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Friday, May 5, 2006

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, May 5, 2006

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

●(1000)

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed from May 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, An Act respecting the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada and amending certain Acts be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in today's debate on Bill C-5, An Act respecting the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada and amending certain Acts.

I have some serious concerns about Bill C-5.

I was a social worker in Quebec's health and social services network. For the past three years, I worked in a nursing home and long-term care facility for the elderly. Such facilities have a high risk of influenza and other viral epidemics. I found that the regional public health authority acted competently and expertly to prevent and respond to epidemics. I am convinced that Quebec's response strategy is effective and rigorous, and that it meets the needs of Quebecers.

Given that the Government of Quebec has the expertise and works with all parts of the Quebec health network, the Bloc Québécois believes that the provincial government should establish its own priorities and create its own action plan according to world-wide objectives developed by organizations like the WHO.

I do not share the opinion of a certain colleague from another part that Canada cannot have 13 different strategies and action plans. I believe that every province can create its own plan that corresponds to the particular activities and characteristics of its territory, particularly regarding prevention strategies for problems such as obesity, diabetes and injuries.

I do not believe that creating or changing the status of the current agency to coordinate the action of the provinces is necessary. I am not saying it is not necessary to coordinate what the provinces are

doing in matters of public health. As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health said, viruses do not have boundaries.

It is important to protect the health of our citizens. However, I wonder about the means proposed and described in Bill C-5. In this bill, we see that the agency will have its own portfolio and that the main administrator will be accountable to the Minister of Health while still remaining impartial and non-partisan.

The detachment of the Public Health Agency of Canada from Health Canada worries me. I fear that significant amounts of money will be allocated to that agency rather than be transferred to Quebec and the provinces, which have jurisdiction over this.

Quebec has to be able to fund its priorities in prevention and health promotion. These priorities may not be the same elsewhere, in all the other provinces.

Having worked in Quebec's health and social services network, I have seen that the application of "wall to wall" programs does not always help in achieving objectives. This centralist formula being imposed on us is far from being unanimously accepted in Quebec.

The Premier of Quebec, Jean Charest, said in January 2004, on the matter of the possible implementation of the Public Health Agency of Canada that:

Quebec ... has created its own structures in these two areas and they work. They will work with those that will be created, but duplication is out of the question—

That is precisely what the government is proposing to us today: duplication of services to the public because, once again, it is interfering in one of Quebec's jurisdictions.

The federal government keeps bringing in more structures in the area of health. After the National Forum on Health in the 1990s and the Health Council of Canada, now they are adding the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The Bloc Québécois, together with the Quebec government, objects to the federal government's desire to interfere with health care in Quebec. How the Quebec government organizes and provides care and establishes priorities for health care and social services is strictly its business.

●(1005)

This does not rule out cooperation and coordination among the provinces.

Consider the contradictions of this Conservative government, which says one thing then proposes to do the opposite.

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In a speech on May 1, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, citing the Speech from the Throne, said, “The government is committed to building a better federation in which governments come together to help Canadians realize their potential”. However, barely two weeks ago, his boss, the Prime Minister and only official spokesperson for the government, stated that the only federalism he would engage in would be open federalism, federalism that respects the areas of provincial jurisdiction and in which the federal government's spending power is monitored.

Thus, in order to make this Conservative concept of open, cooperative federalism a reality, we are presented with a Liberal bill, a bill that comes directly from a government that Canadians removed from power during the last election. This Liberal bill allows Ottawa to interfere once again in an area of jurisdiction that belongs to Quebec and the provinces, this time under the guise of public health.

To justify this interference, reference is made to the SARS crisis that hit the Toronto area in 2003. In his remarks to this House, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health said that the SARS crisis “launched an important discussion and debate about the state of public health in Canada”. That is true, he is absolutely right. However, he forgot to mention that, at the time, all stakeholders in Quebec agreed that, had this crisis hit Quebec instead of Ontario, it would never have developed to the extent it did in Toronto. Why? Because Quebec's public health services already had an action plan in place for use in the event of such an emergency in that jurisdiction. Not only did Quebec have an action plan, but the human resources required had also been defined. That is why.

As an aside, I noted in my research that Ontario has just received, in March 2006, a report recommending that it set up its own public health agency, something similar to Quebec's Institut national de la santé publique.

In a nutshell, it is because Quebec has put in place what is needed to face this kind of situation and because Quebec minds its own business, which we would very much like the federal government to do.

By espousing this Liberal legislation, the Conservative government is espousing at the same time the Liberal vision of Canada: Ottawa knows best and will impose its will from sea to sea.

How will a new agency or specific entity, call it what you want, with offices across the country help us deal with any potential flu epidemic? What will it change in real, concrete terms? I would like to know.

We have no problem with the federal Department of Health instituting prevention and emergency response measures in its areas of responsibility, such as screening at the border. Not at all, that is its job. But to have the federal government establish an agency and spend public money on a new structure duplicating one that already exists and is working well, that is a problem.

The government repeated over and over during oral question period that it is committed to the interests of taxpayers. This is a fine opportunity to show concern for them by using their money efficiently and effectively.

Can someone explain to me what exactly the staff of the new agency will do in the offices in Quebec that employees of the health department cannot do here in Ottawa?

• (1010)

I would like an answer to that question.

How will information on new public health threats be any better coordinated with the creation of the public health agency than it is now with the health department, whose job it is to coordinate this information? I would also like an answer to that question.

The Conservative government plans to set up a new entity, separate it from the health department, give it substantial funding and personnel and set up an office in Quebec and the other provinces, all in order “to identify and reduce public health risk factors”, as the preamble states.

I cannot stress enough that the fiscal imbalance is the cause of the biggest public health risk factor in Quebec: overcrowded emergency rooms. The proliferation of resistant nosocomial bacteria such as *C. difficile* in some hospitals is one of the biggest threats to public health in Quebec.

To address these problems, the Government of Quebec does not need a new federal agency in Quebec, it needs money. The problem is that the provinces and Quebec have the health and social services needs, but Ottawa has the money. The government should stop creating new structures. Quebec and the provinces are cooperating already. Quebec coordinates with the other provinces on public health. I do not think that creating a new agency will make things any better.

We have the federal government to thank for Quebec's underfunded health services. By its actions, the current federal government is doing everything it can to take up where the previous government left off. Emergency rooms will not become less crowded overnight. In my opinion, in addition to recycling a Liberal bill, the Conservative government is clearly also recycling the arrogance of the previous government, which tried only to penetrate further into areas of Quebec and provincial jurisdiction.

I would like to clarify another point. The preamble to Bill C-5 states that “the Government of Canada wishes to promote cooperation and consultation in the field of public health with provincial and territorial governments”. In his speech yesterday, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health added that his government plans to strengthen its collaboration with municipal governments. While he was on the topic, why did he not tell us right away that the next step—under the guise of cooperation and consultation— would be direct interference in the administration of health facilities? Let us not forget that history repeats itself.

Let us talk about health services for aboriginals, which fall under federal jurisdiction. Services provided to first nations communities cannot be considered adequate, to say the least. This government should tread carefully; look where meddling in other people's affairs got the previous government.

The Bloc Québécois is committed to supporting the other parties in this House on issues that are in Quebec's interest. The government again plans to duplicate services and create a new structure whose only purpose in Quebec would be to spend public moneys for no good reason. We cannot support that.

That reminds me of the two anti-tobacco campaigns aired recently in Quebec.

•(1015)

In Quebec a campaign was launched to help people wanting to quit smoking by giving them the tools and a service to help them in this endeavour. While this was going on, the federal government flooded the Quebec media with ads giving a different message with a different telephone number and different contact information on the same issue. What wonderful collaboration and use of public funds.

In closing, I want to make one last point on the issue of direct communication with the public. In Bill C-5 respecting the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada, it stipulates that the chief public health officer "may communicate with the public, voluntary organizations in the public health field or the private sector for the purpose of providing information, or seeking their views, about public health issues".

It is quite clear that with its independent administration and its offices spread out here and there, this agency will end up justifying its presence by regularly implementing communication plans for all Canadians, including those in Quebec. It seems clear to me that this type of duplication is counter-productive. It is not what citizens and taxpayers want. In any case, it is not the wish of the people of Beauharnois—Salaberry, whom I represent in this House.

I would like to draw your attention to a more specific aspect. I read and listened to various speeches by colleagues in this House. There was a great deal of discussion about health prevention in terms of epidemics and pandemics. However, I noticed that there was less discussion about health promotion. An expert in this area knows that it is important for local communities to identify their problems and to find solutions that will work in their areas.

Take obesity, for example. In my area, we decided to fight child obesity by approaching cafeterias in secondary schools, convincing them to offer more nutritious foods, and thus help youth develop better eating habits. We did not talk to youth about diet or try to make them feel guilty. In terms of promotion, we know that individuals are not always solely responsible for their health given that their environment and everything around them also have an impact.

In Quebec, we have made choices. There are campaigns to prevent obesity, to reduce the number of low birth weight babies, and others. We have our own way of communicating with our communities and, what is important, we have a decentralized approach. Each community can promote and work on improving the health of Quebecers. This is done at the local level. Naturally, everyone does not just do what they want, leading to chaos. We are bound and guided by broad directives issued by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec. It provides instructions and directives to each of the 16 regional branches in Quebec.

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This is my first speech in the House and I would like to conclude by stating that I hope to discuss my concerns with the parliamentary secretary. Above all, I would like to impress on him that we believe that the public health agency, as proposed, is not the best means to protect and promote the health of Quebecers and Canadians.

•(1020)

[English]

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the member to the House.

The member has made many misstatements and misrepresentations of the truth. We know the Bloc's agenda is to break up Canada but that is not good for the people of Quebec or of Canada. This is turning into a classic example why that is the case.

Pandemics do not respect provincial borders or international borders. However, in her comments the member seems to suggest that pandemics do respect provincial borders. I will let the people of Canada and Quebec make their own assessment on that.

The member said that there was no need for the federal government to play a role and that somehow we were creating more bureaucracy. In fact, Health Canada and the health minister are ensuring that, within the powers and with the resources that exist, we are better streamlining them in order to deal with a crisis. The member seems to neglect that fact.

In public health, the provinces and the federal government have a joint responsibility, although the provinces do have direct responsibility for hospitals and health services.

I will give one of many examples where this member's argument falls apart. Within public health, we have a national microbiology lab in my home city of Winnipeg which is Canada's only level 4 lab. This lab is routinely called upon to support provincial health authorities detecting potential disease outbreaks. The lab has world experts and facilities to test for these kinds of deadly disease outbreaks. No such lab exists in Quebec.

Is the member suggesting that the people of Quebec should somehow go without the services this lab provides? That may be the Bloc's point of view, perhaps, but the Government of Canada's point of view is that the health of Quebecers is just as important as the health of all Canadians, which is why we invested a billion dollars in pandemic preparedness in this week's budget.

Why does the Bloc Québécois philosophy put the health of Quebecers in jeopardy, particularly in regard to the level 4 microbiology lab in Winnipeg? What is Quebec going to do? It needs those services. It is important that Canadians work together to protect each other because Canada is about mutual support.

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I ask the member to comment on the microbiology lab and how Quebec would deal with that without the Public Health Agency.

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his question. I do believe that my remarks were misunderstood. I said all along that were not against collaboration and cooperation. On the contrary, we think it is important to work together in a joint effort. We do not want structural duplication, increased bureaucracy, wasteful spending and overlapping.

Even though we want to become a country, we know that we do not live in isolation. We live in an era of globalization. I think Quebec has the ability and expertise to manage its own action plan, as do the other provinces. That does not exclude what is currently in place.

Let us take the avian flu, for example. The WHO has given directives to all the countries of the world to prepare for an eventual avian flu pandemic. The WHO gives directives to Canada, which in turn gives directives to the provinces, and each province, including Quebec, puts in place its own action plans at the national, regional and local levels.

We do not want to be isolated and work alone. We want a real partnership, real cooperation that respects our jurisdictions.

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry on her excellent maiden speech in this House.

While people in her riding are hard hit by business closures in the manufacturing sector as companies often transfer their operations to emerging countries, would the member for Beauharnois—Salaberry not have preferred to speak today about the implementation of an effective program to help older workers affected by massive layoffs, instead of a bill creating an agency that obviously intrudes into Quebec's jurisdictions?

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for this important question.

To begin, I would answer that, just yesterday, I received three distress calls from textile workers in Huntingdon. They were all in tears and some of them were even suicidal. They reminded me of our role and responsibilities as government members. They also reminded me that the Conservative government will not commit to creating, as soon as possible, an income support program for older workers. I am referring to men and women aged 58 or 59. They are often couples who worked in the same factory. They often have low levels of education and are now suffering from mental health problems.

Creating an agency is not going to improve their health and prevent their problems associated with psychological distress.

• (1030)

[*English*]

Hon. Carol Skelton (Minister of National Revenue and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about the whole issue of the new public health act and what she feels is the most important part of the

act for her riding. Is there anything else she could add to this important new bill?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question.

When members speak for the first time in the House on a particular subject, especially newly elected members, they take the time to read on that subject and to consult their constituents. As a matter of fact, yesterday, I consulted a senior executive in a rather important health care institution located in the most densely populated part of the Montérégie region, in my riding. This public health specialist told me that, after reading this bill, she saw nothing in it that would improve the health of Quebecers or Canadians. We are already doing what this bill proposes to do. I do not see how this new agency will put forward new solutions. It will just confuse people who will be the target of different health promotion campaigns on the same issues.

There is often a tendency to want to put in place Canada-wide promotion programs. We live in a vast country and each community has its own characteristics. Even in Quebec, response strategies in public health are not the same in the Gaspé Peninsula as in the Montérégie region. We constantly need to adapt our strategies.

In my opinion, the existing agency within Health Canada is acceptable and seems to work well. I do not see why there should be any other agency.

[*English*]

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-5. As many of us in the House are aware, the Public Health Agency has been in operation for some time, and this is the enabling legislation.

In the context of dealing with the Public Health Agency of Canada, I went to the Public Health Agency's website and reviewed some information that is important for the context of the debate in the House.

The mission for the Public Health Agency is to promote and protect the health of Canadians through leadership, partnership, innovation and action in public health. As many members have noted, the Public Health Agency is responsible for a number of different aspects of public health. In part, it is mandated to respond to public health emergencies and infectious disease outbreaks. Specifically, there are a number of branches that have been set up to deal with this issue. I will address two of those branches in my speech today.

One is the branch for infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. I have a quote from the website. It states:

The Branch enables the prevention and control of infectious diseases and improvement in the health of those infected. Staff prepare for and are ready to respond to public health emergencies, 365 days a year. Examples of specific challenges are HIV/AIDS, pandemic influenza preparedness, health-care acquired infections such as C-difficile...

I will speak specifically about infectious diseases.

The other is the branch for health promotion and chronic disease prevention. Again, on its website, it states:

The Branch works with stakeholders at all levels to: provide national and international leadership in health promotion, chronic disease prevention and control; coordinate the surveillance of chronic diseases and their risk factors and early disease detection; create and evaluate/measure programs addressing common risk factors and specialized issues focussing on special populations (seniors, children)...

In the context of several things that have happened in Canada over the past years, it is important to talk specifically about pandemics.

I want to hearken back to SARS and what happened in Toronto and how that terrible event impacted so heavily on so many people, the workers, businesses, and the tragedy for families who lost loved ones. As a result of that, an inquiry was commissioned and it resulted in something that we all refer to as the Naylor report. I want to go back to the conclusions of the Naylor report and the specific recommendations that were made.

The summary of the Naylor report talks about the fact that SARS killed 44 Canadians, caused illness to hundreds more, paralyzed a major segment of Ontario's health care system for weeks and saw in excess of 25,000 residents of the GTA placed in quarantine. Those impacts still reverberate in that community. The report went on to talk about the fact that the national advisory committee on SARS and public health had found that there was much to learn from the outbreak of SARS in Canada, in large part because too many earlier lessons were ignored. The report states:

A key requirement for dealing successfully with future public health crises is a truly collaborative framework and ethos among different levels of government. The rules and norms for a seamless public health system must be sorted out with a shared commitment to protecting and promoting the health of Canadians.

On and on it goes. Toward the end of the report, it states:

Until now, there have been no federal transfers earmarked for local and P/T public health activities. Public health has instead been competing against personal health services for health dollars in provincial budgets, even as the federal government has increasingly earmarked its health transfers for personal health service priorities.

In that context, one would have hoped that there would have been significant movement. Instead last year, on November 3, 2005, the public health officials came before the health committee to talk about a couple of issues, one I will address shortly when I talk specifically about first nations and public health.

In the context of pandemics let me refer to something that Dr. David Butler-Jones brought forward to the committee. In part it was in response to a question that I asked about the fact that there were challenges in light of communication, capacity and the federal plan specifically had earmarked timeframes around vaccinating all Canadians in four months, in two waves.

●(1035)

The question I had put to Dr. Butler-Jones was whether we had the ability to obtain a domestic supply of a vaccine if one is developed, because it does depend on the strain, and whether we had the physical capacity in communities to vaccinate all Canadians in four months. Keep in mind that we had the SARS crisis that talked about coordination in response. Dr. Butler-Jones in 2005 said, "In terms of capacity, it is very variable in this country. But it is something the public health network and working with my colleagues, the deputies in the provinces and the ministers to ministers, in terms of how we can continue to build that capacity". He talked about the money that

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was allocated in the budget. This is not that we were able to do this, but he talked about continuing to work with the provinces and territories in terms of rebuilding the capacity that was lost at the local level over the last decade, as we had been so focused on hospitals and less on the public good of public health.

That was in the fall of 2005. We still have gaps in our capacity to respond to a pandemic in this country. In the context of sending the bill to committee, I urge that this information be addressed.

In the past year we were able to go through a flu season without needing that kind of response in place, but it is a ticking time bomb. We need to have the capacity in this country to address that situation.

I also want to speak about chronic disease and disease prevention specifically in terms of aboriginal communities. There is an aboriginal peoples round table report on the Public Health Agency website which contains a number of recommendations. Regarding operational strategies for a public health agency, it states that an agency should consider:

The need to avoid a melting pot approach to aboriginal issues which might disregard distinctions between aboriginal peoples.

Agency needs to be sensitive to cultural differences in public health, which means that some approaches can seem foreign or counter-cultural.

The importance of engaging aboriginal women as leaders in community public health issues. Aboriginal women should be consulted on the formation of good models of health delivery.

Strategies to address the public health issues of aboriginal peoples who live off reserve.

The report goes on to talk about specific investments that are required:

The need for training nurses and public health professionals to serve northern and remote communities — particularly Inuit who would like to become nurses;

The need for cross-cultural training for nurses who are often unable to take such training because of the demands of their work;

The need for investments in capacity so that first nations communities are better able to respond to outbreaks of infectious disease; and

The need for support to address public health crises in many communities, including mould in housing and potable drinking water.

