



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, February 1, 2007**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, February 1, 2007

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)  
[English]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in relation to Bill C-293, An Act respecting the provision of development assistance abroad. In accordance with its orders of reference of Wednesday, September 30, 2006, the committee has considered Bill C-293, and agreed on Wednesday, December 13, 2006 to report it with amendments.

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Health. The committee has studied Bill S-2, An Act to amend the Hazardous Materials Information Review Act, and has agreed to report it to the House without amendment.

#### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 29th report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 29th report later this day.

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### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-397, An Act to change the name of the electoral district of Victoria.

She said: Mr. Speaker, Victoria is a wonderful riding with many distinct neighbourhoods, but at the suggestion of constituents, I am proposing this name change. First of all, because of the many neighbourhoods in our community, this name change would reflect

the fact that Oak Bay is a full municipality within the riding. It is a simple measure that acknowledges the contribution that this part of my riding has made to the unique quality and character of Victoria.

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

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### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 29th report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs concerning the membership of committees of the House presented to the House earlier this day, be now concurred in.

(Motion agreed to)

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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.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House:

- (a) there is overwhelming scientific evidence that the world's climate is changing as a result of human activity and this poses the most serious ecological threat of our time;
- (b) the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety;
- (c) the government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments;
- (d) the government must establish a 'cap and trade' emission reductions system and regulations for industry; and
- (e) the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action.

*Business of Supply*

He said: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, an international panel of some 2,000 leading scientists, is due to release its latest report. According to yesterday's *Globe and Mail*, that report will conclude that the evidence on climate change is "unequivocal," and that human activity is the cause of that change. The report finds that due to climate change, extreme weather will increase; sea levels will rise; and the effects will be felt for more than a thousand years.

The magnitude of this challenge is clear, economically as well as ecologically. The recent Stern report, prepared for the UK government by Sir Nicholas Stern, highlighted the risk of climate change to the global economy.

The Stern report found that if countries do not address this challenge, the cost of climate change could be equivalent to the cost of both world wars and the Great Depression.

According to the report, climate change could shrink the global economy by a staggering 20%—yes, 20%. Canada must not shrink from this challenge. In a country so blessed with immense natural resources, technological ability, and creative ingenuity, we have the ability to be a leader. Moreover, as one of the wealthiest countries on the planet, we have the responsibility to be a leader.

• (1010)

[*English*]

The environmental achievements of the Liberal government extend well beyond climate change. The previous Liberal government took tangible, methodical and concrete steps to fight climate change.

Over the constant opposition of the Conservatives, the Liberal government renewed the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, passed the Species at Risk Act, amended the Migratory Birds Convention Act, established new national parks, ratified the Kyoto protocol, and played a prominent environment role on the global stage.

In 1998 the Liberal government signed Kyoto.

In 2000 we invested \$625 million on climate change research and emission reduction.

In 2003 we announced \$2 billion in new climate change funding.

These steps laid the foundation for Canada's fight against climate change.

In February 2005 the Liberal government passed a budget that Elizabeth May called the greenest in Canadian history.

The Clean Air Renewable Energy Coalition said, "This budget is so green it should have been announced on St. Patrick's Day".

In April 2005 the Liberal government introduced project green, a comprehensive plan to fight climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Sierra Club of Canada called project green, "probably the most innovative approach anywhere in the world for a government to actually reduce emissions".

The National Environmental Trust said that, "With this first good step, Canada is proving that we can protect our environment and grow our economy".

In November 2005 the Liberal government added greenhouse gases to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This crucial step allows the federal government to regulate the chemicals that cause climate change right now.

The Canadian Environmental Law Association applauded this move, saying, "We are united in our support for the use of CEPA by the federal government as an appropriate regulatory authority".

[*Translation*]

In November 2005, in Montreal, the Liberal government used the United Nations Conference on Climate Change for what it was meant for—to fight climate change, not deny it, as the Conservatives did one year later.

Steven Guilbault of Greenpeace Quebec called the conference "a turning point" in the fight against climate change. The conference was praised internationally.

Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner for the Environment, added that not only was the Kyoto protocol adopted and successfully improved, but more importantly, it was also given a future.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister came to office, he found a government and a country poised and ready to take on the challenge of climate change.

Thanks to the previous Liberal government, he had the legal framework to take action. He had a full set of programs already in operation and, by sheer coincidence, his environment minister had the chairmanship of the UN conference on climate change, the perfect vehicle for Canada to play a positive role in the world.

In short, the Prime Minister had the perfect opportunity to continue the work of the previous Liberal government on climate change.

Canadians know what happened instead. Under this Prime Minister Canada went from being a leader on climate change to a laggard, a lead weight pulling down our national policies and the Kyoto process at the same time.

At home the Prime Minister set about dismantling Canada's programs to fight climate change as deliberately and methodically as the previous government had implemented those programs.

He cut \$395 million from our EnerGuide for houses retrofit incentive.

He cut \$500 million from the EnerGuide low income households program.

He cut \$250 million from our partnership fund for climate change projects with provinces and municipalities.

*Business of Supply*

He cut \$593 million from our wind power production incentive and renewable power production incentive.

He cut \$584.5 million from environmental programs at Natural Resources Canada.

He cut \$120 million from our one tonne challenge.

He cut \$1 billion from our climate fund to reduce greenhouse gases and he cut \$2 billion of general climate change program funding.

In total, the Prime Minister cut \$5.6 billion from climate change investments.

The significance of these cuts goes well beyond a dollar figure. Taken together, these programs represented the superstructure of Canada's plan to fight climate change. The evisceration of these programs can only be the act of a climate change denier.

•(1015)

[Translation]

Not only did the Prime Minister cut funding for these programs; he set about disarming Canada of the tools and expertise needed to address climate change.

The Prime Minister eliminated the position of Ambassador for the Environment—a position created by a former Conservative government. He dismantled two key units within Environment Canada, the climate change group and the offsets group. He eliminated the government website, ClimateChange.gc.ca, which had helped inform Canadians about climate change and what they could do about it.

Finally, not content simply to cut Project Green, the Prime Minister removed every trace of that plan from the websites of both Natural Resources Canada and Environment Canada. Project Green has even been removed from the archives of those two websites.

And then, adding insult to injury, this Prime Minister encouraged all the other climate-change deniers across the planet to do the same, by actively and deliberately undermining the Kyoto protocol—the only international process that is significantly tackling global warming.

Last November, exactly one year after Canada successfully hosted the world in Montreal, and secured the future of the Kyoto protocol, the Prime Minister celebrated the anniversary of that achievement in a most peculiar way.

He sent his environment minister to Nairobi to give the world a very clear message: when it comes to Kyoto, count Canada out. When it comes to honouring our commitments, count Canada out. When it comes to playing a leadership role on the environment, and in the world, count Canada out.

[English]

The Prime Minister's long pattern of climate change denial should come as no surprise to anyone who followed his positions before he took office.

In 2002 the Prime Minister, who was then leader of the Canadian Alliance, wrote a letter to supporters. That letter was intended to

raise money, and to “block the job-killing, economy-destroying Kyoto accord”.

In this letter the Prime Minister makes his views on Kyoto perfectly clear. He wrote, “Kyoto is essentially a socialist scheme to suck money out of wealth-producing nations”.

On the science of climate change, the Prime Minister even went so far as to question the role of carbon dioxide as a contributing factor, insisting that carbon dioxide was essential to life. Water is also essential to life, but that information is no relief to a man who is drowning.

•(1020)

[Translation]

The Prime Minister's pattern of denying climate change did not end with the Canadian Alliance. In May 2004, as leader of the new Conservative Party of Canada, the Prime Minister subjected Canadians to a lesson in Climate-Change Denial 101, when he said that the climate is always changing. In 2005, when the Liberal government listed greenhouse gases as toxic substances under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act—a crucial step toward fighting climate change—the Prime Minister said it was “clearly not in the national interest”.

Not in whose national interest, Mr. Speaker? The interest of those who deny climate change, who refute the science, cancel the programs, bury the reports, and abandon Kyoto.

Mr. Speaker, that's not the national interest; that's the Prime Minister's interest as a climate-change denier, and Canadians have made it clear that they will have none of it.

[English]

What a difference a few polls can make. In the past two weeks, the Prime Minister has engaged in the desperate game catch-up by partly reinstating some of the Liberal climate change programs he cut a year ago and only a pale imitation of these programs. He hopes to hide his beliefs on climate change. After a year of wasted time, these proposals now amount to baby steps on the road to a marathon.

Canadians are not fooled. They know that the Prime Minister has no commitment to fight climate change. His only motive is to prepare his party for an election.

The 2005 Liberal climate change plan was designed as a critical start for Canada along the road to a sustainable economy, one built on energy efficiency, resource productivity and conservation. This plan was designed to be revised and improved every year.

In the time that has past since that plan was introduced, time that the Prime Minister has wasted, the work that was begun has been frozen.

*Business of Supply*

Today, I call on the Prime Minister, as I have since becoming Liberal leader, to live up to his government's responsibility on climate change, in particular, by implementing a cap-and-trade system of greenhouse gas emissions. Such a system was announced by the previous Liberal government in 2005 and its implementation cannot wait.

With the advances in technology, with the carbon market in place in Europe and ready to go in some U.S. states and with the time that has been wasted under the Conservative government, there is an opportunity and a necessity to go further than what was proposed in 2005 with more demanding targets. This is achievable in a way that strengthens our economy.

Just as corporate polluters cannot simply dump their garbage on our streets but instead must pay to manage their waste properly, we can no longer use our atmosphere as a free garbage dump.

We need a cap-and-trade system for industry that creates economic as well as environmental and health advantages in reducing emissions. We need to move to put a market price on emissions and we need to start transforming our economic markets to reflect the green reality. We need to revive Canada's leadership role and the economic opportunity that comes with it.

It is the job of the government to use every measure at our disposal: incentives, regulations, environmental tax reform, partnership with our governments and reaching out to Canadians. We need strong, fair rules requiring reduction of emissions in the short, medium and long term. The elements of the solution are clear.

I call upon the Prime Minister to implement a comprehensive plan to honour Canada's Kyoto commitment, including a cap-and-trade carbon market, with more demanding targets than that proposed in 2005.

