of the House, to refrain from making gratuitous negative comments about our American neighbours and their leadership. Our economies are tightly intertwined and we are, and have been, allies on many fronts.

We will not always agree with the Americans in international affairs but we do share a continent with them. It is in Canada's best interest to strive for good relations with the U.S. whenever possible.

Let us hope and pray for a mercifully swift war and a peace that brings a better tomorrow for all of us on this planet.

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[Translation]

#### WOMEN OF DISTINCTION

**Mr. Jean-Guy Carignan (Québec East, Lib. Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, on March 10, 2003, the finalists in the 2003 Women of Distinction contest for central and eastern Quebec were selected. The purpose of this contest is to showcase women who have demonstrated a sustained commitment to the advancement of women in either their personal life or their professional life.

This is a joint initiative by the Quebec City YWCA and the city of Québec.

Two outstanding women from the riding of Québec East, namely Jocelyne Gros Louis and Gérardine Fournier-Morin, made the short list for the May 6 gala.

Jocelyne Gros Louis is a woman of great charisma, passion and determination. Her social involvement started when, under the Indian Act, she was forced to renounce her origin and her rights after marrying a non-aboriginal. This prompted her to become an advocate for the rights of aboriginal women.

Jocelyne Gros Louis is also behind the establishment of the native friendship centre, where aboriginal families can find assistance in an urban setting. She was also the first woman to be elected Grand Chief of the Huron-Wendat nation, in 1992.

A great humanist and activist of conviction from the very beginning of her career, Gérardine Fournier-Morin was, in late 1995, a founding member of the first union in the counties of Montmagny and L'Islet, of which she was the first president. She was also the first woman to head the organization Jeunesse agricole catholique in Saint-Jean-Port-Joli.

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●(1415)

[English]

#### PRIME MINISTER

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister terrorized his own caucus with strong-arm tactics that were an affront to democracy.

*Oral Questions*

The Liberal government will not tell Parliament what the total cost of the gun registry has been so far. It also greatly underestimated the future costs of implementing and enforcing this legislation. Yet we are being asked to approve another \$172 million.

Is the Prime Minister proud of his schoolyard bullying tactics? Is he proud that he forced his own MP to burst into tears at the thought of having to ignore the constituents who elected her? Is he proud of his anti-democratic antics?

Taxpayers have been robbed for years to pay for this firearms fiasco but now it has become a symbol of the anti-democratic devices of the government.

The Prime Minister should apologize to his own MPs and Canadians. Better yet, he should take a walk in the snow before it is all gone. A Canadian Alliance government would have the guts and leadership to put an end to this mess.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### IRAQ

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the allied effort to disarm and end the regime of Saddam Hussein has begun. Notwithstanding the Liberal government's abandonment of our closest traditional allies, Canadians will be hoping for a successful end to the conflict in Iraq.

This morning the Prime Minister in his statement hoped that it would be a brief conflict. Would the Prime Minister avail himself of this opportunity to wish our allies a short and successful campaign?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we all hope that the war will be as short as possible with a minimum of victims on both sides. I think it is too bad. We have worked very hard to try to avoid a war and unfortunately the decision was made. It was the Americans' privilege and right to make that decision. We respect that.

We made a decision. They have known about it for a long time, and they have respected our decision. I hope that this war will be very short and that there will be a minimum of victims.

Of course I hope that the Americans will do as well as possible.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we are not neutral on this side and in this country. We are hoping for the success of the Americans, the British and their allies.

I want to address the anti-American comments that were made yesterday. The Prime Minister was forced to accept the resignation of his communications director for her anti-American statements, yet he refused to censure members of his own backbench for similar statements.

Which treatment will the Minister of Natural Resources receive? Resignation or approval.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said to the Canadian people and I said to the members of my caucus

yesterday that in a situation like that, we have to respect the decision of the Americans. They made their decision according to their own judgment. They have respected our judgment that is different from theirs.

We have been in communication with the administration yesterday and today, and it has been very cordial. The Americans knew before the war that wanted to be there, and they are very grateful that we are participating in the war against terrorism with our ships in the gulf and with the troops that will be available in a few months.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister should not be vague. He should make it clear that the statement of the Minister of Natural Resources is unacceptable.

This anti-American statement follows a long pattern of such statements from all levels of the Liberal government, from staff, from backbenchers and now from cabinet ministers. Many Canadians and many of our American friends are increasingly convinced that this is not mere sloppiness but Liberal strategy.

Why are remarks like this always targeted at the U.S. administration and never the regime of Saddam Hussein?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is not one day that we have not said that we are opposed to what Saddam Hussein is doing to his people in Iraq, since 1991. We were involved in 1991. This time we are not involved because in 1991 there was an approval of the UN and we were participated.

This year we said the same thing to the president, "If you have the approval of the UN, we'll be with you". Unfortunately, he did not get the approval of the UN with the resolution that was introduced by the President himself a few days ago, and we decided to do what we told them for a year we would do.

• (1420)

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is now reported that the missiles which Iraq fired today on the people of Kuwait are al-Samoud missiles, missiles which were supposed to be banned in Iraq, missiles which Saddam Hussein swore he did not have.

Will the government now reconsider its position and join the coalition of some 50 nations that support the disarming of Saddam Hussein or do we have to wait until Saddam uses a chemical or a biological weapon, which apparently he does not have, before we will join our allies and take action to disarm him?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our position has been clear from the beginning. We have absolutely worked as hard as we can with our American allies, with our British allies and with all communities in the world to bring this to a satisfactory solution at the United Nations process.

We will continue our work in the future with reconstruction and with humanitarian aid, but we do not believe that it is appropriate for Canada to be engaged in a military intervention at this time in these circumstances. We made that clear and we continue that as our strong policy.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has said that he has called world leaders related to the Iraq crisis, and I believe he has, but he also admits that he has never personally picked up the phone and told Saddam Hussein that we as Canadians oppose him and oppose his murderous regime.

The Liberals may laugh. It is now too late for the Prime Minister to pick up the phone, as I understand the lines may be down. He could do what the government of Australia has done and expel Iraqi diplomats, send them home to tell Saddam Hussein that he should step down and save his people. Will he consider sending those Iraqi diplomats home?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have worked very hard, more than any other nation, to try to bridge the gap between those who are supporting the UN resolutions and those who are not. We said that with a few more days or weeks and a precise target and deadline, we would have probably succeeded in the disarmament of Saddam Hussein and not have a war.

The Americans, British and others have decided that they prefer to attack right now. We have disagreed with them and we still disagree. We respect their decision but we are not part of this war.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq is an unjustified, illegitimate and illegal war that could have been averted through the continuation of the inspections, and we deplore this situation. However, despite the fact that the war has begun, the international community still has a role to play. We must now work to help the Iraqi population and to restore peace.

Could the Prime Minister tell us what Canada intends to do on the diplomatic front to ensure that Iraqi civilians will benefit from humanitarian assistance at the earliest opportunity?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we are working with other countries and with the United Nations to get ready to provide humanitarian assistance to the victims of this war. This is a role that Canada has always fulfilled and intends to fulfill again in this case.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister repeatedly pointed out that Canada has tried countless diplomatic avenues. Even though the Bloc Québécois did not always agree with the proposals made, the Canadian government must remain active on the diplomatic front. There are still some options left.

What diplomatic avenues does the Prime Minister intend to explore to strengthen the role of the United Nations, which should be the main architect when it comes to humanitarian assistance?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said, we are currently working with the United Nations. Our ambassador in New York, Mr. Heinbecker, contacted my office this morning to tell me that we are very active and that several countries are very interested in participating in the humanitarian relief efforts to help the civilian victims of this war which, I hope, will be as short as possible.

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

declared, a few days ago, that the minimum amount needed to ease the suffering of those affected by the war was \$123 million US over the next three months. However, to date, only \$40 million has been collected.

Does Canada intend to pay its share, set an example and urge others to follow its lead?

● (1425)

[*English*]

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has responded to the original initial appeal contingency planning by meeting its commitment of 3%. We have just received today an appeal from the Red Cross. We anticipate we will be receiving more appeals on humanitarian assistance. We will evaluate each one of them carefully and will have further news in the coming days.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, may we know how much money Canada has committed to giving? In the case of Afghanistan, Canada made public its participation right from the start. We must not forget that Iraq has a population of 23 million, 50% of whom are under the age of 15, and there are already one million chronically malnourished children.

Does Canada intend to pay its share and urge the rest of the international community to do the same?

[*English*]

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think Canada's commitment in Afghanistan very clearly shows its commitment to humanitarian and reconstruction assistance when it needs to be there. So far in Iraq we have provided up to \$40 million since 1990 in humanitarian needs for the refugees, the children and the people of Iraq who have required humanitarian assistance.

We are in the process of reviewing the proposals that are in front of us. There are many appeals that will be put in front of us. The first one arrived today, the Red Cross appeal. We are looking at that very carefully and I will have further news in the coming days.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has talked of respecting the American decision. What we would like of the Prime Minister is that he respect his own decision, the Canadian government decision enough, to ensure that it is not undermined or violated in any way by Canadian forces in the gulf participating either directly or indirectly in the war on Iraq.

Could the Prime Minister tell us, because there has been speculation to this effect, whether or not JTF2 is involved in any way in the war on Iraq?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not involved in the war in Iraq.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that approaches the kind of clarity we look for from the Prime Minister more often. Could he also tell us whether any Canadian frigate is escorting any vessel involved in supporting the war on Iraq?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP should understand that while Canada and the United States have reached a different conclusion on Iraq, it remains as true today as it was a week ago that the United States is Canada's strongest friend and ally.

This means that our commitment to jointly defend the continent is unchanged. It means that our commitment to ensure that the border is never a security risk for Americans is unchanged. It means that our commitment to the war on terrorism is as strong as ever.

Therefore the last thing we wish to do is that when the risk of terrorism gets higher we take our ships away. That is not what the government is doing.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has decided that Canada would not commit troops to the war on Iraq, but he remains silent on the legitimacy of the military intervention.

Is it the position of the Government of Canada that the military action taken by the United States, the United Kingdom and others is legitimate under international law?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not here to debate the legality or illegality of a situation.

The Americans have decided that they have the right to do what they are doing, and we decided that we would not participate. This is the legality for us. We are not participating because we said at the beginning, a year ago, that we would participate if we were to have the support of the Security Council. It was not achieved, so we are not participating and our position is very legal.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, so the Prime Minister has taken a position on principle, he just does not know what the principle is.

Yesterday the Minister of Foreign Affairs told reporters that Canada was working with the U.S. State Department to determine what would be required to rebuild Iraq.

My question for the Prime Minister is this. In those discussions, is Canada insisting that the United Nations and not the Pentagon lead the reconstruction effort? Could the Prime Minister tell the House what Canada is doing to vest the United Nations with the power to lead the reconstruction effort? I am talking here not just of humanitarian aid but of reconstruction which requires a new mandate.

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I hope that every country in the world that can do it will participate. I am very surprised that the leader of the Conservative Party is objecting to the Americans repairing Iraq. Of course they will be part of the program and we will be part of it. We will do it in collaboration with them and under the umbrella of the UN.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in the past 24 hours, France has said that if Saddam Hussein uses biological or chemical weapons against the American forces in Iraq, it will then support the U.S. efforts to remove Saddam Hussein.

If biological or chemical weapons are used, will Canada finally decide that enough is enough and join the effort to remove Saddam Hussein?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been very clear from the beginning that what we are trying to do here is to achieve a way in which we can work our way through this, with an international consensus as great as possible for not only the peace, which we now are unfortunately seeing erode, but for how we will come out of this.

I do not think it would be appropriate for the House or for a government at this time to pronounce on eventualities of how we might intervene in a military intervention which we have decided at this time and in these circumstances is not appropriate for us to participate in.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, forethought in crises is probably a good idea.

France has said that it may back away from its opposition to war. The House is supposed to have a vote tonight on whether the House believes that the Canadian government should support the war in Iraq.

Will we have a vote tonight or is the government going to back away from that scheduled vote on the war in Iraq so it can leave the door open over the weekend to change its mind to possibly support a war in Iraq like France is doing?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not the time to explain the rules of the House to the hon. member during question period but I am pleased to inform him that the motion today is indeed a votable motion.

As we all know, whips confer about these things and decide at what time the votes are to be taken. These are the rules of the House of Commons. They have existed for a long time, even before I was here and that is a very long time.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, during the war in Afghanistan, we learned after the fact that the joint task force 2 had, without our knowledge, taken an active part in the war. We learned of this fact when it took prisoners.

Can the Minister of National Defence confirm for us that this special unit will not take part in the conflict in Iraq, either now or in the coming weeks?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister just said, the JTF2 is not there. The special force is not there. I think that should answer the question.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is so much secrecy surrounding this force that last time, we had to wait for a photo on the front page of *The Globe and Mail* to confirm that the unit was in Afghanistan.

Is the answer given by the minister not the same thing? Is he saying that we will have to wait until we see a photo on the front page of *The Globe and Mail* for him to confirm that the JTF2 is in Iraq?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP House leader just congratulated the Prime Minister for being so clear on this. I do not know how we could be any clearer. It is a fact that the JTF2 is not there.

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[English]

**CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS**

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, when his communications director insulted the American president, at first the Prime Minister defended her. Two weeks ago when one of his members expressed her hatred for Americans and then joked about it on TV, he defended her. Now his energy minister has insulted again the elected leader of our principal ally and the Prime Minister has not yet reprimanded him.

When will the Prime Minister stand in his place and make it clear that these damaging anti-American remarks are completely unacceptable from members of his government?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister issued a communiqué clarifying his position. I was very happy that he did clarify it.

In the caucus yesterday I said to all the members of my caucus that it was not the time to have any remarks of that nature. I am sure that the great majority of them will understand that we have to respect the decision of the Americans, just as they respect our decision.

•(1435)

**Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, is that the same kind of clarification we got from the member for Mississauga Centre which was to joke about it?

The energy minister's remarks came after that caucus meeting. Why is it that his own members and ministers do not take him seriously when the Prime Minister disavows these anti-American slurs? Is it possibly because he engages in them himself in his own caucus meetings?

Why will the Prime Minister not stop his members from damaging the economic and strategic interests of Canadians with these uncalled for slurs against our closest friends at a time of great urgency?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the relationships between Canada and the United States are perfectly capable of strategic, economic, family and other unities that will withstand many remarks by many members.

I am confident that our relations are so strong we will even be able to withstand the slurs that the Alliance Party is constantly concocting, saying that Canadians are anti-American. They are creating this climate, not us. Why do they not stop their slurs?

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Defence confirmed that Canadian military personnel integrated with the special units under an agreement with other countries were under the command of American or British officers and, consequently, no Canadian officers were required.

Does the Minister of Defence not think that Canadian troops in such a context might once again end up being required to violate international rules, as they were in Afghanistan in connection with the treatment of prisoners?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois ought to understand, along with the NDP, that regardless of the fact that the U.S. and Canada have reached different conclusions with respect to Iraq, it is as true today as it was a week ago that Canada and the United States are the best of friends and allies.

We are therefore still working with the Americans as far as continental defence and the war against terrorism are concerned, including the one currently—

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

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Defence must realize his explanations lack clarity. I will ask him again: Is the minister telling us that he considers it perfectly normal, in the name of friendship, for Canadian soldiers under American command to violate international rules, as they did in Afghanistan in connection with the treatment of prisoners? Does he think that is all right? That is what I am asking.

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been having troop exchanges with our allies, be they British or American, for decades. It is completely normal for soldiers of one country to remain under the command of another in such circumstances. However, their own country, Canada in this instance, reserves the right to order its soldiers home, should it so choose. Since these are good allies and the soldiers are not in a direct combat role, Canada has decided to leave them where they are.

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[English]

**CANADA-U.S. BORDER**

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, border delays are increasing and the United States has no patience for a Canadian government that is openly hostile to it. Business leaders are showing their concern and are worried that the increasing border delays will shut down Canadian exports. Even Brian Tobin has said, "Our special relationship with the United States is by far our most important and vital one".

What steps is the Prime Minister taking to ensure our trading relationship with the United States is not threatened by recent events?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should be aware that we have been working very closely and cooperatively with the Americans for many months to develop contingency plans and have been planning in case of alerts such as we have now.

We have regular and ongoing reports which tell us that non-commercial traffic is moving smoothly and that there are some delays for commercial traffic. But let me quote someone who the member might be familiar with, someone from the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, "It is a problem, but it is manageable at this point". That is from Perrin Beatty who is the head of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters association.

• (1440)

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise Canadians are worried about potential damage being done to our trade relationship. The same person the minister quoted, Perrin Beatty, the CEO of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, has added his voice on behalf of industry.

Some \$1.5 million worth of goods are carried across the border every minute. That is 14 million trips a year and one crossing every 2.5 seconds. That means 90% of our trade may be threatened by a slowdown at our borders.

What concrete steps is the government taking to curb the hostility against the U.S. and protect this special relationship?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only hostility that is trying to be created is by the member and his party opposite. In fact they have been part of the blame Canada crowd trying to tell everyone that our borders do not function, while we have been working with the Americans to ensure that they do, because that is in the interests of both American business and Canadian business. We are working together to keep our borders open and functioning during these stressful times.

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**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Environment, myself, the Caribou Commons Project and the Gwich'in people have lobbied hard for years about not drilling in the 1002 lands of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

There was an important vote in the United States senate yesterday. Could the Minister of the Environment please report to us on this very important vote in the United States senate?

**Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report to the House that the United States senate, in a 52 to 48 vote, eliminated the authority to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from the draft budget resolution.