There were other public health issues that were specifically raised. Participants also raised concerns about specific public health issues, including that Inuit need help facing particular public health concerns relating to lower life expectancy, mental health, tuberculosis, and the challenges of keeping health care providers, such as nurses, in the communities. They also indicated that first nations communities need help addressing problems such as the prevalence of diabetes among first nations people and the high rate of suicide in communities such as those in northern Ontario.

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In talking about suicide, after I was elected for the very first time, my first official duty in my community on July 1, instead of celebrating what a great country this is, was attending the funeral of a first nations youth who had committed suicide a couple of days before. He was 19. This is a crisis in many first nations communities.

In terms of a public health framework for first nations communities, the First Nations Health Bulletin, Winter-Spring 2006 talked about work that the Assembly of First Nations is doing in the context of many communities across Canada. It is raising a number of issues including some of what we call the social determinants of health. We must not just talk about health promotion. We must talk about the social determinants of health. The bulletin refers to high rates of unemployment, lower educational opportunities, poor housing and overcrowding, lack of basic amenities such as running water and indoor toilets. These are but a few of the social issues that contribute to the poor health in first nations communities.

•(1040)

The bulletin stated that it is essential that a community have access to information about itself. We know that knowledge is often power. When we do not have adequate information to talk about the health in communities, then we do not have the tools to help us develop the appropriate public policy to address these issues. That is not available in many circumstances, largely due to the dysfunctional surveillance systems for first nations health.

It goes on to say that the recommendations proposed in the public health framework take into consideration the distinct communities that first nations represent across Canada. This points to the fact that we cannot have a one size fits all approach to public health in first nations and aboriginal communities from coast to coast to coast.

The Assembly of First Nations put out a bulletin on May 3, 2006. I will quote from this because I think the words should come from the people it directly affects. The headline is "Federal Budget Ignores Health Crisis in First Nations Communities" and it states, "Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine said it is alarming to see a complete absence of funding in the federal budget to address urgent health crises faced by first nations communities such as those faced by Garden Hill First Nation in Manitoba and Kashechewan First Nation in Ontario. It is ironic that the first government saw fit to invest in epidemics of tuberculosis, HIV-AIDS in developing countries, while many first nations are living with these diseases and there is no new assistance for them".

To give a little more context, this is Canada. This is not a developing country where sometimes, sad but true, people come to expect high rates of infant mortality, tuberculosis, HIV-AIDS and diabetes. Let us talk about the reality in first nations communities.

In 2000 the life expectancy at birth for first nations populations was estimated at 68.9 years for men and 76.6 years for women. That represents a gap of 7.4 years and 5.2 years respectively with Canadian populations. The gap in the potential years of life lost between first nations and Canadians was estimated in 1999 to be three times greater on injuries, almost double on endocrine diseases, such as diabetes, and more than double for mental illness. In 1999 the first nations suicide rate was 27.9 deaths per 100,000. The Canadian suicide rate was 13.2 deaths per 100,000. There is a litany

of these pieces of information. It is shameful that we need to talk about them today in the context of a country as wealthy as Canada.

I will briefly touch on pandemics as I know I will run out of time and I still want to speak about tuberculosis and diabetes. Pandemic readiness in first nations communities is not where it needs to be. In a paper by Dr. Gideon for the Assembly of First Nations, she specifically talks about the fact that there are gaps in the training plans, that many first nations communities have had the opportunity to develop these plans, but have had no ability to test the plans, that there is still inadequate training around drinking water and sewage plant management, and that there are still no formal discussions or written protocols between Health Canada and the provinces and territories where much of that action will need to happen.

I need to turn my attention in the time I have remaining to the crises around tuberculosis and diabetes within first nations communities in this country. I want to talk about Garden Hill specifically. In 2001 the incidence of tuberculosis disease in first nations communities was on average 10 times higher than that of the Canadian population as a whole.

Between 1975 and 2002 there was a significant decline in the number of cases and incidence of TB among first nations. The most positive impact was achieved by 1992. This is despite the first nations insured health benefits branch tuberculosis elimination strategy implemented in 1992 with the goal of reducing incidence of TB disease in the first nations on reserve population to one per 100,000 by the year 2010. Over the last 10 years there has been limited improvement in further reducing the incidence of TB among first nations, especially in western provinces.

This is in the context of the first nations community, the Garden Hill Reserve, with 3,500 where only 4% have access to running water. There are 20 cases that have been reported in the area. The first case went undiagnosed for eight months. There was a critical need to move on clean drinking water, on sewage, on adequate health care resources in the community.

•(1045)

The community is calling for community-wide testing. We must act. This is Canada. People should not be facing the spread of tuberculosis in their communities in this day and age.

I want to turn now to diabetes. Friday, May 5 marks National Aboriginal Diabetes Awareness Day. Diabetes walks are being held in my own community to attempt to shine the light of attention on this crisis.

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I am going to quote from a press release by Chief Phil Fontaine who said, "Diabetes has become a disabling and deadly disease for many Canadians but first nations continue to suffer with a level that is three to five times higher. In order to better come to grips with understanding and treating this epidemic, the Assembly of First Nations is in the process of completing a three part first nations diabetes report card based on the Canadian Diabetes Association model. The report card will assess the current state of diabetes supports available to first nations people focusing on six areas: prevention; treatment; education; policy development; research; and surveillance. The first part of the report card will be released next month."

• (1050)

The great tragedy of diabetes is that it can be easily prevented or regulated through diet and exercise, but when people live in poverty, making healthy choices is not an option when there is no access to affordable foods and safe drinking water. The press release goes on to talk about how in some communities entire families, from toddlers to grandparents, have diabetes.

This year the first nations regional health survey revealed that the average age of diagnosis among youth is 11 years, but there are also many adults who go undiagnosed and untreated until they suffer serious complications, such as blindness or loss of limb. The risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced through healthy nutrition, healthy weight and regular physical activity. There are success stories in some first nations communities but there are also many tragedies.

The release goes on to say, "The great tragedy of diabetes is that it can be easily prevented or regulated through diet and exercise, but when you live in poverty, making healthy choices is not an option when there is no access to affordable foods and safe drinking water".

There is a litany of information. For many decades first nations communities across this country have continued to plea with governments to ensure that the social determinants of health that are impacting on the health and well-being of aboriginal communities is addressed.

We have developed drinking water strategies and housing strategies and yet we still do not see a significant improvement in many aboriginal communities. What is the loss to this country in terms of people's ability to participate fully in their community life? What is the loss to the economic well-being of the community? What is the loss to the cultural vibrancy of the community when many elders and young people are contracting a disease that is entirely preventable?

Diabetes can be addressed through a comprehensive program that ensures there are adequate health resources in the community and adequate educational resources. These tools must be developed in conjunction with aboriginal communities to make sure they are culturally relevant and appropriate to the first nations community, because it is a diverse community from coast to coast to coast. These things must be put in place to address this crisis.

We saw events unfold in Kashechewan last year when the community was faced with a drinking water crisis. We are seeing an emerging situation in Garden Hill with a tuberculosis outbreak. I

believe there are currently 79 boil water advisories in place in first nations communities.

This bill provides us with an opportunity to highlight some of these very serious issues facing first nations, Inuit and Métis communities, both on and off reserve. I would urge the committee to examine these issues in a very serious way and put forward some meaningful proposals developed in conjunction with aboriginal communities and their leadership.

It is critical that we make sure that access is available for all. We consider ourselves an equality country so let us make sure equality is in place. The time for action is now.

• (1055)

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour and privilege of serving with the member in the last Parliament on the health committee and I know of her resolve on these issues. While we may not always have agreed 100% on the way to solve the problems, we always participated very well, worked very well and shared the principles.

I am pleased that she has made a reference to TB, because I think it is one the areas of public health that we have to pay a lot of attention to. My father was a victim of TB. He lost a lung to TB, which probably contributed to his death at 49 years of age. There was an outbreak of TB in my community almost 40 years ago in which hundreds of people were hospitalized. High school children and children in intermediate school were hospitalized. They lost a lot of very important years at a very important time. I know people who spent seven, eight and ten years in sanatoriums because of tuberculosis.

There is currently a fear of an outbreak in my community. At the Yarmouth Regional Hospital, approximately 750 people had to be tested for tuberculosis. I know what anxiety and fear this puts into our community. I can only imagine what anxiety levels and fears there must be in native communities throughout this country where they have to live with this fear every day.

We know that with TB, fetal alcohol syndrome, juvenile diabetes, and especially adult onset diabetes, socio-economic factors play a large part in the opportunities for those diseases to manifest themselves and spread within those communities.

We know the disappointment there must be in those communities that the Kelowna accord has been scrapped by the government, with the loss of the opportunity they had for socio-economic improvement of those communities throughout Canada, especially in the northern communities, from one ocean to the two others, where they had reached an agreement with all the provinces to deal with the basis of the problems in those communities. That \$5 billion investment, a great first step, has been scrapped.

Could the member tell us her impressions of the socio-economic costs of cancelling the Kelowna accord?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, I know the member has been committed to addressing the very serious health issues both in his own community and in aboriginal communities across the country.

Statements by Members

The Kelowna agreement was an effort to address the poverty gap that exists in first nations, Inuit and Métis communities. There is a disregard of the amount of work done over 18 months, of the amount of consultation and the very real participation of aboriginal communities across this country. To just rip up that agreement after all that work really leads to a sense of dismay.

The social determinants of health, which I spoke about earlier, have a real impact in terms of the incidence of disease in the communities. The agreement may not have been perfect, but it was a good step forward in terms of addressing that poverty gap in this country in first nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

It saddens us in the New Democratic Party, and certainly we have heard from communities across the country that there is a great deal of dismay that we will not be able to move forward as a House to address those poverty gaps around housing, education, violence against women and so many other issues. I would encourage this House to encourage the government to reconsider that.

The Speaker: Following question period when the debate resumes on this matter, there will be about five and a half minutes remaining in the time allotted for questions and comments for the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan. I propose now to move on to statements by members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

PUBLIC SPEAKING AWARDS

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand in the House today and speak on behalf of my colleague from Simcoe—Grey about a talented young woman in her riding.

Laura Brayford is in the gallery today as she prepares to compete in the provincial finals for public speaking in our nation's capital. A grade six student at Alliston's Ernest Cumberland Elementary School, Laura is an accomplished public speaker.

From the classroom to the gym and through three levels of Lions Club competitions, she has been captivating audiences with the mythology behind one of the most recognizable childhood folklore characters, the tooth fairy. This should not be confused with the tax fairy; however, I am sure the experience is just as pleasant.

In her speech, Laura follows the natural progression of losing a tooth and what happens through customs in other countries. Judging by her collection of plaques and medals, quite a few people are interested.

On behalf of all the residents in Simcoe-Grey, my colleagues in the House and the Prime Minister of Canada, I want to wish her well in her competition tomorrow.

* * *

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Omar Alhabra (Mississauga—Erindale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every year since 1993 Canadians have been celebrating the month of May as Asian Heritage Month. In 2001 the Senate

passed a motion that confirmed its official recognition. This acknowledges the long and rich history of Asian Canadians and their contributions to Canada and the world.

Canada prides itself on being one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. This diversity strengthens our country socially, politically and economically in unlimited ways. Asian Heritage Month is an ideal occasion for all Canadians to celebrate the beauty and wisdom of various Asian cultures.

Celebrations will be held in cities across Canada, including my city, the city of Mississauga. I invite all Canadians to take part in the festivities that commemorate the contributions and legacy of Asian Canadians, past and present.

I also call upon my colleagues in the House to join with me in congratulating all the volunteers and organizers who are working hard to ensure a successful celebration and in sending them our gratitude and appreciation.

* * *

•(1100)

[Translation]

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on April 29, three of our finest athletes in Quebec were inducted into the Olympic Hall of Fame.

Everyone will remember Sylvie Fréchette's performances in synchronized swimming. Her determination and grace won her a silver medal in Atlanta and a gold medal in solo in Barcelona, after she overcame tragedy in her personal life.

Also inducted was Pierre Harvey, one of only a few athletes to have competed in both the summer and winter games. With numerous world cup medals in cycling and cross-country skiing between 1975 and 1988 and four Olympic Games to his credit, he is said by many to be Quebec's best athlete.

Maurice Gagné, a respected athlete and trainer who is known as the father of speed skating in Quebec, was inducted into the hall of fame as a builder. Congratulations to these wonderful ambassadors.

* * *

[English]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, international human rights law states that whenever possible it is best to ensure children's welfare within the family and community.

Standards for child and family services are set by provincial and territorial governments. Funding on reserves, however, comes from the federal government.

In 2000 the federal government acknowledged that, on average, funding for indigenous children and family services was 22% lower per child than provincial funding for non-indigenous children, despite the higher costs of providing service in small and remote communities. The gap has increased every year since.

With one in ten status Indian children currently in care, it is unacceptable that this Conservative budget ignored the needs of these vulnerable children.

I call on all my colleagues in this House to support Jordan's principle, which states that when there is a jurisdictional dispute over a child's care, the needs of the child come first, without delay, and then there is a referral of that matter to jurisdictional dispute mechanisms.

I also call on the Conservative government to ensure this gap in funding is quickly closed.

* * *

ANCASTER—DUNDAS—FLAMBOROUGH—WESTDALE

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to sincerely thank the people of Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale for their support and confidence and assure them that I will serve with my utmost strength and ability.

Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale is a riding that is resplendent in natural beauty, situated in and around the Niagara Escarpment. It is known as the land of waterfalls.

It is also known as a gem of higher learning and is home to two universities, McMaster and Redeemer.

From all sectors of agriculture to high tech and research based businesses, our riding's competitive advantage is the talent of hard-working people.

The vibrant communities of our riding voted for accountability on January 23. The people expect accountability in the way their member operates as well, which is why I am very pleased that our constituency office has a high set of standards for customer service, having already handled hundreds of requests for help and information in the first three months.

I am especially proud to be part of the government that introduced the accountability act. Yes, members heard right: we are bringing accountability back to government.

* * *

ATLANTIC CANADA

Hon. Andy Scott (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives, with a \$13 billion surplus, had an unprecedented opportunity to make the strategic investments necessary to Atlantic Canada. However, they have squandered that chance.

The budget failed to even mention Atlantic Canada or regional economic development. Not only did it fail to renew the Canada strategic infrastructure fund for this year to advance many worthy projects in the province, there is no new money for the Atlantic innovation fund or ACOA's other programs.

Under our leadership, momentum was gaining in Atlantic Canada through the innovation agenda. The fact that this government is investing just one-tenth of what we had invested in federally funded university research shows it does not understand or believe in research and development.

Statements by Members

To the Conservatives, R and D means review and diminish.

Atlantic Canada remembers that it was the Prime Minister who stated that Atlantic Canada suffers from a "culture of defeat". With the lack of funding provided to Atlantic Canada in its first budget, it is clear that the Conservatives have no interest in giving our region the tools we need to succeed.

* * *

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 13 years I have fought tirelessly for the government to crack down on crime, restore safe and secure communities across this country and put the rights of victims and their families before those of criminals.

We are now on the brink of significant change in our justice system and I wonder if the opposition is up to the challenge. Just recently during debate I questioned the member for Ottawa South about his thoughts on child pornography and on putting the rights and safety of our children ahead of sexual predators. He answered in typical lawyerly fashion when he stated that we have to "remember that we have to strike a balance here". He said, "I believe the charter is now working for us in terms of its interpretation by the courts".

Let me tell the member loud and clear: there is no balance when children are being violated. Nothing short of a zero tolerance policy for all forms of child pornography will do.

There is no issue that should be more important to any government than the safety of our children. I am proud to stand here today and say that after 13 years of Liberal neglect and callousness toward the outlawing of child pornography our Conservative government is going to do something about it.

* * *

● (1105)

[Translation]

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on the night of May 3, an Armavia airlines Airbus A320 crashed in the Black Sea. All 113 passengers, most of whom were from Armenia, were killed.

The accident, allegedly caused by poor weather conditions, occurred after the aircraft turned toward Adler airport near Sochi, in southern Russia.

This tragedy is the worst air disaster ever to occur in Armenia. Many families were decimated, and a number of children lost their lives.

Armenia has declared two days of national mourning, today and tomorrow, to remember its victims.

My sympathies go out to the Armenian community at this difficult time, and I share Armenians' pain. I pray for the families and offer them my sincere condolences.

In closing, I invite all my colleagues to express their sympathies to the Armenian National Committee of Canada, here in Ottawa.

Statements by Members

[English]

CANADIAN WAR BRIDES

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine, Mrs. Jean Deshane of Belleville, has brought to my attention the fact that this is the 60th anniversary of the Canadian war bride.

Having endured the adversities of war, 45,000 women, mostly of British stock, left behind their homes, families and all they knew for the arduous and often dangerous sea voyage to begin life anew in a foreign land.

Most were very young, between the ages of 19 and 21, and many had been separated from their husbands for months or years at a time. Save for those with small children, they travelled alone in aging and dilapidated vessels. For some, there would be no one to greet them at pier 21; their husbands had abandoned them, while others had died in the war.

Isolation, culture shock and homesickness would drive some women to return to Europe, but the vast majority, toughened by the experiences of war, would thrive. They and their husbands would become the backbone of a dynamic and thriving post-war economy.

Today I wish to pay tribute to their enormous sacrifice and thank them for their immeasurable contributions to building a modern Canada.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Ramin Jahanbegloo, a Canadian citizen, is being detained in Iran. He is being detained because he had the courage to publicly challenge the racist rants of the Iranian president on the Holocaust.

Iran's government has proven itself to be racist and to have no problem with the murder of Canadian citizens in its prisons. The government must act now, before we are faced with another tragic murder by Iranian officials.

Iran has shown a disregard for the international community with its development of uranium, abuse of human rights, denial of the Holocaust and calls for the destruction of the state of Israel. Iran is a pariah state. It must be dealt with accordingly.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to be part of a government that takes crime seriously and is going to deal with violent and repeat offenders with tough minimum sentences.

I am very disappointed with the Liberal member for Mount Royal who is flip-flopping on commitments he made just a few months ago. He is now attacking the Conservative government for wanting to crack down on crime and introduce minimum sentences that he used to say he supported.

On November 25, the last day of sitting before the former government was defeated, the member for Mount Royal put forward a bill doubling minimum sentences for gun crimes. The former

Liberal justice minister is even offside with his own former leader who said that he agreed that there should be increases in punishment and that "there is no difference of opinion in that area".

I cannot believe the hypocrisy of these Liberal members. After a deathbed conversion during the last election to get tough on crime, they are now once again going soft and are willing to neither deal with the criminals nor protect our communities.

* * *

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it should be no surprise that the economic health of southwestern Ontario is dependent on the auto industry. Many families in my riding are particularly concerned about the Ford assembly plant in Talbotville, which will reduce its line speed, cut 280 jobs this July and drop down to one shift, cutting 900 more jobs by July 2007.