I call upon the Prime Minister to implement environmental tax reform and fiscal measures to reward good environmental behaviour and provide disincentives for behaviour that harms the environment and human health all in a way that enables every region and province to succeed in the sustainable economy.

I call upon the Prime Minister to better support greener energy production and other forms of renewable energy starting with a minimum target of 12,000 megawatts of wind power production.

I call upon the Prime Minister to better support the research, development and commercialization of resource efficient and environment friendly technologies.

Most important, I call upon the Prime Minister to do all this in a way that strengthens the Canadian economy, providing better jobs and a higher standard of living for our children.

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

In conclusion, climate change is the single most pressing ecological threat facing our country and our planet. Beyond the walls of this chamber, Canadians are counting on us to get this right. Beyond our borders, people around the globe once looked to Canada as a leader, and I would like them to be able to do so once more.

It is clear that the Prime Minister has neither the courage nor the conviction to meet our Kyoto obligations. It is clear that we need a new government to do so.

In the meantime, I call on the Prime Minister to implement the initiatives I have called for today. This country cannot wait, this planet cannot wait, and this Leader of the Opposition will not wait.

[*English*]

The motion reads:

That, in the opinion of this House:

(a) there is overwhelming scientific evidence that the world's climate is changing as a result of human activity and this poses the most serious ecological threat of our time;

(b) the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety;

(c) the government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments;

(d) the government must establish a 'cap and trade' emission reductions system and regulations for industry; and

(e) the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action.

**Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was interesting when I read the motion this morning and interesting when I heard the hon. member opposite read the motion asking that the government come up with some kind of a plan because the government already has done that. What is interesting about the motion is that the hon. member is admitting that he did not even have a plan.

However, I did hear the member opposite say something about preparing for an election. That came from the member who said that he would not vote for the budget, a budget he has not even seen. Clearly, the member is preparing for an election.

As far as being ready, I have the honour to tell the House that not just myself but a number of colleagues on this side of the House have been working on this plan since before the last election. We were involved in developing a plan a long time ago and we are rolling out that plan as we speak. However, I guess the polls are suggesting that this is the thing to do today. I noticed that a number of the members opposite are wearing green ribbons which is their attempt at convincing the public that we are green. Maybe those green ribbons are actually living leaves because that would be a step toward cleaning the environment.

The member opposite, who just presented the motion, conceded that future Liberal governments would be unable to meet their Kyoto commitment of reducing greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels. That was said by the member opposite on July 1, 2006. Frankly, the member had 10 years to do this. This morning the member said that in 2008 "I will be part of Kyoto but I will say to the world I don't think I will make it". He has been saying that for 10 years and he is still saying it, which is incredible.

I want to ask the member a very simple question, although I know I will not get the answer. Could the member tell us what Kyoto will do to reduce the number of smog days for the folks in Ontario that went from four in 1993 to some forty-seven in 2004?

*Business of Supply*

•(1030)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Speaker, I will forgive the hon. member. If he did not know there was a Liberal plan I guess it was because his government made the plan disappear from everywhere, even in the archives. The plan exists. I do not have the right to show it but I will give the member a copy and I invite him to read it.

In this plan we were ready to honour our Kyoto commitment. The plan was supposed to be improved every year. We have already asked to have it improved. One of the ideas to improve it is to come up with tougher targets for large oil emitters. We urge the Prime Minister to do so. He may do it right away without playing this game with the NDP with the so-called clean air act. He can use the Canada Environmental Protection Act right now.

Concerning my declaration this summer, I will repeat again that if we wait for a year of inaction by the Conservative government, in 2008 it will be very difficult to be on time for 2012.

I also forgive the member for not understanding the difference between smog and greenhouse gas emissions. It has been said that we are talking about combustion. When we tackle greenhouse gas emissions it is not the same thing as smog. The countries that are doing a lot on greenhouse gas emissions are also doing a lot about smog. We do not need to choose. We need to do both.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my honourable colleague, the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, a question about greenhouse gas emissions resulting from oil sands development.

Last year, during the elections, there was already a movement to increase oil sands operations fivefold. It went without saying that greenhouse gas emissions would also increase fivefold.

I would like to know the current position of the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville on this development, one year after being involved. He knew about it. What is his position at this time? What position should the government take to limit greenhouse gas emissions resulting from oil sands development?

•(1035)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Speaker, it is an immense challenge for Canada, but it is also an extraordinary opportunity that we must not let go by. If we succeed in making Fort McMurray sustainable, if we succeed in ensuring that future projects are close to “zero emissions”, then this technology and expertise that we will have developed could be exported all around the world.

This is an extraordinary opportunity that Alberta and the rest of Canada must seize. To do so, we must adopt regulations, establish a carbon exchange and review tax laws. All these things we are proposing need to be done right away, in partnership with industry and the provinces and with determination and courage. And to do this we need a new government.

[*English*]

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I feel ashamed sitting here in the House of Commons watching the two old parties playing a game of Ping-Pong over an issue that is crucial to Canada's

future. It is like a pantomime between Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton.

The Liberals had many years after the CEPA was amended to act and did not act. Obviously Canadians and members on this side of the House support the need for action now. We believe the government can and should act now. There is a need for a law that requires the government to act, not just a law, like CEPA, that allows the government to act as we saw by Liberal inaction in the past years in the House.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion:** Mr. Speaker, I respectfully invite my hon. colleague to look with a bit more severity at the behaviour of her leader. At the Montreal conference on climate change, when the world was in Montreal, he was managing an election and was hammered by all the environmental groups for doing so. Not only that, he came to the conference and said that the conference would fail Canada, that it had no credibility whatsoever. It was an attempt at sabotage for partisan reasons, but the conference was a great success.

Canada was ready to be a leader and to help the world. We had the plan to go ahead. Everything was there, but because the Conservative government came in there was paralysis for a year. The NDP leader was in agreement with that, and when the Conservatives came out with their so-called clean air act, he denounced it and said we needed to act now under CEPA. That is what he said. What happened after that? As usual, as in 2005, the NDP is putting its own interests before the interests of Canada and the interests of the planet.

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in the debate on the opposition day motion by the Leader of the Opposition on the important issue of the environment.

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:** Is Wajid in Paris?

**Hon. John Baird:** I should indicate at the outset that I will be splitting my time with the parliamentary secretary for the environment, the hon. member for Langley.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** A made in Canada solution?

**Hon. John Baird:** At the outset, I would like to beg the indulgence of the House, and on behalf of my constituents, agree with your comments yesterday, Mr. Speaker—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. There is an awful lot of yelling going on. While the leader of the official opposition spoke, there was silence in the House. He was listened to. I would ask that the same courtesy be extended to all members.

*Business of Supply*

**Hon. John Baird:** Mr. Speaker, at the outset I would like to identify myself with your remarks on the passing of the Hon. Lloyd Francis, the former member of Parliament for Carleton and Ottawa West, a riding I am privileged to represent. On behalf of my constituents, I wish to acknowledge his great service not only to our community but to Canada. Mr. Francis was a great man and was a great adviser to me on a number of key issues over the last year.

I was most fortunate to have met Mr. Francis and to have known him. I want to pass on my party's condolences to his wife and family. I attended the memorial service for Mr. Francis. It was not really a funeral but a celebration of not just one life well lived, but of probably about 12 lives well lived. He was a great man. I want to acknowledge his great contribution.

Let me begin my remarks today by saying that I believe that climate change is a real and serious issue facing the world today. It is undoubtedly the biggest environmental threat we are facing.

Let me also say that this government recognizes that the Kyoto protocol is all about a global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions around the world and, most important, for us right here in Canada.

While we share the disappointment of many Canadians and people from around the world that the former government did not meet its obligations or accept its responsibilities, let me indicate that Canada's new government will take real action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the same time as we make our air more breathable.

That brings me to my next point. I am glad the Liberal Party brought forward this motion today because it is an opportunity to remind the Liberals of their shameful record of 13 years of inaction on the environment.

To make things worse, the track record of the Leader of the Opposition is very regrettable on environmental issues. People do not have to go far to read about his party's record. Let us look at the quotes from the 2006 report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development. It states:

In 2005, the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Environment...found that actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions were ad hoc, lacked an overall strategy, and did not have an accountability framework. Environment Canada, in a risk assessment..., found that there was no central ownership of the initiative, leading to non-integrated policies.

That is from Chapter 1, page 10. The report goes on, stating that:

Canada is not on track to meet its obligations to reduce emissions...The [Liberal] government's own 2004 data revealed that our greenhouse gas emissions were almost 27 percent above 1990 levels and were rising, not declining.

The levels were going up, not declining. That statement is from the overview chapter, page 8.

Clearly, this is a sad track record of failure on the environment from the party opposite. To have the Liberal Party now lecture the House on environmental policy is like a Liberal trying to lecture other members on ethics. That party has no credibility.

Then there are the confusing statements from the Leader of the Opposition himself. On September 17 he told the globeandmail.com, "We don't know if the greenhouse gas emissions went up when I was Minister of the Environment...". Less than three months later he told the *Globe and Mail*, "Greenhouse gases are going up, that's for

sure". These are not my quotes. These are quotes from the leader of the Liberal Party.

I must say that I am in complete agreement with the Leader of the Opposition on one point. He told Canadian Press on January 17, about action on the environment, that "...I would agree with you that it wasn't enough".

This lack of action on the environment is something I like to call the Dion gap. It is a gap between what we were supposed to be doing to reduce greenhouse gases and where we actually are.

The Liberal Party is a party of power, a party dedicated to staying in power and nothing else. That is why the Liberals have no credibility when it comes to the important issue of the environment.

Fortunately, there is a new government in Canada. We are the first government in the history of Canada to say that we are going to start regulating industries, not only for greenhouse gas emissions, but also on the important issue of air quality in Canada.

I know that the Leader of the Opposition has had some problems in the Liberal Party with the efforts that his party made in this area. The Liberals had an opportunity to act. They failed to do so. In the dying hours of a 13 year regime, a regime that had been found guilty of corruption, money laundering and stealing money from taxpayers, so guilty that the Liberals had to return more than a million dollars in cash to the public purse, to say after 13 years that in those final hours they were finally ready to act is simply not credible.

● (1040)

It is very interesting to read the text of the motion by the Leader of the Opposition. He says that regulations through CEPA are the only way to go. The Liberals did not go there in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 or 2005. They had the chance to act and they did not.