I caution members this may not be the end of this issue. I would like to say the Canadian government remains determined to ensure that the views of the Gwich'in people and the people of Yukon are put before the lawmakers in Washington and that we pursue this as hard as we can.

I would like to end by thanking the hon. member for his consistent work on this issue which has been so effective, both here and in Washington.

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**IRAQ**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is no justification in law for George Bush's war. The majority of international legal experts agree on that. Article 51 of the UN charter is clear. So is Kofi Annan. Pre-emptive strikes are not in conformity with the UN charter and therefore are illegal.

Does the Prime Minister share this view, and if so, why is he so timid about saying so?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States and the United States administration have made it very clear that they are taking steps in self-defence which are authorized under United Nations resolutions which they have cited as legal reasons in support of their position.

The Prime Minister has made it very clear that Canada's decision was made both on the basis of analysis of the legal situation and also the right political climate in which intervention is appropriate in the circumstances.

We have made our decision. They have made their sovereign decision in their right to make their decision about their self-defence. We respect that and we respect the fact that they consider the decision we make is our sovereign decision.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the question is about the illegality of this war.

Even Henry Kissinger agrees that pre-emptive strikes are not permitted under international law, but not our Prime Minister and not our foreign affairs minister. So much for being the great defenders of the United Nations.

Thirty-one Canadian professors of international law, the UN Secretary General, and Henry Kissinger for heaven's sake, have no hesitation about saying that the war in Iraq is illegal. Does the government agree, yes or no?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this government made its decision based upon whether or not it was appropriate for us to participate in military intervention in Iraq in circumstances where we considered all legal and all political considerations, including those about the preservation of the Security Council system which we consider appropriate and important. We considered all matters in which we could make a helpful contribution to the preservation of peace in the world.

That is what guides us, not a discussion of legal principles. Those are very important. We regard our legal principles as key, but they are a part of an important process whereby we make decisions in terms of Canada's interests and Canada's sacred—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Saint John.

*Oral Questions*

●(1445)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, now that our ships tasked to Operation Apollo are in fact operating in a theatre of war, our forces are at risk and deserve the chance to protect themselves from being the target of hostiles.

Will the Minister of National Defence advise whether these troops have been given permission to take pre-emptive action against any and all threats within their sphere of operations?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I share entirely the hon. member's concern for the safety and security of our troops in the gulf. We are defending our allies against terrorist attacks. The risk of terrorist attacks has gone up in recent days and we are definitely very concerned about their safety and security. Without getting into operational details, I can inform the hon. member that they do have robust rules which will allow them to defend themselves against a number of conceivable attacks.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it has now been confirmed that Iraq has missiles and possibly drone aircraft that would be capable of carrying biological and chemical warheads.

Will the Minister of National Defence confirm whether or not there are sufficient chemical suits on board the Canadian ships that would protect each and every crew member in the event such weapons were used?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is appropriate, given security concerns, to enter into every conceivable threat that might fall upon our ships. I can assure the hon. member as I said before that I share her deep concern that every possible measure be taken to enhance the safety and security of our soldiers, sailors and airmen. These measures have in fact been taken.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, because of their inadequate night vision capability, the Sea Kings are unsafe. In Operation Apollo they must approach within hundreds of yards to identify a ship at night despite the risk of being shot down. This deficiency has also cost lives in search and rescue operations.

The minister says the Sea Kings' night vision equipment will not be replaced until the new helicopters are brought in but that is not going to happen for several years. Why has the minister ignored the life and death concerns of the very people who know best, those who are serving as crews on our Sea Kings?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to answer a question in 30 something seconds when the question is so riddled with factual errors.

I might just say that I have been assured by the chief of defence staff, who himself used to fly helicopters, that the Sea Kings are safe. The same was said by three helicopter pilots that I consulted this morning.

In terms of the hon. member's contention that they are not safe, even the Montreal *Gazette* yesterday, in response to those criticisms, carried a headline "Sea King criticism 'doesn't fly'".

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have the report here. The minister should have looked at it because it is written by those people who are involved every day with the Sea Kings. They say, in fact, that there are several problems.

Let us look at them. The only Sea King with the three ships in the gulf has been grounded. The government is spending a fortune to send over another one. Yesterday, we found out that the Sea Kings cannot fulfill many missions they are asked to fulfill and an internal report says that the lives of our air crews are at risk.

In the face of all of this, how can the minister just stand there and say everything is fine, and continue to put the lives of our Canadian men and women at risk?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult enough to answer when there are so many factual errors, but when there are about 17 questions, it becomes even more difficult.

For the reasons I have already given, I have received every assurance from sources more competent than the hon. member that these aircraft are indeed safe. It is always a risk when one flies, whatever the vehicle may be. These helicopters have carried out more than 2,000 missions in the gulf area and they have done so with exemplary success.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IRAQ**

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq highlights the immense vulnerability of civilians. The International Red Cross launched an urgent appeal yesterday to collect funds to assist the victims of the war.

Given this urgent appeal by the Red Cross, does the Canadian government intend to become more involved and surpass its usual obligations in order to minimize the terrible consequences of this war?

●(1450)

[English]

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said very clearly that Canada has already provided assistance to Iraq through contingency planning efforts, assistance that goes to the UNHCR, to the world food program, and to UNICEF. We have just received the Red Cross appeal today. We are taking it under very serious consideration and we will do more.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what is the Canadian government planning to do to ensure that other members of the international community participate in Red Cross efforts to help the victims of this war?

[English]

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said, we work with a number of UN partners and we will be receiving a number of appeals. We have just received an appeal from the Red Cross. We are taking a very serious look at that. Canada is doing its part and will do its part in humanitarian aid.



*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Works has been silent while his confused colleague at defence tries to explain away 10 years of Liberal foot-dragging on the maritime helicopter project.

Public works, as the contracting agent for the government, will be in defiance of Treasury Board guidelines and its own supply manual if it does not underscore best value in the upcoming helicopter contract documents.

Why will the minister not guarantee the basic principle of best value and that it will be followed in that procedure?

**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 Minister of National Defence made a major step toward the end of last year when he dealt with the bundling issue.

We are now at the letter of interest stage. We expect reactions to that very shortly and we will proceed as rapidly as possible according to each and every rule to ensure that every legal step is properly taken.

We will not fall into the trap of taking a misstep that could end this whole contract in a set of litigation that would last for 40 years.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there we have it, some more bungling of the contract right there.

For 10 years the Liberal government has used weasel words—and we heard some more—and confusion to deflect attention from its political interference. It debundled it to start with. Now it is taking credit for putting it back together. The Liberal government broke it.

We have now learned that there will be a prequalification process never seen before where a favoured hand picked contractor will be told what is wrong with the bid so it can be changed. That is insider trader. Is the public works minister prepared to put his job on the line when this politicized process hits the courts?

**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 will ensure that every step is taken according to procedure and according to law so that every rule is properly respected, and the end result will be in the best interests of Canadian taxpayers.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if there is an outbreak of disease among animals, the federal government has a system for working with local authorities to contain and deal with the outbreak. Such tragedies are inevitably local.

My question is for the Minister of Health. In the case of an outbreak of an infectious disease among humans, do we have a similar plan for working with local authorities?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, such emergencies begin at the local level. Health Canada works to ensure that all levels of government are prepared to respond in a coordinated fashion to local health emergencies and outbreaks of disease. In fact, since September 11, 2001, we have spent about \$90 million to boost our capacity on the ground across the country.

There are now national contingency plans for specific illnesses, such as influenza or smallpox. Our surveillance system picks up information about local risks, and our centres for emergency preparedness and disease prevention work with provincial authorities to respond. Finally, Health Canada laboratories and scientists provide expertise and advice to provincial authorities to identify specific risks.

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**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, there are reports today that the CBC pulled a story on Canada Steamship Lines because of pressure from Earncliffe where much of the former finance minister's leadership team works. The CBC is supposed to be an arm's length agency that is supposed to be immune from this kind of pressure.

I ask the Minister of Canadian Heritage, what will she do to ensure that leadership candidates cannot just spike stories that they do not like?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I will assure the hon. member that the pressure to spike the story certainly did not come from me. Second, may I please reinforce the fact that any decision in the newsroom of the CBC must be the exclusive decision of the CBC.

• (1455)

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the second part of her answer.

The CBC did plan to do an investigative piece on CSL and promoted it heavily. It did this in spite of the fact that the former finance minister's handlers over at Earncliffe had a problem. There was no problem, just a couple of calls from Elly Alboim to his good friend Tony Burman, the editor in chief of CBC News. Suddenly, the story is yanked.

I want to know how CBC journalists can do their jobs when they know that kind of pressure can be applied to their bosses?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with the member. I do not think there should be any kind of pressure. That is why I would certainly not cause any interference or have any involvement in any news decisions that are made by the CBC. It is the decision of the CBC's news department, and so it should remain.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IRAQ**

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the war has begun. Even if Canada is not participating in it, the government has a duty to take steps to protect itself against potential repercussions that could affect our country.

Could the Prime Minister tell us whether the special cabinet committee struck following the events of September 11 has planned any specific actions to deal with the current situation?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the House that the committee the hon. member is referring to is carrying on its activities to ensure the safety and security of Canadians. We are not exclusively concerned with the issue of Iraq. Since September 11, 2001, we have introduced a wide range of measures to ensure safety in Canada, and will carry on our work in this area, in conjunction with all ministers responsible, to ensure the safety and security of Canadians.

\* \* \*

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LA FRANCOPHONIE**

**Mr. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is International Day of La Francophonie in Canada. Could the Secretary of State for Latin American, Africa and la Francophonie set out the objectives pursued by Canada within the international Francophonie?

**Hon. Denis Paradis (Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by wishing a happy Francophonie day to all. Canada is a proud partner of la Francophonie. This pride is expressed more specifically, at the cultural level, through the active part we take in international network for cultural diversity of our colleague, the hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage.

It is also expressed, politically, through the promotion of values that Canadians hold dear, values of democracy, human rights and good governance contained in the Bamako declaration.

Finally, we pay tribute to our friend, His Excellency Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS**

**Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the health minister has been less than forthcoming about the Joanne Meyer Ferrari contract of her predecessor. I would like to give her the opportunity today to answer that question. If she cannot, I would ask her for a commitment.

When will the minister get the report from the department and will she commit to present it here in the House.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said over and over again, my Health Canada officials are gathering the facts in relation to the contracting question. I expect to have that factual record presented to me in very short order.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday we learned that Canadian development money for Afghanistan was going to warlords from the northern alliance. However, we know that these warlords will hinder any improvements to the status for Afghan women. It is the northern alliance that is responsible for raping women and forcing them to wear the burka.

Could the Minister of International Cooperation assure us that money that Canada gives will, in fact, be used to improve living conditions for the people of Afghanistan, including women?

• (1500)

[English]

**Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday we announced \$250 million of new funding for Afghanistan in four priority areas: supporting rural livelihoods and social protection, managing natural resources, strengthening security and the rule of law, and providing continued support to the government of Afghanistan.

We are doing specific things to promote women's rights in Afghanistan. We have spoken out often about the human rights violations against women and about the rights that women and children in Afghanistan need to have. We support the courageous efforts of the many of the small Afghan NGOs that are operating and providing education in health to women in Afghanistan. We support the Afghan's ministry of women's affairs and we have contributed \$1 million to the United Nations.

\* \* \*

**IRAQ**

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister who has said that he respects the decision of George Bush to launch this illegal and immoral war on the people of Iraq, a war that is criminal under international law.

If the Prime Minister will not condemn the war, will he at least agree that the use of depleted uranium and cluster bombs would be inhumane and illegal? Will he call on both Bush and Blair not to use those weapons that have already taken such a terrible toll on innocent human lives in Iraq and elsewhere?

*Points of Order*

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is appropriate for the Canadian government to pronounce on the use of certain weapons that have not been used. I do not think that we are in a position to direct the Americans as to how to prosecute a campaign that will be extremely difficult for them. I think it is appropriate for us to be respectful of their decision.

At the same time we are confident that the Americans will conduct themselves in accordance with the rules of humanitarian war to which they are obliged under the Geneva conventions and other conventions. Our American allies have always observed the rules of law and the rules of international law with respect to conflict and we expect that they would do so in this case as well.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for the Minister of National Defence which requires a yes or no answer.

Do all Canadian troops on ships in the gulf have gas masks and chemical suits to protect them against potential chemical or biological attacks? Yes or no.

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I already answered that question for the colleague of the right hon. member. I do not think it is appropriate for me to deal with such issues in public, but given the right hon. member's past as a prime minister and his long service to Canada I would certainly be happy to have a private conversation with him and say more to him than I can say in public.

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**MULTICULTURALISM**

**Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Friday, March 21, is a special day around the world. In 1966 it was declared by the United Nations as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Would the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women tell the House what her department is doing to raise the awareness of Canadians about racism?

**Hon. Jean Augustine (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), Lib.):** Indeed, Mr. Speaker, March 21 is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This is recognized in Canada. We know that the vast majority of Canadians strongly condemn racism and discrimination.

This is the seventh year of our campaign with young people, "Racism. Stop It!". They have produced videos. They have worked in their schools and in their communities to make sure that they pass on messages of respect about their culture and messages that they share with each other.

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**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** I wish to draw to the attention of all hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Honourable Elaine Taylor, Minister of Justice and Minister of Business, Tourism and Culture for Yukon.

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

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government House leader if he could give us the business for the rest of today, tomorrow, and next week. Also, could the government House leader, if he were to schedule a day for the Senate amendments to Bill C-10A, advise the House of his intention regarding time allocation since he already has given notice of time allocation on Bill C-10A? Could he also advise the House, so we could all know what we are doing this afternoon, whether his whip, using the rules, will defer today's vote to a future date?

● (1505)

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is almost an open House leaders' meeting this afternoon. I am pleased to inform the House that this afternoon we will definitely continue with the opposition day motion. Let the record be very clear about that fact.

Tomorrow we will call Bill C-20, the child protection bill, followed then by Bill C-23 respecting sex offenders. On Monday we shall have an opposition day or an allotted day. That is also the case with next Tuesday.

Pursuant to an all party agreement on concurrence in a ways and means motion to take place on Tuesday and the subsequent introduction of the budget bill, it would be my intention to call on Wednesday the budget bill 2003. Insofar as anything else that may occur, I am pleased to inform the House that the government fully intends to comply with all Standing Orders.

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**POINTS OF ORDER**

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, you will recall that yesterday in the House in answer to a question I undertook to deposit in the House a response of the Canadian embassy in Haiti to certain allegations or references that were made by the opposition. I would like to deposit that document at this time. It is the press release of Canada's policy regarding Haiti in response to the question I answered yesterday.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the document that was sought was not the press release which the Minister of Foreign Affairs is tabling. It was instead the record of the meeting that was referred to in the question by my colleague from Cumberland—Colchester. I am delighted that the minister has agreed to table the document requested. He made a mistake, perhaps, in understanding what was requested, but in carrying out the principle of his agreement to table the document that was requested, I would ask him now to put before the House of Commons the record of the discussion that was requested by the hon. member, and not simply a press release.

*Routine Proceedings*

**The Speaker:** The right hon. member for Calgary Centre is asking for another document, saying that this document is not the one he asked for. I am sure the minister will hear the member's representations, but he is entitled to table what he has presented without consent from the House. It is tabled and I would suggest that the right hon. member have a look at it and see if it does not contain something of what it is he is after. He and the minister can have a discussion about this and possibly get back to the House at another time.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark:** Mr. Speaker, we have had a lot of discussion of principle today. The Minister of Foreign Affairs took a decision in principle to table the document that was requested. He made a mistake and tabled the wrong document. I want him to honour the principle and table the document that was requested.

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I would have to consult the record, but I certainly tabled the document which I understood myself to say yesterday I would table. That is to say, I was asked a question as to whether or not there had been statements issued by our embassy in Haiti respecting certain activities of the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa. I said I would table the statement of our embassy in respect of those comments and that is the document I am tabling today, so I am somewhat mystified by the right hon. member. If he wants another document about another event and something else, he would have to ask for that in some way that I could understand what it is about before I could give a proper response.

**The Speaker:** As I suggested earlier, perhaps if the right hon. member were to pay a visit to the minister or vice versa they might be able to resolve this issue in a matter that is satisfactory to all parties, never mind just the two of them.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions with the other parties and I think if you seek it you will find unanimous consent to revert to routine proceedings so we could make a couple of changes to private members' business, as has been discussed among the whips.

**The Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

• (1510)

[*English*]

**CITIZENSHIP ACT**

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have two items. Bill C-343 is standing in my name and I would like to change that to the member for Okanagan—Shuswap.

**The Speaker:** First, is there agreement to allow Bill C-343 to be switched?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. John Reynolds:** I would like to introduce a bill for the member for Portage—Lisgar, who cannot be here today.

**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance) (for Mr. Pallister)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-416, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Youth Criminal Justice Act (sentencing principles).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is an act that amends the Criminal Code and the Youth Criminal Justice Act by removing the obligation of a court to consider with particular attention the circumstances of aboriginal offenders when imposing a sentence.

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

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**PARLIAMENTARIANS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-417, Parliamentarians' Code of Conduct.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill, parliamentarians' code of conduct, to ensure a high standard of conduct and transparency for all members of the House of Commons and Senate under supervision of a truly independent ethics counsellor.

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

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It seems to me that it is a rule of the House that a private member's bill cannot be introduced if there is already a government bill seized with the issue and I think that is the case with the code of conduct. I think perhaps this private member's bill just introduced should not be in order on that account.

**The Speaker:** Even if the hon. member is correct that there could not be such a duplication, and I am not convinced that this is the case, doing this off the top of my head without checking any authorities, the argument will have to be made later when we have had a chance to examine the bill. No one has seen it yet. We have an order to print it. Only the hon. member for Halifax has seen it. In fact, the Chair had a copy a second ago but I have not had a chance to read or compare. I am sure the hon. member will want that opportunity and then maybe he will come back and make another argument. We will deal with that another day.