It is a benefit to everyone if Ford keeps its plant on two shifts. It is not just the jobs that are lost. Those workers buy products, use services and pay taxes. With the new Conservative tax cuts, Canada cannot afford to support more unemployment and hope to keep basic services, such as health care, running effectively.

Working families need jobs and the people in my riding of London—Fanshawe deserve employment. The fear is very real that Ford's next step is to shut down the plant entirely. That would devastate the community. We need more jobs, not fewer.

I hope the government is really interested in made in Canada solutions and will meet with the Ford Motor Company and find a way to keep jobs in Canada.

* * *

● (1110)

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past month I have had the privilege to meet with the Canadian Federation of University Women and the Coalition for Gun Control. Both organizations are working to correct so much of the misinformation around the gun registry and the licensing and permit requirements for firearms.

The facts are that since the gun registry has been in place, there has been a 62% decrease in the number of women murdered by firearms and a 63% decrease in the number of robberies with firearms across this country.

I call upon the government to look beyond the rhetoric of the gun lobby and get a bigger picture of the lives that have been saved since the registry began.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

CARREFOUR JEUNESSE-EMPLOI DES MOULINS

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi des Moulins youth employment centre, in my riding of Terrebonne—Blainville, is celebrating this year its 10th anniversary. The youth policy and support concept it represents was a great initiative of the Parti Québécois.

In addition to the 10 years of operation of this organization, we want to acknowledge the outstanding work of its founding president and chief executive officer, Diane Hamelin.

Over the years, this kind-hearted, tenacious, enthusiastic and dynamic woman has shown leadership, surrounding herself with the professional team she needed to meet the objectives of this organization, which is an important player in our community when it comes to ensuring the social and professional integration of young adults.

Diane, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, myself and the people of Terrebonne—Blainville, I say, “Well done!”. The 16-35 generation in our area thanks you.

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[English]

CHILD CARE

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last November the NDP sold out to the Conservatives and now that strategy has cost Canada a national child care program. Yesterday's child care debate proves it.

After the throne speech, the NDP was “cautiously optimistic”, and the NDP House leader had the gall to state, “We are making progress”. Now the NDP is surprised that the Conservative budget keeps the Conservative promise to kill child care.

Amazingly, in NDP land the members continue to attack the Liberal opposition and give the Conservatives a free pass. The NDP told Canadians last election, “Lend us your vote just this one time”. That is a mistake Canadians will not make twice.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to emphasize the significance of agriculture to this great country of Canada.

For the first time in many years, our agriculture producers have a government that listened and then took action on a financial crisis that the previous government created and then failed to do anything about. Farmers are now represented by a government that will reinvest in the second largest industry in this country to the extent of \$1.5 billion in additional funds.

I am proud to be a member of a government that keeps its promises. I commend the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and the Prime Minister for listening and taking action in such a positive way.

This is a great budget for farmers. It has proven that the government is committed to agriculture and will provide real investment in a real time of need.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative budget has failed several groups in my riding and across Atlantic Canada.

The government's silence on improvements to EI for seasonal workers is a serious source of concern. The Conservatives are just looking at reducing EI premiums at the expense of those working in seasonal industries. The two-week qualifying period for benefits should be eliminated, because the expenditures of low-income families cannot wait two weeks. Fishers need money to fix their wharves, and this budget is offering them little hope.

The words “official languages” do not get to see the light of day in this budget. The francophone communities in my riding need the support of the federal government to build on their economic, social and cultural progress of recent years.

Reducing the taxes of the wealthiest will not solve all problems.

* * *

● (1115)

LAURENT PAUZÉ-DUPUIS

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honour the passing of a student from Hemmingford in Montérégie. Laurent PaUZé-Dupuis died on April 3 in Peking, China.

Laurent was 22 years old. Together with 1,300 other university students from all over the world, he was participating in a simulation of international debates using UN conferences as a model.

A student at McGill University in Montreal, Laurent was participating in the World Model United Nations 2006 as a representative of the Institut des sciences politiques de Paris.

Perhaps you may have seen him in the hallways of Parliament, as he was hired as a guide last year.

On behalf of the people of the riding of Beauharnois—Salaberry, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to his parents, Laurent and Michèle, his sister Gabrielle, and his partner Yumiko.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***AGRICULTURE**

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, until the budget, farmers thought they might get as much as \$2 billion more this spring in emergency assistance but the Conservative MP for Battlefords—Lloydminster says that he does not see any sense in making a big payment to farmers. He says that pockets are not deep enough in Ottawa for such a program.

The government inherited the biggest surplus in Canadian history. Why were farmers misled to think they might get more cash this spring?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague opposite is absolutely wrong. After 13 years of Liberal inaction on agriculture and after a farm crisis developed under its management, this government's first act was to deliver immediately a major cash injection of \$700 million.

In the budget we have added an additional \$1.5 billion for the family farms of Canada that the Liberal Party neglected.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what he counts is last year's money and maybe next year's money but nothing this spring.

Until February, the books of the Government of Canada carried specific allocations to fully implement the Kelowna accords for aboriginal people: \$1.8 billion for education, \$1.6 billion for housing and water, \$1.3 billion for health, \$170 million for governance, \$200 million for economic development, more than \$5 billion altogether until February.

With the biggest surplus in Canadian history, why did the government gut 90% of the funding for aboriginal people?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the real question is why, after 13 years in power, did the member, when he was finance minister, his party and his government fail to act for aboriginal Canadians? Why is it that they waited until the 11th hour and 59th minute to put together a press release in Kelowna rather than delivering for aboriginal Canadians, as we have in the budget, with an additional \$450 million over two years?

That is why the head of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples said, "We're very pleased with the budget.... We see this as a down payment on the Kelowna agreement".

* * *

CHILD CARE

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every mainstream aboriginal organization in the country says that the government is wrong.

After the Liberals first balanced the country's books, we increased federal support for families and children by close to \$10 billion per

year. We had the child tax credit, the child benefit supplement, child care expense deduction, parental leave and the list goes on.

In last Tuesday's budget, the Conservatives cut \$1 billion from the Liberal package, slashing the young child supplement. With the biggest federal surplus ever, why did the government cut support to the most vulnerable families?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the opposite is true. The government in the budget has provided more financial support for Canadian families with kids than we have ever seen in a modern Canadian budget, including one point off the GST that will save Canadian families over \$5 billion, including \$1,200 per year per child under six, money that the Liberal Party will vote against in the budget.

We have provided money for kids' sports, for textbooks and for schools because this government puts families first rather than Liberal special interests.

* * *

● (1120)

HEALTH

Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to report that there is no new money in the budget to achieve the government's guarantee of shorter wait times for health care services despite the recent throne speech that made the guarantee.

The provinces have already said that they cannot attain the Conservative guarantee without new money. How does the Minister of Health expect to keep his promises to Canadians when he failed to get the necessary funds into this year's budget?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what I can report to the House is that the budget of this government has added a further 6%, \$1.1 billion, in transfer payments to the provinces. Next year there will be another \$1.2 billion.

Of the \$41 billion of the new deal for health care, fully \$5.5 billion will reduce wait times in Canada. We are part of that solution. The government stands four-square with the provinces and territories to deal with the issue that was left hanging by the previous Liberal government because it talked a lot about wait times but it did nothing.

Oral Questions

Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the money of which the minister speaks is the money that we promised in the 10 year health plan. It is not new money. This is simply carrying forward previously allocated money.

Considering that we left the largest surplus in the history of the country to the new government, why can we not find one new dollar for the Conservative health care guarantee?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I explained to the House, there is an additional investment in wait time reductions. We have followed through on our promises, which are consistent with our promises in the campaign.

If I were dining on Liberal promises, I would be wasting away right now. They do not count for anything, and the people of Canada have seen a true government that deals with its promises to the people of Canada for the benefit of Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

UNESCO

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on December 19, 2005, in the middle of the election campaign, the Prime Minister made the following promise: "...we will invite Québec to participate in UNESCO according to the model for the Francophonie Summit". This morning we learn that all Quebec will get is a spot within the Canadian delegation to UNESCO and the right to be consulted before Canada takes a position.

How can the government explain backing off from the promises it made in December?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her question. This gives me the opportunity to point out that the Prime Minister is currently in Quebec city with the Premier of Quebec to announce an historic agreement to give Quebec a voice on the world stage. In 13 years of power, the Liberals never did that.

Our Prime Minister promised to give Quebec a voice on the world stage. Today he has kept his word.

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in terms of UNESCO and other international organizations, Quebec asked for the possibility to give its consent before Canada takes a public position on areas under Quebec's jurisdiction.

Are we to understand that in the event Quebec and Canada do not share the same position Canada will never defend a position that is contrary to the one Quebec is defending?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today's historic agreement shows that the current federal government can work with Quebec's federalist government. The Bloc and the separatists do not want that. They do not want this federation to succeed.

Today, thanks to this agreement on Quebec's role at UNESCO, the Prime Minister is showing the Conservative government's good faith

and proving that he keeps his word and honours his commitments toward Quebec's international role.

• (1125)

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the last election campaign, the Prime Minister made a commitment, and I quote, "to enable the provinces to extend their jurisdictions on the international scene".

Does this mean that the government is committed to giving Quebec the power to negotiate and conclude international agreement in matters that fall within its jurisdiction?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this government respects provincial jurisdictions. This government is creating an open, flexible federalism.

Today, the Prime Minister is in Quebec to sign an agreement with Quebec's federalist government. He wants to cooperate and work with all of the provinces, including Quebec, that have concerns about their voice on the international scene. Today, the Prime Minister has kept his word, and he will continue to keep his promises.

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a statement he made last December, the Prime Minister clearly recognized the international extension of Quebec's jurisdiction.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to formally commit to making no decisions on behalf of Quebec when negotiating or signing a treaty concerning a matter that falls within the province's jurisdiction unless Quebec gives him formal authorization to do so?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the agreement signed in Quebec this morning is clear on all of these issues. This agreement is the result of talks between the federal government and the Government of Quebec. Quebec wanted a voice on the international stage, specifically in UNESCO. That is why we will continue to work with the Quebec delegation to UNESCO to ensure that we can work together. That is open federalism.

* * *

JUSTICE

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, something important was missing from yesterday's announcement concerning crime. For years, the NDP has been asking the government to take action against payday lenders. Such companies exploit the weaknesses of poor people and low-income workers. They charge fees that can add up to 15,000% annually.

The Liberals did nothing. Will the Conservatives make the changes needed to protect citizens from this usurious practice?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are going to consider the matter raised by the hon. leader of the NDP. This government will always act to protect the best interests of Canadian consumers and taxpayers.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it appears as though the government has forgotten about those who are being most exploited, those who are going to these payday loan companies and paying up to 1500% in interest. Surely this is something the government could have addressed in its legislation on the Criminal Code.

Manitoba has recently introduced legislation to regulate these profit-takers, but it requires a change to the Criminal Code before its law can come into effect.

Canadians are waiting and progressive provinces are waiting to act. Why will the government not act to stop the cruel vulture behaviour of these payday loan companies?

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is very aware of this issue. Federal officials have been working very closely with provincial and territorial officials to examine potential policy responses that we can make. We will be fully assessing this matter and discussing it with our provincial counterparts.

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*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has spent his entire political career fighting against Kyoto. As head of a lobby group, he probably spent more money on anti-Kyoto advertising than his government will spend on the environment in this budget.

If the Minister of the Environment wants to be honest, why does she not admit that the government is trying to destroy the Kyoto protocol and isolate Canada? She should admit it.

● (1130)

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to cleaning up the air that Canadians breathe. We made that promise to Canadians, and we will deliver on our promises.

We want Canadians to be part of the solutions on the environment and we want to help Canadians participate in cleaning up Canada. That is why we have invested \$1.3 billion to build more public transit. That is why we have committed \$370 million to benefit Canadians to making their choice of public transit.

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these are just more meaningless platitudes.

We know now that the government has no plan for the environment and no plan for Canadians' health. We are wondering why the Bloc Québécois is abandoning the environment to support this budget.

Will the minister finally admit that she has no plan, that she does not know where she is going and that the only thing she has

managed to accomplish today is to buy the Bloc Québécois off cheap?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after 13 years of doing nothing, I can see why there is frustration on that side. They are seeing a government that is going to do something. The difference between the Liberal plan and our plan is it is achievable. We are investing, and we will have achievable results.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as put so eloquently by the late Hank Williams Jr., the Minister of Finance has finally shown us his "cold, cold heart".

This morning we learn the minister has told his Ontario counterpart that over \$500 million in federal funding to fight global warming has been wiped out. That money was a critical component of Ontario's plan to phase out coal-fired energy production in the province. It would have been the equivalent of taking seven million cars off the road.

Why is the government so intent on making the air Ontarians breathe even worse?

Ms. Diane Ablonczy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member will be happy to know that the article on which he bases his question is inaccurate. In fact, the federal government is committed to delivering the financial commitments in the Ontario-federal agreement in an open and transparent manner, and that money will be flowing to Ontario.

[Translation]

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment is clearly unable to defend the environment. She cannot even answer a simple question without resorting to empty platitudes.

Yesterday, she talked about the 53 smog days that Toronto had last year, and she is using this to justify her invisible made-in-Canada plan.

Why does the minister not just admit that cutting \$500 million in federal funding and eliminating 12 programs will do absolutely nothing to fight climate change and reduce smog?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I agree that there was a terrible problem with smog days. We ask the member, why he did not take responsibility? That government had 13 years to clean up this mess and it did nothing.

Last year there were 53 smog days. This government is doing something. We are investing in the environment, and we will clean it up.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

JUSTICE

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are proposing a strategy based on the American approach: severe minimum sentences, larger prisons, little room for rehabilitation, and an approach based on a sentence for every crime, no matter what the circumstances. Yet, there are three times the number of homicides in the United States than there are in Canada, and four times more than in Quebec.

Does the Minister of Justice acknowledge that he is going down the wrong path by following the American model of justice that no one wants?

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we share the concerns of the citizens of Canada across the country and also of our police officers. We are not speaking of the Americans, or the Chinese, or the Japanese, but of the citizens of Canada who want to feel safe in the streets and in their communities.

• (1135)

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the measures proposed by the government will put 5,000 more individuals behind bars every year, many in Quebec prisons.

Does the minister realize that these coercive measures will be costly for Quebec, and force it to invest in repression rather than rehabilitation?

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also spoke to Quebecers and they are worried about the crime rate in their communities and in their streets. It is important to reassure Quebecers also that we will give funds to the RCMP and to municipal officers. Protecting our communities is one of our five key priorities. That is exactly what we will do.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for several weeks now, the Minister of the Environment has been promising us an implementation plan for the Kyoto protocol. In less than 12 days, she will chair an important conference, in Bonn, attended by Kyoto signatories. Yet, she still does not have a plan to present to us.

Under these circumstances, does the minister realize that she will seriously lack credibility if she goes to that conference without a plan for how Canada is going to implement the Kyoto protocol?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to working with all provinces and territories to develop a made in Canada plan to clean up our environment. The minister has been engaging in discussions with her provincial counterparts and will continue with these consultations.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in this very important file, as in others, the Conservative government seems to be taking its lead from the Bush administration.

Can the minister guarantee us that this will not be the case in the Kyoto file and that her plan will allow Canada to meet its Kyoto protocol targets?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I said that the minister was meeting with her provincial counterparts, the territories, the private sector and individuals. The member should understand that each province and territory will not have the same needs when it comes to cleaning up the environment, which is why the minister is consulting.

We will work with the provinces, the territories and individuals in a manner that is accountable to Canadians. We will have clean air and clean land for the health of all Canadians.

* * *

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the government left \$1.5 billion of the Canadian softwood lumber industry's money in Washington. Now we find out that the returned money will be taxed. The government will be taking another \$1.5 billion away from the Canadian softwood industry.

How can the government show such callous disregard? Will it commit today to not tax a single dollar in returned duties, or does the government have to run and check with Washington first?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here we go, the Liberals now advocating tax evasion for major multinationals.

This is taxes 101. If a person claims something as an expense and the person is subsequently reimbursed, it becomes taxable income. The forest sector understands that, the industry analysts understand that and Canadian taxpayers understand that.

It is amazing that the Liberals do not understand how the tax system works but, mind you, they did not understand how to spend tax dollars wisely either, did they?

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what utter nonsense. It is \$1.5 billion for Washington and \$1.5 billion for Ottawa. To add insult to injury, this tax was put on when the Canadian dollar was not nearly as high as it is right now.

Why will the minister not admit that the industries will only receive half back? Why did you sell out Canada?

The Speaker: I remind the hon. member that he must address his questions to the Chair, not to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister who now has the floor.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the sellout occurred through six years of Liberal inaction as it permitted the United States to take \$5 billion U.S. in money that belonged to the Canadian forestry industry. It took the leadership of this Prime Minister to get \$4 billion of that money back, plus interest.

Oral Questions

If the Liberals were still in power, the Americans would still have all \$5 billion. It would not be repatriated to Canadian pockets and the U.S. would still be taking billions more out of the Canadian economy. That is not happening under this government.

* * *

•(1140)

INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the last 13 years, the Liberal government gave more attention to the north than any government in history and we are very proud of that fact.

It is incomprehensible that the government created an entire throne speech and an entire budget without even mentioning the northern half of Canada. There is no northern strategy, no northern economic development fund, no northern search and rescue planes, no northern contaminated sites and, in fact, the word “north” is not mentioned at all.

When will the Conservatives stop leaving the north out in the cold?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is very interested in the north. We actually took some of our first initiatives, especially on behalf of the minister, who toured the north and met with many of the stakeholders. In the budget we indicated that we would be spending \$300 million on northern housing. We also put forward \$500 million for a socio-economic fund for the Mackenzie Valley basin.

We believe that this is a vision for the north and we are looking forward to working with all stakeholders.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how embarrassing could it be when the only money the government can come up with is our \$300 million from last June 23, our \$500 million that the deputy prime minister—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

An hon. member: It belongs to the taxpayers, Larry, not you.

The Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the hon. member for Yukon appreciates all the help he is getting with the question but we need to be able to hear it. How will the parliamentary secretary be able to reply if he cannot hear the question? We need a lower level of noise. If members would refrain from carrying on their debates here on the floor among themselves when they are not recognized and do it out in the lobby, it would be better.

The hon. member for Yukon has the floor.

Hon. Larry Bagnell: Mr. Speaker, it is so embarrassing that the only money the Conservatives can talk about is the money we announced last June 23 for affordable housing and the \$500 million the deputy prime minister, Anne McLellan, announced for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

We put in a northern strategy, northern economic development money, money for northern search and rescue planes, money for the territories and more money for northern health.

When will the Conservatives put in even one thing for the north?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is very interested in the north.

Let me remind the member that the money committed is not his money or our money. It is taxpayer money.