Is that not just like the Liberal Party of Canada, a party that does not like transparency or accountability, a party that prefers to work in the shadows? That party would prefer that cabinet, behind closed doors, make these decisions rather than have important legislation on the statute books of this country. That is exactly why we brought forward some of the toughest legislation ever tabled in the House on greenhouse gases and air pollution, Bill C-30, Canada's clean air act.

What has been the response of the Liberal Party? For a long time, Mr. Dithers, the member for LaSalle—Émard, was running the show over there with the Liberal Party, and now he has been replaced by Mr. Delay, the Leader of the Opposition, with his sidekick, the member for Ottawa South. They have no interest in getting things done for Canadians. In fact, they want long, drawn-out hearings on Bill C-30, months of hearings, in fact. They want to study and have meetings, events and conferences rather than get to work.

While Conservatives voted for getting down to work and a quick session, Liberals voted for time extensions. Why? Perhaps the quote from the Liberal environment critic, the member for Ottawa South, says it best. He asked the committee studying Bill C-30, "What's the rush here?" Let me tell members what the rush is: greenhouse gas emissions are a priority. It is important that we tackle this problem as soon as possible, not as soon as possible plus 10 years.



*Business of Supply*

Canadians sent us here to work together with all parties to get the job done on the environment. Some parties in the House, I think, get it more than others. Others clearly have not got it. The Liberal Party is the party that does not get it.

I think this motion is an attempt to derail the toughest regulation of greenhouse gases in Canadian history, and we are leaving behind the important issue of air quality, especially in regard to indoor pollutants. I think it is important that we do not lose any time and that we get to work on Bill C-30. Commensurate with that study in committee, the Department of the Environment and the federal government are actively working on the numbers and targets and the architecture and design to make this system work.

Tomorrow, some of the world's leading scientists will gather in Paris to outline what will be some very significant additional scientific research, something that will only encourage us to do more, not just around the world but hopefully here in Canada.

I look forward to receiving the contents of that report. From what I have read so far in reports, we hope to learn from world renowned scientists, and regrettably, the news is not good. Global warming and climate change are serious issues. Not only do they face us here at home, but they must bring the entire world community together.

For far too long, Canada has not accepted our responsibility when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This government intends to do something about it. Clearly, the Kyoto protocol is a 15 year marathon to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. When it was signed in 1997, when the starter's pistol went off in that race, the Liberal Government of Canada began to run in the opposite direction. That is shameful.

As a result, we have a lot of catching up to do. It will not be easy. It will take focus. It will take Canadians working together. It will take members of Parliament from all political parties working together.

But I believe the challenges of global warming and climate change are the challenges of the 21st century and we must respond. We must respond by also addressing clean air. We can do both at the same time. Let us respond without sending \$5 billion of taxpayers money to Russia, to China and to India, which will not help the quality of air in Canada at all.

This government will act. The government will deliver real results on the environment for Canadians. We owe it to ourselves and we owe it to the next generation.

• (1045)

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to participate in this debate. I want to commend our leader of the official opposition for an extraordinary speech in which he has laid bare for Canadians the actual conduct of the new minority government. I want to pick up on a few of the points made by the Minister of the Environment.

Chiefly, I would like to go to the theme of misrepresentation. The minister has misrepresented yet again, as Ronald Reagan used to say, "here he goes again". There they go again. The Conservatives misrepresentation game is something that Canadians are catching onto, and I would recommend that the Minister of the Environment

get a new writer. For example, let me quote from the commissioner of the environment's report of 2006. She writes:

Even if the measures contained in the previous government's 2005 plan had been fully implemented, it is difficult to say whether the projected emission reductions would have been enough to meet our Kyoto obligations.

The minister should give the full quote and not misrepresent the facts to Canadians.

He speaks about regulating through CEPA. He talks about us, as a government, not having regulated through CEPA. Is the minister aware of the fact that the Kyoto protocol became international law in 2005?

Another question for the minister is this. Is it true the minister is flying to France tomorrow to find his made in Canada solution?

I have another question for the minister. The Prime Minister was asked 18 times in a row yesterday if he was misleading Canadians over the past 10 years, or was he misleading Canadians on his new-found position on climate change.

• (1050)

**Hon. John Baird:** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite asks if I was aware that Kyoto only officially came into effect in 2005. I think it was 2004 when Russia signed on. In 1997 we said this was a huge global problem. Why would we wait from 1997 until the Russian parliament actually passed the bill? The Liberal government did absolutely nothing when it was in power.

The member for Ottawa South heckled me yesterday during question period and said I was quoting him inaccurately. He rose on a point of order afterward and demanded that I give the sources. I gave all the sources and, in fact, everything I said yesterday he actually said. We have to look at the credibility.

I will remind Liberal members of what the member for Ottawa South said in the *National Post*, on March 23, 2006. He said, "The Liberal Party was involved in a medium-sized car crash". The member said that he never said it, but we have come up with the proof. He also said, "when people see the costs of Kyoto, they are going to scream". He said that he did not say it, but he said it on January 1, 2003, in the work of *Canadian Speeches*, volume 16, issue 6.

Canada has a huge job—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry, but we have a lot of other people trying to get on, so the two members from Ottawa might want to continue this in some other venue.

The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker. I am sure there are some fine coffee shops in the Ottawa district that the two hon. members can continue their rather vigorous debate.

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However, at issue is the notion of climate change and what our country needs to do about it. There will be no dispute from this corner of the House as to the ineffectiveness of the previous Liberal governments in tackling this issue. The numbers clearly speak for themselves. Promises continued, but emissions went up.

Despite the opinion of many people in the country that things could not get worse with respect to the environment and the federal government, when the Conservatives came into power things did get worse. There was no notion of a plan, no notion of concrete action and no urgency to it.

My question is very specific for the minister. At the same time we are talking about implications, he will be in Paris a little later this week to talk about the serious economic and environmental implications of dangerous climate change. At the same time, the government is refusing, as the previous government did, to put a halt to the tax breaks offered to oil sands companies operating in northern Alberta. It continues the plans for an expansion of those projects, despite the request for a moratorium from the people of Fort McMurray, their elected officials and also the first nations people of that area.

If there is a seriousness about this issue, will he commit today to join in the call to halt progress on the rapid expansion of this until we can get control of the issue and stop driving emissions up in the country? I would urge members of the official opposition join in this call as well.

**Hon. John Baird:** Mr. Speaker, it is tremendously important that we begin to tackle this problem and that voluntary compliance is not enough. We actually have to regulate. Those regulations have to be enforceable.

The Liberal private member's bill on greenhouse gases has no effect. If one does not comply, there is no compliance mechanism. There is no problem or consequence. It is like a speeding ticket with no fine, or one does a crime and there is no time. That is why we think it is important in Bill C-30 that there are compliance mechanisms to force industry to follow the regulations to be presented.

We have said very clearly that the reductions we will propose for the industrial targets will be greater than those promised but never delivered by the Leader of the Opposition when he was in power. We have also said that on air pollution issues like SO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and VO<sub>x</sub>, particulate matter, indoor air quality, the quality of the air we breathe and the huge effect it has on asthmatic children have to be among the best in any jurisdiction in North America and in fact the world. Those are the two big commitments we are making.

• (1055)

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment and to participate in this debate.

I begin by thanking the environment minister for the hard work and the great achievements he has made. The government, under the leadership of our Prime Minister and our minister, is making headway. It is a shock to the former Liberal government that

progress can be made on this file. It is ironic and hypocritical that the Liberals present this motion to us today.

The motion presented by the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier calls into question the government's commitment to the environment. That contention is just plain wrong. The government is committed to delivering real solutions to protect the health of Canadians and the environment. The government is about action and real change.

Canada's new government has said before that it accepts the science of climate change. We understand that it is real and we know that it is here. That is why we are taking real action to preserve our environment and to protect the health of every Canadian.

Canadians demand leadership from the federal government, and that is precisely what they are getting now.

We understand that to make real progress on the environment, we need real cooperation on all fronts, between all parties and all stakeholders. If the member opposite really cared about the environment the way he says he does, he would be looking to cooperate. Instead, we are mired in the minutiae when we should be pushing the agenda forward, making a real difference for Canadians.

The motion brought forward today says, "the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action" Canadians covet on the environment. I can assure members it simply does not do enough.

The fact is that Bill C-30, Canada's clean air act, is a necessary addition to CEPA. It would set in motion Canada's first comprehensive, integrated approach to tackle air pollution and greenhouse gases. In doing so, it would deliver better air quality for Canadians and it would take substantial aim at the issue of climate change.

Our proposed clean air act would create a new clean air part in CEPA that would provide a tailor-made approach to enable integrated regulatory approaches for the reduction of indoor and outdoor air pollutants as well as reduce greenhouse gases.

The proposed amendments to CEPA will require the ministers of environment and health to establish national air quality standards and to monitor and report annually on the status and effectiveness of the actions taken by all governments in Canada to improve air quality.

Finally, proposed amendments to CEPA will also strengthen the government's ability to enter into equivalency agreements with the provinces and their territories. This will prevent regulatory duplication by more clearly allowing for recognition of provincial permitting and licensing regimes for industrial facilities as equivalent, in effect, to federal regulations so long as they meet the same environmental objectives.

The hon. member's motion states, "our government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety". Had the previous government not left us in such a precarious position, perhaps we would have been able to do that by the 2012 deadline.

The debate is not on the merits of Kyoto; it is on the time required to achieve the objectives. The government must deal with the fact that we have lost 10 years due to Liberal inaction.

When Canada's new government took office a year ago, it quickly became apparent that our Kyoto commitments would be impossible to meet. Because of the previous government's inaction, today Canada stands at 35% above the Kyoto target, with only five years remaining to meet the imposed deadline.

Some critics, including the member opposite, have said that we should simply push harder and make our mission to meet the 2012 reduction targets, no matter what the cost. They are wrong.

● (1100)

Yes, we must act to put Canada on the path to achieving sustainable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, but in reality, years of inaction between 1997 and 2006 have left Canada in no position to do so.

Canadians can be certain, however, that this government is committed to reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, but we intend to do so prudently while promoting sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

Canada's new government knows that Canadians are concerned about poor air quality so we have made it a priority to clean the air that Canadians breathe. By introducing Bill C-30 we have put forward a number of tools that will help Canada address its air quality by reducing greenhouse gas and smog emissions simultaneously.