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**CRIMINAL CODE**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-418, an act to amend the Criminal Code (criminal liability of corporations, directors and officers).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a bill to amend the Criminal Code, the purpose of which is to hold corporations, directors and company officers criminally responsible if they knowingly put the lives of their employees at risk.

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

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**PARLIAMENTARY EMPLOYMENT AND STAFF RELATIONS ACT**

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-419, an act to amend the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act (members' staff).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to amend the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act. The bill grants to all personnel employed on Parliament Hill the benefit of full trade union rights and protections which, unbelievably, they are presently denied.

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

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### FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

**Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Canadian Alliance)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-420, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the bill is entitled an act to amend the Food the Drugs Act. It is a short bill but a very important bill if Canadians are to lead the world in health care outcomes.

In 1997 Canadians sent a message to the government about freedom of choice in health care. Over one million people signed petitions demanding government respect their right and access to natural health products.

The standing committee of the 36th Parliament heard from Canadians and wrote an excellent report, with 53 recommendations, that was tabled in November 1998. The committee and the transition team report recognized:

The weight of modern scientific evidence confirms the mitigation and prevention of many diseases and disorders listed in Schedule A through the judicious use of NHPs.

It is time that the legislation and regulations reflect the prevailing science.

The bill would remove schedule A from the act and restore Canadians' right and access to natural health products that build healthy bodies and therefore healthy Canadians. This is a priority for many Canadians and I hope that it will be supported by all members of the House.

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

\* \* \*

● (1515)

### PRIVILEGE

#### FIREARMS REGISTRY—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Before we go to orders of the day, I wish to indicate that I am now prepared to rule on the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for St. Albert on February 27, 2003, concerning release to the media of information related to the main estimates 2003-04 before that information had been tabled in the House.

I would like to thank the hon. member for St. Albert for having raised this matter, as well as the hon. government House leader and the hon. member for St. John's West for their contributions.

The hon. member for St. Albert complained that a government press release provided detailed information concerning the breakdown of funds sought for the Canadian firearms program in the main estimates 2003-04. Further, he noted that a spokesperson for the Minister of Justice was cited in a report in the *National Post* as indicating that this detailed information would not be provided to the House until later in the month of March. The hon. member surmised

#### Speaker's Ruling

that the information would be included in the Department of Justice's "Report on Plans and Priorities", the main estimates part III, as they are commonly called.

In addition to this issue, the hon. member also drew the Chair's attention to a note in supplementary estimates (B) for 2002-03 which, he said, indicated that the sum of \$14,098,739 had been provided to the justice department out of Treasury Board vote 5, the contingencies vote. He indicated that if this money had been provided to make up for a shortfall in the funding of the firearms registration program, arising from the withdrawal of the request for funds originally contained in supplementary estimates (A) 2002-03, this would constitute a disregard of the will of the House and a contempt.

[Translation]

In speaking to these charges, the hon. government House leader informed the House that the \$14 million provided out of the Treasury Board Contingencies Vote had been used by the Department of Justice for drug prosecution and aboriginal litigation.

In a further statement on this question of privilege, made on February 28, 2003, the minister confirmed that these monies were indeed part of the incremental funding needed to address the core operational requirements he had identified, namely an increased workload in drug prosecutions and aboriginal litigation.

Given the minister's explanation, the Chair can consider this aspect of the matter closed.

[English]

Members seeking further information on the use of the contingencies vote funds have ample means at their disposal to obtain it. For example, members may, of course, seek such information from the President of the Treasury Board during question period or when she appears before committee. Alternatively, members may prefer to question individual ministers, parliamentary secretaries or senior officials testifying before committees on main estimates as to whether their particular departments or agencies have had to seek additional funding from Treasury Board via the contingencies vote.

The other point raised by the hon. member for St. Albert concerns the premature release of information. Our practice in this area varies greatly, depending on the nature of the information and the purpose for which it is presented to the House.

As the hon. member pointed out, previous rulings have made it clear that to divulge proposed legislation of which notice has been given prior to its introduction in the House is a breach of the privileges of the House. As I stated in a ruling given on March 19, 2001 at page 1840 of the *Debates*:

The convention of the confidentiality of bills on notice is necessary, not only so that members themselves may be well-informed, but also because of the pre-eminent role which the House plays and must play in the legislative affairs of the nation.

*Speaker's Ruling*

[Translation]

As well, all members are familiar with the requirement for the confidentiality of committee reports prior to tabling, which is set out in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, at p. 884.

• (1520)

[English]

Our practice also safeguards the confidentiality of all reports tabled pursuant to an act of Parliament or a resolution of the House, as provided for in Standing Order 32(1). With respect to annual reports, I refer hon. members to the statement made by Mr. Speaker Fraser on May 7, 1992, at page 10407 of the *Debates*.

In the present case, the information whose disclosure is under dispute was apparently made public as background material related to the main estimates. Those estimates were tabled in the House in proper form on February 26, 2003, and there has been no allegation that they were prematurely released to anyone outside this place. However the hon. member for St. Albert surmises that this background information might be included in the justice department's "Report on Plans and Priorities" when it is tabled later this month. It is on this surmise that he bases his allegation that the information was prematurely disclosed and it is on the charge of premature disclosure that his argument on contempt must rest.

Let us consider the context. First of all, it is important to recognize that there have been many attempts over the years to address the various frustrations encountered by members in undertaking the scrutiny of the main estimates. Some hon. members will remember a time when, along with what is commonly called the "Blue Book" in which parts I and II, namely the government expenditure plan and the main estimates, respectively, the government tabled the accompanying part IIIs. This additional blue book for each department and agency contained the detailed breakdown of all the votes listed in the main estimates. When members of Parliament complained that the detailed forecast of proposed annual expenditures left them awash with information but no better informed as to the strategic plans on which those expenditures were presumably based, the government responded by developing the current system of reports on plans and priorities.

The current form in which the "Reports on Plans and Priorities" are presented to the House resulted from considerable study of the business of supply by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs during the period 1995-98. Now tabled annually, the "Reports on Plans and Priorities" are described in the estimates documents as:

—individual expenditure plans for each department and agency (excluding Crown corporations). These reports provide increased levels of detail on a business line basis and contain objectives, initiatives and planned results, including links to related resource requirements over a three-year period. The RPPs also provide details on human resource requirements, major capital projects, grants and contributions, and net program costs.

[Translation]

"Reports on Plans and Priorities" provide details about the government's intentions not only during the current fiscal year, but also during the two following years. In addition, as the House has recently seen, they contain information about the budgetary requirements for the current year as reflected in the main estimates

and involving as well supplementary requests that have not yet been placed before Parliament. They are examined by committees in conformity with the provisions of Standing Order 81(7). It may be, given their relatively recent development and the recent experience that the House has had with them, that further consideration should be given to their format or presentation.

[English]

In one sense, then, it is reasonable to conclude that, like departmental annual reports and the reports of our committees, it is a breach of the privileges of this House to make public "Reports on Plans and Priorities" before they have been tabled as required. In the case before us, however, we are not faced with the premature release of the "Report on Plans and Priorities" of the Department of Justice, but only with certain information that is presumed to be included in it. This is information that complements the information provided to the House in the proper form in the main estimates. While our procedure with respect to documents is clear cut, our practices concerning information are less well-codified.

Where information relates directly to decisions that the House is, or may be, called upon to make concerning legislation or the recommendations of committees, obviously the rights of the House must prevail and so must be considered pre-eminent. In other cases, there is considerably more latitude. We do not expect, for example, that every piece of information contained in a department's annual report will have been kept from the public until that report is tabled in the House. This would require the government to conduct its business under a shroud of secrecy that would be contrary to the openness and transparency that this House and all Canadians expect.

The main estimates 2003-04 are already before the House. Making public supplementary information concerning estimates figures which are already available does not seem to me to represent an objectionable practice and it might be unwise for your Speaker to comment on how sensible it is to make available to the media, information that is not, at least simultaneously, made available to members.

Members may well believe that this information should have been included in the main estimates or perhaps tabled with them in a separate document. The Speaker is aware that both the manner in which the estimates material is brought before the House and the nature and extent of that information is of ongoing concern to many members. When, in due course, standing committees take up their study of the main estimates, they may wish to pursue the concerns arising from the case before us.

In light of our current practice, I do not find that the simple disclosure of this additional information constitutes a breach of the privileges of the House.

I would like once again to thank the hon. member for St. Albert for having raised this issue and for his continued diligent interest in the proper observance of the rules governing our financial procedures.

*Supply*

Finally, when our closest allies and long time friends finally take the tough steps of enforcing resolution 1441, refuse to help them and refuse to stand by their side.

Can he think of a better way to ensure that someone who is as crazy as Saddam Hussein could be encouraged? I think that is what has happened. He has taken encouragement from the fact that when the going gets tough, everybody just leaves. They leave the tough lifting and the tough going to the Americans and our allies.

Saddam said that it looked to him that the world was divided so he will continue doing what he has done for 12 years successfully. He will continue to use weapons that have been declared illegal and continue to abuse his own people in the most heinous ways and try his luck because it seems to be working. Canada certainly has not taken a firm stand against it.

**Mr. Paul Bonwick (Simcoe—Grey, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure which part of that to address considering the absolutely incredible number of inaccurate statements that the hon. member has made.

I should start with addressing the one that Canada has done nothing to address the potential breach of these UN conventions. That is simply not true. There is no country in this world that has been more aggressive in trying to get the allies together through the United Nations and the Security Council to address this means in a peaceful manner. That is the word that is escaping the Alliance. It is incumbent upon political leaders of this world and this country to pursue peace at all costs and exhaust all possibilities until such time as those possibilities have been fully exhausted.

Just as recently as today Dr. Blix made the statement that he felt he was making progress. Why would we not have let him for a few more weeks? The Prime Minister clearly showed leadership not only here in Canada on foreign policy but all around the world. When we talk about flip-flopping and inflammatory statements, one only needs to look at the Alliance.

I am sitting here looking at some of this stuff. I remember the last leader of the opposition talking about governing by consensus, governing by referendum or governing by plebiscite. Not only the majority of Canadians but the majority of people in the world have said to give peace a chance, not the warmongers across the way. Once again we see the official opposition flip-flop, whether it was the Reform, the United Alternative or the Alliance, whatever the case might be.

Obviously, Canadians recognize at face value the comments that are coming from across the floor. We have the Leader of the Opposition making statements that are erroneous and inaccurate. We have the member for Okanagan—Coquihalla make a statement that “we now find ourselves in the company of communist China, Libya, Iran and other tyrannies who oppose the liberation of Iraq”. Can we even tolerate such absolutely ridiculous comments from the opposition?

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

• (1525)

[*English*]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## TRANSPORT

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

That, in relation to its study of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway system, a group comprised of five government members and one member of each of the opposition parties of the Subcommittee on Marine Transportation of the Standing Committee on Transport be authorized to travel to Washington, D.C., U.S.A., from March 30 to April 3, 2003 and that the necessary staff do accompany the subcommittee.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

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

**The Speaker:** When the House broke for question period, the hon. member for Simcoe—Grey had the floor on questions and comments.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member what sequence of events one would follow if one wanted to encourage a rogue state and a delinquent dictator like Hussein. I think it would go something like this.

First, demand that Hussein disarm and then do nothing over the course of 12 years to actually enforce the demand.

Second, pass 16 or 17 resolutions in the UN demanding compliance from the Iraqi leadership to disarm and then do nothing to enforce the resolutions.

When the dictator of Baghdad gasses his own people and uses weapons of mass destruction, do nothing to take the weapons away.

When the UN Security Council votes unanimously for Iraq to disarm or face serious consequences, refuse to help our allies when they stand united in their efforts to pressure compliance.

When diplomatic efforts fail or if public opinion waivers, refuse to support our allies even in their efforts to get another tougher resolution through the council.

When the dictator of Iraq needs to hear a united, firm, unequivocal call to disarm or face military action, refuse to even take a position on the rightness or wrongness of that demand just in case someone opposes it later on in council.

### Supply

It boils down to one thing. The majority of members of Parliament in this House, the majority of people across this country, and the majority of people in the world want to source out a peaceful solution if at all possible. If that means a few more weeks, then by God it is incumbent upon us to exercise that option and pursue it, explore all other possibilities and support Dr. Blix. Dr. Blix was clearly indicating that he was making progress and if he required double, triple, quadruple the manpower or the resources, why not give it to him? Why not allow him to do what he was sent there to do?

I cannot help but feel a certain amount of shame for the members of Parliament from the official opposition.

● (1530)

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay.

It is with great sadness that I rise today because, last night, an illegal, immoral and illegitimate war began. It is a sad moment in the history of mankind. People all around the world are sad and many of them are worried.

In the last few weeks, I had the opportunity to meet people, including students at the École Arc-en-ciel in Lac-Saint-Charles, at the Polyvalente de Charlesbourg and at the Polyvalente Le Sommet. They told me: “Mr. Marceau, do whatever you can to prevent this war from happening. We do not want this war”. These young people said spontaneously, and not because they were prompted to do so by teachers or by some school board employee, that they were worried and that they wanted to avoid this war.

But, unfortunately, the war has begun. These students asked me: “What can you do as a member of Parliament? What influence do you have on this issue?” Unfortunately, I had to tell them that the government, through lack of leadership, refused to put this issue to a vote in the House. Considering what is at stake here, parliamentarians should have been given the opportunity to vote on this issue in the House.

The government should have taken the lead and given the hon. members the opportunity to vote on this issue. But they did not. It is only thanks to the Bloc Québécois that the elected members of Parliament have the opportunity to officially express their opinion on this war, by voting on this motion. Of course, we should have held that vote before the start of the war. But again, because of a lack of leadership, that vote did not take place.

The Prime Minister said that Canada would not participate in the hostilities, and we commend him for this. However, if we are to be consistent and logical, we need to take action to avoid being caught in the middle of this, which could very well happen. We have ships in the Persian Gulf and some of our troops, taking part in exchange programs with the U.S. and the British armed forces, are also over there. What this means is that troops with the Canadian flag on their uniforms will be called upon to take part in the war against Iraq, even though the government has said that Canada would not participate in that war. This is not logical.

It is crucial that the government recall our troops who are currently in the Persian Gulf, so that Canada will not be called upon to play an indirect role in a war that the people and the members of Parliament consider illegal, immoral and illegitimate.

The only invasion that should have happened in Iraq is an invasion of inspectors. With more inspectors and more time, we could have avoided this whole mess.

● (1535)

When we talk about war and dead people, be they soldiers, civilians, men, women or children, we are talking about waste and damage.

There should have been more inspectors and more time. Unfortunately, since the American government had probably decided from the beginning to take military action, this did not happen.

Now that this conflict has begun, the Government of Canada must insist on a cessation of hostilities. It must insist on this to avoid more lives being lost.

At the conclusion of the most terrible conflict in the history of humankind, the second world war, the world created an instrument, however imperfect—it was created by men and women and is thus imperfect by its very nature—and that instrument was the UN.

The UN was created to prevent such situations from ever happening again. The world created the UN to avoid pre-emptive wars, to ensure that might no longer made right and that conflicts would be solved in a peaceful and legal way, and no longer by force.

With the beginning of hostilities, unfortunately, the instrument that the world created, the UN, has suffered a serious blow.

Other solutions besides war would have been possible. Any unilateral action, any pre-emptive war is an illegal action. It is a breach of international law. However, the interpretation of the countries that initiated the strikes might be this. Martin Wolfe, of the *Financial Times*, summarized international law as seen by the Americans as follows:

The supreme law is the security of the republic—

We are talking here about the American republic. Too bad if the search for absolute security for the Americans means that others must live in absolute insecurity.

How dangerous it would be if this notion of international law won out over the multilateral and international approach, which should be the one guiding us today.

The beginning of hostilities will probably have consequences not only for Iraqi civilians and for Iraq itself, but also for the neighbouring regions. Several states are very unstable in the Middle East. The conflict between Israel and Palestine is still an open sore.

I am at a loss for words, and this does not happen very often. Because of these people who will die, probably by the thousands, and because of this destabilization of a situation that is already serious in the Middle East, this is not an auspicious day for humankind. It saddens me.



I will conclude by saying that it also saddens me that the government chosen by Canadians did not at least show leadership and allow parliamentarians in this House to vote before the beginning of hostilities to justify its refusal to take part in the conflict.

• (1540)

**Mr. Sébastien Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay, BQ):** Madam Speaker, despite pressure by the world community, despite millions of people protesting in the streets, including in my own region, and despite a lack of legitimacy, the United States has decided to wage a war.

First of all, I would like to emphasize the need to disarm Iraq. Indeed, this process was under way, thanks to the effective work of UN inspectors. Cooperation by Iraq suggested that peaceful disarmament was possible within a reasonable period of time.

It is also obvious that a political regime change in Iraq was desirable, and that it was a step that needed to be taken, but this in no way justifies the use of force. Members know very well that the overthrow of a regime is not seen by the UN as a motive for the use of armed force. If we were to intervene in all countries where a regime change is desirable, we would have our hands full. It is impossible to imagine the consequences.

I agree with the disarmament of Iraq, but it should be peaceful. The unfortunate aggression that started yesterday will have far-reaching consequences.

We must think first and foremost about the Iraqi people, who of course are those most immediately concerned. In a matter of hours, after only a few strikes, one civilian has already died and many have been injured. And this is only the beginning.