As a person who is originally from the north, I am very interested in working with the minister and with all members on this side to help northerners achieve the economic development that they are looking for.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week's budget has shown the government's overwhelming commitment to our farm families. The constituents in my riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, like the rest of rural Canada, were abandoned for 13 years by the previous government.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Larry Miller: They obviously do not like to hear the truth, Mr. Speaker.

Could the agriculture minister please tell us what farmers in my riding will be receiving from this budget?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary (for the Canadian Wheat Board) to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, farmers are well aware of the government's commitment to them, especially the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound who has been very vocal in his support of the farm community.

We put forward \$755 million right after we were elected. We promised \$500 million and we have tripled that. The farm community is very happy to have that. We are coming forward with a biofuels initiative to give farmers a chance to be part of the processing and development sector. We want to do research and development.

We look forward to working with farmers to bring them the success that they have not had in the past because of—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 15% of federal prisoners are aboriginals, even though the aboriginal population nationally is only 3%.

Provinces have been working hard to reduce the number of aboriginal people in jail. Today, Saskatchewan's NDP justice minister, Frank Parnell, said, “striking down the conditional sentencing laws as proposed by the Conservatives may reverse that trend”.

Oral Questions

Is this reasonable or fair? How will the government ensure the percentage of aboriginal Canadians incarcerated does not go up?

• (1145)

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the last election, Canadians asked us to end the revolving door to our criminal justice system. They asked us to take seriously the concerns of victims of crime of the provinces and of the police who protect our streets.

The government made a commitment to act and yesterday we delivered. We will continue to act in the best interest and the safety of all Canadians.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, have you actually consulted with aboriginal communities about some alternatives?

The Speaker: No. The hon. member will address her remarks to the Chair.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the Lubicon Lake First Nation is testifying today at the United Nations in Geneva. It will tell that international body of the government's reluctance to settle land claims, of the third world conditions its members live under, the mouldy housing, the lack of running water and the high rates of youth suicide.

Why did the government not live up to its promises and put real money toward closing the gap on aboriginal poverty in the budget? Is this fair and reasonable?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is very concerned about aboriginal people throughout Canada. We are currently working with all stakeholders throughout Canada to rectify the problems as they are.

The government is committed to a progressive achievement by all Canadians of economic, social and cultural rights contained in the international covenant, which the member mentioned, at the UN and we look forward to working on this issue.

* * *

[*Translation*]

VETERANS

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at a stop in New Brunswick during the election campaign, the Prime Minister, drunk on the idea of seizing power, promised immediate compensation for all soldiers and civilians who had been exposed to agent orange. Veterans in my riding read the budget with interest, but found no trace of the money that was promised—not a word, not a cent.

When will the Minister of Veterans Affairs keep his promises and compensate all of the victims?

[*English*]

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a priority of our government to respond to concerns raised by members of the

Canadian Forces, veterans and area residents about the health effects of herbicides used at CFB Gagetown.

The Government of Canada does not intend to wait for the resolution from the class action suits. As promised, work is continuing and proposals are being developed to deliver on the commitments the government has made.

Hon. Robert Thibault (West Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, the Minister of Veterans Affairs assured agent orange victims that they would be given the benefit of the doubt in their claim for compensation. Now the same minister is saying that he refuses to be pressured into compensating the victims.

Will the minister now admit that he was making promises he had no intention of keeping, or is the minister admitting that he lacks the clout to get the money that he promised? Will the minister stop hiding behind the parliamentary secretary and face the House?

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat what I said for the hon. member and I will say it as clear as I can. The Government of Canada does not intend to wait for the resolution of the class action suit. As promised, we will deliver.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Petitcodiac River has been called one of Canada's worst environmental disasters. The time has now come to act quickly and restore the full tidal flow of this once mighty river.

Premier Lord says it is a federal responsibility. The Prime Minister has said it is a provincial project. While these two Conservatives continue to pass the buck, residents grow more impatient and the environment continues to deteriorate.

Where is the money in the budget to begin work on the restoration of the Petitcodiac River starting this summer?

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is another example of 13 years of a government doing nothing and this is why we have some of these problems.

The government is focused on clean water and clean air and we will engage in discussions with all jurisdictions and interested parties to work together to ensure safe, clean water for all Canadians.

• (1150)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary obviously has absolutely no idea of the answer because he would know that a joint federal-provincial environmental impact assessment was just completed a few months ago and now the decision is in the hands of the government as to whether it will do the right thing.

[*Translation*]

Not only did the government cut funding to fight climate change, it also failed to invest any money in strategic infrastructure funds for the coming year. These funds are needed to fix the problem on the Petitcodiac River.

Oral Questions

How long will residents of New Brunswick have to wait before the government decides to act?

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, budget 2006 delivers real promises on the environment. We have increased incentives to promote the use of public transit. This measure alone will help reduce traffic congestion and improve the environment.

The finance minister has confirmed that substantial funding of \$1.3 billion will help with infrastructure.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Friday, I asked the Minister of Finance what he intended to do about the Canadian International Trade Tribunal's recent decision to allow a surtax to be imposed on cheap bicycle imports from certain countries. I was told to wait for Tuesday's budget and look for the answer in it. There is, however, no mention of this important issue anywhere in this budget.

What is the Minister of Finance waiting for to act and enforce the decision of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, before the bicycle industry in Quebec and Canada disappears?

[English]

Ms. Diane Ablonczy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member was very pleased to see in Tuesday's budget that economic measures were introduced to improve the productivity and overall competitiveness framework for Canadian businesses, including the bicycle industry. These include the reduction of small business taxes, the general corporate tax break, as well as the elimination of the corporate surtax, and greater support for education and training for all industries.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the military base in Bagotville plays a major economic role in the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region. Some facilities, including several F-18 and helicopter hangars, need to be replaced quickly because of how rundown they are.

Will the Minister of National Defence give the people of my riding and my region the assurance that new money will be allocated to the military base in Bagotville to revitalize the infrastructure and confirm the base's role in the long term?

[English]

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, we said that we would keep the vital base at Bagotville into the future. We will keep that base going. We are committed to adding a rapid reaction battalion to that base. We will look at the infrastructure of all bases everywhere in the country to try to improve infrastructure.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, despite the Prime Minister's promise to abolish corporate political donations to end the influence of big money on government, he broke that promise again last night by participating at yet another Conservative fundraising dinner at \$7,500 a table. This "do as I say not as I do" attitude represents an unacceptable double standard.

If the government seeks to be honest, transparent and accountable, should it not start with the Prime Minister?

Hon. John Baird (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite will be very interested to know that the government has brought forward some of the most comprehensive changes to outright ban corporate and union donations to political parties, something that is very important to clean up the ethical mess that was left by the previous government.

The Prime Minister attended two very important functions yesterday in the city of Toronto. He had a very good meeting with the Premier of Ontario. He completely followed all the rules as legislated by the Ontario legislature with respect to its political funding.

* * *

● (1155)

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last year the member for Richmond told the Chinese community repeatedly that the government could not and would not apologize for the head tax. It claimed that it had received legal advice that to do so would create open ended liabilities.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister please tell the House if the former government had its facts straight?

Mr. Jason Kenney (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last year the member for Richmond, when he was multiculturalism secretary, said, "My reason for not apologizing is because of the legal position that was given to me by my department". That was the excuse. We have since discovered, according to access to information, that he received exactly the opposite advice. The legal advice was that it would appear, from a legal point of view, that none of the outstanding claims would meet such a burden.

The government is doing what is right for Chinese Canadians, under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage. It will offer a formal apology.

I think the member for Richmond should apologize to Chinese Canadians for not telling—

Oral Questions

The Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa Centre.

* * *

PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have examples of public servants who, through their disclosures of serious wrongdoing in past governments, have saved taxpayers millions of dollars. Yet we continue to harass these men and women through the courts, causing them serious financial hardship and emotional stress for simply being ethical.

Is the President of the Treasury Board prepared to give assurances that the government will compensate past whistleblowers whose claims are proven correct?

Hon. John Baird (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will totally agree with the member of the New Democratic Party when he says that we have to do more to reward whistleblowers, people who have the courage to stand up. Our federal accountability act is all about that.

As for those brave individuals who did stand up in previous administrations and reported wrongdoing, this government is more than happy to look at each case and seek a speedy resolution. We want to do the right thing by our public servants. I agree with the member.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, again, these men and women have put their careers on the line for the sake of better government. No one has asked for the \$1,000 cash reward, which the government has dropped into the whistleblower legislation. What is required is real protection for anyone whose actions unveil serious wrongdoing in government.

Will the government commit to undoing these past wrongs and call off the courts against these innocent men and women and, instead, give them the compensation they deserve?

Hon. John Baird (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, I completely agree with the member from the New Democratic Party. Those brave public servants who stood up, did the right thing, reported wrongdoing, reported criminal activity or gross waste and mismanagement under the previous administration and were not dealt with fairly, their cases should be reviewed. If there is a speedy and expeditious way to do that, this government is very anxious to consider anything that would do right by our public servants.

* * *

BRITISH COLUMBIA ECONOMY

Mr. Blair Wilson (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of International Trade is gaining quite a shoddy reputation. First, the minister sells out British Columbia by leaving over \$1 billion on the table in the softwood lumber settlement. Second, he reduces the funding for the Pacific gateway initiative from \$190 million to \$90 million. That is not all. Now the minister is taking British Columbia to the mat. He is holding us ransom for \$55 million that the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games desperately needs.

Three strikes and he is out. When will the minister stop selling out British Columbia?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this budget and this government is providing for British Columbia in a way that the Liberals never did. In fact, members of the Pacific gateway council support our plan. The eight year timeframe for money for the Pacific gateway is precisely the timeline that is required. This is the timeline that the projects are coming on line.

Here is what the *Vancouver Sun* said in an editorial:

—the Tories have committed themselves to spend just as much money as the Liberals had promised, and to provide more of it faster than the previous government ever said it would.

We are delivering; they promised. That is the difference between a Liberal and a Conservative government.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no greater responsibility for a parliamentarian than the protection of the health and safety of our citizens. My question today is for the Minister of Public Safety.

The Auditor General has found that the RCMP is lacking over 1,000 officers to meet its provincial and community police duties, that it routinely pulls people from national police work, including drug and organized crime investigations, simply to fill the gap and that the national police force has to improve its training.

What is the government doing to ensure that the RCMP has the resources needed to combat crime and to keep our citizens safe?

● (1200)

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Prince Edward—Hastings has long been an advocate for safety and security of his constituents and the areas in which he serves. I can give him assurance that we have heard his voice and the voices of his constituents and people across Canada.

There are going to be 1,000 more police officers trained and added to the existing force in the years ahead. To do that, for the next two years, \$161 million will be provided to put that in place. With that, there has to be training, as the member said. Therefore, \$37 million is being provided to expand the training facilities depot in Regina along with a number of other initiatives. The previous regime took care of criminals; we are taking care of citizens.

* * *

[*Translation*]

OLDER WORKERS

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to our great disappointment, the tabling of the latest budget has seen older workers ignored once again, and not only by the government, but also, at everyone's surprise, by the Bloc Québécois.

Routine Proceedings

Could the minister tell us what concrete action she intends to take to provide assistance, once and for all and as soon as possible, to older workers and their families?

[English]

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased yesterday when the Prime Minister announced in the House, "In the budget there is a fund related to the forest industry of about \$100 million for this year to help older workers. We are examining our options".

I am pleased to say he also announced that during the budget we will be conducting a feasibility study on this very issue. I look forward to the hon. member's participation in that process.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

CERTIFICATES OF NOMINATION

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege to table a certificate of nomination for a position to the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation.

* * *

ADDRESS OF THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think you would find unanimous consent that Motion No. 1, concerning the Address of the Australian Prime Minister, be adopted.

The Speaker: Is it agreed that Motion No. 1 on the order paper be adopted?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to table quite a number of petitions from constituents across Canada, mostly from western Canada.

The petitioners point out that under the current federal criminal law an unborn child is not recognized as a victim with respect to violent crimes. When Olivia Talbot of Edmonton was shot and killed in November 2005, her 27 week old unborn son, Lane Jr. also died. Because we offer no legal protection for unborn children today, no charge could be laid in the death of baby Lane.

The vast majority of the public supports laws that protect unborn children from acts of violence against their mothers, which also injure or kill the baby in their womb. Forcing upon a pregnant woman the death or injury of her unborn child, is a violation of a woman's right to give life to her child and protect her child.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to enact legislation which would recognize unborn children as separate victims when they are injured or killed during the commission of an offence against their mothers, allowing two charges to be laid against the offender instead of just one.

● (1205)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Nepean—Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Egyptian Christians from my constituency who are deeply concerned about the ongoing persecution of Christians who live in Egypt and across the Arab world. It has become regular practice for terrorists, extremists and even the government in Egypt to mistreat the Christian minority in that country.

It is time that we stand up against these forms of terrorism and abuse. It is time we stand up in favour of legitimate human freedoms.

CHILD CARE

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting petitions from residents in Ontario. The petitioners call upon the Prime Minister to honour the early learning and child care agreements.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: Apparently, when I called introduction of private member's bills, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre meant to introduce some bills. Is it agreed that we revert to introduction of private member's bills at this moment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

LOUIS RIEL ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-258, An Act respecting Louis Riel.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a private member's bill which would reverse the conviction of one of our colleagues, a fellow member of Parliament, Louis Riel, who was elected to the House of Commons three times. He was a father of Manitoba and a father of Confederation.

On behalf of the Métis people, I ask not just to have Louis Riel pardoned, but this bill calls for the conviction to be reversed. The conviction for high treason would then be found to have never taken place. He would be declared innocent of high treason and his name would be restored that way in the history books.

Government Orders

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

* * *

CANADA WATER EXPORT PROHIBITION ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-259, An Act to prohibit the export of water by interbasin transfers.

He said: Mr. Speaker, most MPs will recognize that water is the oil of the 21st century. This bill seeks to ban the bulk sale and interbasin transfer of water, recognizing, as it says in the bill, that the interbasin transfer of water is a crime against nature, offends the natural order and threatens aquatic ecosystems with invasive species and biota.

The bill would ban this practice. It would prohibit the practice for anyone who contemplates selling water in bulk through the interbasin transfer of water.

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

* * *

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-260, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (deductibility of expense of tools provided as a requirement of employment).

He said: Mr. Speaker, as a tradesman, although not currently practising, I rise to stand on behalf of my fellow carpenters and other building trades workers or anyone who uses tools in a job.

Recognizing that the recent Conservative budget does acknowledge a tax deduction for the purchase of tools, this bill improves on that, if I may say so, by having no ceiling and no limit. It broadens the parameters of who would be eligible to deduct the expense of these tools for the use and the purpose of earning income.

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

* * *

•(1210)

PENSION OMBUDSMAN ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-261, An Act to establish the office of Pension Ombudsman to investigate administrative difficulties encountered by persons in their dealings with the Government of Canada in respect of benefits under the Canada Pension Plan or the Old Age Security Act or tax liability on such benefits and to review the policies and practices applied in the administration and adjudication of such benefits and liabilities.

He said: Mr. Speaker, there is not too much more I wish to add except to say that many MPs will recognize the need for some sort of further advocate for their constituents who get frustrated by the adjudication or the administration of the Canada pension plan, old age security, the guaranteed income supplement and, most critically, the Canada pension plan disability chapter, which most Canadians find horrendous to try to deal with.

This would create the office of an ombudsman who would be able to advocate on behalf of those individuals. It would be a resource for the offices of members of Parliament, who would be able to refer their constituents to the office of the ombudsman for help and support.

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

* * *

OLD AGE SECURITY ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-262, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act (monthly guaranteed income supplement).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is my last bill for today. All through the last Parliament we tried to have the guaranteed income supplement made an automatic benefit so that the onus would not be on the seniors to apply for it. We learned that many seniors were eligible but were not getting the benefit because they simply did not fill out the proper paperwork.

This bill goes further and asks for full retroactivity for any senior who may have been eligible for the guaranteed income supplement but failed to file the paperwork on time. The government limits retroactivity to 11 months. We believe the retroactivity should extend to the day upon which they were eligible. This would create that authority.

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

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-5, An Act respecting the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada and amending certain Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan had the floor before question period for questions and comments following on her remarks. I therefore call for questions and comments and recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I found it interesting that before the budget the NDP raised concerns about the moneys that would be provided to deal with a pandemic. I trust since the issue was not raised post-budget by the NDP that this concern has been alleviated with the \$1 billion committed in this budget to deal with pandemic issues. Incidentally, the Minister of Health will also be leading a provincial-territorial conference next week on pandemic preparedness.

Government Orders

My question for the member is twofold. I realize the member was on the health committee in the last session. First, I wonder if the member would comment on the fact that under the previous government it seemed that the bill did not get the attention it deserved. In fact, it never even came to a vote, whereas under this government the bill has been brought forward within the first 100 days. That certainly suggests quite a difference between the commitment of this government to public health and the commitment of the previous government, with our government being very keen on pursuing the matter whereas the other government seemed to delay. I would be interested in the member's comments on the previous government's commitment, or lack thereof, to public health.

The second question I have for the member deals with the Bloc's comments with regard to jurisdictional issues. The Bloc seemed to try to make the case that pandemics will respect provincial and other boundaries, whereas I think most reasonable people would agree that pandemics and other diseases do not respect boundaries and it is very important to have a public health agency in order to have a meaningful, deliberate and comprehensive strategy to deal with the challenges that may exist when dealing with a pandemic. A national agency would help do that.

Would the member comment on those two issues?

• (1215)

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary raised a number of issues in his question. In terms of asking me whether I thought the previous Liberal government had fulfilled its obligations, obviously not, or I would not be raising these issues. However, I think it is incumbent upon the current government to also be aware of its obligations.

With regard to the comments around the budget, I was specifically raising issues with regard to first nations communities, the reason being that there still is a great deal of concern that aboriginal communities have not had the attention that is required around pandemic preparedness.

I am going to refer back to resolution 66 from the Special Chiefs Assembly of the Assembly of First Nations. I will not read for members the details of it, but they certainly are calling for an immediate infusion of funding for first nations communities around testing, around the need to fund technical coordination and assistance, and around the need to ensure for public health safety that aboriginal communities are included with provincial and territorial governments in discussions around coordination. It is a very complex matter.

What is critical, I think, is that any time we talk about a pandemic we need to ensure that aboriginal peoples are included at the table in those discussions so there is that coordinated approach, so it does take into account rural and remote communities. This is a critical issue.

I can see that the Speaker is signalling that I am going to run out of time, but let me say briefly that when we are talking about jurisdictional issues, I think we need to put those jurisdictional issues to the side and really talk about the health, well-being and welfare of Canadians.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to address Bill C-5, an act respecting the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada. As my colleagues have indicated, this legislation represents a key piece in supporting the federal government's efforts to promote and protect the health of Canadians.