Soon we will announce aggressive short term targets for industrial greenhouse gas emissions with sector by sector regulations, all coming into effect between 2010 and 2015. This is the first time that Canada has regulated reductions in both air pollution and greenhouse gases. Internationally, we are the first country to regulate all sectors in an integrated and cohesive manner.

Using existing authorities, we will regulate emissions from all major industrial sources: electricity generation, smelters, iron and steel, cement, forest products, chemical production, and oil and gas.

By giving clear direction we are providing industry with the incentive and regulatory certainty it needs to invest in greener technologies and to deliver early reductions in their emissions. While we have been listening to industrial concerns, we have also made it clear that the days for soft rhetoric are over. Making progress on the environment requires hard work and tough decisions.

We realize that the best way to reduce our global emissions is to address the issue here at home. Using taxpayer money to buy credits halfway around the world is not a solution. It is barely even a band-aid. So we have taken a number of steps and we have taken a number of approaches to be a constructive player in the international efforts to address climate change. We know it can be done because we have done it before.

In 1987 the Conservative government was instrumental in pushing for the Montreal protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer. Twenty years later, with 191 nations now signed on to the treaty, atmospheric CFC concentrations have either levelled off or

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decreased considerably. The Montreal protocol is widely viewed as an example of exceptional international cooperation. Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has even called it perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date.

Our challenge has broadened since then. So too has our commitment.

That is why in addition to the proposed clean air act, we introduced a clean air regulatory agenda which supports effective regulations on both indoor and outdoor pollutants as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

Under this agenda, we are providing stronger energy efficiency standards on consumer and commercial products. We have already established new emission standards for on-road motorcycles. We are paving the way for setting mandatory fuel consumption standards on vehicles that Canadians buy. We will also regulate 5% average renewable content in gasoline and 2% average renewable content in diesel fuel and heating oil.

To help individual Canadians and communities do their part, we have already taken action by providing a tax credit to those who use public transit and by increasing the funding for public transit infrastructure.

We also announced a number of other initiatives that will help to reduce emissions at home, at work and even in our communities.

In the last two weeks alone, we invested \$230 million in the research, development and demonstration of clean energy technologies. We announced more than \$1.5 billion in funding for the ecoenergy renewable initiative to boost Canada's renewable energy supplies. We unveiled our plan to invest approximately \$300 million over four years to promote smarter energy use and to reduce the amount of harmful emissions that affect the health of Canadians. Without a doubt, action by our government on the environment has been driven by our goal to protect the health of Canadians.

We took action to help ensure that mercury switches are dealt with safely before cars are recycled and scrapped. This alone will prevent the release of as much as 10 tonnes of mercury being admitted into the atmosphere.

● (1105)

It is obvious that Canada's new government is committed to the environment by our action alone. It is clear that we are taking concrete action to address climate change. Quite frankly, by any standard of comparison we are moving quickly with action and not the hollow promises that we saw from the former government.

We have a plan, we intend to stick to it and we will achieve the plan.

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**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on some of the comments made by the parliamentary secretary in his speech and pose a couple of pointed questions in a timely fashion.

First, could the parliamentary secretary let the House and Canadians know what the status of European Union regulations is on regulating large final emitters? He claims that his government is the only government to have done so or to have projected to do so.

Second, could he tell us how much the international emissions trading system will be worth when it is fully operational under the Kyoto protocol?

Third, will the government introduce a cap and trade system or not to achieve our greenhouse gas reduction targets?

Fourth, could he help Canadians understand why his government's own officials in Environment Canada and Finance Canada recommended to the government that it not bring in a tax deductible transit pass because the economics simply were not there to justify it?

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, Bill C-30 with the notice of intent to regulate deals with many of the questions that he has asked. The hon. member sits on that committee.

We are looking forward to receiving the cooperation of all members of the opposition to move forward on Bill C-30. It is a good piece of legislation. Unfortunately, the member sits within a party which when in government had 13 years of inaction.

I have asked his party, and in particular the leader of the Liberal Party who has presented today's motion to the House, why there were 13 years of inaction. If the environment is as important as it is and as all Canadians know it is, why did the Liberals not do something for 13 years? Why are they trying to stall and obstruct this government from moving forward on the environment? With Bill C-30 the Liberal members are trying to delay, delay and delay.

We are moving forward in cooperation—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further questions and comments, the hon. member for Brome—Missisquoi.

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment which philosophy he is basing his plan on. Naturally, I would not want to ask him what his plan is because he would not even let us sneak a peek at it.

However, a plan is prepared based on a given philosophy and certain parameters. Is he preparing his plan based on polluter-pay or government-pay parameters?

The Bloc Québécois thinks it is very important to know the spirit in which the government is preparing its plan and the philosophy behind that plan.

Is it a plan that ensures that polluters will pay?

[English]

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the member for his question and in fact the participation of the Bloc in the legislative committee on Bill C-30.

The members well know that the plan is to deal with the health of Canadians and the health of the planet.

We well know that the science of climate change is certainly irrefutable. We have a very important issue globally and in Canada to deal with climate change and the health of Canadians. That is what our plan is. It is a plan of action. It is a plan to move from voluntary programs by the previous government which did not work. Ours is a plan of action; it is plan of notice of intent. We appreciate the involvement of the Bloc in the committee.

However, we need to move forward. I trust that in the spirit of cooperation we will strengthen the clean air act to deal with the issue of the health of Canadians and the health of our planet.

• (1110)

**Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are some comments on Kyoto that were made by the Liberal environment critic himself which caused some great confusion in the House. He said, "When people see the cost of Kyoto, they are going to scream". That was on January 1, 2003. In the *Globe and Mail* on January 29, 2002, he said, "If Canada does ratify Kyoto, the cost will be as much as \$40 billion a year".

He is standing in the House and voting for a motion today that he has said will cost \$40 billion a year, the cost of which, he said, will make Canadians scream. Yesterday that critic was silenced and muzzled by his own party. He was not given the opportunity to raise these questions in the House of Commons, perhaps because of his past record saying that Kyoto's cost would make people scream.

Has the member received any notice from the official opposition that that member has been relieved of his duties as the environment critic since these troubling comments have been revealed, or is he still the critic and—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. We have to give the parliamentary secretary some time to answer.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Mr. Speaker, the member to whom he referred is still sitting on the committee. We have quotes from the leader himself that it is very difficult to set priorities and if we push the responses, of course, that is not fair.

We will move forward. We are a government that has clear priorities to deal with the issue of climate change, to deal with the issue of the health of Canadians and a clean environment. We will not be sending billions of dollars out of Canada as the Liberal plan would do. Those dollars will be staying in Canada. We will build infrastructure and technology right here in Canada for the health of the Canadian environment.

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[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise on this opposition day to discuss the Kyoto protocol.

The motion introduced by the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House:

(a) there is overwhelming scientific evidence that the world's climate is changing as a result of human activity and this poses the most serious ecological threat of our time;

(b) the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety;

(c) the government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments;

(d) the government must establish a 'cap and trade' emission reductions system and regulations for industry; and

(e) the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action.

I would like to emphasize the words "is available immediately to launch the necessary action".

Tomorrow—Friday, February 2—the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was created in 1988, will release the first part of its fourth assessment report, which states that the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases has increased dramatically since the pre-industrial era, that is, since the 1750s. This increase is due primarily to human activity, including the burning of fossil fuels and changes in land use in agriculture and forestry.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change provided the scientific basis leading to the adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and, a few years later in December 1997, the Kyoto protocol.

It is clear to the Bloc Québécois that human activity produces greenhouse gases and is responsible for emissions and climate change. The Bloc Québécois also recognizes how urgent it is to take action and has never stopped pressuring the federal government—whether Liberal or Conservative—to take significant steps toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting the Kyoto protocol targets.

The Bloc Québécois has denounced the Conservative government's push to focus the debate more on air quality than on reducing greenhouse gas emissions enough to meet Canada's Kyoto targets. We therefore support the Liberal Party motion, insofar as the required, realistic plan includes the Bloc Québécois' demands, namely, full respect for the Kyoto targets, the possibility for Quebec to choose a regional approach—since Quebec already has its own plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the creation of a carbon credit exchange in Montreal and the \$328 million that Quebec needs to meet its target of a 6% reduction compared to 1990.

Indeed, the motion moved by the leader of the Liberal Party is little more than a copy of the motion presented by the Bloc Québécois and adopted on May 16, 2006, which called for an efficient and fair plan to adhere to the Kyoto protocol. That motion was adopted by the majority of the members of this House. With the motion, the Bloc Québécois was sending a clear message to the Conservative government on the eve of the climate change

conference in Bonn. The government was asked to commit to respecting the Kyoto protocol, an international agreement to which Canada is legally bound and which a vast majority of Quebecers support. In fact, 76% of Quebecers still believe that the government must make the necessary effort to reach our Kyoto targets; otherwise, it risks jeopardizing Canada's credibility on the international stage.

• (1115)

Yet the Conservative government stubbornly rejected the Kyoto protocol and lost face in front of all the countries that ratified it. This position is no surprise, coming as it does from people who deny the environmental impact of global warming and scoff at the Kyoto protocol.

In 2002, when he was leader of the Canadian Alliance, the current Prime Minister wrote, in a letter he himself signed:

Kyoto is essentially a socialist scheme to suck money out of wealth-producing nations. Implementing Kyoto will cripple the oil and gas industry, which is essential to the economies of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

The Prime Minister went even further:

Workers and consumers everywhere in Canada will lose. There are no Canadian winners under the Kyoto accord.

Not to be outdone, the Minister of Natural Resources stated on December 3, 2002:

—I will start off with a very bold statement, that Kyoto should not be ratified. It is based on uncertain science with new doubts coming to light almost daily. It is based on poor economic models which hide the serious damage that will occur to Canada's economy.

The Bloc Québécois believes that the federal government must comply with certain basic principles: honouring international commitments, making an equal effort and fully respecting Quebec's jurisdictions. On the issue of climate change, these three principles have been repeatedly undermined by Ottawa, both by the Conservative party and by the Liberal Party.

Even though the federal government ratified the Kyoto protocol on December 17, 2002 after a majority vote in the House of Commons, thereby promising to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 6% compared to 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012, Ottawa has a dismal record.