In addition to living under miserable conditions for a long time—Saddam Hussein is no stranger to this situation—these people will have to suffer through a war that may go on longer than expected and will inevitably see thousands injured, killed, widowed, orphaned, left homeless and traumatized.

Inflicting such harsh punishment on these people is an odd way of liberating them. Imagine what state the country will be in after this conflict. There is no doubt that we will have to participate in its reconstruction. But above all we must ease the suffering of these people during this war.

We must also think about the many families of the soldiers of the countries involved, who have seen their loved one for the last time, especially all those young children who will never see their father again except in a photograph. All these direct affects of the war should make us realize that we must do whatever it takes to avoid war. Only through diplomacy can we stop writing such dark chapters in the history of humanity.

This illegitimate war is hampering one that is justified, the war on terrorism. While we are going to great lengths to eliminate this kind of violence, by attacking Iraq the United States is providing terrorists with ammunition. Indeed this unjustified war may well give several potential suicide bombers the ammunition or the motivation they were lacking. I am not excusing them, but obviously the revolt caused by this aggression is a real powder keg.

### *Supply*

This unilateral military action sets a dangerous precedent. The message it sends is this: Let us use the UN when it serves our interests. Otherwise, let us ignore it. We must admit that recent events are a serious slap in the face for this institution and that its credibility has been jeopardized.

It is essential for the future that we maintain a balanced world order by respecting these institutions. We must not go back to the law of the jungle and ignore the international community. No country is more important than all the other countries put together.

The international community must approve any military action. Otherwise the interests of individual countries will take on too much importance in international relations, resulting in a climate of confrontation and suspicion that will be bad for the vast majority of countries.

• (1545)

This is why we cannot accept the statement made this morning by the Prime Minister, who said in essence that now that the war has started we must stop criticizing the Americans in order to avoid encouraging Saddam Hussein, and that now that the offensive has been launched we should only look after our own security.

No. I do agree that we must ensure our security, but that should not prevent us from seeing that there are thousands of people like you and me whose life could still be saved. We will only succeed, or at least we will have done everything in our power to succeed, if we espouse the cause of peace, if Canada joins with the many countries who are speaking out against this aggression and calling for this attack to stop immediately so that the inspection and disarmament process can resume in Iraq and be carried through to completion.

In conclusion, can such international pressure succeed? It is doubtful, but if we exercise pressure to quickly stop the bloodshed, we might sleep better tonight.

[*English*]

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to indicate that I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough East.

[*Translation*]

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the motion before us today, particularly to say that we cannot support the amendment as it stands.

It is very important to understand what the Canadian Forces are doing, and why they are doing it.

[*English*]

Before getting into the details of these matters I would like to situate this a little. Even though Canada and the United States have come to a different conclusion on the question of Iraq, it is as true today as it was a week ago that the United States is Canada's greatest friend and ally.

*Supply*

On things that really count we are with the United States the great majority of the time. For example, there is nothing more important than the defence of our continent. Since 1940, Canada and the United States have had a solemn pact to defend jointly our continent against aggressors. Since that time as well, Canada has undertaken to ensure that the northern flank of the United States, the northern Canada-U.S. border, should not pose a security risk for the American people.

More recently, following the events of September 11, Canada was with the United States all the way in terms of the war against terrorism.

There are three issues that this amendment deals with. First, it deals with the soldiers, sailors, airmen and women on exchange with allies, including the United States. Second, it relates to our presence in Qatar. Third, it references the ships in the Persian Gulf. I will deal with these three issues one at a time.

Long before the situation in Iraq developed we made commitments to our allies and we fully intend to honour those commitments. On the subject of exchange officers, let me put this issue in context. There are only some 30 people who could be affected. These individuals are filling positions like ship technicians, air crew and headquarters staff. None of these people are in a direct combat position and none are authorized to use force except in self-defence.

These secondments have been an important part of our defence relations with our allies for decades. I cannot think of a worse time to renege on these commitments. At best, it is not the message we want to send to our allies at this critical time. At worst, it could put the lives of our allies at risk. It could compromise the integrity and effectiveness of our allies' missions and could jeopardize the security and safety of their colleagues.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

I would like to make it clear that our personnel is under the responsibility of the Chief of the Defence Staff at all times.

[*English*]

In terms of the second issue, the presence of a number of liaison officers in Qatar, as I have already indicated, given Canada's decision regarding military action in Iraq, we are in the process of downsizing the number of people that we have in Qatar. We will not however be downsizing it to zero because we continue to lead the task force. We need some presence in Qatar to obtain the information necessary to carry out our role with this task force.

I come now to Canada's naval role. One has to understand that this goes back to our commitment to the war against terrorism. All members of the House will remember the horrific events of September 11, will remember Canada's response to those events, and will remember perhaps the ceremony outside the House of Commons where over 100,000 people showed up to mark our respect for those who were killed and our determination to join in this war against terrorism. We have been doing so since that time. At a certain moment we were the fourth largest contingent in Afghanistan in terms of the war on terrorism.

Canada's commitment to the international campaign against terrorism remains strong. As a consequence, we will not be removing our forces from the area. On the contrary, armed conflict in Iraq could lead to an increase in the terrorist threat. This is not the time to cut and run. This is the time to stand by our commitment to vanquish terrorism. Our contribution to the campaign against international terrorism has been and remains considerable, particularly on the naval side.

[*Translation*]

We currently have more than 1,200 members of the Canadian Forces deployed in the Persian Gulf. Two Canadian ships are en route to relieve HMCS *Winnipeg* and HMCS *Montréal* in that region.

• (1555)

[*English*]

Our ships are in the gulf to escort vessels transiting through the Arabian gulf and to protect them. Our ships are there to conduct maritime interdiction operations, to board suspected vessels to ensure that they are not carrying prohibited material or transporting terrorists. The outbreak of war in the region means that the terrorist risk may be even greater. For this reason, we will not remove our ships from the gulf.

Canada must be able to support and protect the military forces of those nations that are participating in or supporting the campaign against terrorism. If the ship of one of our allies comes under attack, members can be assured that we will certainly feel a duty to respond, and respond we will.

The fact that Canada was entrusted with this important responsibility speaks to the high quality of our navy and to its many accomplishments. Countries, including France, the Netherlands, Greece and New Zealand, have contributed ships to task force 151 and look to Canada for leadership and commitment. We will not let them down.

In closing, I want to commend the Canadian Forces for the superb commitment they have shown. They have proven themselves time and again. Whether on the ground, in the air or at sea, they have earned the respect of Canadians and our allies. We, the members of Parliament, should demonstrate solidarity and our support for their efforts and sacrifice.

I can assure members that we will not stand down from our commitments. We will not abandon the struggle for international peace and security and we will not abandon our allies if a serious security situation arises during these difficult moments in the region. It is for all of the above reasons that the government cannot support the proposed amendment to repatriate our members in the region.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I have a two part question. The first part is straightforward.

*Supply*

The Minister of National Defence says that Canada believes in standing up and fighting against terrorism. I want to know whether or not he believes that the fight against Iraq and Saddam Hussein is part of that or not. Does he believe that Saddam Hussein is part of a network of terrorism given his past efforts to help finance terrorists, to pay off, to finance terrorists' families who have terrorized Israel and murdered people because they happen to be Jewish? Does he not consider that terrorism and the efforts to get rid of Saddam Hussein as part of that effort?

Second, does the minister not understand that the government essentially has no position at all on Iraq because the government said that it would go to war if the UN Security Council voted yes? If France had not said outright that it would veto no matter what resolution was passed by the United Nations Security Council, then there would have been a vote. If the vote had gone eight to seven in favour of going to war, the Liberal government would have sent Canada's troops to war. If they had voted eight to seven against going to war, we would not go to war.

The government has delegated away its sovereign responsibility to decide whether or not to send troops into battle to the United Nations. That is the government's position. How can that be defended?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Madam Speaker, I do not think it would be appropriate at this time for me to comment on the debate that has gone on for many months about the linkages or lack thereof between the government of Iraq and terrorists, al-Qaeda. I do not want to get into that.

Suffice it to say, as the Prime Minister indicated today, it is the government's hope that the war be swift and that the casualties be minimized. The foreign affairs minister and the Prime Minister have spoken for Canada and have said very clearly that while we respect and understand the United States' position, we in this country have a different position. We have decided that we would not participate in military action in Iraq because it is not supported by the Security Council of the United Nations.

As the Prime Minister and foreign affairs minister have stated many times, that is the position of the government.

**Ms. Wendy Lill (Dartmouth, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his comments. The NDP is pleased to see the first step and the important step that the government has taken in terms of this war.

I and other members of the New Democratic Party would like to know whether the government and the minister are willing to make a statement about the legality of this war. At this point in time people such as former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger, who is hardly a defender of peace, are saying that a preventive attack on Iraq is inconsistent with international law.

It is important for the government to continue to move and for the Canadian people and nation to move in a proactive, positive, international fashion around this conflict. I would like to know whether the minister could make a statement now about the legality of the conflict that is taking place even as we speak.

• (1600)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The hon. Minister of National Defence has a minute and a half.

**Hon. John McCallum:** I will need less than that Madam Speaker, because these issues are straying somewhat far from the role of the minister of defence.

I am aware that the British and the Americans have a legal case for their war. Other international lawyers have different opinions. I will not assess, as a minister of defence and before that an economist, the competing merits of alternative views regarding international law.

**Mr. James Moore:** Madam Speaker, in my first two questions the minister did not answer either of them so I will give him the shortest question to answer. It is a yes or no answer.

In the fight against Saddam Hussein and his history of financing terrorist activities, does he believe that it is part of the fight against terrorism, yes or no?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Madam Speaker, I have already answered that question. I said that I would not enter into this debate because now that military action is underway, I will not comment on that debate regarding the link or the lack of a link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda.

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

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Order, please. I think the hon. members were given ample time to ask questions and comments. It is very hard for the Chair to listen to the answer when people are heckling back and forth.

**Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in this short period of time I would like to comment on three things: one, the war against terrorism; two, the weapons of massive destruction; and three, what happens next.

The problem with the war on Iraq is it is based on the dubious premise that disposing of Saddam Hussein is a significant step toward combating terrorism and ensuring world security. This is not to downplay the fact that Hussein is a cruel dictator and deserves absolutely no sympathy. However, in my estimation, there is a true terrorist threat to world peace and security that is far more menacing than Iraq, and that is Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network.

Most countries, excluding the U.S., have limits as to how much manpower and money they can afford to spend on extraterritorial military operations. In my view, it would be wiser to concentrate those limited resources on more pressing areas of concern, such as getting at the root causes of terrorism and capturing its most deadly practitioners.

Clearly, the U.S. has been traumatized by September 11 and operates out of a mindset that we in Canada have trouble comprehending. It has become frightened and cautious and its administration has certainly been spooked by terrorism.

Until September 11, Canada and the U.S. lived a somewhat charmed existence. The bad things seemed to happen to other people and other countries. Gwynne Dyer, in his book *Ignorant Armies: Sliding into War in Iraq*, calls it American exceptionalism. He said:

### *Supply*

The citizens of New York should have known that they were not so much exempt as lucky for the moment, but the powerful tradition of American exceptionalism misled them into thinking that invulnerability was their birthright.

The Americans have been shaken to their core. We should respect that fact and resist the temptation to call them names and impugn their motives.

From September 2001 until now, we have witnessed many twists and turns. Canada was and is a loyal ally in the war against terrorism. Even the much maligned France has been there for the fight against terrorism and as the French said post-September 11, "We are all Americans".

Domestically, Canada has spent significant sums of money on security and legislation. We have updated our laws and have given our security forces the tools that they say they need. In my opinion, some of the expenditures have been questionable and the encroachment on citizens' rights has been very aggressive at times. It is pretty hard to tell whether the gain in security has been worth it and really, only history will answer that question.

We are partners in Afghanistan and have participated in proportion to our resources. I would argue that is where we should remain focused and that is where the U.S. should remain focused. Osama bin Laden has not been captured and the al-Qaeda network has not been destroyed. They are likely in northern Pakistan and still quite dangerous to world peace.

The question is, however, how did a legitimate war on terrorism mutate into a war on Iraq? One day we seemed to wake up and there was an axis of evil with its three charter members: Iraq, Iran and North Korea. It almost appeared to be a campaign of propaganda.

All these regimes can be described as tyrannical, anti-democratic and oppressive, but they cannot be described as terrorists in the same sense as al-Qaeda. Nor have they ever been accused of state sponsored terrorism, such as Libya or Syria for instance.

The war on Iraq may be a lot of things, but let us not confuse it with the fight against terrorism.

There are several perverse ironies here, the effect of which may actually give comfort to the terrorists of September 11.

Saddam Hussein is a Shia Muslim in a secular Muslim state. He is the antithesis of bin Laden's vision of an Islamic state.

Bin Laden is a Sunni Muslim from the Wahhabi sect, which sees itself as the only true version of Islam. In addition to being down on infidels like you and me, Madam Speaker, they despise Shia Muslims and they despise Muslims like Hussein.

Bin Laden has tried to have Hussein assassinated twice. In a perverse sort of way, bin Laden will be cheering President Bush, who he hopes will succeed where he has failed, although I dare to say they do not have the same thing in mind when they talk about regime change. I have this perverse image of Osama bin Laden in some cave with a little aerial outside the cave tuned in to CNN and cheering on George Bush.

• (1605)

It is a strange world when enemies such as Bush and bin Laden are cheering for the same result.

This war against Iraq has nothing to do with the war on terrorism and might just be counterproductive. In my view, if the U.S. does not stay focused on bin Laden and his network, he may well enhance the risk of further terrorist attack and give al-Qaeda and others like them comfort.

The war on Iraq will likely exacerbate hatred against the United States, Israel and the west. Iraq will fracture along ethnic religious lines and give encouragement to one of the other members of the axis of evil, Iran. Already we hear of Shia Muslims crossing into Iraq at the Iran-Iraq border to finish off some business left over from the last 12 or 15 years.

In a post-war scenario, the U.S. occupying force will likely control Baghdad, but power will decline in inverse proportion to its distance from Baghdad. How strange it would be that Iran will also be cheering that President Bush has some success.

Having argued that the U.S. has lost its focus on that which threatens it the most, what then is the point of this war? If it is not terrorism, what is it? The argument is that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction and is a threat to his people and his neighbours. Some might even argue that he has the ability to transport these weapons and do damage in the U.S. or sell them to terrorists.

Weapons of mass destruction come in three categories: nuclear, chemical and biological. The big one is nuclear. That is basically 98% of the game. It is powerful, very destructive and with a good delivery system can attack anyone, any place, any time.

The flaw in the argument is that no one in the Bush administration believes that Saddam Hussein has a viable nuclear weapons program. He may have bits and pieces here and there, but he cannot deliver them. The weapons inspectors have that one pretty well nailed down. If he does not have nuclear weapons, does he have biological or chemical weapons?

The U.S. has some basis for concern on this score as the U.S. sold the stuff to Hussein in the first place. As Dwyer in his mythical question to President Bush asks, "Mr. President, how can you be sure that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction?" The answer, "We kept the receipts". The U.S. sold him this stuff in order to stalemate the Iran-Iraq war. The problem is that the weaponization of this stuff is very difficult. It is useful in confined spaces such as battlefields and little villages, but not nearly as effective as nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Saddam Hussein has no nuclear capability and his chemical and biological capability is severely curtailed, so where are the weapons of mass destruction that warrant going to war? Why would the world's only superpower start a war on those grounds? It does not make any sense.

*Supply*

The Prime Minister has tried to make the point that the Americans have already won the war. For 12 years there have been overflights. There are overflights and there are military satellites. Saddam Hussein cannot blow his nose without the Americans knowing what kind of kleenex he used.

For 12 years there has been a form of sanctions and presumably the coalition forces have a pretty good idea of the goods that are going into and out of Iraq. For 12 years on and off weapons inspectors have been playing hide and seek.

I appreciate the president is frustrated and is impatient, but there have been results. We saw missiles actually being destroyed. It is also a great deal less risky and less expensive to play cat and mouse than to start a war. What is the rush? This could go on for years, I am perfectly prepared to admit that, but during all of that time the mouse cannot run anywhere.

Again if this is not a war about terrorism, and it is not about weapons of mass destruction, and it is not about inspections, what is it about? It is just speculation as to what it is all about, but on speculation, I am not prepared to recommend going to war.

• (1610)

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's statement that he is not prepared to go to war. I certainly expect that most Canadians would look for another option.

I would ask him if he would have been prepared to continue the sanctions against Iraq, as well as the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi men, women and children. It sounds to me as though that is his alternative, that we just leave the status quo in place, continue to ignore reality and allow the Iraqi regime to rape, pillage and murder its own citizens by gassing them in the streets of their own towns.

That apparently is not a problem for the member. I would like to know if the status quo is just fine.

**Mr. John McKay:** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member has to realize that this is a choice between quick death or slow death. It is utterly naive to believe that this war will be without civilian casualties.

I do not frankly know how many deaths sanctions have caused over the course of a number of years but it certainly has been a degraded existence for the Iraqi people. I am certainly prepared to concede that. However when bombs are dropped on people, it would be extremely naive to think there would not be collateral damage.

We have a very unhappy equation here. Would it be better to kill a lot of people quickly or a few less people more slowly?

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the opposition complains that we are anti-American because of our stand to not participate in the war. In 1956, during the Suez crisis, the U.K., France and Israel attacked Egypt. The U.S. government was the only government opposed to the invasion. It even threatened to blow up British ships in the Mediterranean. Now they are best buddies.

Some people think by Canada staying out of the war now, it will create such animosity between us that the Americans and Canadians will be fighting forever as enemies. If the U.S. and England were

able to unite the day after the war, why can we not support each other to build Iraq after what happens, and continue on to be good friends?