As members may know, following the outbreak of SARS, there were discussions and debates on the state of the public health care system in Canada. Two subsequent expert reports, one completed by Dr. David Naylor and other by Senator Michael Kirby, pointed to the need to establish a federal focal point to address public health issues. Specific recommendations included the establishment of a Canadian public health agency and the appointment of a chief public health officer for Canada.

In response, the Public Health Agency of Canada was created in September 2004 through orders in council. However, it currently lacks parliamentary recognition in the form of its own enabling legislation. As such, this legislation provides the statutory footing for the Public Health Agency of Canada and it gives the agency and the Chief Public Health Officer the parliamentary recognition they need.

Beyond the benefits to Canada are the benefits that this agency will bring to Winnipeg and my riding of Kildonan—St. Paul. I intend to touch upon how the legislation affects Winnipeg, Manitoba, and also how the agency will rank against other institutions all around the world.

Winnipeg remains the location of Canada's only level 4 microbiology lab for human health and a world leader in research, training, commercialization and innovation in addressing the threat and impact of infectious diseases. However, the agency will continue to maintain offices, staff and expertise all across Canada, including its federal laboratories, its surveillance networks, its regional offices and national collaborating centres. What this means for Winnipeg is that we will continue to experience the benefits of our leadership in combating infectious disease.

With regard to how the legislation will affect Manitoba, the legislation does not expand on the existing federal role in public health. Nothing that the federal government is currently doing in public health has changed.

Rather, the legislation simply provides a statutory footing for the agency and gives it a mandate to assist the Minister of Health in exercising his or her powers, duties and functions in public health. The minister recognizes the importance of continuing to foster collaborative relationships with federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments as well as international organizations and public health experts.

This is an objective that is clearly set out in the preamble of the bill. It is also why we have established the pan-Canadian public health network, currently co-chaired by the Chief Public Health Officer and the provincial health officer of B.C. The network is a forum for multilateral, intergovernmental collaboration on public health issues and it respects jurisdictional responsibilities in public health.

It is also important to note that the legislation does not explicitly define the functions and responsibilities of the agency. This was purposely done in order to provide the Minister of Health the necessary flexibility to assign powers, duties and functions in the area of public health, either to the agency or to Health Canada. This flexibility is further enhanced by not defining the term “public health” so that future governments will be left with the flexibility to define the federal role in public health in keeping with emerging issues and new challenges.

Both the American CDC and our Public Health Agency of Canada are part of their respective governments' health portfolios, working on core public health functions such as infectious disease control and prevention, emergency preparedness, chronic disease prevention and health promotion.

The CDC is not a separate departmental entity within the U.S. administration, but rather one of 13 major operating components within the U.S. department of health and human services. There are also some differences in the mandates of the two organizations. For example, the USCDC has responsibility for policy and programming on environmental health, occupational health and safety, and health information and statistics. In Canada, these issues are handled by Health Canada and other departmental agencies.

• (1220)

The director of the CDC in the U.S. reports to the secretary of the department of health and human services through the deputy secretary. In the U.S. the surgeon general, who has no direct connection to the CDC, has traditionally been the lead federal spokesperson on public health issues.

By contrast, Bill C-5 gives the Canadian Chief Public Health Officer a unique dual role. In addition to serving as deputy head of the agency reporting directly to the Minister of Health, the Chief Public Health Officer will also serve as Canada's lead public health professional, able to communicate directly with the public on public health issues.

I would like now to discuss the role of the Chief Public Health Officer, another critical element of this legislation.

One of the key recommendations from the Naylor report was not only the establishment of a Chief Public Health Officer for Canada, but that the Chief Public Health Officer head up a new Public Health Agency of Canada and serve as a credible, official voice on public health nationally. Actually, that is the deputy head; the minister heads it up. This legislation responds to his recommendation by formally establishing the position of the Chief Public Health Officer and recognizing this unique dual role.

First, as deputy head of the agency, the Chief Public Health Officer will be accountable to the Minister of Health for the day to day operations of the agency and will be expected to advise the Minister of Health on public health matters. Further, as deputy head, the Chief Public Health Officer has the standing to engage other federal departments and is able to mobilize the public health resources of the agency to meet threats to the health of Canadians.

In addition to deputy head, the legislation also recognizes that the Chief Public Health Officer will be Canada's lead public health professional with demonstrated expertise and leadership in the field.

Government Orders

As such, the Chief Public Health Officer will have legislative authority to communicate directly with Canadians, to provide them with information on public health matters and to prepare and publish reports on any public health issue.

Stakeholders have made it clear that they expect the Chief Public Health Officer to be a credible trusted voice able to drive real change by speaking out on public health matters and issuing reports. Providing the Chief Public Health Officer with the authority to speak out on public health matters and ensuring that the Chief Public Health Officer has qualifications in the field of public health will help confirm this credibility with stakeholders and with Canadians.

This dual role of the Chief Public Health Officer may be unique, but it is not without precedent in certain provinces as it brings certain advantages. For instance, as deputy head, the Chief Public Health Officer has the standing to engage provincial ministries of health and work with the Canadian public health network to receive the best advice from his provincial and territorial colleagues.

At the same time, with the authorities granted in legislation, the Chief Public Health Officer is able to communicate with the Canadian public and provide them with the best public health advice on key issues.

I have spoken on how the legislation represents a critical piece in the ongoing improvements the government is making to strengthen our public health system.

By giving the agency its own enabling legislation and positioning the Chief Public Health Officer as a credible voice on public health, the government will not only bring greater visibility to public health issues or threats facing Canadians, it will have taken a key step to renew and strengthen the public health system as a whole.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, like the member for Kildonan—St. Paul, I think we have to be ready to respond to pandemics. However, since 1998, Quebec can count on the experts at the Institut national de santé publique du Québec. This institute has all the tools and the knowledge required to face new challenges in the area of public health.

Does the member not think that the government is making a mistake with Bill C-5? By creating measures for the whole country and ignoring the expertise that already exists in Quebec, the federal government shows no respect for the work Quebec does in public health.

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, public health is a shared area of jurisdiction. Provinces are responsible for hospitals and direct delivery of health care services.

The federal government can also play a role under this jurisdiction. I do not think it is duplicated. This is a very important agency. It is a very important initiative that needs to be formalized to ensure that Canadians all across Canada are protected. It does protect provincial jurisdictions, but it shares in collaboration with all provinces across our nation.

Government Orders

● (1230)

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this agency has been in existence through order in council for many years. There has been no legislative framework or legislative authority, which makes one wonder about the previous government's commitment to public health. The bill did not even make it to a vote under the previous government.

Would the member comment on the Conservative government's commitment to public health and the fact that the bill was introduced in the first 100 days of being in office, versus the previous government that did not even get the bill to a vote during its 13 years in office?

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, our government has been a government of action.

Everything that the Conservative Party stated in the election has come to pass almost within the first 100 days of our time in government. Canadians will be very buoyed and happy that they have a government in place that actually keeps its promises.

This very important agency reflects the health and welfare of all Canadians across our nation. It works in collaboration with the jurisdictions in the provinces. We now have a formalized mandate for the Chief Public Health Officer to give information to the public and to stand strong in terms of the public health of our nation.

This is a very important step. I must commend the Prime Minister for his timely implementation of Bill C-5. The bill formalizes the agency. I think it makes a big difference. It is not out there hanging in the air, it is permanent.

I look forward to the vote on the bill on Monday night. I encourage all members of the House to support Bill C-5.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, much of the work of the Public Health Agency obviously deals with infectious disease control, the outbreak of SARS, the possibility of mad cow or Asian flu for instance.

I am more interested in a different part of the mandate of the agency, and that is the issue of public health due to exposure to pesticides, asbestos, and other known health hazards that are among us. Our agency is relatively silent on those things. To be fair, perhaps it is that in recent years SARS and these other possible epidemics or pandemics have been top of mind issues.

Would the member agree that there is a role to play for the Public Health Agency to dwell on the bigger picture of public health for people's well-being and to relieve the burden on our health care system with a healthier population?

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, clearly this agency is important and it is being formalized through Bill C-5, as are the roles and responsibilities of the public health officer.

There are many issues that need to be addressed. We certainly look forward to working in collaboration with members opposite on all these issues.

I look forward to more discussion of things, such as the issues the member outlined.

● (1235)

[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, could the member tell us what exactly would be the role of the Quebec office of this agency?

In concrete terms, what would that do to improve and better protect the health of Quebecers?

[English]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, this agency is extremely important. When it comes to Quebec or Alberta, we are a nation that sticks together and works together. Through the agency itself there will be collaboration by the Chief Health Officer and other members of the agency who work together to ensure that the health of Quebecers and people all across the nation are addressed.

Not only that, but if and when there is an epidemic in any one of our provinces, we will work together as a country to ensure that the disease is under control. We are looking at problems that we have across our nation that we really never had before. I think that the formalizing of the agency is very timely. I look forward to working in collaboration with all members of Parliament, with the Canadian Public Health Agency and with our Minister of Health to ensure this happens.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The hon. member for Laval has the floor for a very brief question, and I do hope to see a question mark at the end of this question.

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not question the good faith of the member. I have had the opportunity to work with her and she does very good work. I am very happy to be able to ask her a question today.

With regard to cooperation, would it not be preferable that Quebec not have an office since it already has the Institut national de santé publique, which does an excellent job? That would reduce the risk of blunders like we saw this morning regarding an ad campaign—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

[English]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Speaker, again I will say that this national Public Health Agency works in collaboration with all offices and all departments in all provinces across our nation.

The member opposite is a representative from the beautiful province of Quebec and I know her concerns are centred around Quebec. I think as this evolves and is formalized, in the way it is being done right now, we together can ensure what is best for each and every one of our provinces. More important—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Order. The period for 20 minutes speeches is now terminated. Members may now speak for 10 minutes with 5 minutes for questions and comments.

I would like to ask members, especially during the period of questions and comments, to look at the Chair. I will give you signals as to how much time you have left so that we can share the time in an equitable manner with all members.

Government Orders

I now recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill C-5 on behalf of the NDP caucus. I also want to recognize and pay tribute to the Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Butler-Jones, a resident of Winnipeg and a resident at the federal virology lab in my riding, the only level 4 biological laboratory in Canada. It is a dubious thing to have a level 4 lab in the middle of a residential neighbourhood but we do not have time to dwell on that today.

Many of us were moved as we watched Wendy Mesley, on her program special, talk about her personal struggle with cancer. She made a very compelling point about public health in the process of that very personal exposé. Many of us have been led to believe, and it has been the prevailing wisdom, that if we have cancer it is probably because of something we did, such as we smoked or we did not take care of our personal health. In other words, and I say this with the greatest of respect, it has been a bit of a blame the victim mentality about the exploding incidents of cancer in our society.

I would like to put it to the House, through the context of this debate, that there is a secondary reasoning that we have to accept. It could be, and I argue it is to a large degree, our environment which is increasingly a chemical soup that we are exposed to. I say this as a way, I hope, of sounding the alarm and in the context of speaking to it for all of our benefit but within the context of public health.

The question I put to my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul is in this vein. I recognize that the Public Health Agency has been preoccupied with infectious diseases, the SARS emergency and crisis after crisis, but I urge us, as MPs, and the Public Health Agency to be seized of our public health as it pertains to exposure to known harmful products around us every day.

In that light, I have put forward a private member's bill, which I hope to expand on at some other date, to ban the non-essential cosmetic use of pesticides everywhere. Over 90 municipalities have done this unilaterally. Ottawa tried and failed. I believe it should be a federal initiative because some smaller municipalities cannot stand up to the incredible lobby that hits them. As soon as they have the temerity to suggest that they might want to ban the use of cosmetic pesticides in their communities, the lawyers and the chemical producing lobbyists show up and, more or less, slap-suit them into silence or submission. It is a role that the federal government could play to help these communities.

The entire province of Quebec has done it. Community after community started banning it until the province recognized that was the will of the people and simply banned it.

Fifty per cent of the 200 million kilograms of chemical pesticides used in Canada every year is for non-essential use. That is the first point I would make.

The second issue concerns another dangerous carcinogen, a health hazard that we have within our ability to do something about and have turned a blind eye to, and that is the fact that Canada is still the third largest producer and exporter of asbestos in the world. The province of Quebec, where it is produced, has the highest rate of mesothelioma among women in the world and the third highest among men in the world. That is a cancer caused only by asbestos.

I used to work in the asbestos mines and I can say from experience that they were lying to us about the health hazard of asbestos then and they are lying to us about the health hazard of asbestos today. The Government of Canada should not be spending millions of dollars a year, as it does, subsidizing and underwriting the production of asbestos to dump into third world countries where there are very few health and safety measures and, what measure there are, are not enforced.

• (1240)

First, on behalf of Canadians and through the Public Health Agency, I would like the agency to be aware of and take action on the exposure to asbestos that continues to take place today in Canada, especially in the province of Quebec where the threshold limits are appallingly high and the exposure is epidemic. However it is also for the rest of us because Canada's bizarre affinity and affection for asbestos has led us to contaminate virtually the entire country, including the very buildings that we occupy here today.

I would suggest to the House that the asbestos industry is the tobacco industry's evil twin. It has been lying to us and putting us at risk for the better part of the last century and it continues to do so today. I ask the federal government to, for God's sake, stop supporting this dying industry and let the industry die a natural death.

The asbestos mine in which I worked died a natural death because no one wanted to buy this poison any more, except for underdeveloped third world countries. The whole European Union has banned all forms of asbestos. Australia, Japan and South Africa have banned it but not India. India is one of our biggest markets for dumping Quebec asbestos.

I know it is awkward for the federal government because it has just taken over the seat in Quebec that has all the asbestos mines, Thetford Mines. However, as a former asbestos miner, I ask the government to do the miners a favour and shut down these horror pits and do the rest of the world a favour and stop exporting this killing product. It is like exporting 1,000 Bopals every year. That is how cruel and negligent this is. The Public Health Agency should have a role to play in the broader public health and not just in the emergency preparedness for communicable diseases.

If members have not seen Wendy Mesley's special on CBC about her personal experience with cancer, they should make a point of seeing it. Those who have seen it, I ask them to reflect on this and consider that it is not just what we do and it is not always our fault that we get cancer. We are being poisoned and pickled by a chemical soup as we speak and it is irresponsible to allow that to continue. It is irresponsible to expose another generation to that type of chemical contamination.

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It has been well researched in the post-war years that the use of chemical pesticides grew exponentially and, correspondingly, the incidence of certain types of cancers grew exponentially. We will never be able to prove the direct causal link between this particular chemical and that particular cancer, but we know enough now that the precautionary principle must prevail, especially when it is our children who are being exposed as they tumble around innocently on the lawns of the city park that was just sprayed with 2,4-D. We owe it to ourselves.

My bill calls for an absolute moratorium on the non-essential use of chemical pesticides until such time as one by one the industry can come before a parliamentary committee and prove to us that they are absolutely safe. It reverses the onus. It puts the burden of proof on the industry. Instead of us having the impossible task of trying to prove this chemical is dangerous, we want that company to have the equally difficult task of proving to us that the chemical is absolutely safe. It can then put it back on the shelves and sprinkle it around the countryside. I do not care what they do with it. That is one concrete thing we could do today that would substantially reduce the incidence of chemical related cancers.

In summary, there are steps we could take and, with our newly ratified changes to the Public Health Agency through Bill C-5, Parliament could actually make great use of our Public Health Agency by facing up to the reality that the asbestos industry is a corporate serial killer and it should be stopped in its tracks. We also can clean up our municipalities by stopping the cosmetic non-essential use of pesticides.

• (1245)

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member pointed out that the virology lab in Winnipeg is in his riding. We have heard from the Bloc Québécois that Quebec is independent and that the Quebec public health agency does not need help from the rest of Canada.

The member mentioned that the virology lab is the only level four lab in the country. I wonder if the member would agree that the virology lab is an excellent example of many of why we need a national collaboration in dealing with public health.

• (1250)

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to be the hosts of the federal virology lab, which, of course, has a Quebec connection. We were given the virology lab because the Mulroney government gave Quebec the CF-18 contract which we really wanted. We were the low bidder on the CF-18 contract that had to go to Bombardier because Bombardier is in Quebec. As a default, we received this disease factory plunked into a residential neighbourhood. I do not think it was that great a trade, frankly, but now that we have it we are proud to have it. It is part of a national strategy where we serve all of the provinces, including the province of Quebec, with their needs in analyzing infectious diseases.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the record. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health says that Quebec does not need help or wants nothing to do with the rest of Canada. This is totally false.

Quebec has always been fully cooperative. We should not forget either that Quebec has its own health research university centres. What we said and what we are repeating is that Bill C-5 that is before the House today is directly interfering in provincial areas of jurisdiction. A federal government that manages only a few hospitals has no right telling the provinces how to manage their health care systems.

We need to set things straight. Today's debate is not about a war between Quebec and the rest of Canada. Rather, we are discussing the government's plan to put a health care system, a registry, a new level of public employees in each of the provinces. I do not think that we need this. That would be spending money for nothing.

I would like to hear the comments of my friend from Winnipeg Centre on this issue.

[English]

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Speaker, there is one Chief Public Health Officer through the Public Health Agency, Dr. David Butler-Jones, who spends a lot of his time flying around the country serving in that function. Not only does he fly around this country, but he also flies internationally because the agency is part of a network internationally that monitors infectious diseases, whether it be SARS or the avian and Asian flu.

I do not know about each individual province but I do know there is only one national agency and one chief officer. The National Institute of Public Health in Quebec is linked intricately with this Canadian agency.

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak to Bill C-5, which provides the statutory framework for the Public Health Agency. As well, Bill C-5 establishes the position, the powers and the duties for the Chief Public Health Officer.

In my discussion today I will talk about why I think this legislation is important. I also want to comment on whether public health needs a national voice and whether we are actually interfering with provincial jurisdiction. I will be dealing with these questions throughout my discussion.

Public health is a field of health care that is often out of the spotlight until there is a crisis. Let us face it, most of us take our public health needs for granted. We all assume that the water coming out of the tap is safe to drink. We all assume that when we go to a restaurant, the facilities are clean and the food is safe. We all assume that our immunization system protects us from communicable diseases, including tuberculosis.

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However, when there is a crisis, the interest in public health suddenly comes into focus. In a crisis, our public health care professionals and the public health care system become the centre of attention. In a crisis, Canadians deserve, want and should get solutions and answers, and they should get them immediately.

In my previous job as a regional councillor in the region of Halton I experienced first-hand the vital role public health plays in the lives of my constituents. I appreciate its importance and firmly believe the Government of Canada has a role in gathering information, providing advice and responding to emergencies in public health.

Canadians expect their federal government to care about their public health needs. The past outbreak of SARS and in my area the introduction of the West Nile virus have been two important public health issues in my riding. Public health officials have played a key role in informing the public on the risks and actions that people need to take to protect themselves.