In 2004, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions were 26.5% higher than in 1990. Consequently, to reach the target of a 6% reduction compared to 1990 levels, Canada must now reduce its emissions by 200 megatonnes annually. Both the Liberals and the Conservatives are to blame for this sad state of affairs.

Quebec made different choices. Between 1990 and 2004, its greenhouse gases increased by just 6.1%, which is four times less than the Canadian average. Furthermore, Quebec is already showing leadership with its plan to combat climate change and is proposing a plan to remedy the situation.

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We have fundamental principles and these principles have been undermined by a Liberal government in the past and by the current Conservative government. When they were in power—it is all well and good for them to table a motion today—the Liberals dragged their feet instead of taking action to achieve the objectives of the Kyoto protocol. They increased the number of voluntary-based programs, which were not very successful, instead of opting for real solutions such as a territorial approach and the implementation of a carbon exchange.

Not only did they not help Canada achieve the objectives—under their government, greenhouse gas emissions increased by nearly 30%—but they hindered Quebec's ability to fully achieve the targets by refusing to give it the \$328 million needed for Quebec's green plan. In her last report, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development described the government's efforts to achieve the Kyoto protocol objectives as too few and too slow.

• (1120)

The commissioner was also very critical of the intensity approach, saying that it will not help achieve the Kyoto protocol objectives and could even increase Canadian emissions.

The Bloc Québécois is asking Ottawa for a plan to implement the Kyoto protocol that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels and a series of measures that come under federal government jurisdiction: strict vehicle greenhouse gas emission standards; incentives for buying environmental vehicles; significant support for the development of renewable energies, such as wind energy; the elimination of tax benefits for oil companies; and subsidies for agencies that contribute to achieving the Kyoto protocol objectives.

The Bloc Québécois wants to emphasize that the plan should include the creation of a carbon exchange that will compensate provinces, companies and agencies that show leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Bloc Québécois is also asking that the federal plan include—and I cannot emphasize this enough—a mechanism to allow the signing of a bilateral agreement with Quebec based on a territorial approach. This agreement should give Quebec the financial tools it needs to implement more effective measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on its territory.

We believe this is the most efficient, effective and the only truly equitable solution that takes into account the environmental efforts and choices made by Quebecers in recent years, particularly with the development of hydroelectricity. In short, the Bloc Québécois concurs with the Liberals on the objective of the motion, even though the means envisaged by the Bloc Québécois to meet Kyoto targets are different.

I would like to speak more about the territorial approach that we favour for the Kyoto protocol. The Bloc Québécois has always called for this territorial approach. Given the major differences between the economies of Quebec and the other provinces, as well as efforts already made, it is the only effective and equitable approach that will not require years of negotiations. The principle is quite simple: Quebec and the provinces may opt out of the federal plan

and adopt their own measures to achieve mandatory reductions of emissions to 6% below 1990 levels.

In order to allow Quebec and the other provinces to opt out, the territorial approach would include a system for the exchange of emission permits. The Liberals were adamant about developing a sectoral approach requiring several years of work and pegging 2010 as the reference year. We spoke out against this approach several times because it is inefficient and not fair to Quebec.

Now that the deadline is looming, the federal government must opt for the territorial approach in order to accelerate, as much as possible, efforts to reduce greenhouse gases in Canada. Yet, on two occasions, the Conservatives rejected this promising approach and, at this time, do not seem any more receptive.

We need only refer to the debates of the parliamentary committee on Bill C-288 when the Conservative Party, the government party, rejected a Bloc Québécois proposal and amendment that simply would have opened up the possibility of proceeding on a territorial basis by coming to an agreement with Quebec based on the principles of equity.

• (1125)

But obviously the Conservative government, like the Liberal government before it, refuses to adopt this fairer approach for Quebec, which would also enable Canada, let it be said, to reduce and to respect the Kyoto objectives.

We are in favour of this motion, of course, but we think some major changes are required in measures to reduce climate change. Fundamentally we believe that we should definitely ensure that the Kyoto objectives are respected; we agree. A change of approach is required, however, so that provinces, like Quebec, where a formal commitment has been made by its National Assembly and its government, to meet the Kyoto objectives, can be fully responsible for implementation of their own policies.

This is the approach actually that has enabled Europe to work towards the Kyoto protocol objectives and to comply with them. Europe made a commitment to Kyoto in 1997—and I was there—to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8%.

I was in Kyoto and I saw how organized the Europeans were. I saw them ready to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and even to present to the international community a new strategy based on a territorial approach, whereas the federal government appeared in Kyoto without having talked with the provinces and without having established formal agreements. That is unacceptable.

The government should understand that, if this approach worked in Europe, it might well work here too. Europe, as I said, undertook to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8%, but it distributed its reductions among the members of its community and among the sovereign member countries of the European Community—at the time, there were 15—based on certain parameters.

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The climate differs according to one's location, particularly in Canada. The economic structure is not the same. In Quebec, the manufacturing industry forms the base of the economy. The industrial sectors have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions by 7%, while those in the rest of Canada have increased theirs considerably.

We are not opposed to the motion. I repeat, the Bloc Québécois concurs with the Liberals on the objective of the motion and will support the motion, even though the Bloc Québécois is in favour of different ways to comply with Kyoto.

However, I would like to introduce an amendment.

I move, seconded by the member for Richmond—Arthabaska:

That the motion be amended by replacing “regulations for industry” in paragraph (d) with “, within the limits of federal constitutional jurisdictions, establish regulations for industry and allow the signing of federal-provincial agreements for the territorial application of the Kyoto protocol”.

• (1130)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The amendment is in order, but it is my duty to inform the hon. members that pursuant to Standing Order 85, an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion.

[*English*]

I would normally ask the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville if he consents to this amendment being moved but, in his absence, the House leader for his party is able to indicate whether or not there is consent. Is there consent?

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** No.

**Deputy Speaker:** There is no consent so the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

Questions and comments on the speech by the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns expressed by my friend from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie about the Liberal's poor performance. I have questions to ask, and I will use two brief examples. First, our government will invest over \$1.5 billion over 14 years in the ecoenergy renewable energy initiative. This initiative will encompass all forms of clean, renewable energy: wind, small-scale hydro, solar, biomass, geothermal and tidal. It will help us add up to 4,000 megawatts of clean electricity, enough to power a million homes and the equivalent of taking a million cars off the road.

As for the technology component of ecoenergy, it represents a targeted investment of more than \$230 million over four years, for a total investment of \$1.5 billion in energy sciences and technologies. We are working with industry and the provinces, including the Province of Quebec, to set our science and technology priorities, so that we can get the best results in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants.

There are many other initiatives, but these two alone show that the government means business. I wonder whether the Bloc Québécois will support our clean air bill.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, we have to distinguish between Bill C-30 on air quality and the measures announced by the government.

I would like the member to explain to me how the programs he announced—which are nothing more than recycled programs from the previous government—will enable Canada to reach its Kyoto protocol targets.

I have known about the programs and announcements he referred to for years. They were announced years ago by the Liberal government. This government's proposed strategy to fight climate change mimics announcements made by the previous government. I would like the member to explain to us how things that did not work under the Liberals will work under the Conservatives to help us meet our Kyoto protocol objectives.

I would rather see the member adopt a new approach. For example, he mentioned the WPPI program. He reminded us that the government is committing to allocating 1¢ per kilowatt-hour produced by wind energy, an amount similar to what the previous government promised. Why not double that financial incentive to 2¢ per kilowatt-hour produced rather than offer generous financial incentives to the Alberta oil industry? Since 1970, the federal government has invested \$70 billion in Canada's oil industry. Instead of doing that, we should take the public funds allocated to the oil industry and improve programs for Canada's renewable energy sector. That is what the government should do to meet the Kyoto protocol targets.

• (1135)

**Mr. Brian Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I was very impressed by the remarks and speech given by the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. For the first time in 40 years, we had a green Christmas in Moncton. This worries me, because it is clearly one of the effects of climate change. I am sure the hon. member knows this and that he was appalled by the parliamentary secretary's comments when he said he would not adhere to the Kyoto protocol.

I have two questions. First of all, does the member believe that the Kyoto targets should be different for Quebec and why? Second, a work plan is now in place for the committee that is studying Bill C-30 and I know the hon. member supports that plan. Can he explain the Bloc's support of that legislative committee's work plan?

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, in response to the first question, Quebec is not asking to have lower Kyoto targets. Quebec is ready and has every means at its disposal to enforce the Kyoto protocol within its borders and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 6% compared to 1990, for the 2008 and 2012 periods.

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However, what the government and the hon. member must recognize is that a coast-to-coast, Canada-wide approach will fail to make the most of every dollar invested in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Quebec businesses have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions by 7% compared to 1990, but it is the transportation sector that has a dismal record. We are proposing that Quebec maintain its target of a 6% reduction compared to 1990—and there will be a firm commitment from the Quebec government and the National Assembly—and that Quebec receive \$328 million to reach its target. Thus, Quebec could implement its own, more efficient policies.

These funds for fighting climate change would very likely not be used in the industrial sector because it is doing very well in Quebec in the fight against climate change. In contrast to the rest of Canada, these public funds would likely be invested in transportation. This territorial approach is more effective and equitable and maximizes the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for each dollar invested. This is the approach that the federal government should adopt, and in this way we will certainly be able to achieve our Kyoto protocol objectives.

In regard now to Bill C-30, I want to remind the House that the Liberals wanted to study it in committee for some three or four months and the Conservatives for a month and a half. We are going to study Bill C-30 for two months now, but during these two months, we will be taking two weeks off.

The Bloc Québécois has remained true to one principle, that of urgency and effectiveness. That is how we behaved in committee, as a responsible political party that facilitated the compromise we see today.

• (1140)

[*English*]

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for a very interesting dissertation on the nature of the ability to react to a global crisis by reducing the actions to a territorial level.

Quite clearly, in Canada we are in an integrated economy and we still are in a country together. We have certain interests that play against each other and certain interests that we have in common. However, in energy, it is very important to realize that we are an integrated system. We supply natural gas across the country. We could supply more hydro electric energy across the country as well if we had a grid, but right now we are proposing to take on a new source of fossil fuels and that would be liquefied natural gas.