Could my hon. colleague comment on this relationship between the U.K. and the U.S. now?

• (1615)

**Mr. John McKay:** Madam Speaker, I know there is some concern in Canada about the relationship we have with our American neighbours and in some respects that is a well placed concern. However I dare say that it was true with former Prime Minister Trudeau when he had some differences with former President Nixon but we seemed to get over it.

Similarly we had differences with former Prime Minister Thatcher from time to time but I dare say we got over it.

We have a constellation of values that is very similar and that constellation of values is one that I think we need to rely on and we will.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Scarborough said that there is only speculation about why the United Nations would go to war. Here is a theory. Because Iraq has violated United Nations Security Council resolution 1441, the violation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 allows the use of force in response. The current Liberal Prime Minister said that in *The Guardian* in Charlottetown. That is rationale.

Could the minister for Scarborough comment on whether he disagrees with his own leader?

**Mr. John McKay:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the elevation to minister and if I could learn about that, it would be good.

We are into a realm of speculation as to why go into this war at this time. Clearly there was a cascading series of resolutions which ended with 1441. I think there are something in the order of 14 or 17 resolutions that have built up over time. Ultimately I think they would lead.

The question here is whether we are achieving the goal of those resolutions, which is disarmament. There was some considerable evidence that they were achieving some level of disarmament, not as happily or quickly as President Bush would have liked, and it was not costing any lives or creating divisions among a variety of countries. There was a means by which they were disarming.

I would have liked it to be faster. It was not happening as quickly as the President liked.

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague from Matapédia—Matane.

### Supply

Yesterday, at 9:35 p.m., the first U.S. missiles reached their targets in Baghdad. These targets of opportunity were fired on in an effort to eliminate the Iraqi regime and more particularly Saddam Hussein, his sons and his senior officials. These people appear to have survived. The only victim was a Jordanian citizen. He was the first victim in a war that will cost the lives of hundreds if not thousands of women and children, all innocent victims.

Today, we find ourselves in a situation that could have been avoided. With resolution 1441, which had been adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council, Iraq could have been disarmed in a peaceful way. In a speech he made yesterday morning, the chief UN inspector, Hans Blix, stated in a resigned voice that progress had been made and that he was sorry to see all his good work annihilated by the impending war being initiated by the Americans and the British.

Pursuant to the resolution, Iraq would have had to let UN inspectors in. Before leaving Iraq, these inspectors had found no trace of any chemical or nuclear weapons. Destruction of the few Al-Samoud 2 missiles that had been found in Iraq had begun.

Yes, Saddam Hussein has made his people suffer and is still making them suffer. He is a small local dictator whom we must condemn. But this is not a good enough reason to make war when the international order is not threatened. The action taken yesterday by the Americans and their allies was unilateral.

We set up structures such as the UN and the Security Council, which are aimed at maintaining international order and ensuring that the major powers come to a unanimous agreement before proceeding with economic or military sanctions against a state. Unfortunately, and despite the positive effects of inspections in Iraq, the United States and their allies still decided to act unilaterally, which threatens international order.

This precedent is very significant. We now have a new kind of war, the pre-emptive war, that is, attacking a state that might attack us one day. What will be the next step? Will Israel invade the neighbouring Arab countries? Will China attack North Korea?

This principle is quite different from the one that prevailed until last night, at 9:35 p.m. The old principle allowed military intervention against a state only if it had violated the sovereignty of another state. Let us call this the rule of the musketeer, "One for all and all for one".

Indeed, in 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, the other states of the world had the moral and legal right to make war on Hitler. The same happened in 1990 when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. A massive international coalition was created to force Iraq to withdraw. The coalition and the military intervention of January 1991 were justified on moral and legal grounds.

Today, this is not the case at all. The American intervention is illegal because Saddam Hussein did not attack anyone. I am not the only one to think this way. The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, asked the United States and Great Britain to quickly put an end to the war in Iraq, saying that it was not justified in any way and that it was a serious political mistake. The same goes for China, which accused the Americans of violating international standards of conduct. The spokesman for the Chinese department of foreign affairs said:

The Iraq issue must be returned to political settlement mechanisms within the framework of the United Nations.

• (1620)

He stressed that the military offensive in Iraq had begun despite opposition from the international community.

In January, I polled all my constituents. The question was very simple: "Are you in favour of a military intervention in Iraq?" To date, I have received over 1,200 answers, and 85% of respondents say they completely oppose military action.

These are very serious times. In January, my constituents said they were overwhelmed by the possibility, now a reality, of armed intervention in Iraq. They said that we should not get involved in other people's affairs, and they absolutely opposed Canada's taking part in such a war.

The result could therefore not be clearer. People said they were fully aware that Iraq was not a threat to us.

I would like to read some of these comments. Suzanne Tremblay, aged 38, wrote:

Why, in the year 2000, can we not find other solutions than resorting to violence? We are forever telling our kids not to resort to violence—

Gilles Gagnon, aged 48, advised George Bush, and I quote:

There is a way to disarm Saddam without making the Iraqi people suffer. Use your imagination.

Jocelyne Tremblay, aged 60, said:

Negotiation is preferable.

Erika Dioskali said:

What right do we have to invade another country or interfere in its affairs when we have not been attacked?

Lisette and Alain Tremblay, aged 53 and 57, said:

If there is a war on Iraq because Saddam has weapons of mass destruction, all countries with such weapons should also be attacked.

Yolande Gendron said:

Peace does not come out of the end of a gun.

Finally, Normand St-Gelais, aged 47, said:

No to war. Even if Iraq has weapons of mass destructions, it is not the only country that does.

Members can see how astute and logical are my constituents. They think, and rightly so, that this illegal war is unjustified. Many of them wondered if controlling oil did not have something to do with it.

Of course, the main justification given by the U.S. and Britain is the fact that Saddam Hussein is a dictator who has brutalized his people. I am not calling this into question. However, it needs to be said that the inspections were producing results and no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq up until yesterday. The fact that this is a unilateral action makes this conflict illegal and Canada must not get involved in this war, and even more importantly, we must not condone this intervention, which is in no way justified at this time.

In the last hours we have witnessed explosions over the Iraqi and Kuwaiti skies live on television. There is only one thing to say: it is terrifying.

I urge all members of the House to support the Bloc Quebecois motion, which reads as follows:

That this House call upon the government not to participate in the military intervention initiated by the United States in Iraq.

We need to think about after the war. Members will recall that after the first war in Iraq, in 1991, the UN imposed a military embargo against Iraq to prevent it from importing any more weapons. Everyone supported that. However, there was also an economic embargo, and Iraqi civilians suffered enormously. Iraq could no longer import certain products that were designated as “dual use products”, in other words, products that could be used for both harmless and military purposes.

Take chlorine, for example. Chlorine can be used to manufacture bombs. However, the proper and normal use of chlorine is in treating water to make it potable. Because of the economic embargo, Iraq could no longer import chlorine. More than 50,000 civilians have died since 1991 due to disease and malnutrition.

Men, women and children who had nothing to do with the war have died. We must keep this terrible fact in mind during the reconstruction of Iraq to avoid repeating it.

•(1625)

Do you know what an employee of the House said to me this morning? He said that we all had a problem, a sickness: we no longer have a heart. Let us show him today that we still do have a heart, and let us take the legal and moral high road. We must say no to this war. Someone has already died. There will be more deaths. Iraqis will not allow their country to be invaded without standing up for themselves. They will defend their territory, their women and children—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** I am sorry to have to interrupt the hon. member for Jonquière, but unfortunately her time has expired. The hon. member for Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia.

[English]

**Mr. John Harvard (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments made by the hon. member from the Bloc Quebecois.

I have heard from the other side, particularly the Alliance members, that they have a great fear that the Americans will take great umbrage at our decision to stay out of the war. Let me say that I have much greater faith and respect for the Americans than that. The Americans have a long-standing and very deep democracy. While they may be disappointed with our position, I can assure the House that they will respect it. I think that we will remain steadfast friends for a long time to come.

I also want to say that we as Canadians take pride in the fact that we are a nation of laws. We follow the laws and I think that we have to behave in the same way when it comes to international law. In this case, the law is the United Nations and more specifically resolution 1441. It is only the UN Security Council that can decide whether the Iraqis were in breach of resolution 1441. It is only the Security Council that can decide whether there should be consequences as a result of Saddam Hussein not living up to the terms of resolution 1441.

### Supply

Resolution 1441 does not say that if the United Nations remains silent on that resolution some individual country, the United States, Britain or someone else, can take it upon itself to invade Iraq. That is not the way the international law works.

I just hope that when this war is over, and I hope it is mercifully short and there are few deaths, that the world community will be able to address this issue of the Bush doctrine having to do with pre-emptive war or pre-emptive strikes. To me that simply is not fitting and does not match international law. It simply does not. I hope that the United Nations can find a way of dealing with this very serious issue.

If we are going to leave the world at this particular risk, so that strong powers in the world can take the law into their own hands, who knows where that takes us? I would like to address that question to the hon. member who spoke previously.

•(1630)

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Madam Speaker, I thought the hon. member was making a speech, so he kind of lost me there. I can tell him, however, that those who promote peace cannot have enemies anywhere in the world.

Because of all the people who marched for peace in the world and who promoted peace, notwithstanding what the Alliance believes, we will have to promote peace. That is the only way to settle conflicts around the world.

[English]

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, in response to the speaker prior to the member from the Bloc who said that pre-emptive war is a bad idea and that this is a move of unprecedented proportion and without historical precedent, let me say that in fact that is not true.

Israel launched a pre-emptive war against Iraq, and thank God it did because it took out a nuclear reactor in Iraq. If Iraq had had nuclear weapons in the first gulf war, today Kuwait would be the 19th province of Iraq. That is an example of pre-emptive war working. It led to a more peaceful world. It led to Saddam Hussein not having nuclear weapons and not terrorizing the Middle East. Thank God Israel did it and thank God people have learned that lesson.

I am sorry that the Liberal member opposite has not quite figured that out.

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Madam Speaker, I do not know if there was a question in there. All I can say is that pre-emptive war does not work. We will have to promote peace. That is our only hope for world order.

## Supply

[English]

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member could comment on the fact that Alliance Party members for the last few weeks have accused anyone who does not agree with their policy of supporting the American war against Iraq of being anti-American. Would the hon. member comment on that statement that because we do not agree with the war and the Bloc Québécois, the NDP and others do not agree with the war the Alliance Party members think we are anti-American?

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Madam Speaker, what I hear from the Alliance members is a bit disconcerting. We do not make enemies by promoting peace. So, why would they think that we are making enemies out of the Americans by promoting peace? I think that they should reconsider their position, stop looking at the little picture and take a good look at themselves.

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, contrary to my habit, I am not going to say that I am pleased to speak today. I believe that the situation is extremely serious and dangerous. It may be much more serious than we think it is today and perhaps even more than we may realize now.

This morning, at 11:06 a.m., I was watching and listening to the news. I will give a few examples. Of course, I will not quote all of the examples that I saw. Simply on the news at 11:06 a.m., it was mentioned that the first refugees had arrived in Jordan.

Shortly after the beginning of the attack, around 11 p.m., the United States initiated a global alert in anticipation of potential terrorist acts against American citizens in foreign countries. Artillery fire has allegedly been heard at the Kuwait-Iraq border. Israel has asked its people to start wearing gas masks, and I could go on. At 11 a.m., CNN confirmed that two oilfields in southern Iraq were on fire. There might be more now.

Eye witnesses report that southern Iraq has been under heavy bombardment. In Italy, demonstrations against the war are being held in several cities, and I could go on. There is talk of sirens, of attacks. There is talk of people having been injured, but all we see on our television screens is a green image that looks like a video game; an image that looks like what our kids use in our houses on their computers. But this has nothing to do with video games. This has absolutely nothing to do with these games. This is a real war, an intensive war that could give rise to a major increase in terrorism.

We know that all our communities, countries and the countries of the free world have been forced to dramatically increase security because attacks are anticipated.

War has been declared and a country like Iraq is being attacked. Naturally I do not condone the regime that governs Iraq. I cannot condone a dictator. I do not condone the way Saddam Hussein treated his people, the Kurds and his neighbours in 1990.

But was it justified for democracies to attack Iraq without the approval of the United Nations? No, because as a democracy, we must respect democracy and the institutions that we have created, namely the United Nations. This is a fundamental principle. If we no longer respect the institutions that we have created for ourselves, if

we as democracies no longer respect the institutions that we have promoted, that we have contributed to creating and continue to run, it will no longer be possible to enforce international law.

The arbitrary war against Iraq by the United States, Great Britain and Australia is very serious. This act is very serious for democracy and our international institutions, but it is also very serious for the women, children and citizens of Iraq who will suffer after already having suffered for years under a dictatorial regime. This desire to destroy a regime and replace a dictator adds to their suffering.

In 1970, I read *Building Peace* by Dominique Pire, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1958. After the events of September 11, I did not remember the reference, but I said that peace is much more than the silence of guns.

In 1990, after the gulf war, the guns were silenced. We stopped bombing Iraq, but what did we do as a democracy for the Iraqi people?

• (1635)

The Americans had promised to back the Sunni among others, in the south. And what happened? They did not really support them.

We need only look at the present-day situation in Afghanistan. The guns are silent, but have there been any real improvements? I would say not. At the present time in Afghanistan, we can consider that any real improvements are limited to the capital. The country is still under the domination of the war lords, who control the nation as a whole and are once again tyrannizing the population, especially women and children.

As far as the status of women is concerned, it is wrong to claim that Afghani women are living any different lives than they were under the Taliban.

I too have received e-mails, and will read from a few:

You have declared war on me, but I propose peace to you in return.

This reaction may seem as unreal as the 2001 attack on New York did.

In terms of democracy, this is, in my opinion, what our response to those attacks should have been and what our response should be today. You have declared a kind of war on us but we propose peace to you, the sort of peace in which we will provide you with help as a people, will help you develop, will help you to grow and progress.

I know that Saddam Hussein is no angel and that his regime is corrupt and dictatorial. But is it really necessary at this time to take action without the authority of the United Nations? Once again, I say no. As many nations around the world, including France, Russian and Germany, have said, given a little time, we might have been able to bring about a regime change.



Also, had we seriously taken matters into our hands right after the first gulf war, we might not have to change the regime in Iraq now. It would probably have been gone for years.

Let me quote from another excellent e-mail I have received:

Instead of praying for a few hours before launching into war for years to come, acting out of vengeance, out of the desire to fight terrorism, an announcement should be made to the effect that every effort will be made to build peace on justice and sharing.

As long as democracies do not understand that peace must be built, and built on the firm foundations of justice and sharing, we will continue to be faced with the same problems.

Terrorism flourishes in fertile ground. Poverty and misery constitute a breeding ground for terrorism, and there is no shortage of poverty and misery around the world. It is safe to say that two-thirds of the world population currently has to make do with the bare minimum and that the situation of the so-called fourth world is extremely tragic.

What is the Bloc Québécois calling for today in its motion? It is simple, and I would like to come back to it. The Prime Minister of Canada told us, "We will not go to war." However, we already have military personnel on site, and the Bloc would like the government to reconsider its position in that respect.

• (1640)

[English]

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, the member from the Bloc made the statement that he really did not think much about the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and indeed after the gulf war in Iraq. We all recognize that there are improvements that can be made, but the member also made a statement that he did not think that the situation for women in Afghanistan was any better today than under the Taliban. I take great exception to that.

I cannot comprehend how this can somehow be construed as an excuse for inaction when we have basic human rights being violated by two regimes, one of which has now been overturned. There is an international effort to turn things around and we do not put all of that burden on the original combatants.

As a matter of fact, the Americans have said very clearly that it is not their interest in doing the reconstruction. They are not good at it and they want others to step in and do that. Canada is a country which is very good at that.

I would like the member to respond to the impression he left that people would not be better off.

• (1645)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy:** Madam Speaker, there is one thing that my hon. colleague needs to understand. Violence begets violence; it is unavoidable. Our democracy will have to learn that lesson someday.

It is pointless to initiate a violent action without the authorization of the United Nations, without the backing of the United Nations and other international institutions. For any action that is questionable, there will be a reaction, and that reaction might be even more violent

### Supply

than the action itself. If you have the backing of the United Nations, then you have the backing of the whole international community.

Therefore, if there is a reaction, it can be dealt with. In what direction is the action initiated by the United States taking us? If more attacks like those of September 11 were to be sponsored by another country, will the U.S. feel they have the right to attack that country right away?

Let us take a more concrete example. If an attack were to come from Indonesia, one of the largest countries in the world, would the U.S. decide to attack Indonesia the next day? That is what we need to understand. No action can be justified without the backing of international institutions.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot.

Like tens of millions of people around the world, I was deeply troubled by the idea of the war that was going to be declared, and that has now started. All war brings is destruction. So many innocent people, who have nothing to do with the decision to go to war, will die.

I could not help but see the great paradox in the comments used by those who support the war. The other day I heard the President of the United States talk about peace and security in the world. How do you make peace by going to war? What kind of example for peace are we setting for the world when we go to war and drop the most deadly bombs on innocent people?

I also heard those in favour of the war speak of reconstruction after the war. In order to rebuild, first you have to destroy. How paradoxical to destroy places in order to rebuild them, instead of trying to work together to build a better world.

In this war, we have forgotten about the innocent, the women and children, the soldiers sent to the front, while their leaders go about their daily lives in a maximum of comfort. And that is what is so wrong about this war. That is why, in this euphoria, there are potentially catastrophic consequences for those who want war at all costs. There is the polarization between the countries in our world and, on the other hand, the countries in the Islamic world who will turn this war into a real cause, a sure breeding ground for future terrorists. Is that how to fight terrorism?