Public health in today's environment is facing a number of challenges, including the potential of a pandemic influenza outbreak. Our Public Health Agency can play a vital role in preparing and preventing such an outbreak in all parts of Canada. A planned and coordinated effort will help prevent a Canadian public health crisis in the future and our Canadian Public Health Agency should be at the forefront of this effort.

Members of the public expect the government to provide them with the necessary information to protect them in a timely and accurate manner. I see this as the key role for the Public Health Agency. The agency is and will continue to be the catalyst for information sharing and will be the central clearing house for public health data as it relates to trends and issues facing public health in this country. I support this important role for this agency, as we can work cooperatively with the provinces and our municipal partners in preparing and responding to public health threats.

Not only will this agency be the connection for public health in Canada but it will also be a key link in the public health issues and best practices that are facing other nations around the world. The agency will work closely with other important international health agencies, such as the World Health Organization.

I also support having a Chief Public Health Officer who will be the lead spokesperson on public health issues at the federal level. We need a credible spokesperson who has the trust and faith of the Canadian public. The bill will make the Chief Public Health Officer the deputy head of the agency and accountable to the Minister of Health. The Chief Public Health Officer will use his or her expertise to assist in policy development in public health.

In addition, the Chief Public Health Officer will also be required to submit to the Minister of Health for tabling in Parliament an annual report of the state of public health in this country. The Chief Public Health Officer will have the authority and expertise that is needed to give Canadians confidence that our public health concerns are being addressed.

Are we interfering in provincial jurisdiction? I say no. I view the Public Health Agency as complementary.

● (1255)

I took it upon myself to contact the public health doctor for the region of Halton, Dr. Nosal. I asked his advice on whether he felt that an additional level of scrutiny of information was important. He told me directly that he and his colleagues throughout Ontario believe it is important to have a national voice in public health.

As a regional councillor, my personal experience in public health issues included SARS. A hospital in the community of Burlington was closed to the public during the SARS outbreak. Constituents called me in tears. They could not get into the hospital to see their loved ones. They wanted to know what was happening. It was something new for us. Information was not as available as we would have liked it to be. We got the answers, but if at that time there had been a national agency that had that type of information on how to respond to emergencies and to a crisis that could have been shared with other communities and provinces, then we would have been able to react in a quicker and more efficient manner.

Another public health issue which I think is more localized for me but could occur in other parts of the province and country is West Nile virus. It is a virus carried by mosquitoes. It tends to grow in stagnant water and can cause a public health issue.

We had a major reaction in Burlington on what to do about West Nile virus. Would it not be great if we had a national agency that could act as a clearinghouse to provide information so that all public health agencies across the country would know how we handled the issue, what worked and what did not. Then if it became an issue in another parts of the country they would be able to react quickly to those issues.

That is why I believe we are not interfering with any provincial jurisdiction. What we are doing is standing up for the health of Canadians everywhere.

In addition, there was a study done on whether there was a need for this agency. There was a full consultation with experts in the field and public health stakeholders and they all agreed there was a need and desirability for a national public health agency. In discussions with our provincial and territorial partners, they indicated a need for a federal public health voice. They indicated a particular need for federal involvement in emergency situations.

This legislation does not expand the existing role that the federal government plays in public health. The legislation simply provides the agency with the mandate to assist the Minister of Health in exercising his or her powers, duties and functions in public health.

Of course we want to work cooperatively with our provincial, territorial and municipal partners. In addition, the agency will play an important role with international organizations and other public health experts around the world. Public health threats to Canadians often have no borders.

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In conclusion, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Chief Public Health Officer deserve our support. Whether it is preparing for a pandemic influenza outbreak, maintaining the national emergency stockpile system, consulting with other international organizations, or responding to other public health crises, Canadians can be reassured that the federal government takes public health seriously.

I look forward to supporting the bill all the way through the legislative process.

• (1300)

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the bill provides in the regulations that the new Chief Public Health Officer is able to form committees to collect, analyze and distribute information. I am not sure whether the member has any knowledge about what has been going on within government in terms of setting up these ad hoc committees to look at things, but I do know the health committee had an unfortunate encounter with one such task force looking at alcohol misuse, and particularly questions that the committee raised with regard to fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. The member will probably know that it is an important issue.

When we talk about the new agency, it will have to have some priorities. Members throughout the House have talked about a number of areas of public health promotion and protection but when it gets down to it, I would think that Canadians want to ensure the significant risks to public health ought to be dealt with first. Does the member agree?

Mr. Mike Wallace: Mr. Speaker, I think that based on our government's response to a number of issues facing Canadians, we are very keen on setting priorities and following through on priorities, as we said we would do in the election. We are delivering on them now. I do not see any difference in the way we operate here. Once this is in place from the legislative perspective, and as members know the agency is already up and running, it is appropriate to determine the public health priorities of Canadians. This can be done through consultations involving the Ministry of Health, the public, members of the House and the health committee. Those public health priorities should be the priorities for that organization. We need to take advice from the experts in the field, including the Chief Public Health Officer and the other public health agencies throughout the country on what the priorities are for individual provinces and territories. Once those are set it would be ideal for us to follow through on them.

• (1305)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, earlier the parliamentary secretary had talked about the \$1 billion that was set aside for pandemic preparedness, so I checked the document to see if the word "aboriginal" was anywhere in it and it is not, on pandemic preparedness.

What are the department's plans with regard to the specific requests that have been put forward by the Assembly of First Nations on testing, staff training, and sewage and water?

Mr. Mike Wallace: Mr. Speaker, I obviously do not have the answer to that specific question.

I just want to say again that once this legislation is in place, priorities should be addressed in terms of what the issues are.

Whether it be clean water, emergency preparedness, or something else, those things should be dealt with and we look forward to the input of all the parties on those issues.

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to clarify for the NDP member, actually the 2006 budget provides for \$450 million to improve water and housing for on reserve educational outcomes and to assist aboriginal women and children. The budget also firms up to \$600 million for aboriginal housing off reserve and in the north.

With regard to my question for the member for Burlington, we have heard a lot of rhetoric from the Liberals, but here we are within 100 days of our party forming the government and we have brought forward Bill C-5 and the Liberals were not even able to bring it to a vote. I wonder if the member could comment on the contrast between the previous government and this government's commitment to public health.

Mr. Mike Wallace: Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this government's ability to move very quickly on the public health issue. I think it is important to Canadians.

Canadians will judge this government on its ability to act quickly and get things in place.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, although I have spoken in this House a few times since my election on January 23, I am privileged to do so today, for the first time in the context of a debate, on behalf of my constituents in Verchères—Les Patriotes. However, I would have preferred to do so under different circumstances.

The Speech from the Throne states, and I quote:

All too often, the strength of our federation is compromised by jurisdictional squabbles that obscure accountabilities and prevent governments from working together in the best interests of Canadians.

This new government will take a new approach.

This same government is now proposing a bill that is has merely been cut and pasted from a Liberal bill, one that in no way respects the constitutional jurisdictions of Quebec and the other provinces. That is Bill C-5, which permits the government to set out the minimum obligations of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Before reminding you why the Bloc Québécois opposes this bill, since this is my first speech in the House and just to put a smile on my face for a moment, I would like to sincerely thank my constituents from Verchères—Les Patriotes for the confidence they have shown in me and in the Bloc Québécois, confirmed once again during the last election. I promise to listen to the concerns of my fellow citizens with just as much dedication as my predecessor, Stéphane Bergeron, and to ensure that they are voiced in this House.

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I would also like to thank the Bloc Québécois members in Verchères—Les Patriotes, who have given me the honour of representing the ideas and ideals of our party. Although the nomination race was lengthy, it allowed me to establish solid relationships with many party members, and the nomination evening, I can assure you, will be etched in my heart and memory as one of the greatest moments of my life. I would like to recognize my fellow opponents: Marc-André Veilleux who, with the support of his wife, children and family, conducted a great campaign, and Frédéric Brossard-Lemerise, who gave his first political speeches. We have all been there, and it is a major step to take. I must also thank Lise Lavoie, my election campaign manager, Louis-Marie Pilote, my official agent, and their team of volunteers who spared no effort and who, in honouring their commitment to making Quebec a sovereign nation and sacrificing the quality time they could have spent with their families at Christmas and the New Year, greatly contributed to the success of this election.

Finally, I would like to share with you the debt of gratitude I owe my family—my father and grandmother at the top of the list—for the unfailing support they have always shown and continue to provide day after day.

I did say that would put a smile on my face. Unfortunately, it was short-lived because I must now return to Bill C-5, a bill that, let us not forget, was presented by the former government and scorns the Quebec government's sole authority over health care in Quebec.

Need I remind the House that although none of the parties in this House except the Bloc Québécois seem interested in respecting Quebec and the provinces' exclusive jurisdiction over health, Quebec governments have always intervened to ensure that this constitutional guarantee is fully respected? I could find any number of quotes from Maurice Duplessis, Robert Bourassa, Jacques Parizeau or Lucien Bouchard on the matter.

Is it clear that the creation of this agency will cause the governments of Quebec and the provinces—the only governments that have the structure and the tools in place to provide adequate health care—to lose hundreds of millions of dollars?

It is understandable that this type of legislation would appeal to the sort of government that used the surplus generated by creating the fiscal imbalance to interfere in areas in Quebec and provincial jurisdiction. But I have a hard time understanding why a government that claims to want to end this kind of disrespectful conduct toward other duly elected governments would want to introduce it again.

How can the Minister of Health, the adoptive father of this bill, find this bill acceptable when he said, in reference to guaranteed wait times, that we have to respect provincial jurisdictions, even if it takes a little more time to get things done?

How can the Prime Minister, a disciple of open federalism, support this bill when he stated in Montreal on April 21 that open federalism means “respecting areas of provincial jurisdiction, keeping the federal government’s spending power within bounds”?

We are disappointed to see that this government says one thing but does another.

●(1310)

We are not opposed to this bill because we do not care about people's health. Quite the contrary. The Bloc Québécois has always been concerned about health issues, especially public health, a crucial aspect of health that includes both prevention and development of plans to deal with serious diseases.

The Bloc Québécois also recognizes that there is a lack of funding for health. In fact, the Bloc Québécois feels that the main problem is underfunding related to the fiscal imbalance that deprives Quebec and the other provinces of the revenue they need to carry out their responsibilities and, as a result, makes them less able to properly support their public health bodies.

The Bloc Québécois feels that correcting the fiscal imbalance will enable Quebec and the other provinces to further develop services for their people in their areas of jurisdiction and ensure that everyone has the right tools to meet the new public health challenges.

The Bloc Québécois feels that only correcting the fiscal imbalance and providing stable funding will enable Quebec and the other provinces to further develop services for their people in their areas of exclusive jurisdiction and ensure that their citizens receive proper health care.

In his budget the Minister of Finance informed us that he will address the fiscal imbalance. I hope the government will keep its word and remain firm in its commitment to resolve this impediment to a healthy democracy in Quebec and the provinces. If it is sincere, this government will indicate to us quite quickly the process it will negotiate with the provinces and the deadline it has given itself. It goes without saying that given the complexity of this issue, a short deadline would be preferred in order to achieve concrete results by spring 2007.

Since I am taking a few moments to talk about restoring fiscal balance, I want to remind the government that this cannot be done without including the \$807 million the federal government owes Quebec in 2007 for cancelling the child care agreement.

In closing, I want to reiterate that the federal government's responsibility is to provide adequate funding for health and not to propose new structures—such as indicators for waiting lists—that do not solve the problem of the under-funded health care system. This government should listen to its good friend Jean Charest who, in reference to the Public Health Agency of Canada, said last January that Quebec had its own structures and that they were working.

Since 1998 Quebec has had the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, which does not need a federal agency that will perform the same duties. Why create unnecessary duplication?

Since it is the Government of Quebec that has the expertise and that can intervene in all the institutions of Quebec's health network, it is up to that government to establish its own priorities and action plans and include them in the framework of global objectives developed by agencies like the WHO.

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I thought, quite naively, that arrogance had left this House with the Liberal government. The establishment of this agency proves the contrary. If, however, Canadians really want it and Quebec's refusal to have Canada-wide objectives imposed on it harms Canada's development, like our colleagues from other parties in this House are saying, would it not be better for us to move forward as good neighbours in two sovereign nations?

•(1315)

[*English*]

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about jurisdiction. In fact, public health is a shared jurisdiction. We are not talking about the direct delivery of health care in hospitals or otherwise.

I wonder if the member could comment on the virology lab in Winnipeg. If the member believes that each province can do everything completely independently, then he must believe that each province should have its own virology lab. I ask the member where he will get the expertise, moneys and other support in order to do that. If he does not believe that, then he must believe that there is a shared responsibility on behalf of everyone in the Canadian federation to work together to protect the public from pandemics and deadly diseases.

I assume the member therefore needs to change his position and support this public health act, because there are synergies that can be gained by working together as Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Malo: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his question.

I totally agree with him. Indeed, we must work together to be better equipped to respond to pandemics of deadly diseases. However, this does not mean simply working together here in Canada, with Quebec and the other provinces. We must all work together on a global level.

It is the WHO that establishes guidelines for the various stakeholders in the world to guide them in their choices and in the development of their own policies.

In Quebec, we have an institute, the National Institute of Public Health. It works quite well. Of course, it calls on capabilities from outside Quebec. However, it is this institute that determines the guidelines for Quebec, since it knows its people best.

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like first to congratulate my colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes for his very interesting speech. He clearly emphasized that Quebec wants its areas of jurisdiction to be respected.

I also heard the comments from representatives of the Conservative federal government about the Public Health Agency of Canada. I remember some of them, particularly that this is a federal central organization that collects and analyzes data for all of Canada. However, as the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes said so brilliantly, health is a responsibility that comes under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces.

I would like to ask a short question to my colleague. Could he explain to us very briefly the contradiction that exists between what the Conservative government is saying about this open federalism with its respect for provincial areas of jurisdiction, and Bill C-5 on the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada?

•(1320)

Mr. Luc Malo: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord for his question.

Indeed, this is quite strange. On the one hand, different government ministers and stakeholders are telling us about the place that the government wants to give Quebec and they assure us that it will now respect the provincial areas of jurisdiction. On the other hand, as soon as this House resumed its work, the government presented us with Bill C-5, which provides for the establishment of a Canada-wide public health agency.

A public health agency in Canada might create confusion in Quebec. Who would now be the main spokesperson? We, in the Bloc Québécois, consider that it is the Institute—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but we must pursue the debate.

The hon. member for Hochelaga now has the floor.

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about a bill that is actually a rerun of a bill introduced by the previous government. The wording is exactly the same.

Clearly, the political landscape has changed. My friend the parliamentary secretary, who was formerly in opposition, is now enjoying life in the government. We can imagine just how proud he is to be a parliamentary secretary, and we wish the best of luck to him and his whole team in their new duties.

I know that within him is a man who has deep respect for provincial jurisdictions and that his autonomist streak is just waiting for an opportunity to come out. That said, we must be very, very aware that, frankly, this bill is insultingly paradoxical.

If this were a bill about epidemics and quarantine or about patents and trademarks in the health field, all the Bloc Québécois members would agree that the government is fully within its jurisdiction.

But how can the government have the gall to introduce a bill on public health in this House? The very title of the bill is potentially offensive and shows no respect for provincial jurisdictions.

What is public health? Often, it consists of treatments for citizens. Public health often means a vaccination strategy. Who gives vaccinations? Not the virology lab in the riding of our colleague, the parliamentary secretary.

Of course, the Bloc Québécois members are not so simple as to think that viruses have borders. That is not our philosophy. That is why we want cooperation across Canada, across North America and around the world, as the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes stated.

However, where we part ways with the government is on the need for an agency with roughly \$665 million in funding to handle this cooperation.

The government has a very clear urge to engage in nation building. When the Conservative government, the Tories, introduce a bill on the Public Health Agency of Canada, they are giving a nod to the Romanow report.

The Liberal's propensity to intrude and centralize was familiar to us; there is nothing new about that constitutional philosophy. But I find it surprising that the Conservatives are making the same kind of calculations in terms of nation building.

Why is there a Canadian public health agency? It was established because all governments are getting the same polls and realizing that, for the vast majority of our fellow citizens, health is the top priority.

At the time when the Liberals took office, back in 1993-94, and reduced transfer payments from \$18 billion to \$12 billion, with the inherent risk this had of destabilizing the provinces' public finances, health was less of a concern for the federal government.

Let us not forget that it took three conferences of federal, provincial and territorial first ministers, be they NDP, PQ, Liberal or Conservative, it took a totally airtight, monolithic coalition of provincial premiers to get the federal government to put money back into health care. This resulted in an accord providing \$41 billion over 10 years, with the federal government's contribution being 18¢ on every dollar, whereas 25¢ were expected.

That is to say that the Public Health Agency of Canada exists for a political reason.

• (1325)

The reality is that, if ever there is, God forbid, a crisis such as a pandemic, actual help will not come from the virus laboratory in Manitoba, but from the CLSCs in Quebec and front-line services in Ontario or British Columbia. Those are the players working closely with health and social services, as my colleagues mentioned this morning.

We cannot support the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada. We know too well the cascade of events the federal government would put us through. Incidentally, the Public Health Agency of Canada took over a number of programs. I would not want our fellow citizens to think that the agency is only involved with issues relating to viruses and immunization. The Public Health Agency of Canada took money earmarked for administering HIV, AIDS and cancer programs and a number of other strategies.

The Government of Canada wants to engage in "nation building" through its health care system. I am willing to bet you, Mr. Speaker—a pint of beer or a glass of wine, if you have more refined tastes, which I'm sure you do—that the government is going to table a bill concerning a national pharmaceutical strategy. It wants to institute a common purchasing policy for all provinces and a common pharmaceutical formulary. We are heading down a slippery slope in terms of health.

Fortunately, the voice of the Bloc Québécois can be heard in this House. We would remind you that creating the Public Health

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Agency of Canada is no more effective nor does it respect provincial jurisdictions any more than Canada Health Act. The Canada Health Act proposes principles that are very familiar to us all, including universality, a public system, accessibility and a transferrable system.

Sovereignty is a very promising and liberating prospect for the future of Quebecers. In a sovereign Quebec, if it were up to the Parti Québécois, the National Assembly would adopt legislation that would include the principles found in Canadian legislation. What would be different would be the actor, the one who votes on the budget and provides health care services.

I am fast approaching forty, Mr. Speaker. Did you say I had one or two minutes remaining?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Two minutes remain.

Mr. Réal Ménard: You are too kind, Mr. Speaker.

The paradox lies in the fact that the federal government wants to enforce a law while not having any expertise in how to deliver the services in the field.

When I was health critic, I read a report every year that the member for Québec will now make a point of reading to obtain up-to-date information. In this report, Quebec or other provinces are criticized for not providing some service that ought to be provided, as if the federal government should have a say in the delivery method for health services.