In the member's province of Quebec we are looking at a terminal right now for the importation of liquefied natural gas from Russia. Does this fit with the member's idea of how the future of Quebec energy should be developed, that we tie into international markets for a fossil fuel product that has a very high environmental cost in its development and transportation? Is this the answer that the member sees for Canada and for Quebec?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member seems to be talking about something that has not progressed very far. What I am talking about instead are the choices that Quebeckers made long before any discussion of this liquefied natural gas terminal.

The hydroelectricity that was developed in the 1960s and 1970s and the Quebec government's recent announcement of a hydroelectric development on the Rupert River in cooperation with the first nations are examples of the energy choices that Quebec made. In Quebec, 95% of our electricity is hydroelectricity. That is the reality and the energy position that Quebec has adopted.

Before turning to natural gas, I would like to say that Quebec is one of the most proactive provinces on the Canadian scene with regard to the development of wind energy. We have 1000 megawatts tendered and there is enormous potential.

Quebec's choices are still the same today: develop its hydroelectricity and wind potential to provide clean energy not only to Quebeckers, but also to people in southern Quebec and the United States, if necessary, and thereby help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in North America as a whole. That is Quebec's winning strategy, which it will continue to apply in the future.

[*English*]

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we will find out one day the Bloc's position on liquefied natural gas imports into its region, but perhaps not today.

It is today that we are addressing the debate that has been put forward by the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, the leader of the official opposition. It is a topic and a debate that I engage in with great interest and passion.

This chamber can be seized with many different topics. Members from all sides can get quite excited and brought into the consequences of the decisions that we take in this place. Perhaps no other issue and no other topic facing the country, facing all of our individual communities and, indeed, facing the international community, than the topic of climate change and the pollution that we allow into our atmosphere and our environment has seized us more.

Certainly, this past week for me and other members in this place who work on the issue of the environment has been quite a busy week. There have been many suggestions and proposals put forward, and a constant challenge for members of Parliament to rise above partisan interests, and to rise above the rhetoric of daily question period that plays to specific partisan interests. Our challenge is to grasp the ideas, the concepts and the actions that are required for our country to once again be proud of our standing in the international community, for our economy to change course, and for our communities to develop in such a way that we work within the context of this environment and this planet.

I think it may have been Mr. Suzuki himself who said we must understand that conventional economics, as it is understood, is a form of brain damage. The reason he said this is because of the concept that we can continually grow exponentially within a finite structure is not sane; it is counterintuitive and makes no sense.



*Business of Supply*

The motion that has been brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition is a motion and a topic which I believe sincerely the future generations will judge us. They will judge all of us as leaders in this country, not in the strict definition of the word politician or act thereof but as leaders in this country, to make decisions, make pronouncements, and to take action at long last that Canadians so desperately want to see.

It is important to take a small walk through history.

There were some discrepancies between the member for Ottawa South and the Minister of the Environment, so we will clarify the numbers, just to ensure we are all on the same page.

The Earth Summit at Rio in 1992, and some members in this place were there, brought together the world leaders. With great conviction, they produced much rhetoric and pronouncements, and announcements and press conferences. However, one of the substantive things that came from that debate, that crisis that the world was seeing with respect to our environment, was the decision to go on and negotiate an international pact, a treaty that would be binding, that would connect the countries of the world into a common cause, and that cause was to reduce the effects of climate change.

At that time, some of the more progressive climatologists and scientists in the world were saying that this is a serious matter, but the skeptics and the naysayers were far and wide. Yet over time, the debate has gained momentum and with the exception of some backward-looking members in this place and a few narrow pockets of self-interest in this country, the debate has been settled that human-caused anthropogenic climate change is a fact and a reality, and is having an effect on our world.

I know the minister will be going to Europe later this week and will hear directly from the more than 2,000 leading scientists on this issue. They will claim the debate is over as to whether the effects are happening; the only question now is how much hotter is the world getting, and how much of a great change is facing us in our environment?

Kyoto was negotiated by a former Liberal government in December 1997. Parliament ratified that decision, under a Liberal government, in 2002. One would think with all that history behind it that when it was ratified in February 2005, after Russia ratified it in 2004, the government would have had plans in place. One would think that the government would have taken action, would have been making the systemic changes that are required in the way that we produce and use energy primarily in this country to allow us to fall into compliance to the agreements that we made, but there was more cynicism at play than that.

• (1145)

We have heard from Conservative members that protestations were made to executives in Calgary by the former leader of the Liberal Party to not worry, that Kyoto was more of a protocol and an exercise in public relations, but that it was not serious. The oil and gas sector in Alberta would face no hard times or no encumbering of its business.

Lo and behold, the surprise came upon us and the protocol was ratified. Now we look to the record. The record is important to

establish including the numbers and the comments that I am using here, none of which are under dispute.

For eight of the nine years since this protocol was ratified the Liberals were in power. They negotiated the targets. The Leader of the Opposition was the environment minister for 18 months of those eight of nine years. Plans were delayed and it was the Commissioner of the Environment herself, Johanne G elinas, who said that “—the measures are not up to the task of meeting our Kyoto obligations”. That is a direct quote. She also said:

When it comes to protecting the environment, bold announcements are made and then often forgotten as soon as the confetti hits the ground. The federal government seems to have trouble crossing the finish line.

This again was stated by Johanne G elinas, someone who members of the Liberal benches, the Bloc, and the NDP, all opposition parties praised her work as a true fighter for the environment and auditor of this country.

Under the Liberals and Conservatives, the most recent numbers we have, and these are not disputed, say that we are almost 35% above the targets that we set for ourselves. For Canadians watching this that is a staggering number. It is a staggering condemnation of inaction and dithering that has gone on too long.

The time for action is now. That action has been decided through agreement by all four parties in this place to take place in a legislative committee set up to redo, rewrite, and redraft Bill C-30, a bill that was misnamed as the clean air act. When the details were looked at by members of the opposition, environment groups and Canadians, it was found seriously lacking.

Lo and behold, the New Democrats made a suggestion. I remember the day we made the suggestion. The NDP leader, the member for Toronto—Danforth, stood in this place and asked whether the Prime Minister would give this bill to a special legislative committee and allow it to be redrafted from top to bottom. Some of my Conservative colleagues guffawed, laughed, chuckled, and said things I could not repeat on the record which were directed toward the NDP leader. It is true. It was incredible. The guffaws were loud.

Yet the Prime Minister, in a state of desperation, reminded us of similar times when the Liberals were in power and needed to have a budget rewritten because there was a massive corporate tax cut included that was not campaigned upon and the budget was redrafted. The NDP, pushing to redraft a flawed piece of legislation, got agreement from all the parties to do this. How quickly the parties have forgotten.

We need to go through the record because it is important. The Liberal leader voted with the Conservatives against mandatory fuel efficiency standards for cars in February 2005. This is not distant history. This is recent. He voted against an NDP proposal for mandatory fuel efficiency standards. He was absent from the vote in fact on Bill C-288, the bill we will be debating tomorrow to implement the Kyoto accord. He was busy with other things.

*Business of Supply*

He voted against the NDP proposal to include the precautionary principle in CEPA in November 1999, a strange thing to do, the precautionary principle being something that is known and understood. I know the member for Ottawa South is a great champion of such a cause and concept. His own leader voted against it recently. He voted in favour of allowing oil and gas companies to deduct an even greater portion of their royalties. He did that in October 2003.

We are going in the wrong direction. Science warns us that a rise in the average global temperature of 2° by 2050 or sooner will have catastrophic impacts. That is the record from the one who cast a green scarf around his neck and claimed to be champion of the environment. He may wish to rename his dog at some point in this debate.

The riding experience is something that is important to me. I come from the northwest of British Columbia and we all need to take this experience back to our homes and understand what it means for our constituents. We in the northwest of British Columbia have seen the devastating impacts of climate change.

The forestry councils of British Columbia and Canada have said direct causal links between the change in climate created by human activity has caused the pine beetle infestation to spread right across B.C. It is now headed over the Rockies. The foresters, and no tree huggers by their own admission, have said this is what is going on.

• (1150)

We have seen a change in the temperature of our rivers and our waters. The salmon migration has changed and the quality of life enjoyed by first nations people from time immemorial in our region and by the people who have since moved there like myself has changed.

There was a suggestion by one of my staff some months ago that we may wish to screen *An Inconvenient Truth*, a film by the defeated former presidential candidate in the United States. I said it has been out for months, no one will come, but let us try it anyway. We showed it in five different small communities in my riding and there was standing room only in every single community. The most interesting thing was not that more than 500 people came out to watch it, but they stayed afterward because they wanted to talk about these issues. They wanted to talk about what was happening not only in our communities but at the federal level.

When I would explain the process that the NDP had negotiated for Bill C-30, they were encouraged and told me to go back there and get it done and make the proposals. For months the NDP has had front and centre on our website, [ndp.ca](http://ndp.ca) for those viewing at home with access to the Internet, those proposals out in the public domain so that the other parties can critique them or add to them. What have the other parties done? They brought forward nothing except an extensive witness list, more than 100 witnesses for something we have been studying for more than two and a half years. Let us bring more witnesses to discuss climate change. Let us talk about the nuance of the debate.

Every party in this place, every platform will claim to have the answers to climate change, and yet when we ask for those answers to be brought forward in amendments and suggestions, in concrete ideas, they are found wanting. Not a single party has brought

forward an amendment other than the New Democrats. Not a single party has made a constructive suggestion of how to make this bill better. They have just said it is no good and that is not good enough.

I remember when Bill C-30 was being tabled, the ministers of the Crown, one by one, it seemed there was a roll call, approached me and said this bill is going to knock our socks off, this clean air thing is going to be so good the NDP will have to support it. It was so disappointing to see the eventual reality for that bill was dead on arrival.

The Liberals and Conservatives have decided to stall on this. The sincerity of their action on this is found seriously wanting. The Conservatives delayed debating it in Parliament in December. The Liberals did not even name the members to sit on the committee until the 11th hour, the last possible moment. Only then did they slip in their member list. They were confused. They were not sure anyone wanted to be there and then they all wanted to be there. They got themselves in a snit.

Both parties refused to meet during the winter break as the NDP suggested. They were busy. At committee the Liberals refused to agree to a quick process. As the member from the Bloc has pointed out, members of the Conservatives and Liberals are interested in extensive debate. To their credit there is one thing the Liberals have been very good at throughout the entire environment debate and that is the ability to seek consultation and more consultation, and more meetings and further consultations.