I would like to quote an editorial from the *New York Times* of March 18, 2003, that talked about the consequences of this war:

• (1650)

[English]

The Atlantic alliance is now more deeply riven than at any time since its creation more than a half-century ago. A promising new era of cooperation with a democratizing Russia has been put at risk. China, whose constructive incorporation into global affairs is crucial to the peace of this century, has been needlessly estranged. Governments across the Muslim world, whose cooperation is so vital to the war against terrorism, are now warily navigating between popular anger and American power.

[Translation]

Senator Byrd had this to say in the Senate on February 12, 2003:

*Supply*

[English]

Will our war inflame the Muslim world resulting in devastating attacks on Israel? Will Israel retaliate with its own nuclear arsenal? Will the Jordanian and Saudi Arabian governments be toppled by radicals, bolstered by Iran, which has much closer ties to terrorism than Iraq?

[Translation]

I have heard that this war will cost us at least \$200 billion. This money could have been used in a much more constructive or positive manner. The purpose of this war is to get rid of Saddam Hussein, this despot, this tyrant. Clearly there is a consensus here among us all that he is an extremely cruel despot and tyrant, but we must be consistent.

[English]

Are we also going to go to war against Zimbabwe to get rid of the dictator there who will bring famine to 6 million of his own people? Are we going to go to war against Libya which also has a dictator? Are we going to go to war against Myanmar which has imprisoned for years the duly elected leader of the opposition? Are we going to war against North Korea which is thumbing its nose at the world, against all the edicts of the United Nations about nuclear power?

No. In North Korea the United States has decided to use diplomatic arrangements because of course the shadow of China looms very large there. War against North Korea would be far more inconvenient than war against a feeble Iraq.

I heard it said by the proponents of war that it was the French and its veto that prevented a diplomatic settlement. Yet the second resolution brought in by the United States and Great Britain could not get enough support to carry itself.

I remind the people who blame only the French, that the Russians, the Chinese, certainly Germany, Mexico, Chile, Guinea, Cameroon, all these countries were there despite tremendous pressures by the United States, and especially on the small ones, to conform and vote for them. In effect all the votes that the United States and Britain had was Great Britain, the United States, Spain and Bulgaria.

I marched with the marches for peace three times in Montreal. The first time there were 15,000 people. The second time there were 100,000 people. When we marched the other day there were upwards of 200,000 people. The story was repeated across the world, on every continent of the world, in the United Kingdom itself, which is in the war. Millions of people turned out in London, Manchester and all the other cities.

In Spain, where the Prime Minister is for the war, 95% of the people are against the war. In Italy where the Prime Minister is for the war, again 95% of the population is against the war. It is all across the world and here in Canada.

Are we listening to our people? Our people say that wars are not always inevitable. Sometimes we have to go to war because it is a last resort and there is no other option. This time war is totally unjustified and unnecessary and so say the tens of millions of people all over the world. It is really symbolic that in the organization of NAFTA two of the main partners of the United States are staying away from the war for the same reasons as so many other countries of the world are staying away from it.

War is abominable. War kills innocents and it destroys. Senator Byrd said in his speech on February 12. He said:

To contemplate war is to think about the most horrible human experiences. On this February day, as this nation stands at the brink of battle, every American on some level must be contemplating the horrors of war.

Indeed, war is a horror. I find it very sad to see on the television these images as if there is an euphoria and a great testimony to war, all these explosions and so forth. Meanwhile who suffers from the explosions and our wonderful smart bombs and the other ones, the cruise missiles and all the other missiles? It is the innocent, women and children. Fifty per cent of the population of Iraq is under 18 years old, 10 million people, and they do not want war.

Why deplore the war when we cannot do anything about it, sadly? I hope we will find in there a lesson for the future that the only salvation for a peaceful world is to be part of the forum of nations, not to take it upon ourselves to decide that this dictator or that dictator is wrong and we should pre-empt his or her actions and go to war against him or her when it suits us and our own interests. The only way that peace can be established is through a forum of nations.

● (1655)

Therefore I hope we take the resolve today that never again will we face as we do today, as a world, an unnecessary, unjustified and therefore immoral war.

**Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, the member is talking about the victims of war as being innocent women and children. They are the victims of the tyrants who are in control, whether it is the Taliban or Saddam Hussein. I think the million plus people, who are no longer alive because they were living under that regime, might have something different to say than with what the member has been coming forward.

I would also like to inform the member that he may want to check out the background of Senator Byrd before he starts aligning himself with someone who has a track record of being very supportive of the KKK.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln:** Madam Speaker, I am not going to characterize Senator Byrd and his personality. I am just quoting from a speech he made which I thought reflected—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln:** Will the member please allow me to speak? I listened to him with great civility and I ask the same thing of him.

I am not going to characterize Senator Byrd and look into his past. All I was doing was reading from a speech which I thought was cohesive, which made a lot of sense and which came from an American Senator in the senate.

I could also quote from Senator Kennedy and he was not a member of the KKK. I could also quote from the minority leader the other day, Senator Daschle, and many Americans who today refuse to accept the doctrine that pre-emptive war is the only reason for replacing dictators.

I would like to repeat for my hon. colleague that it is very nice to say that this dictator caused millions of deaths. Mugabe will cause famine for six million people. Do we declare war there? Do we declare war against North Korea? Why is the United States treating North Korea differently from Iraq? North Korea is a far greater threat and danger and its regime also has caused all kinds of brutality and death in its country. Yet we just leave it alone. There diplomacy will work. Obviously the United States is really worried about the big shadow of China next door. Therefore one regime is one way and the other regime we go to war with all our smart bombs, 250,000 soldiers and so many ships.

We have many questions to answer ourselves. How is it that tens of millions of people around the world, the greatest demonstration for peace ever, have spoken so loud? Perhaps this is what the members of the Canadian Alliance should reflect on, including 80% or more Canadians who say that war when it is inevitable, yes; but not war at any cost at any price every day when we decide we want it.

• (1700)

**Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, my colleague talked about reconstruction, conciliation and building a better world. The member is obviously characterizing the role that the United Nations and the vision and the hope that the United Nations would offer.

The member also has talked about the future needless estrangement of China and Russia at time when we are developing a global attitude and a strengthening hopefully of the United Nations.

The member also has talked about the future in terms of Korea and the problems with the Palestinians and Israel.

I ask my colleague this. How can we strengthen the United Nations and what is the role that Canada can play in recognizing that the future is very precarious, as he has described, inasmuch as the United Nations has not been able to respond to the present situation?

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln:** Madam Speaker, for those who say that the United Nations is now irrelevant because of the war, I say exactly the reverse. Never have we needed the United Nations more than we do now. If this war has taught us something, it is that now there must be conciliation. People of the world must get together in the only forum we have. It may have all its flaws. It may not be the perfect forum by any means. No human forum is ever perfect. At the same time it is the only source of conciliation, of getting together, that we have across the world where small nations and large nations can all have a say.

We need the United Nations more than ever to rebuild, to reconstruct and to reconcile this world and stop it from polarizing into blocs that hate each other and that want war.

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#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, discussions have taken place between all the parties as well as with the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, concerning the taking of the division on Bill C-206, scheduled at the conclusion of private members' business later this

#### Supply

day. I believe you would find consent that at the conclusion of today's debate on Bill C-206, all questions necessary to disposed of the motion be deemed put, a recorded division deemed requested and deferred to Tuesday, March 25 at the end of government orders.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

#### SUPPLY

##### ALLOTTED DAY—MILITARY INTERVENTION IN IRAQ

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

**Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, now that the bombs are falling I have struggled as much as I can with trying to find some good or benefit out of what is occurring by the attack on Iraq. I share the misgivings that have been expressed in the House about the attack and how it threatens institutions like the United Nations. It raises the spectre of retaliatory aggression by terrorists. There are many, many negatives, many of them negatives in the interests of the United States itself, and I have commented upon those.

So it is with a struggle that one searches to find a good, a real good, out of what is occurring today and I think I have found one. I would say it is a beautiful good and it is also something that is very sad. That good focuses on what happened with Turkey leading up to the decision to attack Iraq.

Turkey, you will remember, Madam Speaker, is a Muslim nation that for a very, very long time has struggled to balance religion with advancement of western economic and political values. It has been a long struggle that has extended over a century and a half, and only now does it have a parliament that has been re-elected with great hopes of joining the European Union, of being accepted as one of the western nations, not just in terms of economics but also in terms of the freedoms and liberties that have been developed by the western nations.

I would like to quote from the Honourable Abdullah Gul, who spoke to his parliament. He was speaking to the proposed program of the new government. In his remarks, which dealt with many things economic, with trying to rescue Turkey from severe economic problems and political problems, he said:

The objective of our democratic government approach is to secure all civil and political freedoms, primarily that of thought, belief, education, association and entrepreneurship and to make available an environment where people can continue with their individual development free from any fear or worry.

In this framework, the international democratic standards in basic human rights and freedoms, that we regard as the accumulation of humankind, will be taken as the basis of all our policies.

Let us think of what was just said there: basic rights and freedoms, democratic standards that are the accumulation of humankind.

*Supply*

I would submit to you, Madam Speaker, that this is one of the great gifts that the western democracies, the western countries, have given to the world, and indeed it is one of the great gifts of the United States and Britain. We have to acknowledge that the United States, with its Declaration of Independence—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all—and the model of the British parliament, has led the world into an appreciation that democracy is the hope of the world. It has taken many years to spread that idea across Europe and it has been very difficult to spread it in the third world, in the Far East, and most especially, some might say, in the Muslim world.

Here we have Turkey that is undertaking this grand experiment and is really on the threshold, I think, with language like that, of certainly joining any country like Canada or the United States in terms of our commitment to basic human rights and democratic freedoms. But Turkey is in trouble. It is in terrible trouble economically, and I think what is so significant in what has happened with Iraq is the fact that, despite its difficulties, the Turkish parliament refused to allow the Americans to use Turkish soil for an attack on Iraq and refused to allow the American army and air force to occupy Turkish bases for an attack on Iraq. I point out that this was not a decision of the leadership of Turkey. This was a decision of the parliament of Turkey. It was a democratic decision.

● (1705)

I suggest that this is a singular event, a brilliant event, that is coming out of this terrible thing that has happened with the war in Iraq. I say that because what we are seeing here is a nation leading other nations into saying that it is not enough to have economic wealth, that it is not enough to benefit from the largesse of the Americans or the British in order to make a decision that is morally right, at least in the eyes of that people.

We must remember that the Turkish people were offered the carrot, shall we say, of \$25 billion, and the Turkish people turned it down on the basis of sticking to a moral principle. That moral principle was that the attack on Iraq without the support of the UN Security Council was not morally justified. That is the Turkish position.

We see around the world that a similar thing happened with this debate in the United Nations. It is true that the United Nations has probably been fatally wounded, but one of the very good things is that we see individual countries, some of them very small, standing up to the United States and saying, “Even though you are a superpower, even though you have tremendous economic power, we will try to do what is right”. It was because of that resolve, not because of the leadership of France or the leadership of China or the leadership of Russia, it was because the people of the world did not accept that this was a just war that the Americans and the British were embarking on.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a tremendous hope for the world. It means that countries around the world have adopted the democratic values, the respect for human rights that originally sprang from the declaration of independence and then was followed by the British parliament and spread around western Europe.

And now, Mr. Speaker, here is the sad part. The sad part is that what this implies is that the United States has probably lost its leadership as a model of democracy and liberty in the world. Indeed,

we know this is so, because we know that American politics is probably no longer the model of democratic politics that the rest of the world would want to follow. What the White House has done by this attack on Iraq is it has driven the world into deciding what kind of democracy the world wants. It would appear that the leadership of the United States and of Britain is no longer there. Countries like Turkey will follow their own hearts in discovering their own democratic institutions and making sure that their members of parliament are free to speak and are elected in ways that are not dependent upon how much money one has or dependent upon special interests.

That is the evolution of democracy and I think one of the things the war in Iraq is showing us is that the countries of the world are discovering this, not just democracy, discovering a strong desire to see justice done in the world and that aggression, no matter how justified, is not acceptable, and that countries are prepared to make decisions even though those decisions are not in their own interests if it is a decision that is morally correct in their eyes.

The irony is, of course, that for the White House, the President of the United States, I really do believe the intention in his attack on Iraq is regime change in order to bring democracy to the region. And maybe it will work. There was the model of Japan and Germany in the post-war period, but I suggest that it is a very dangerous and doubtful process to expect that one can bring democracy to other countries by the sword. I am not so sure it is going to work and we will see in due course.

Finally, I would like to speak a little about how this affects Canada because it does affect Canada. It affects Canada deeply, in somewhat the same way as with Turkey. All my life growing up, I was taught to believe that Canada is very much a country of the British democratic traditions and a country very much of American cultural traditions. It is true that the British and the Americans are our closest cousins, but one of the things this has shown is that at last Canada has embarked upon a decision that actually takes it away from the leadership of Britain.

● (1710)

Consider the significance: this is the first war in a century that Canada has refused to follow Britain's lead in even though we have the same Queen, the same Crown.

**An hon. member:** Are you proud of that?

**Mr. John Bryden:** Someone on the opposite side asks if I am proud of that. Yes, I am proud of it. It is so important for Canada to stand up for its own principles. The one thing that we will take from this is that Canada is its own country with its own values, its own democratic values. At last we perhaps have broken the chain of Britain and we have become Canada for the Canadians who live in this country and not the monarchy or anyone else in a different land.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (1745)

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

*(Division No. 60)*

**YEAS**

Members

Asselin	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bergeron	Bigras
Blaikie	Bourgeois
Cardin	Crête
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
Desrochers	Duceppe
Fournier	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godin
Guay	Guimond
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lancôt	Lill
Marceau	Masse
McDonough	Ménard
Paquette	Perron
Picard (Drummond)	Plamondon
Robinson	Rocheleau
Roy	Sauvageau
St-Hilaire	Stoffler
Wasylycia-Leis— 41	

**NAYS**

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Allard	Anders
Anderson (Victoria)	Assadourian
Augustine	Bagnell
Bakopanos	Barnes (London West)
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)	Beaumier
Bélanger	Bellemare
Benoit	Bevilacqua
Binet	Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick	Borotsik
Boudria	Bradshaw
Brown	Bryden
Burton	Byrne
Cadman	Calder
Caplan	Carignan
Carroll	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Chatters	Chrétien
Clark	Coderre
Collenette	Copps
Cotler	Cullen
Cuzner	Day
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Drouin
Duncan	Duplain

*Supply*

Easter	Epp
Eyking	Farrah
Finlay	Folco
Forseth	Frulla
Gallant	Goldring
Goodale	Gouk
Graham	Grey
Harb	Harper
Harris	Harvard
Harvey	Hearn
Hill (Macleod)	Hilstrom
Hinton	Ianno
Jaffer	Jennings
Johnston	Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Keyes	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
LeBlanc	Lee
Leung	Lincoln
Longfield	Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)
MacAulay	Macklin
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Marcil
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Matthews	McCallum
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
McTeague	Meredith
Merrifield	Mills (Red Deer)
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)	Mitchell
Moore	Murphy
Myers	Nault
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Reilly
Obhrai	Pacetti
Pagtakhan	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Peschisolido	Pettigrew
Phinney	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Pratt	Price
Provenzano	Rajotte
Reed (Halton)	Regan
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)	Reynolds
Ritz	Robillard
Rock	Saada
Savoy	Scherrer
Schmidt	Scott
Sgro	Shepherd
Simard	Skelton
Solberg	Sorenson
Speller	St-Julien
St. Denis	Stewart
Stinson	Strahl
Thibault (West Nova)	Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Tirabassi	Toews
Tonks	Torsney
Vanclief	Whelan
White (North Vancouver)	Wilfert
Williams	Wood— 166

**PAIRED**

Members

Bertrand	Loubier
McCormick	Tremblay— 4

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

*Private Members' Business*

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

• (1750)

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

*(Division No. 61)*

## YEAS

## Members

Anderson (Victoria)	Assadourian
Asselin	Augustine
Bachand (Saint-Jean)	Bagnell
Bakopanos	Barnes (London West)
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bellemare	Bergeron
Bevilacqua	Bigras
Binet	Blaikie
Blondin-Andrew	Bonwick
Boudria	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Brown
Bryden	Byrne
Caccia	Calder
Caplan	Cardin
Carignan	Carroll
Castonguay	Catterall
Cauchon	Charbonneau
Chrétien	Coderre
Collenette	Copps
Cotler	Crête
Cuzner	Dalphond-Guiral
Davies	Desrochers
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Drouin
Duceppe	Duplain
Easter	Eyking
Farrah	Finlay
Folco	Fournier
Fruilla	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godin
Goodale	Graham
Guay	Guimond
Harb	Harvard
Harvey	Ianno
Jennings	Jordan
Keys	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Laframboise
Lalonde	Lanctôt
Lastewka	LeBlanc
Lee	Lill
Lincoln	Longfield
MacAulay	Macklin
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Marceau
Marcil	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Masse
Matthews	McCallum
McDonough	McKay (Scarborough East)
McLellan	McTeague
Ménard	Mills (Toronto—Danforth)
Mitchell	Murphy
Myers	Nault
O'Brien (Labrador)	O'Reilly
Pacetti	Pagtakhan
Paquette	Paradis
Parrish	Patry
Perron	Peschisolido
Pettigrew	Phinney
Picard (Drummond)	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Plamondon	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Robillard
Robinson	Rocheleau
Rock	Roy
Saada	Sauvageau

Savoy	Scherrer
Scott	Shepherd
Simard	Speller
St-Hilaire	St-Julien
St. Denis	Stewart
Stoffer	Thibault (West Nova)
Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)	Tirabassi
Tonks	Torsney
Vancief	Wasylycia-Leis
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood— 153	

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)
Benoit	Borotsik
Burton	Cadman
Chatters	Clark
Day	Duncan
Epp	Forseth
Gallant	Goldring
Gouk	Grey
Harper	Harris
Hearn	Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom	Hinton
Jaffer	Johnston
Keddy (South Shore)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)	MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)
Meredith	Merrifield
Mills (Red Deer)	Moore
Obhrai	Rajotte
Reid (Lanark—Carleton)	Reynolds
Ritz	Schmidt
Skelton	Solberg
Sorenson	Stinson
Strahl	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Toews
White (North Vancouver)	Williams— 50

## PAIRED

## Members

Bertrand	Loubier
McCormick	Tremblay— 4

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[*English*]

**CANADA HEALTH ACT**

The House resumed from March 19 consideration of the motion that Bill C-202, an act to amend the Canada Health Act (linguistic duality), be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, March 19, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-202 under private members' business.