We will not be duped by this series of events, this escalation that the government is preparing. We will not accept that the federal, Conservative government engage in nation building, as did the Liberals, with the health file. We will be the jealous, scrappy and uncompromising guardians of the prerogatives of the Government of Quebec. Fortunately, in this House, the Bloc Québécois is there to make the voice of Quebec heard. We will continue to do so under any circumstance.

• (1330)

[*English*]

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, part of being a nation is ensuring that all its citizens have security, good order, good government, peace and good public health. This is a machinery bill that will allow the Government of Canada to do that. In fact, there is no change in power or jurisdictional issues. This is all within the powers that already exist with the federal government.

The member talked about jurisdictional issues. There is an explicit federal rule in controlling infectious diseases at our borders, something with which the Chief Public Health Officer would deal. There is no expansion in any way, shape or form of the federal role in provincial jurisdictions.

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The member talks about an independent Quebec. However, there are synergies in working with all Canadians. Another example of that is the virology lab in Winnipeg. The virology lab provides many services for people across Canada, including Quebecers. If we carry the member's logic to its natural conclusion, he would expect each province to have its own lab, which is hugely expensive, and there are not enough human resources to staff such labs.

Would the member admit that synergies are to be gained by working together and that all Canadians, including Canadians who live in Quebec, benefit from having a coordinated and deliberate strategy?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Like him, I was present at the committee when Dr. Butler-Jones presented the agency's role. I am sure my colleague will agree that this is not an administrative reorganization. If it is indeed an administrative reorganization with a \$650 million budget, then we have a problem with the appropriate use of public funds.

This agency was the product of a report the federal government received following the unfortunate SARS crisis. From a humanitarian perspective, we must work together under all circumstances, particularly in cases of natural or public health disasters. I think Quebecers support that.

What we are saying is that we do not need this agency. The European Union, for example, wants to share information, but the fact that Great Britain has a virology lab or a lab to study certain diseases does not mean that Belgium or other European Union countries cannot have one too.

My colleague, the parliamentary secretary, is arguing from a false premise. If the premise is false, the conclusion will be too. We want to be involved in this issue. We are saying that, except for its responsibility for quarantines, the federal government has no business developing service delivery plans. That is what the new agency plans to do, it will get \$650 million to do it, and its budget will grow over the next few years.

• (1335)

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree more with the parliamentary secretary. We are really talking about the public health of Canadians.

Does the member feel, notwithstanding there will be an agency established, that this agency should not have such a free reign to try to do all things at the same time, but rather should establish a critical list of priorities and assure Canadians that the most important priorities will be dealt with by the agency in its early days?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian agency is taking over an administrative branch that existed at Health Canada. Moreover, it is taking over programs that are managed by Health Canada, a number of which are related to diseases that are already known.

The Bloc is not questioning the relevancy of working together. We believe that the centre of decision making, coordination and of policy should not fall to Health Canada, and certainly not on the federal government.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in the House to speak to such an important bill with such an important role.

As my colleague from Winnipeg stated, there are many aspects to health that we need to confront directly and if we do not do it from a national perspective, then the health of all Canadians will suffer.

I want to touch on a number of issues in Bill C-5 and the role of the Chief Public Health Officer. If we take a look at what Canadians suffer from in terms of health concerns, we need to a lot more in the area of prevention.

My colleague already referenced the importance of what we put into our environment. We must ensure that what we put into our environment does not make us ill and later on requires us to use health services that are costly and scarce. It makes no sense if in the end those illnesses could be prevented.

Pesticides is an area that my colleague talked about and one which I have been active on in my own community. When we look at the pesticides that are put into our environment without any concern for the health of our children and those who are most vulnerable, it seems to me that we have a lot of work to do. As the member mentioned, there presently is a model in the province of Quebec where the cosmetic use of pesticides will no longer be allowed. I think that is something all provinces should be looking at. I am hopeful that when the bill is passed that the Public Health Agency will look at the Quebec model.

I would also like to look at the additives that we put into our food source. Today I spoke in the House about the importance of recognizing those persons who work in the public service and who have blown the whistle, not because they were trying to rock the boat but because they were looking out for the public good.

We recently had the mad cow or BSE crisis. Canadians should know that there were men and women working in the veterinary branch of Health Canada who cited the concerns around BSE two years before the crisis hit. We know the costs that were borne by those in the agricultural community. Many people lost their livelihood and many went through incredible turmoil in their own lives.

We also have a concern around the health of Canadians in general. Why? It is because our food source was contaminated. Our own officials within Health Canada, who blew the whistle on BSE, said that rendered beef cannot be fed to cattle. This is exactly what was happening.

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We knew this information and had this information but there was no coordinated effort to deal with it. In fact, the recommendations that came forward were the recommendations that the premier of Alberta cited. What did the premier say? He said that we should be testing more of our cows, that we should not be feeding rendered feed to cattle and that there should be more money put into this jurisdiction.

In fact, the same thing happens presently and had been happening in Japan and Europe. Why? It is because those countries had gone through this crisis.

I think the role of having someone looking over the national concerns of public health is absolutely critical for the reasons I have mentioned when we look at the mad cow crisis. This could have been avoided. We could have responded to that crisis more quickly and more sensibly. The health and welfare of Canadians would have been put first and foremost.

Other areas in terms of prevention where I think we have failed and need to do more is on how we prevent persons who are living at the lowest margins from becoming ill. We know the key indicators of health when we take a look at where people live, what kind of housing they have, what access they have to health care, what kind of nutrition they have and what kind of food sources are available to them. We know that access to recreation facilities is important. People must be allowed to participate fully and not, with all due respect, the little bit that was given in the budget. We need to go much further than that so all our citizens can participate in a healthy, vibrant, active life.

● (1340)

Those are the things we need to be put on the table. This kind of purview by the Public Health Officer would allow for health promotion to take place so that we could truly get into preventing some of the ailments Canadians suffer from.

My background is that of a school teacher and I have seen, exponentially, the rise in asthma. At the school where I taught, only one or two students had asthma. If I were to go into any classroom in Canada today and asked how many kids had asthma, I would find that at least three or four students would put up their hands. Why is that? It has to do with the quality of our air, along with some other concerns.

What have we done to prevent the poor quality of our air and deal with pollution? We obviously have not done enough. This needs to be looked at through a national lens. I hope the Public Health Agency can look at this kind of thing and, in doing so, will offer some recommendations that will have some teeth. We do not want to see a report that just gathers dust like the Romanow report sadly did. We want to see a report that has efficacy, that will be heard, not just something that is tabled.

When the bill goes through committee it will be interesting to look at other jurisdictions to see if there are ways in which this will not just be a reporting mechanism to the Minister of Health, but that the recommendations have some teeth so that they will have traction and efficacy and that the health of Canadians will benefit in the end.

We just have to turn to what has happened in the past with reports from auditor generals or other royal commissions when really good

work was done but, sadly, not enacted. I hope the scope and the efficacy of the public health office will be something that is not just seen as symbolic but something that will be action oriented.

I want to touch on an area that is near and dear to me, and that is the area of mental health. This is Mental Health Awareness Week. I believe most Canadians are aware of the fact that it is an issue that has been stigmatized for far too long. I would like to see provisions put into the Canada Health Act so that we can take this issue seriously. Hopefully it will become one of the primary focuses of the Public Health Agency. This area has been stigmatized for far too long. It requires resources so that Canadians can have an active, healthy participation in their respective communities.

● (1345)

Mr. Steven Fletcher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, early in his comments the member touched on what the Bloc member had to say. I would just like to get the member's view on the importance of working as a nation in the area of public health, while ensuring that we do not intrude into any areas that the federal government has no power, to ensure that people throughout Canada, including Quebecers, have the access to public health that they deserve. The member may want to talk about the virology lab which is an excellent example of where the nation's resources were pooled together to create a better good for everyone within the nation.

I wonder if the member could discuss the importance of working together as a people in the area of public health.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I think it is absolutely critical that we share resources, in that we put our resources together to affect the health of all Canadians.

I must say that if I had had more time I would have spoken about disabilities and putting in a disabilities act, which is also important, but I will save that for another time.

When we look at what Quebec has done, we not only need to look at the fact that we should have national scope but we need to look at where things have been done right. I know my constituents are envious of the community health centres in Quebec and to the extent it has been done in Quebec and in Ottawa Centre. We need to look at best practices and use those best practices in all provinces. I think the community health centre approach is the way to go. Quebec has done it, bar none. As I mentioned in my speech, we also need to look at best practices like the banning of cosmetic use of pesticides.

I quite agree with the member that we are better off when we put all of our resources together to positively affect all of our health services. When we see health issues that do not respect borders, we need to do that and the more we can the better.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on a specific issue mentioned by the member in terms of the public health responsibility around access to clean air and clean water.

A first nations community on the shores of the St. Clair River in southern Ontario is surrounded by industry. The community has significant health problems as a result of water and air contamination.

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I wonder if the member could speak specifically to how important it is to have the Public Health Agency oversee these kinds of impacts on our communities.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, it really is critical that we look at the air we breath, the water we drink and the environment that surrounds us.

I would hope that this office and the officer would be able to, as I mentioned before, have some efficacy in terms of being able to go into a community and act on people's concerns about not having potable or drinkable water for decades. The fact is that they need something to be done right away. It would be similar to a local medical officer being able to file a report that commissions the local municipality to act directly.

It would be interesting to see if we can find a way to have that done at the national level, whether it is a national purview, but I am not talking about going over jurisdictions. However we need to ensure that access to drinking water is paramount.

To be honest, I do not think most Canadians are aware or maybe they are becoming aware of the water crisis in this country. Some of it came out of Walkerton and Kasechewan most recently, but I think Canadians are aghast and quite surprised at the fact that in Canada, where we have access to fresh water, we still have people who are not able to drink and access clean water.

I think it is an excellent point and I hope it is incorporated.

• (1350)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division stands deferred until Monday, May 8, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

* * *

AERONAUTICS ACT

Hon. John Baird (for the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities) moved that Bill C-6, An Act to amend the

Aeronautics Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to be in the House today to open debate on Bill C-6, the Aeronautics Act.

This act is all about Canadian safety in the air. It is going to add additional compliance tools and increase the penalties for people who do not follow the rules.

Just 50 years ago, air travel was reserved for a few people in Canada. It is now, however, the standard for most travellers throughout our country for both long and short distances.

Canada's air industry continues to make enormous contributions to the growth and prosperity we enjoy every day. Because of our country's vastness, the industry is an absolutely essential contribution and an instrument that connects Canadians to each other and to the rest of the world. This is our future. In fact, this works toward unifying our great country.

Our country is vast and it is spread out. The air industry provides links to communities throughout the north, east and west, links to remote communities that have no other transportation methods.

For example, in my own riding of Fort McMurray—Athabasca in northern Alberta, 150,000 people went through our airport two years ago, while this year we expect more than 450,000 people to do so, a tremendous increase in people going to work in northern Alberta. Indeed, some 20,000 to 30,000 people who work in northern Alberta have no other way but air travel to get places quickly or to go home to loved ones. These people do travel and they come from all over Canada: Winnipeg, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia. We need to have better transportation, better security and better safety for these people.

Most people would not know this, but on the whole, Canadians travel some 25% more than people in other countries. Over the years, Transport Canada and the Canadian airline industry have been recognized worldwide for the tremendous safety record we have. This government, under this Prime Minister, will continue to make Canada's safety number one. It will continue to keep Canadians safe.

Bill C-6 will provide for a modern and flexible ability to do that, a legislative framework to further enhance aviation safety and, through safety management systems, to have a system in place that will actually allow a continuous method of keeping Canadians safe. Australia and the United Kingdom have had great results from this system. Quality assurance, performance measurements and penalty increases, all of these things are in the act to do one thing: keep Canadians safe.

Government Orders

The proposed changes aim to increase aviation safety while responding to the changes in the operating environment. After this act is in place, with consent from my friends across the floor, we are going to have better air safety standards than the United States. One mistake on a plane while it is in the air is sometimes the last mistake. We need to make sure if those mistakes do happen, they do not happen again.

Things change. Instrumentation has changed dramatically in the airline industry. Plane mechanics have changed dramatically, even in the last 10 years. Traffic control rules and security issues such as 9/11 were not even thought about 10 or 20 years ago, but today they are a reality and we need to make changes for those realities.

We must constantly update our rules to ensure Canadians' safety. We have consulted with industry on this and the members of the industry agree. They want this legislation. Who would know better than the industry as far as safety and consistency and travel for Canadians are concerned?

As I have said, this government has the safety of the Canadian public as priority number one. We will ensure, through our legislative agenda, that we keep Canadians safe.

These further amendments that are proposed today relate mainly to aviation safety and the aviation safety program that we are proposing in these amendments. The scope is broad enough, though, to apply to all matters regulated under the Aeronautics Act. These are simply safety amendments.

I must emphasize, however, that the amendments in this bill only relate to enabling authorities. That means, in essence, that for regulatory requirements more specifics will be necessary to implement, but this will only be done through discussions with stakeholders through the Canadian Aviation Regulation Advisory Council.

• (1355)

We are going to have stakeholders' input because we believe they want to keep themselves as safe as we want to make sure they are. These stakeholders include large major organizations and associations within Canada.

For instance, they include: the Air Transport Association of Canada; the Canadian Airports Council; Nav Canada; the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association, the people who fly the planes; the Air Line Pilots Association; and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the airline division of CUPE. All of these stakeholders are going to have input into these regulations and are going to provide the very basis and framework that we need to keep Canadians safe.

We listen. This government listens and cooperates. We are going to get those things done.

We even have international cooperation. For instance, academics and leading safety experts from around the world and international bodies such as the International Civil Aviation Organization all advocate that greater attention be paid to managing safety through the organizational level. That is what this approach is doing. As I mentioned, Australia and New Zealand have had great results from this kind of legislation and we want great results for Canada.

An example of our government's cooperation with its stakeholders is that in low risk parts of the aviation industry, for instance, such as business aircraft operations, we intend to actually authorize industry to establish their own operational standards. They are going to be self-governed, but we are going to make sure that we audit those standards and audit the management systems to ensure that in operational standards a minimum is kept and met.

The activities of the industry body, the standards it publishes and its audit activities would all be subject to regulation authority and regulation oversight by Transport Canada. We are going to keep Canadians safe.

A key amendment would be to establish voluntary non-punitive reporting programs. Some people ask, "How can you have voluntary non-punitive reporting programs?" In this case, we have to, and I will go into this in more detail.

This program would actually allow individuals and operators to file a report that would be confidential. It would be done on a voluntary basis in relation to certain regulatory violations. The aviation community wants to work with us to identify these safety risks and they want options for how to address them.

We want results for Canadians. We do not just want rules. We want what is best for Canadians, not just more bureaucracy.

We would use this data provided by operators to make safety improvements. They would provide the information on a non-disclosure basis and we would take that information, disseminate it and implement programs and policies that are going to be good for Canadians. The data, without identifying any specific information from stakeholders, would be used to share with others internationally and nationally to ensure the safety of Canadians.

Do members see a theme in this? As government, we are going to ensure the safety of Canadians.

A new safety data reporting system would be established, including integrated management systems: systems in place that would protect Canadians and set standards. Individuals, operators and industry bodies have expressed very strong support for this implementation and for such systems.

With sufficient information data, Transport Canada will be better off. It will be able to better manage and regulate safety and security issues. It will be better able to apply risk management techniques to ensure minimum risk. It will be better able to create an environment for continuous improvement. We want to continue to learn. This is an industry that continues to evolve. Things continue to happen. That means we have to make changes as time goes on and, most important, we need to make those changes on an informed and justifiable basis for Canadians.

Let me now turn to the penalty provisions of the act.

Government Orders

Quite frankly, current penalties are insufficient. The last time any amendments were made in relation to the penalties themselves was in 1984. Now in 1984 dollars, in some cases that is not even sufficient given what has happened today. The maximum penalties before this were \$5,000 for individuals and actually only \$25,000 for corporations. Quite frankly, sometimes corporations would consider the penalties to be a cost of doing business, which of course in turn would infringe upon Canadians' right to privacy in some cases, for noise and other things like that, and also it would not keep Canadians to a minimum standard of safety. As a government, we are going to do that.

● (1400)

Whether the penalty results from an administrative or a summary conviction penalty, Bill C-6 would raise both maximums and would allow a more severe penalty so industry would know that if it violated the act, it would pay price. It would be deterred from doing anything illegal or against the act.

For administrative proceedings, for instance, we will increase the maximum from \$5,000 to \$50,000 for individuals, 10 times the amount that was in the act under the previous government. For corporations, we will change that to \$250,000, 10 times more than what was provided under the previous government.

They could also be applied for contraventions with serious actual or potential impacts for flight safety, and that is the most important issue here. The act looks at fatigue management for controllers and mechanics. We cannot have these people not operating as number one on the basis of safety.

In summary conviction offences and proceedings, for instance, the proposed amendments will take it up to \$100,000 for individuals and \$1 million for corporations. They are not going to be taking the legislation for granted anymore and they are not going to take it as a cost of doing business. They will stop doing it. This behaviour will change.

The new maximum penalty levels could be assessed for serious, wilful contraventions of the act. We are not trying to penalize those people who have the intention of doing right and accidentally do something that could be a violation of the act. We are going to catch those people, especially for the maximum amount of penalty, who are doing this wilfully and who must be stopped.

The adoption of the bill will update the act to make it more consistent. Let us bring it into this century. Let us recognize that things change in the airline industry and that one mistake in the air could cost a the lives of many people. We must bring it into consistency with other transportation acts.

A new section, part II, would provide the Canadian Forces the airworthiness investigative authority with the legal authority to investigate accidents where both the civilian and military personnel are involved, something they do not have currently. These new powers would be comparable to those of the Transportation Safety Board when it investigates civilian aircraft accidents. This will give military personnel the teeth to find out what happened in those accidents that involve both sectors.

I would now like to focus on a particular aspect of Bill C-6 by providing background information on something so important that

people hear about on the news and read about in the newspaper, and that is flight data recorders.

The regulations made under the bill require large aircraft, which transport passengers or large amounts of cargo, to have flight data recorders onboard. Accident investigators regularly use these to determine why an accident took place. In fact, it tells us more than the last few minutes of what happens in a cockpit. It tells us a lot about how to help enhance the safety in the future to prevent accidents from ever taking place again. They monitor a very wide variety of aircraft systems during a flight, from engine start up to landing and even taxiing after they land to drop off cargo or people.

The black box analyzes the data. The fact that we have multiple data from flights, it does not have to be an accident. We can see what went wrong and fix the problems so we keep Canadians safe. That is what the government will do. We want to protect Canadians before the accident happens, not just afterwards. The data can be used to enhance aircraft maintenance schedules so we have preventative maintenance onboard of a more serious nature, and monitor even flight crew performance.

The flight data monitoring programs have been implemented in many countries throughout the world and are widely recognized as very cost effective methods and tools for improving flight safety. In Europe and the United States these are pretty much the standard on flight operational quality assurance. Most carriers have had the program for years.