When the Leader of the Opposition was minister of the environment, I would sit with him and say we need to get such-and-such done. He would shake his head and say, "I have a real struggle at cabinet with this, I cannot get that done. I cannot get mandatory fuel efficiencies. I cannot get any connection between research and development connected to the environment. I cannot get it done. The cabinet is resisting."

Yet, the Liberals will stand in this place and I am sure members will say it again, that we have the ability to do it right now, we could make these changes right now. That is incorrect. We have had that ability for more than five years, four of those years under the Liberals. They had that ability if they claim it to be true for all of those years and they could not get it done. The reason is they needed to return to the cabinet table. They needed to enter back into the political fray behind those closed doors to make the types of progressive changes for the environment that were needed and they could not get it done.

They could not do it, whether it was the minister of the environment, now the Leader of the Opposition, or other ministers of the environment. I know Mr. Anderson from Victoria has made public statements about his inability to get it through cabinet. We have said join with us, have the courage of the convictions to put this into legislation, to draft this in such a way that it can no longer be done behind the closed doors of cabinet. It must be done in this place.

Parliament and the public must see what parliamentarians are up to when it comes to climate change and the environment. If there is no other issue that must be in the public discourse, it is this one, but instead we have had delay and dithering.

*Business of Supply*

•(1155)

I will read an important letter, which was sent on January 22 and signed by seven of the largest and most important environmental groups in the country. It is an important quote and it states:

We believe that all parties understand the need for urgent action on climate change and clean air, so the committee should have no need for lengthy debates. A time period on the order of four weeks should be enough to debate the wording of any amendments and to consider C-30 clause by clause.

This was the very motion the NDP brought forward at committee and members of the House from the other three parties voted 11 to 1 against us for such a suggestion. They said that we should take our time. We do not have the luxury of time. Of all the things at our disposal right now, time is not one of them.

The letter also said:

As you know, we are interested in the most efficient possible Committee process with respect to C-30. The issues involved with this piece of legislation have already been studied extensively, and it is our view that the Committee needs to hear from a minimum of witnesses in order to gather the necessary information for its report.

Canada needs aggressive action on these issues.

More than 100 witnesses were proposed.

I am not sure Liberal members would know aggressive action on the environment if it came up and smacked them on the head.

The rush is on. Every day we ponder, consider, navel-gaze and have speculative conversations about the impact of climate change, but greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise and the case becomes impossible. In fact, the Liberal Party might even be in collusion with the Conservative Party to ensure that nothing happens. Maybe they want to roll it all in to the debate around the budget. Maybe the Liberals want to roll it into confidence debates and perhaps at some point in some future imagined and wishful thinking, they will regain power, get it to cabinet and delay more.

The record is absolutely solid in this respect. The very member who was elected a short time ago to lead the Liberal Party claims a new conviction to the environment. I remember the green scarves fondly. My goodness, look at what he named his dog. It seems the solutions are found wanting. When his members show up at committee, they have absolutely no solutions as to how to reach the Kyoto targets or how to reset Canada back on the track. They come wanting. They come lacking.

We must understand that we will be judged by future generations about our actions now. We have proposed a course of action to which all parties in this place agreed. All parties recognized it as a way forward and chose to involve themselves in the committee process. We must act beyond narrow partisan interests. We must act in a responsible way, in a way of leadership. We must take command and have the courage to seize the opportunity in front of us.

At committee, Liberal members said that they needed to hear more plans from the government. They needed to understand the greater context of the plan. That is incredible. Waiting for a Conservative plan on the environment might even take longer than the time we waited for the Liberal plan on the environment. They need to put those partisan interests aside. They need to come forward with serious and honourable recommendations, solutions they all claim to have.

We are all intelligent members in the place. We have studied this issue for quite a number of years. We need to get tough. We need to make the hard decisions. We can make those decisions. The people in northwest British Columbia demand that we start to make changes. As Sir Nicholas Stern, former chief economist from the World Bank and who we have all quoted in this place, has said that the cost of inaction is significant, perhaps as much as 20% of the world's GDP. Perhaps worse in terms of economic catastrophes in the first world war and the Great Depression combined, he has called what has happened with pollution perhaps the world's greatest market failure.

•(1200)

It is important that we take a progressive stance. It is important that we move to a place where this issue no longer gains interest for one party or another.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that the motion be amended by adding immediately after the word "action": (f) understanding the importance and urgency of this matter, this House calls on the legislative committee currently dealing with Bill C-30, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, the Energy Efficiency Act and the Motor Vehicle Fuel Consumption Standards Act (Canada's Clean Air Act) to complete its work and report back to this House on or before March 2, 2007, in line with the recommendation of leading environmental organizations.

•(1205)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The amendment is in order, however, it is my duty to inform the hon. member that pursuant to Standing Order 85, an amendment to an opposition motion may be moved only with the consent of the sponsor of the motion.

In the absence of the mover of the motion, I recognize the hon. House leader for the official opposition. I see the member shaking his head.

[*Translation*]

Since the sponsor of the motion is not present in the House to give his consent and the official opposition does not give its consent, the amendment cannot be moved at this time.

[*English*]

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Langley.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's comments on the environment and his zeal to move forward. I agree with his criticism of the former Liberal government of doing absolutely nothing on the environment.

In his zeal, he misrepresented the facts. He said that he was the only member who stood up to move the clean air act through the committee quickly. In fact, the Conservative members on that committee supported a speedy passage, a speedy delivery, a speedy execution of the clean air act. We supported the vote to which he referred. I want to clarify the facts that he is not the only person in the House who wants to have clean air and have it urgently.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, the technical fact of what the parliamentary secretary to the environment says is true. The 11 to 1 vote eventually became the vote that brought this back, although it was some weeks after we wanted.

It is important to note that the amendment we just brought forward is one that works completely at purposes and in line with what the leading environmental groups in the country have asked for. The amendment to motion of the Leader of the Opposition would bring it back in line, would call for that action that the Liberals so desperately want, and they just rejected it. The hon. House leader for the opposition simply shook his head, no. He could not even be bothered to rise to his feet. He rejected it out of hand.

I think of the environment groups and the people whom they represent, the many hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of Canadians. They want speedy action on this, and the Liberal Party of Canada dismissed them with a wave. It said that it was not interested in their views. The Liberals will go to their receptions and they may go to their fundraisers and leave \$5 in the kitty, but they will not help them when something serious is going on. When there is a legislative process that has been created, the Liberals dismiss them, and that is what they just did.

I find it remarkable that on an amendment calling for speedy action, calling for some of the things that are proposed by the Liberals in the debate, they want to delay it and take more time to get it right, as if they know how to do that. They did not do that when they were in power and I am not sure they have the capacity or the willingness to do it now, and that worries me. They need to change direction quickly.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will shift gears from the hyperbole and to a certain extent the histrionics and move to some substantive questions for the member. I will like to ask the member a couple of pointed questions.

If in fact the NDP and its leader were so firmly committed to immediate action, why did they not work with the Liberal Party and the official leader of the opposition at the time to compel the minority government to regulate greenhouse gases under the Canadian Environment Protection Act, all powers of which the new government possesses? In fact, as a reminder for Canadians, our government actually amended the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, against the wishes of the Conservative Party, the new minority government, to include greenhouse gases as toxic substances under the Canadian Environment Protection Act.

Could he help us understand that?

Second, I put four pointed questions to the parliamentary secretary for the environment awhile ago. He was incapable of or refused to answer any of the four. He made a statement, which was quite astonishing, that it was the first government in the world to move to regulate greenhouse gases. Could the member help us understand what the European Union has been doing for 12 years?

• (1210)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, the effort required to educate the Conservative Party on issues of international environmental action and obligations would take a lot longer than I think I would be allowed to speak. The Conservatives have been misguided. They

have been wrong. They presented a bill before Parliament and I think they sincerely thought it was a good thing. I think they thought it would pass the mustard for Canadians. The groups and scientists, who were working on this issue, were a little stunned and surprised by the vehemence of Canadians, pushing back on them saying that it was dead on arrival.

Working with the Liberal Party is not necessarily the easiest thing to do. An impression has been created by hon. colleague's question that the Liberal Party, when in power, needed the help of the NDP to regulate greenhouse gases under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Liberals had the powers right there all the time. After it was amendment, the capacity to do that was right there.

I talked to the former environment minister about doing that very thing and his response was it was very difficult at the cabinet table because that was where it took place.

What we are suggesting to the hon. member is let us take it from behind the closed doors of cabinet, the veils of secrecy and power, and put it in front of Canadians, here in Parliament. Would that not be a more progressive and enlightened thing to do? We and the environment groups believe so.

When the Liberals were in power, we worked with them to get \$1.4 billion for the environment that they did not allot. We rewrote their budget, which was the first time in Canadian history, and we were proud to do it. With a gun to the head, back up against the wall, we used what we could to get the job done on the environment, and we are continuing to fight for the environment from this corner.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley a question and perhaps bring him back to today's issue, Kyoto and the environment. We do not want to hear about committee arguments and what the Liberal Party did not do. We know that and we have heard enough about it in the House.

Can he explain how he can defend the idea that Kyoto can work mainly with sectoral programs rather than territorial programs? Take the example of Europe, which has been successful with territorial programs. Each territory has its own program for reducing greenhouse gases.

Yet, here in Canada, we do not want that, at least the NDP does not. Why not? Take the oil sands, for example. This will be a very important issue and the NDP will have to take a stand. Is it the responsibility of all of Canada to reduce greenhouse gases because there will be greater development of the oil sands? British Columbia has built hydroelectric dams. Should it pay to reduce greenhouse gases resulting from Alberta's oil production? Does this also apply to Quebec and Newfoundland?

That would be unfair. We shall see if the NDP response will be a wish to reduce Alberta's oil production to avoid paying for the pollution. My question is as follows: is that what the NDP would propose?

*Business of Supply*

[English]

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting comment by the member from the Bloc. We have to be very careful in this debate to not pit province against province. Under that splitting of common interest, and I believe the interests on climate change are common, climate change does not identify provincial boundaries or notions of potential sovereigntist boundaries. Climate change works across this. It is a nation that must be seized with this issue, no less.