● (1800)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 62)

YEAS

Members

Allard	Anderson (Victoria)
Assadourian	Asselin
Augustine	Bachand (Saint-Jean)
Bagnell	Bakopanos
Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)	Beamier
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bergeron	Bevilacqua
Bigras	Binet
Blaikie	Blondin-Andrew
Bonwick	Borotsik
Boudria	Bourgeois
Bradshaw	Bryden
Byrne	Caccia
Calder	Caplan
Cardin	Carignan
Carroll	Castonguay
Catterall	Cauchon
Charbonneau	Clark
Coderre	Collenette
Copps	Cotler
Crête	Cuzner
Dalphond-Guiral	Davies
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dion	Drouin
Duceppe	Duplain
Easter	Eyking
Farrah	Finlay
Folco	Fournier
Frulla	Gagnon (Champlain)
Gagnon (Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay)	Gagnon (Québec)
Gaudet	Gauthier
Girard-Bujold	Godin
Goodale	Graham
Guay	Guimond
Harb	Harvey
Hearn	Ianno
Jennings	Jordan
Keddy (South Shore)	Keys
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lancôt	Lastewka
LeBlanc	Lee
Lill	Lincoln
Longfield	MacAulay
MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough)	Macklin
Mahoney	Malhi
Maloney	Marceau
Marcil	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Masse	Matthews
McCallum	McDonough
McKay (Scarborough East)	McLellan
Ménard	Merrifield
Mills (Toronto—Danforth)	Mitchell
Murphy	Myers
Nault	O'Brien (Labrador)
O'Reilly	Pacetti
Pagtakhan	Paquette
Paradis	Patry
Perron	Peschisolido
Pettigrew	Phinney
Picard (Drummond)	Pickard (Chatham—Kent Essex)
Plamondon	Reed (Halton)
Regan	Robillard
Rocheleau	Rock
Roy	Saada
Sauvageau	Savoy
Scherrer	Scott
Shepherd	Simard

Speller	St-Hilaire
St-Julien	St. Denis
Stewart	Stoffer
Thibault (West Nova)	Thibeault (Saint-Lambert)
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Tirabassi
Toews	Tonks
Torsney	Vanclicf
Whelan	Wilfert
Wood— 153	

Private Members' Business

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Anders	Benoit
Burton	Cadman
Chatters	Day
Duncan	Epp
Gallant	Goldring
Grey	Harper
Harris	Hill (Macleod)
Hilstrom	Hinton
Johnston	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni)	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mills (Red Deer)	Moore
Rajotte	Reid (Lanark—Carleton)
Ritz	Schmidt
Skelton	Solberg
Sorenson	Stinson
Strahl	Thompson (Wild Rose)
White (North Vancouver)— 35	

PAIRED

Members

Bertrand	Loubier
McCormick	Tremblay— 4

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment carried.

[English]

(Order discharged, bill withdrawn and subject matter referred to the Standing Committee on Official Language)

● (1805)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:05 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

\* \* \*

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from January 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-206, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (persons who leave employment to be care-givers to family members), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House tonight to support this private member's bill.

I congratulate my hon. colleague, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. Having read his bill and having been present in earlier hours of debate, I want to say that this is one of the most important pieces of private members' business that has come before the House. It deals with an issue that affects Canadians right across the country, no matter where they live, no matter what their background, no matter what socio-economic class they come from. It is a private member's bill that deals with a very grave and important issue.

*Private Members' Business*

To refresh people's memories, Bill C-206 would provide employment insurance benefits to people who leave employment to be caregivers to family members who are seriously ill or undergoing severe rehabilitation. It is modelled on the EI parental benefits program. The bill simply and straightforwardly would enable Canadians to leave their workplace to care for a family member, knowing that their job and income would be protected for the designated period.

I cannot think of an issue that is more important to so many people across the country. That is one reason the bill has received tremendous support.

In my own province the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities is probably the major organization that deals with issues around disabilities and deals with this issue of caregiving. This is a major issue that faces that organization and their members. I am very glad that the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities is supporting my colleague on this bill, as are many other organizations across the country. These include the Alzheimer's Society of Sudbury-Manitoulin, the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District, the Alzheimer Association of Saskatchewan, the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, Muskoka and Kingston, VON Canada, Hospice Huronia, the Canadian Mental Health Association in Ottawa, the Canadian Caregiver Coalition in Ottawa, the Canadian Cancer Society, and the list goes on. It is a very strong indication that people understand the importance of this bill and why it needs to be supported.

In speaking to the bill today, like many people, I have had personal experience about what it means to be a caregiver when a family member is sick, or in my case, in palliative care. In my situation, my partner of 24 years, Bruce, was dying of cancer. Like many family members in other situations, I faced very difficult choices about what to do. One struggles to keep commitments at work and at home to care for the family member. There are very difficult choices. My colleague has outlined many stories from Canadians and the struggles they faced.

In my own situation, in 1997 I was very lucky that I worked for the Hospital Employees' Union in British Columbia, which was very sensitive and understanding of its employees. It was willing to give me time away from work so that I could participate in the care of my partner when he needed it, in the most critical time when he left the hospital and came home, basically to die. If I had been in a work situation where I had not had an employer that was willing to provide that kind of compassion and support to me as an employee of that union, I would have been in a very difficult situation.

I did not have savings that I could have used to stay home. I did not have family members who could provide income support. I recognize that in my situation I was able to cope, as difficult as it was.

● (1810)

We have to recognize that in most situations across Canada, when one member of a family unit is working but is also placed in the position of trying to care for another member of the family unit, and it might be a child, a sister, a spouse or partner, or a parent, employers often are not able to make arrangements. People may not work in a situation where there is a collective agreement that has

some sort of provision. They may actually be in a situation where their employer just does not give a damn about the situation.

The bill says that under the employment insurance program we should be entitled to receive the kind of benefits, just as we would when our employment is terminated. We can use EI now for parental leave. It seems to me that this would be the most logical expansion of the program, especially when we consider that the EI fund has now accumulated a huge surplus. It is over \$40 billion. This is money that is paid into the fund by employers and employees. Government money is not involved in the fund. It is a very legitimate use of the insurance program, to extend it for caregiving purposes.

I have had a lot of feedback in my riding about this bill. One person in particular, a member of an aboriginal family, described to me the circumstances they found themselves in of having to care for family members not just once but on several occasions, where family members were terminally ill.

As a result of losing employment, one of the real tragedies of the status quo is that people lose their pension benefits. They actually lose pensionable earnings because they have to quit work.

The bill is important. I want to address some of the concerns and myths the government has put forward in debating the bill. It has suggested that it would be very expensive, that it would cost a huge amount of money to do this, yet there is no evidence to suggest that.

What the government fails to take into account is that not having this kind of provision through EI actually costs our health care system a huge amount of money. For every dollar that would be spent on this kind of caregiver program, we would actually save \$4 to \$6 in health care costs. We would be creating a supportive environment, with support programs, palliative care programs and programs for sick children. This would actually save dollars in the health care system. I would also note that Mr. Romanow in his report strongly recommended that a caregiver program be approved.

One of the other myths the government puts forward is that somehow if a program did exist, a person would only need about six weeks. In my own situation a minimum of 10 weeks was what I required to be at home in order to care for my partner. To suggest that the period could be limited to six weeks, I do not think is any kind of representation in terms of the realities that are out there.

In closing, I congratulate my colleague from Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. He has produced a fine piece of legislation that is not only worthy of debate, but is worthy of support. I hope very much that members from all sides of the House will agree that the bill should now go to committee where we can get into detailed examination of it and debate the issues in it. It is very worthy of that support. I urge members to agree to support it and to send it to committee.

● (1815)

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to compliment the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. This bill represents a piece of public policy whose time has come.



I must go back to an experience that I had in my own riding approximately one year ago where I put out a request to my constituents asking them what they believed some of the priority issues would be, should be, that I would take to our Liberal policy convention which was to happen in June of last year. One of the top three messages that came to our policy team was the whole issue of compassionate leave of absence for respite caregivers. We developed a resolution in the community and I would like to read it into the record:

Whereas the Government of Canada provides for parental leave of absence of up to one year, which allows a parent to nurture and care for a new member of the family and our Canadian society without jeopardizing employment status or career opportunities as an employee;

Whereas the Government of Canada does not formally recognize the importance or impact of family members or guardians providing respite care without jeopardizing employment status or career opportunities;

Whereas current and future generations of Canadians will require the Government of Canada to hold dear an individual's quality of life until the point of death and for caregivers to provide comfort and support to that point;

Be it resolved that the Government of Canada review compassionate leave of absence to employees or guardians providing respite care to family members as a mandate for review. The review period should not exceed two years for the purpose of establishing criteria, standards and timeframes for leave of absence.

The people of my community are 100% behind the member from Sackville on Bill C-206. In June 2001, of the 400 policy resolutions that were tabled for the Liberal Party of Ontario policy convention this resolution was accepted as one of the top 10 as a priority resolution. There is a will emerging within the Ontario wing of the Liberal Party that this issue be dealt with.

We must also acknowledge that in the last budget the Minister of Finance did put this issue on the radar screen. He made a great first step with six weeks. It is a start.

The House of Commons must really press the finance officials and the will of all members in the House, especially the ones who are obsessed with the fiscal framework. What they do not understand is that when we have to work to make a living and our parents or a family member is dying, if we cannot look after them what happens is that most often we put them into the hospital system. That is a heck of a lot more expensive.

First of all, we cannot even compare the quality of care to a loved one looking after us. But the cost to the health care system, when people are just put into a hospital because they have no alternative, is really a heck of a lot more expensive than what the member is proposing in Bill C-206.

I wish to congratulate the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore. Let us continue to press the will of the House to ensure that in this term, before we go back to the people, within the next two years that this becomes one of those pieces of legislation that is a fond memory of all of us collectively doing something special in this Parliament.

• (1820)

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-206, an act that would amend the Employment Insurance Act concerning persons who leave their employment in order to look after their loved ones at home.

### *Private Members' Business*

I agree with the previous speaker that this legislation is very important. This opens up the debate on exploring some of the new alternatives that must be looked at as we move forward into the 21st century if we are to protect our health care system.

I wish to commend my colleague from Nova Scotia for bringing forward the bill before the House at this time so that we can at least begin debating it. I also wish to commend my colleague from Medicine Hat who led our party's response to this piece of legislation.

As senior health critic of the Canadian Alliance I would like to look at this issue primarily from a health perspective.

Canadians are a caring people. It is a value that we have as Canadians. In fact, as Canadians, we see our identity sometimes being wrapped around our health care system and the value of it. The value that we applaud and appreciate is the value that says that we will not lose our life savings because of an illness later in life, or at any time in our life. Because of that we collectively would like to pick up those costs for health care and have the one tier system. That is a value that we share.

Our American friends to the south have a different value. I am not here to judge their value. I am here to say that is not our value and we do not appreciate it. However, their value is a little different. They say they will look after people's health needs, in fact, they have terrific health care, but they have a terrible health care system, in the sense that they will take people's life savings before they give them treatment. Because of that, we do not share that value system and do not want that system. Nor do I hear any political party or hear any voices calling for that.

The value system that we have is saying that we should look after our people, regardless of their financial means. The Canadian Alliance will stand firmly behind those values.

We also have another problem; it is our aging population. An aging population means many of those who are facing the challenges later in life of becoming ill, as this bill will speak to, are having to be looked after by an institution, or by home care, or perhaps by a solution that is brought forward in this piece of legislation.

I am not here to say that the idea is wrong; the idea is right. We must explore all the ideas that we can possibly come up if we are to sustain the health care system as this aging population moves into the 21st century. It is important to take a little bit of time and describe exactly what we are facing in Canada as a health care system. We must realize that between the ages of 45 and 65 the average cost to the health care system in Canada right now is about \$4,400 per person. However, between the ages of 65 to 75 that cost almost doubles, to over \$7,000. And between the ages of 75 to 85 it doubles again, to almost \$14,000. Those are just the bare facts of the dollars that go into health care right now without any of the exponential costs that we have seen. However, these costs are continuing to grow and becoming a real concern.

We can say that is fine, as people get older they access more dollars for health care. However, what we must put into that formula is an understanding of the demographics.

*Private Members' Business*

People who were born after the second world war are now reaching the age where they are getting into those high dollar costs of health care. As they hit our health care system we will have to come up with ideas that would have to go far beyond what this piece of legislation is proposing to be able to sustain our health care system. The numbers will keep increasing, until the year 2041, before we start breaking over the bubble where it starts relieving the demographic curve and we will have fewer people age 65 and over. From now until then we will have more individuals in Canada who are reaching the age of 65 and beyond. Therein lies a dilemma in our health care system and because of that we must start looking at it.

That draws me to the bill itself, the idea of compassionate leave for individuals to look after their loved ones at home.

Most Canadians want to be there for their loved ones, at the time of their greatest need. I also believe that those who have a terminal illness would prefer to live at home. They would prefer to be in their own environment where they would be the most comfortable with the least stress, have an easier time of it, and be looked after by those who love them the most rather than be in an institution where they would feel alienated.

● (1825)

From that perspective, I believe it is important that we look at this proposed legislation. As I said before, I applaud the member for bringing it forward.

Indeed many Canadians are already providing formal care in their homes. Most families are looking after their aged individuals. In fact a study has been done in Ontario by the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organization. It estimates that 85% to 90% of the home care is provided by family and friends. That means there are a great many individuals who are looking after those they love dearly. I salute each one of them who dedicates and sacrifices himself or herself for Canadians. It is very important that happens.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that care at home is actually more beneficial for the patient than care in institutions. It is also more cost effective.

When it comes to care at home, the care from family members is much more cost effective than formal care. I think that is very easy to understand. In fact my colleague from Medicine Hat, when he made his first comments on this proposed legislation, said that a constituent of his came to his office to talk to him about the bill. He said that the home care cost for his loved one per month would be \$2,500. He said he could do that same job for \$700.

When we look at Canadians, we can understand why this could be duplicated many times over which would relieve a lot of the costs.

However is it the right vehicle? Is it the right place from which we should be getting the money to deal with this? I would suggest that probably not. It may contribute to better health outcomes and enhance human dignity, and it is possibly less expensive. That is true when we look at the bill.

However should we be drawing the money from the EI program? That is where the bill and I differ. I do not believe EI was set up for that purpose. EI was set up for the purpose of employment insurance, which insures people for the times they are out of work. Individuals

as well as corporations have paid into that program. In fact that program is in some ways an over taxation because of the amount of money brought in through that program and yet is not paid out through that program.

In fact the Auditor General has repeatedly criticized the government for pouring the EI funds into the consolidated revenue fund rather than establishing a separate self-sustaining EI account. I believe the Auditor General is right because the numbers are significantly more and it really amounts a higher tax than what it should be in the program.

Under the bill, it calls for 52 weeks on EI with a potential extension. We have to understand that the government's own pledge is only for a six week program. That would still add some further dimensions to the program.

We need further study to see if that is appropriate, with the right numbers and if it is flexible enough. All that needs to be taken into consideration. Because the compassionate leave is a health issue and because such leave is intended to address human health needs and would allegedly result in cost savings to the health care system, consideration should be given to the funding for compassionate leave being provided through federal and provincial health budgets and not employment insurance.

There is another example recommended in the Kirby report suggesting that perhaps the money should come from tax credits for supporting individuals at home. That is another way of accomplishing the same thing only in a little different way.

It is very important that we understand that this is perhaps an important bill. However even under the bill and even under the government's six weeks plan, we can see it would cost \$86 million for the first year and \$221 million for the second year. Therefore it is a very costly program.

If we are to sustain our health care system into the future, we will have to come up with ideas like this, not as expenses, but ideas that will drive efficiencies into the system or we will lose our health care system. It is very important that we open our eyes and examine all areas and ways to deal with our elderly and with the people who are ill in Canada.

I applaud the member for bringing forward this bill, but I would challenge him on using EI as the vehicle to pay for it.

● (1830)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief, because a lot has been said on this bill. I want to congratulate the hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore for his bill. I think that the Bloc Québécois will support this legislation, even though our party does not impose a party line on private members' bills.

*Private Members' Business*

I understand what the hon. member is proposing in his bill. This is definitely a humanitarian measure to support families and informal caregivers. There is a whole series of legislative measures that provide government assistance and that allow a person to stay at home when that person becomes a new parent or adopts a child, whether it is here or abroad. However, nothing has been provided to help those who live with disabled persons, or who look after sick people or people who require palliative care and who are near the end of their lives.

The House would be well advised to support this legislation. It reflects a public health policy that provides that we should rely less and less on institutionalization. The Clair report in Quebec said so, and so did the Kirby report in the Senate and the Romanow report.