We are currently working with Canadian air carriers that are interested in establishing voluntary flight data monitoring to do so. We have initiated agreements with four carriers to do so. We will provide funding and support for the exchange of information, so industry can exchange information, which will give us a bigger base to draw from to ensure that accidents do not happen.

● (1405)

Two important elements of this program relate to the confidentiality of the data. We have to ensure the data is confidential, otherwise people will not share it with us. For this program to work, it is most important we keep confidential reports and once they do report, it is on the basis they will not be penalized for the information they provided. Aircraft operators have indicated they are not prepared to provide this information unless those two criteria are met. We listened to stakeholders and we will implement what is best for Canadians. This is best to provide impunity and confidentiality.

We will share those results, analyze the data and protect identity and any punishment that would take place. There are currently evidentiary issues under the Aeronautics Act and we will ensure that we honour those commitments.

The key for our government is not to blame people, not to penalize people, but to keep Canadians safe. However we can do that, we are going to do that. We are going to prevent deaths and accidents.

The proposed amendment will give a legal foundation to the agreements entered into by aircraft operators with Transport Canada, confirming that the collection of the data, the analysis and the use of it and the disclosure of the information derived from the flight data recorders will not be used against their wishes, but will be used in the best interests of Canadians.

Government Orders

The amendments will also provide the necessary confidentiality and enforcement protections to encourage aircraft operators to voluntarily implement flight data monitoring programs. Why would they report, why would they even put the equipment there, if they are going to be penalized? That is why we have to do it this way.

This is only one of the many proposed amendments found in Bill C-6. Other examples include the designation of industry bodies, the reporting programs and, as mentioned earlier, the broader authorities concerning integrated management systems, which is so effective in other countries. Let us face it, we have to learn from other people doing the same things we are doing to ensure it does not happen.

Stakeholders are absolutely enthusiastic. That is what makes me so happy to rise here today. All stakeholders have bought into this amendment to the Aeronautics Act. I look forward to the opportunity to answer my friends' questions from across the floor.

This Prime Minister and this government listens. We will protect Canadians.

I appreciate very much the opportunity to rise today in the House to introduce this act. I look forward to support from my colleagues from all sides of the House on it.

• (1410)

Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I noticed the theme at the start was to continue to keep Canadians safe. All governments strive to do that.

He mentioned things change from time to time and we will end up with better standards. We truly hope that is the case. Change is necessary. My riding paid an extremely heavy price for changes in technology. More than a decade ago, global positioning systems were in place and a horrific accident happened because they were so accurate and so good. Change needs to happen.

The hon. member referred many times to stakeholders. How will the government get that valuable input? Will it put resources behind talks with the stakeholders or will it bring them in? How will it work so the government gets the proper information? Will there be the necessary resources for that?

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, the good news is we have already consulted with stakeholders. We already have their input into this bill. They have bought into it fully because it is a good bill. It will help them and Canadians.

It is unfortunate what took place in his riding especially. We need to be more diligent. We need to ensure that we do not wait 22 years to amend an act and that we change things for the time. So many things have happened over the last four or five years in the security and safety of Canadians and all people abroad. We have to ensure that we continue to monitor these things, especially in air and border security. We have to make changes before they are necessary and when they are necessary.

I would encourage the members opposite to support the bill because it will keep Canadians safer. I look forward to that support.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for my colleague, the parliamentary secretary.

I can accept that a bill is presented to justify a safety management system. However, my colleague must understand that the system demanded by the industry is a self-administered safety system. That is the reality.

I want my colleague to assure me that Transport Canada will not take advantage of this to be more lax in its inspections. According to our sources, within the next five years 40% of Transport Canada's inspectors will retire. We have the impression the government wants to shirk its responsibility and entrust the industry with self-regulation in matters of safety. I have some concerns about national safety.

This legislation will apply not only to big businesses, but to all those with aircraft transport permits in Canada, whether they are small, medium or big businesses.

I want my colleague to assure me that Transport Canada will uphold the budgets and continue to do monitoring. I can accept, based on what we are being told, adding a second level of safety, which would be self-regulation by the industry. Nonetheless, I want to be sure that the budgets for monitoring and inspection will not be cut. I would not want Canada to go through what the U.S. experienced on September 11, 2001.

• (1415)

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, I can assure my friend that no part of Canada is more important than the people of Quebec. In fact, as he knows, the Prime Minister and most of my Quebec colleagues are in Quebec City today. As well, we met several days ago in my office and I assured him at that time that any information he wanted, any facts he wanted in relation to this act would be provided to him. We will ensure that it is provided in such a manner that he can make an informed decision as to what he believes is in everyone's best interest.

After his comments the other day, I did some brief analysis on how many investigators had been appointed over the last few years. To my surprise I found out that we had more appointed, although I have requested specific numbers on that to ensure that his questions are addressed.

As well, remember the government is going to require a minimum level for self-regulation. It works in other bodies. It works in law societies, hospital societies and all across Canada. There has to be a minimum level and the government will have a minimum level. I will answer all and any questions that my friend has to put to me before, now and any he may have in the future.

We want what is in the best interests of Canadians and we will get that, with his help.

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I commend the parliamentary secretary for his truly terrific involvement in advancing the Aeronautics Act. As the parliamentary secretary mentioned, this is overdue.

Government Orders

I bring my perspective as a pilot, predominantly in the general aviation industry and someone who flies under visual flight rules. In participating in an activity like this, as pilots know, we have ultimate responsibility for the safety of our aircraft, as well as for any passengers or those who might fly with us.

We know full well that the safety of this activity is paramount and that the kind of discipline that goes into flying is essential. We have to practise it day in and day out. I acknowledge and thank the parliamentary secretary for pointing out that environment we fly in has changed considerably with the level of aircraft congestion, the changes with instrumentation and the kinds of pressures that come to bear on pilots.

Could the parliamentary secretary perhaps expand on what types of consultation have taken place with the pilot community? They are the people who are charged with the ultimate responsibility of ensuring flight and aircraft safety.

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, what would be more important to pilots than to have the safe planes? I fly approximately 16 hours every week from my job here to northern Alberta and back. As a frequent flyer, I want to ensure that planes are as safe as humanly possible.

Both the Canadians Owners and Pilots Association and the Airline Pilots Association have said they want this. I would be surprised if they did not want more strenuous regulations. As a frequent flyer, I do.

I welcome any amendments that my friend or any member would put forward, which would be helpful in this.

• (1420)

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on Bill C-6, the Aeronautics Act.

If we knew nothing about the act and we listened to the parliamentary secretary, we would get the impression that something was being done by the government to deal with this, with all the references to the consultations and all the amazing work that was so carefully done. What he did not say, which I wish he had, was that the bill is identical Bill C-62 from the last government.

Hon. John Baird: Then why didn't you pass it?

Mr. Paul Szabo: The President of the Treasury Board cannot take the truth. He can dish it out, but he cannot take it.

Bill C-5 was the same. At least the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health said it. Governing is not about putting one bill on the table and working it right through to the end. Then when it is finished, putting another one on the table. There happens to be a series of legislative initiatives that have to be on the table on a broad range of ministerial initiatives to ensure that we deal with all the priorities of Canada.

There were 34 bills—

Hon. John Baird: Legalizing marijuana was a bigger priority.

Mr. Paul Szabo: I would really like to spend a bit of time on debate, Mr. Speaker, without the interruptions of the President of the Treasury Board. Between him and the parliamentary secretary, I am

not sure which one interrupts debate more. However, I would appreciate a bit of respect from the minister.

The members are suggesting somehow that they did something with the bill. If they were honest, they would say that the bill was on the table at the end of the last Parliament. There were 34-some-odd bills that were in process at various stages. We cannot pass them all. To ask why we did not pass them is foolishness. The minister should not be so foolish in this place.

There are some important changes. The parliamentary secretary tried to outline the list of consultations they had. The parliamentary secretary will know from the officials of the Department of Transport that the consultations with all stakeholders went on over years. It was three years, and he admits it now. Yet during his speech, he took credit for all these consultations.

Let us get one thing straight, the bill—

Hon. John Baird: I admit it, you're the best.

Mr. Paul Szabo: There goes the President of the Treasury Board. I have never seen such a rude person during all debate. It is really disgusting.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): I would appreciate it if, in these last few minutes we have left here today, that the Chair could hear the speaker from Mississauga South. The speaker from Mississauga South has the floor and he knows the subject to which he is to speak.

As for the other comments, I would appreciate it if we could save them for another day, especially from people who know they are members of the government. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Szabo: The bill has a couple of important amendments which I would like to read into the record. Clause 6 reads:

The Airworthiness Investigative Authority shall make available any on-board recording obtained in the course of an investigation of a military-civilian occurrence

Clause 6(a) reads:

to a coroner who requests access to it for the purpose of an investigation that the coroner is conducting;

Clause 6(b) reads:

to any person carrying out a coordinated investigation under section 18 of the Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board Act; or

Clause 6(c) reads:

to a board of inquiry convened under section 45 of the National Defence Act by the Minister, if he or she requests that the recording be made available, the occurrence did not take place in or over Canada and it involved an aircraft operated by the Canadian Forces.

Some implications still have to be reviewed and discussed and one relates to whether or not the addition gives more power to request flight recording if an accident happens on non-Canadian soil.

The proposed legislation would provide Transport Canada with the required tools to maintain and enhance the safety of the Canadian aviation system.

Government Orders

I think it is extremely important for Canadians to know that the Government of Canada in the last Parliament, over a two or three year period, spent an enormous amount of time consulting thoroughly with all the stakeholder groups. This is an extremely important piece of legislation and, quite frankly, I am pleased that the current government saw fit to introduce and reintroduce what was Bill C-62 into this Parliament because it is the right thing to do.

However to suggest somehow that the Conservatives did the work and they somehow put this bill together is absolutely incorrect. It is also incorrect with regard to Bill C-5. Bill C-5 was a reintroduction of the last government's bill to create the Public Health Agency of Canada.

I hope the President of the Treasury Board will rise on questions, but with regard to Bill C-2, which he sponsored, there are amendments to the whistleblower act. The whistleblower act was Bill C-11 in the last Parliament. It passed at all stages, had the unanimous consent of all parties and received royal assent but the present government has not proclaimed it. It is the law in Canada but it is not in force. The reason being is that the government wants to take credit for that as well. There is a little bit of a pattern here.

The changes put forward in Bill C-6 reflect new strategies being implemented to regulate aviation safety, including an increase in penalties that may be imposed under the act. I think the parliamentary secretary did a very good job in outlining that section.

The key amendments also include the voluntary, non-punitive reporting programs which would allow individuals and operators to confidentially report on a voluntary basis certain regulatory violations. This is an extremely important issue. I am sure that as we get into the speeches from other members that they will be able to amplify on one of these important provisions. It took an awful long time to develop the provisions of this bill which would meet the needs of Canadian aeronautic safety.

These changes are essential to advancing aviation safety, as we all recognize. The Liberals will support this bill. It was our bill, but that does not matter. It is not a partisan bill. It is a public safety bill, aeronautics safety, amendments for public safety. It is the right thing to do and I hope we have the support of all members.

There may be some modifications or amendments and that is appropriate. This is at second reading. We will have an opportunity

to go to committee and maybe have further consultations with the various stakeholders to see if there is anything else that may have come up in the interim since the consultations ended.

The reason we are here is to make good laws and wise decisions, and part of that is to have debate and informed debate, not to somehow suggest that someone has good ideas and someone else does not. That is not the case. It just happens to be a bill that was in process in the Parliament of Canada. It is the right thing to do to have brought it back and I thank the government for bringing this bill back to the floor of Parliament so that we can deal with this important public safety issue.

The introduction of the amendments in the Aeronautics Act is a culmination of these extensive consultations. I hope the Minister of Transport will ensure that we have the necessary consultations or final consultations through the committee process and that they are open to any amendments that may come forward to further enhance and improve the bill.

●(1425)

The Canadian Aviation Regulatory Advisory Council's primary objective is to assess and recommend potential regulatory changes through cooperative rule making activities concerning Transport Canada's civil aviation regulatory mandate.

We are quite happy that this bill has been brought forward. We want to continue to participate as much as necessary to ensure that the bill is as good as it possibly can be. I am sure the government will recognize that it was the work of parliamentarians not just in this Parliament but in the past Parliament as well and regardless of party, there should be no shame in saying that we did good work in the last Parliament.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): When the House next considers Bill C-6, there will be 10 minutes left in the hon. member's time.

●(1430)

[*Translation*]

It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until 11 a.m. Monday, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

HON. BILL BLAIKIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ROYAL GALIPEAU

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

HON. ROB NICHOLSON

MR. JOE PRESTON

HON. KAREN REDMAN

HON. LUCIENNE ROBILLARD

HON. CAROL SKELTON

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Thirty Nine Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Calgary—Nose Hill.....	Alberta	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga.....	Ontario	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Ontario	Lib.
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of the Environment.....	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary (for the Canadian Wheat Board) to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	BQ
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard.....	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry.....	Yukon.....	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, President of the Treasury Board.....	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	CPC
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	Québec	BQ
Barnes, Hon. Sue.....	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Batters, Dave	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Beaumier, Colleen.....	Brampton West.....	Ontario	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Lib.
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's.....	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon.....	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of Industry	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake.....	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Black, Dawn.....	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooog, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister for Sport	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	BQ
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Fontana, Hon. Joe	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal, Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	BQ
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la- Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Graham, Hon. Bill, Leader of the Opposition	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Helena, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	Québec	CPC
Hawn, Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Manitoba	Lib.
Kenney, Jason, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lapierre, Hon. Jean	Outremont	Québec	Lib.
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	BQ
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloney, John	Welland	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merasty, Gary	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Defence	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	BQ
Owen, Hon. Stephen	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Christian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Peterson, Hon. Jim	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Skelton, Hon. Carol, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin— Kapuskasing	Ontario	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	Lib.
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	BQ
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	New Brunswick	Lib.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Thirty Nine Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of the Environment	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Jason, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Medicine Hat	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	Lib.
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Owen, Hon. Stephen	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	NDP
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	Lib.

MANITOBA (14)

Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Bruinooge, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	Lib.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)

Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	CPC
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	CPC
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	CPC
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Lib.

NUNAVUT (1)

Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Lib.
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ONTARIO (106)

Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale	Lib.
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, President of the Treasury Board	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Barnes, Hon. Sue	London West	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	CPC
Chamberlain, Hon. Brenda	Guelph	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister for Sport	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Lib.
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Fontana, Hon. Joe	London North Centre	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal, Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	CPC
Graham, Hon. Bill, Leader of the Opposition	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Helena, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Defence	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women	Durham	CPC
Peterson, Hon. Jim	Willowdale	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Lib.
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	CPC
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.
QUÉBEC (75)		
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of Industry	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska— Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	BQ
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Kotto, Maka	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lapierre, Hon. Jean	Outremont	Lib.
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Christian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary (for the Canadian Wheat Board) to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Batters, Dave	Palliser	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukowski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Merasty, Gary	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Lib.
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Skelton, Hon. Carol, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of May 5, 2006 — 1st Session, 39th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Maurice Vellacott	Vice-Chairs:	Jean Crowder Nancy Karetak-Lindell	
Harold Albrecht Rod Bruinooge Marc Lemay	Yvon Lévesque Inky Mark	Colin Mayes Gary Merasty	Anita Neville Todd Russell	(12)

Associate Members

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Diane Ablonczy	Barry Devolin	Ed Komarnicki	Lee Richardson
Mike Allen	Norman Doyle	Daryl Kramp	Gerry Ritz
Dean Allison	Rick Dykstra	Mike Lake	Lucienne Robillard
Rob Anders	Ken Epp	Guy Lauzon	Gary Schellenberger
David Anderson	Ed Fast	Pierre Lemieux	Bev Shipley
Charlie Angus	Brian Fitzpatrick	Tom Lukiwski	Joy Smith
Gérard Asselin	Steven Fletcher	James Lunney	Kevin Sorenson
Larry Bagnell	Cheryl Gallant	Dave MacKenzie	Lloyd St. Amand
Dave Batters	Yvon Godin	Fabian Manning	Brent St. Denis
Leon Benoit	Peter Goldring	Pat Martin	Bruce Stanton
Dennis Bevington	Gary Goodyear	Tony Martin	Brian Storseth
James Bezan	Jacques Gourde	Irene Mathysen	David Sweet
Steven Blaney	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Myron Thompson
Sylvie Boucher	Helena Guergis	Rob Merrifield	David Tilson
Garry Breitzkreuz	Art Hanger	Larry Miller	Bradley Trost
Gord Brown	Richard Harris	Bob Mills	Garth Turner
Patrick Brown	Luc Harvey	James Moore	Merv Tweed
Paule Brunelle	Laurie Hawn	Rob Moore	Roger Valley
Blaine Calkins	Russ Hiebert	Rick Norlock	Dave Van Kesteren
Ron Cannan	Jay Hill	Deepak Obhrai	Peter Van Loan
Colin Carrie	Betty Hinton	Brian Pallister	Mike Wallace
Bill Casey	Rahim Jaffer	Christian Paradis	Mark Warawa
Rick Casson	Brian Jean	Daniel Petit	Chris Warkentin
Nathan Cullen	Randy Kamp	Pierre Poilievre	Jeff Watson
John Cummins	Gerald Keddy	Joe Preston	John Williams
Patricia Davidson	Tina Keeper	James Rajotte	Lynne Yelich

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Tom Wappel

Vice-Chairs:
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Sukh Dhaliwal
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Dave Van KesterenMike Wallace
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David Sweet
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Garth Turner
Merv Tweed
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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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Mauril Bélanger

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Ruby Dhalla
Ed Fast

Maka Kotto
Luc Malo
Francis Scarpaleggia

Gary Schellenberger
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John Williams
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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Chair: Norman Doyle

Vice-Chairs: Meili Faille

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Johanne Deschamps
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Nina Grewal

Albina Guarnieri
Rahim Jaffer

Jim Karygiannis
Ed Komarnicki

Bill Siksay
Blair Wilson

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John Williams
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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair:

Bob Mills

Vice-Chairs:

 Bernard Bigras
 Mario Silva

 Steven Blaney
 Scott Brison
 Nathan Cullen

 Dean Del Mastro
 John Godfrey

 Marcel Lussier
 Pablo Rodriguez

 Mark Warawa
 Jeff Watson

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 Mike Wallace
 Chris Warkentin
 John Williams
 Lynne Yelich

FINANCE**Chair:**

Brian Pallister

Vice-Chairs:Yvan Loubier
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Rick Dykstra
Luc HarveyJohn McCallum
John McKayMichael Savage
Thierry St-CyrGarth Turner
Judy Wasylcia-Leis

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Mr. Jacques Gourde	to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board
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Mr. Peter Van Loan	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
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Mr. Ted Menzies	to the Minister of International Cooperation
Mr. James Moore	to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics

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