This is why, in the mid 1990s, the Quebec government made the shift to ambulatory care. What does this mean? It means recognizing the fact that increasingly people are living longer. As members know, we no longer talk about the old, but the very old. It is not rare, during the course of our activities as members of Parliament, to meet people who are 85 or 90. It is no longer exceptional in our society to meet people who are 90 years old.

When he launched the election campaign in Quebec, Premier Bernard Landry pointed out—since the Quebec government has made the work-family reconciliation initiative a major issue in that campaign—that a person born in 2003 has one chance in two of living to the age of 100. This shows how difficult it is for public authorities, health care professionals and parliamentarians to anticipate what home support services will be required.

The shift away from hospital care that happened in Quebec in the mid-nineties was aimed at unclogging hospitals and keeping people in their communities as long as possible. This is why hospital stays are being shortened and this is why we want more resources for CLSCs and we need natural caregivers. When we talk about natural caregivers, of course we mean immediate family members, but it can also mean members of the extended family, in-laws or friends.

Contrary to what our colleague from the Canadian Alliance was saying, I checked with the sponsor of the bill and I understand that the federal funds to be used will come from Human Resources Development Canada, since this measure is similar to the ones that exist for maternity leave, adoption leave and bereavement leave. This must be very clear.

The money will not come from provincial budgets either, which does not mean that we should not convince the provinces to introduce similar measures. This is why Pauline Marois, Quebec's Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance, wants the money from the employment insurance fund to be transferred to Quebec so that the province can have an integrated family policy. This kind of leave would obviously be part of such integrated family policy.

Therefore, this is an extremely positive measure that must be adopted, not only so that people can remain in their communities, but also because people obviously do not choose to be sick. There is not a single family that is immune from reversals of fortune. No one knows what tomorrow will bring. One can be healthy for most of his or her life and working, and then become sick. No one is immune to that, and people who participate actively in the labour market—even

though they often have access to wage loss insurance—must be able to count on an extended network of people to help them, without financial worries.

• (1835)

I think this is the merit of the measure that our colleague is proposing. When illness strikes, it is catastrophic to people's lives. The person who decides to stand by in solidarity and take care of the person who is sick has to be protected by coverage.

The former leader of the NDP gave the example of taking care of her husband. I had a similar experience when I was an MP and my partner, who had AIDS, was at the terminal stage of the illness. However, I was not in financial difficulty.

When you earn more than \$100,000 a year, you are relatively secure financially. But if you earn a modest income of \$25,000, \$30,000 or \$35,000 a year, you do not have the means to forgo any of your salary. Often, you do not have the means to stop working.

There has to be coverage. In addition to the existing wage loss insurance and private policies, there are also the Human Resources Development Canada measures. I think this is an extremely positive measure, because we also know that this will result in savings for the public health systems.

In correspondence from the member, he pointed out that, according to the calculations, for every \$1 devoted to the program, to be implemented if this House wishes it and it gains majority support, public health services will save \$4 to \$6. The provinces will therefore be the main beneficiaries of these savings.

We are aware of how much health systems devote to program spending. In Quebec, which is the situation I am most familiar with, the Ministry of Health obtains approximately \$19 billion of a total budget of approximately \$52 billion. Last year the figure was \$17 billion, and this year it is \$19 billion. That is obviously a considerable amount. It is the highest program expenditure the government has to make.

In closing I would point out that this is a bill with extremely strong support from significant groups of stakeholders in our society. I am thinking of the Victorian Order of Nurses, and of course the Newfoundland and Labrador health council. I am thinking of the Canadian Cancer Society. I am thinking of the various bodies that provide services to people with degenerative diseases.

I will be pleased to support the bill and to convince my colleagues in the Bloc Québécois to do the same. I believe it will be voted on next Tuesday.

This is a humanitarian measure which puts an extremely modern face on the health and social services system. Once again, I congratulate our colleague on this praiseworthy initiative.

[English]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The Chair takes notice that there are a few members who still wish to speak. Cognizant of the fact that at 6.50 p.m. the Chair will have to put the question, if it is agreeable to the two members standing they could each have five minutes.

*Private Members' Business*

[Translation]

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Laval West.

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to speak on Bill C-206. It is legislation that certainly seeks to assist those who need help to be able to provide care to a close relative, father, daughter or son who is seriously ill.

However, with respect to this bill, the funds allocated under the 2003 budget deal specifically with this problem.

• (1840)

[English]

I can well understand the thinking of our hon. colleague, the member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore who has worked so hard to advance Bill C-206. However, while I fully share the values of compassion, caring and dedication that lie behind his bill, I believe it has some serious shortcomings.

[Translation]

Our government has pledged in the Speech from the Throne to find a way so that workers will not have to choose between taking care of a family member and their job.

As usual, we were quick to deliver on our commitments. Actually, the government has announced in the 2003 budget the establishment of a six week leave with employment insurance benefits. This initiative seeks to ensure that Canadians can provide compassionate care for a seriously ill or dying child, parent or spouse without putting their job or income at risk.

[English]

Beginning in January 2004, six weeks of compassionate care benefits, along with eight weeks of Canada Labour Code job protection, will be available so eligible workers may take a temporary absence from work without fear of sudden income or job loss when a parent, spouse or child is dying or falls gravely ill.

[Translation]

Of course, at first glance, this leave may appear inadequate to my colleague, who is suggesting leave of up to 52 weeks. However, several analyses we conducted in the medical world showed that the average absence of a relative taking care of a seriously ill family member was six weeks. This is why the government suggested a six week leave paid by employment insurance.

Contrary to what my colleague from Vancouver East said, when she was drafting her bill, I am not so sure that our hon. colleague carefully researched the financial impact of her proposal on workers, employers and society as a whole.

Her bill includes not only close relatives such as children, parents, spouses, as does the government proposal, but also brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, as well as in-laws and step family members. This definition of family will be very costly for our society.

[English]

It gets worse when we consider the idea of impairment involved in the bill that applies to a wide range of care services entailing significant costs for Canadians.

I have noticed that no one here has mentioned any numbers. Let us talk numbers. Just to give members an idea, our compassionate care plan should cost the public purse approximately \$86 million in 2003-04, and \$221 million in 2004-05 and subsequent years. Clearly, Bill C-206, which would entitle more Canadians to this kind of leave and would make the leave almost nine times as long, would be very costly.

I do not believe that we as a country can afford this measure. The idea behind the measure is an idea that the government has already put forward and the government's position is one where we acknowledge the need, we try to answer the need, but there is certain limit to which we can go and this is a financial limit.

[Translation]

Bill C-206 runs contrary to the very principles on which we laid the new foundations of the employment insurance system, since it requires those who want to take care of their relatives to quit their job or be fired to be entitled to support.

The government proposal stresses that it is important for individuals to keep their jobs as long as possible. Unfortunately, I am out of time but, believe me, it is important to have a balanced approach.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the member for Laval West for her cooperation under the circumstances.

• (1845)

[English]

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me tonight to speak on Bill C-206. Of course my learned friend who brought it forward is a very kind and compassionate person. He cares about what happens to individuals all over the country.

People have to forget the fact that it is going to cost money. It will cost money up front, but we will save money in the long haul. We could sit down and talk about all the bills that come through the House, and when all is said and done, there is no bill that will affect people as much as this bill will. Bill C-206 is a bill for the people. It is an excellent, caring, compassionate bill, which we sometimes do not see from politicians. Today we have a chance as a country and as politicians to stand up and say that we care for the working people of this country in a way that we have never cared before.

We all know that the workplace is very stressful. For 22 years I worked as a front line worker in health care. That is a long time. I have seen a lot in 22 years. I have been with family members who cried, who had stress and who did not know where their next dollar would come from because they were too emotionally upset to work. They had no plan so that they could go off work and have some income. They did not know where their next dollar was coming from.

This bill gives them hope. Bill C-206 gives them some type of peace of mind for the future and the people they love and will care for.

Bill C-206 raises legitimate points. Certainly all members sympathize with and respect those who are left with no other choice but to leave their employment due to the illness of a family member. Whether it is a parent, a sibling or a child, it does not matter.

The Progressive Conservative Party of Canada certainly believes in assisting Canadians who are in need of help. Bill C-206 will bring a great sense of peace of mind to people who are in need. The government gives parental leave and maternity leave, so what is wrong with the government giving compassionate leave to the people who need it the most? Bill C-206 gives it to the people.

I know that the hon. member is looking for 52 weeks and I know that the Liberal government put 6 weeks in the budget. I commend the government for that. Six weeks is a good starting point. This is a good start to move forward to make the bill better than ever before.

I am sure we all know people who have been in situations where they could not go to work because of stress and because they wanted to take care of a loved one on the last leg of the journey. As a result, they did not know where they were going or if they would have any money.

Bill C-206 gives them hope. I could tell story after story of people whose lives have been torn apart, but unless people go through it themselves they do not really understand it. I have been through this experience with my father-in-law who had cancer. He was diagnosed in December and before the trout season began he passed away. The

*Private Members' Business*

only reason the family had peace of mind was that there were family members in the house. One could afford to take time from work and there were two family members who were not working at the time and they spent every day and rotated shifts.

The bill would give those family members a chance to say, "I can take legitimate leave from work, stay off and take care of our loved ones". The hon. member should be congratulated. We have an old saying: the people in this country should be kissing his feet, because we have a kind politician, a politician who means a lot to this country. We as politicians can change the time and change the image of politicians if we do things right. This is what it is all about.

● (1850)

All of us should vote in favour of the bill. No one should object to the bill. We should unanimously support the bill, give the people something that they rightly deserve and give them hope for the future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of Bill C-206 are deemed put and a recorded division is deemed demanded and deferred until Tuesday, March 25 at the expiry of the time provided for government orders.

[*Translation*]

It being 6:50 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:50 p.m.)



# CONTENTS

Thursday, March 20, 2003

<p><b>Business of the House</b></p> <p>Mr. Boudria ..... 4451</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b></p> <p><b>Government Response to Petitions</b></p> <p>Mr. Regan ..... 4451</p> <p><b>Canada Airports Act</b></p> <p>Mr. Collette ..... 4451</p> <p>Bill C-27. Introduction and first reading ..... 4451 (Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) ..... 4451</p> <p><b>Committees of the House</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Government Operations and Estimates</b></p> <p>Mr. Valeri ..... 4451</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Public Accounts</b></p> <p>Mr. Williams ..... 4451</p> <p><b>Special Economic Measures Act</b></p> <p>Mr. Anders ..... 4451</p> <p>Bill C-414. Introduction and first reading ..... 4451 (Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) ..... 4451</p> <p><b>Nuclear Liability Act</b></p> <p>Mr. Caccia ..... 4451</p> <p>Bill C-415. Introduction and first reading ..... 4451 (Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed) ..... 4452</p> <p><b>Petitions</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Canada Post</b></p> <p>Mr. Reid ..... 4452</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Canadian Emergency Preparedness College</b></p> <p>Mrs. Gallant ..... 4452</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Child Pornography</b></p> <p>Mr. Williams ..... 4452</p> <p><b>Questions on the Order Paper</b></p> <p>Mr. Regan ..... 4452</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Suspension of Sitting</b></p> <p>(The sitting of the House was suspended at 10:12 a.m.) ..... 4453</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Sitting resumed</b></p> <p>(The House resumed at 10:30 a.m.) ..... 4453</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GOVERNMENT ORDERS</b></p> <p><b>Supply</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Allotted Day—Military Intervention in Iraq</b></p> <p>Mr. Duceppe ..... 4453</p> <p>Motion ..... 4453</p> <p>Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) ..... 4455</p> <p>Mr. Solberg ..... 4455</p> <p>Mr. Robinson ..... 4456</p> <p>Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) ..... 4456</p> <p>Mr. Abbott ..... 4457</p>	<p>Mr. Perron ..... 4458</p> <p>Mr. Maloney ..... 4458</p> <p>Mr. Moore ..... 4460</p> <p>Ms. McDonough ..... 4460</p> <p>Mr. Solberg ..... 4460</p> <p>Mr. Harper ..... 4461</p> <p>Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) ..... 4463</p> <p>Mr. Crête ..... 4463</p> <p>Mr. Blaikie ..... 4464</p> <p>Mr. Shepherd ..... 4465</p> <p>Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) ..... 4466</p> <p>Ms. McDonough ..... 4466</p> <p>Mr. Epp ..... 4467</p> <p>Mr. Clark ..... 4468</p> <p>Mr. Lincoln ..... 4469</p> <p>Mr. Day ..... 4470</p> <p>Ms. McDonough ..... 4470</p> <p>Mr. Casey ..... 4471</p> <p>Ms. Carroll ..... 4472</p> <p>Mr. Day ..... 4472</p> <p>Mr. Bachand (Saint-Jean) ..... 4472</p> <p>Amendment ..... 4474</p> <p>Mr. Day ..... 4474</p> <p>Mr. Eggleton ..... 4474</p> <p>Ms. Lalonde ..... 4474</p> <p>Mr. Gagnon (Champlain) ..... 4475</p> <p>Mr. Duncan ..... 4475</p> <p>Mr. Mahoney ..... 4476</p> <p>Mr. Day ..... 4477</p> <p>Mr. Bonwick ..... 4478</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS</b></p> <p><b>CIS Hockey</b></p> <p>Mr. Scott ..... 4479</p> <p><b>Iraq</b></p> <p>Mr. Abbott ..... 4479</p> <p><b>Democracy and Human Rights</b></p> <p>Mr. Cotler ..... 4479</p> <p><b>Pond Hockey</b></p> <p>Mr. Savoy ..... 4480</p> <p><b>Energy Innovation</b></p> <p>Ms. Sgro ..... 4480</p> <p><b>Terrorism</b></p> <p>Mr. Sorenson ..... 4480</p> <p><b>Racial Discrimination</b></p> <p>Mr. Finlay ..... 4480</p> <p><b>International Day of La Francophonie</b></p> <p>Mr. Sauvageau ..... 4481</p> <p><b>Karine Dumouchel and Karine Vaudeville</b></p> <p>Mr. Marci ..... 4481</p>
---	--

<b>Member for Calgary Southwest</b>	
Mr. Rajotte .....	4481
<b>Comité des jeunes de Rosemont</b>	
Ms. Frulla .....	4481
<b>International Day of La Francophonie</b>	
Mr. Godin .....	4481
<b>War in Iraq</b>	
Ms. Guay .....	4482
<b>International Day for the Elimination of Racism</b>	
Ms. Thibeault .....	4482
<b>Canada-U.S. Relations</b>	
Mr. Doyle .....	4482
<b>Women of Distinction</b>	
Mr. Carignan .....	4482
<b>Prime Minister</b>	
Mr. Breitzkreuz .....	4482

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

<b>Iraq</b>	
Mr. Harper .....	4483
Mr. Chrétien .....	4483
Mr. Harper .....	4483
Mr. Chrétien .....	4483
Mr. Harper .....	4483
Mr. Chrétien .....	4483
Mr. Day .....	4483
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4483
Mr. Day .....	4484
Mr. Chrétien .....	4484
Mr. Duceppe .....	4484
Mr. Chrétien .....	4484
Mr. Duceppe .....	4484
Mr. Chrétien .....	4484
Ms. Lalonde .....	4484
Ms. Whelan (Essex) .....	4484
Ms. Lalonde .....	4484
Ms. Whelan (Essex) .....	4484
Mr. Blaikie .....	4484
Mr. Chrétien .....	4484
Mr. Blaikie .....	4485
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4485
Mr. Clark .....	4485
Mr. Chrétien .....	4485
Mr. Clark .....	4485
Mr. Chrétien .....	4485
Mr. Moore .....	4485
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4485
Mr. Moore .....	4485
Mr. Boudria .....	4485
Mr. Bachand (Saint-Jean) .....	4485
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4485
Mr. Bachand (Saint-Jean) .....	4486
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4486

<b>Canada-U.S. Relations</b>	
Mr. Kenney .....	4486
Mr. Chrétien .....	4486
Mr. Kenney .....	4486
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4486
Mr. Gauthier .....	4486
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4486
Mr. Gauthier .....	4486
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4486
<b>Canada-U.S. Border</b>	
Mr. Jaffer .....	4486
Ms. Caplan .....	4487
Mr. Jaffer .....	4487
Ms. Caplan .....	4487
<b>The Environment</b>	
Mr. Bagnell .....	4487
Mr. Anderson (Victoria) .....	4487
<b>Iraq</b>	
Ms. McDonough .....	4487
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4487
Ms. McDonough .....	4487
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4487
Mrs. Wayne .....	4488
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4488
Mrs. Wayne .....	4488
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4488
<b>National Defence</b>	
Mr. Benoit .....	4488
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4488
Mr. Benoit .....	4488
Mr. McCallum (Markham) .....	4488
<b>Iraq</b>	
Mr. Rocheleau .....	4488
Ms. Whelan (Essex) .....	4488
Mr. Rocheleau .....	4488
Ms. Whelan (Essex) .....	4488
<b>National Defence</b>	
Mr. Ritz .....	4489
Mr. Goodale .....	4489
Mr. Ritz .....	4489
Mr. Goodale .....	4489
<b>Health</b>	
Mr. Adams .....	4489
Ms. McLellan .....	4489
<b>Canadian Broadcasting Corporation</b>	
Mr. Abbott .....	4489
Ms. Copps .....	4489
Mr. Abbott .....	4489
Ms. Copps .....	4490
<b>Iraq</b>	
Mr. Lanctôt .....	4490
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) .....	4490
<b>International Day of La Francophonie</b>	
Mr. Simard .....	4490





Mr. Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls)..... 4516

Divisions deemed demanded and deferred..... 4517

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