It is confusing when my hon. colleague talks about choices. The last federal budget, which his party supported on the record, was one that absolutely slashed and crumbled funding for climate change programs in Quebec. That party also supported the softwood lumber sellout, hurting people in Quebec.

It is a confusing debate to try to suggest that the NDP are not believers in the environment. There is nothing further from the truth. We have worked consistently and adamantly across the country to get something progressive for our country when it comes to the environment.

● (1215)

[Translation]

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I intend to share my time this afternoon with the hon. member for Halifax West.

[English]

Clearly, today in the House we, as parliamentarians, are confronted by the 21st century challenge: climate change.

I am proud to have been elected to keep the government accountable on the environment and to defend the Kyoto treaty. It is one of the things I ran on and it is one of the reasons I ran at all.

I have had the great privilege, over the last 20 years, of working in the area of environment and energy and I am very privileged now to have been named by the official Leader of the Opposition as the environment critic and, in a sense, I have come full circle.

I have been asking the government for a full year now a simple question: Will it table its plan to fight climate change? I have asked that question repeatedly and I have yet to receive an answer. Unless the government can show Canadians otherwise, now 12 months into a term, there is only one reasonable conclusion for Canadians to draw: there is no plan. The government is making it up as it goes along. It is, as I like to say, jumping from ice flow to ice flow, announcing programs, handing out cheques and organizing photo ops.

However, worse than that, it is now clear, after questioning yesterday, when 18 times in a row the Prime Minister was asked to clarify his views on climate change, which he campaigned against for 10 full years before becoming Prime Minister, including as Leader of the Opposition, whether his views were correct then or whether his views are correct now, and he refused, in every instance, to answer the question. It is now clear that it is worse than the fact that there is no plan. There is no vision from the government and no vision from the Prime Minister.

The Conservative platform almost did not mention the environment, except for a made in Canada plan. This, while the Minister of

the Environment flies off today to Paris to do damage control at the intergovernmental panel on climate change meeting. I suppose in France he will be finding his made in Canada plan.

The federal government did not mention environment in its recent economic update. It was barely mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. The made in Canada plan right here in Ottawa was a euphemism for taking Canada out of the Kyoto treaty, something that has been the project of the Prime Minister's for a long time.

Canadians are asking what the made in Canada plan included. They want some details. As I said, it was not in the Speech from the Throne.

In late February, the former minister of the environment told *The Globe and Mail*, "There is an action plan that we are going to move on very quickly". February became March and then April. The Conservatives introduced a budget that froze or cut every major climate change initiative that our government had put in place, to the tune of \$5.6 billion. Bureaucrats were told to take every reference to Kyoto off every government website, including our archives.

By October, environmental groups were beginning to think nothing would happen. The former minister said, "All targets, whether short, medium or long term, will be consulted with industry, provinces and territories". Meanwhile, our party was pointing out that there was no need for new legislation. Every legislative power that the government needs is at its disposal under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. All the government needs is conviction, vision and political will.

Senior officials were sent to deliberately undermine Kyoto, while we, as a nation state, were chairing the international talks. Now we see a second Minister of the Environment in the young government, given that the first minister had taken too many bullets already for the Prime Minister and the PMO.

Environment itself is not one of the top five priorities. It was not in the Speech from the Throne. It was slashed from the budget and was not in the fiscal update. Now we have a so-called clean air act. Knowing full well that it does not need any more legislative authority than that which it already possesses, the government creates a smokescreen, smoke and mirrors, photo ops.

We had draft regulations in place. We had negotiated these and had achieved targets with the large final emitters before we were defeated. The so-called clean air act was met with condemnation from every quarter in the country.

● (1220)

A new Minister of the Environment has been appointed and now he is re-gifting core Liberal programs. First, he brings back rebates for renovations that make homes energy efficient but he leaves out the part of the program that makes it affordable for low income Canadians, particularly our seniors, when it is the wish of all parliamentarians that seniors can reside in their homes independently and with dignity as they grow old in, usually, their older homes.

*Business of Supply*

Low income Canadians spend 13% of their income on energy, compared with 4% paid by average households. Low income Canadians are being left out in the cold.

Second, a year later the minister also brings back funding for wind power and renewable energy, having first spuriously stated that it was wasteful spending and that it was not achieving its targets. This is cloak and dagger, behind the scenes, media manipulation where the minister disgracefully resurrects and re-gifts the programs which he had described only weeks earlier as wasteful spending.

Why were these programs ever cut? If Canadians believe the government when it described the programs as wasteful spending, then why were these programs brought back exactly as is?

Third, the government has come back to the table on clean energy technology but the year of uncertainty has had a damaging effect on young Canadian companies. Investors know which party did not make the environment one of its top five priorities and they are not flocking back to put their money in solid Canadian technologies that they were investing in 18 months ago which need a real federal commitment to turn the corner and take off worldwide. Our green industries are being left out in the cold.

Yesterday, our party held the Prime Minister to account for his radical anti-Kyoto campaign when he was leader of the opposition. In that letter he said that Kyoto was a “dangerous and destructive scheme”. He went on to say “we will do everything we can to stop Kyoto”, including, apparently, a taxpayer subsidized and disgraceful PR blitz against a proven environmental leader, the Leader of the Opposition.

I do not think Canadians buy that the Prime Minister or the government has turned over a new leaf. Just days before Christmas, in the foyer of this building, he was still talking about so-called greenhouse gases. Before that, he was saying that we must redirect federal spending aimed at fulfilling the terms of the increasingly irrelevant Kyoto protocol. He clearly believed that the Liberal government was acting to fight climate change because he was so fiercely opposed to it.

Another member of cabinet with us here today, the Minister of Public Safety, mocked the science of climate change just a few short months ago.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** I would like to advise the hon. member for Ottawa South that he has two minutes left. I would also like to remind him, since he has experience in the House, that it is not parliamentary to refer to the presence or the absence of members in the House.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Public Works and Government Services talked about the many benefits of global warming, urging his constituents to buy land so that when the thawing occurred they could flip it and make money. The day after the so-called Flintstone's moment, all evidence of his statement was removed from the minister's website.

Where are we today? We have a government with no plan and no vision and a Minister of Natural Resources freelancing about building a nuclear power plant to support a fivefold increase in oil sands production in northern Alberta. We have a Minister of Finance

in China flogging oil and gas and a Prime Minister having met with the president three or four times but not a single shred of evidence that greenhouse gases, climate change or the environment was part of any of those discussions.

Now we find out that in the mandatory reporting that this country is obliged to provide under the Kyoto protocol, the only programs being reported for 2006 by the government are the programs that were put in place by the former Liberal government; re-gifting and copying once again the heavy lifting and the work done by the former government. If we did nothing, why does the government continue to list our achievements as the only ones Canada has accomplished for the full year of 2006, the Conservatives first year in government? These are questions that Canadians are asking.

It also appears that the government is misleading the international community by not telling the international community that it slashed the funding cuts to climate change in its 2006 budget and instead reporting on all the programs we had in place.

● (1225)

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back to some of the work that was put in place by the Liberal government on climate reduction and perhaps look at the work done by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development. She looked at the program for carbon sequestration and found that the moneys had been expended but that only one of the five projects had been completed and the CO<sub>2</sub> reductions from that program were a hundredth of what they had hope for.

Let us look at the wind program. Everyone was pleased that some effort was put into wind in Canada but when we compared the program in Canada to the one in the United States we found that the wind industry here was dealing with a subsidy that was half of that of the United States and U.S. wind producers were selling into a market where wholesale prices for electricity were considerably higher.

When we look at biomass, we have had a complete lack of program development in the use of biomass energy over the last number of years. We have a huge resource in waste wood. Three million tonnes a year is being wasted in our forest industry. Nothing has happened on that front.

What about solar energy? We heard that the people in charge of the Canadian Solar Industries Association admit that we are the least funded nation for solar thermal energy of all the western nations.

On every front on renewable energy, the programs that were put in place were thin soup for Canadian producers and developers.

Why should we continue with programs like that, that were not doing the job for Canadians?

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Mr. Speaker, I will take the opportunity to pick up on the theme of the question and remind the House of the facts, not the misstatements and disinformation from the government but the facts on what took place on this file during our time as the government in power.

In 1998, we signed Kyoto. In 2000, we spent \$625 million on climate change research and emissions reductions. In 2003, we announced \$2 billion in new climate change funding. In February 2005, Elizabeth May, the leader of the Green Party of Canada, called that budget the greenest budget in Canadian history. The Clean Air Renewable Energy Coalition said that the budget was so green that it should have been announced on St. Patrick's Day.

Further to this, of course, we see what has happened after a year under the new government. It cut \$395 million from the EnerGuide program to retrofit houses. It cut \$500 million from the EnerGuide for the low income households program. It cut \$1 billion from our partnership fund for climate change projects with provinces and our cities that desperately need help from the federal government. It cut \$593 million from our wind power production incentive and our renewable power production incentive. It cut \$585 million from environmental programs at Natural Resources Canada. It cut \$120 million from our one tonne challenge which we now know has been judged to be a very effective program.

Those are just some of the cuts, total cuts of \$5.6 billion, effected by the government for the successful programs that were in place under our administration.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Louis-Hébert should know there is just one minute left for the question and answer.

**Mr. Luc Harvey (Louis-Hébert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want my colleague to know that there were cuts, but there were also major investments. He should stay informed.

As far as renewable energy is concerned, almost \$1.5 billion has just been invested. The ecoenergy initiative has also just been improved. We were told of a fabulous Liberal program that was 50% effective, which is the standard rate of effectiveness for the Liberals. For the Conservatives, this was not enough; it needed to be increased to 90%.

I would like to know whether my Liberal colleague recently followed the news on the ethanol expansion program, through which we have already managed to reduce by 5%—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Ottawa South should know that the period for questions and answers has ended. Nonetheless, I will give him a few moments to respond to the hon. member for Louis-Hébert.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to answer this question simply, I will quote former Prime Minister Joe Clark, who said just yesterday I believe:

[*English*]

“There is no question that it injured our international reputation”, he said, when referring to the new minority government's repudiation of the Kyoto climate control treaty.

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly was enjoying the comments of the member for Ottawa South and I congratulate him on his words today.

As Canadians, what do we spend an awful lot of time doing? Talking about the weather. We get in an elevator with complete strangers and we say, “Is it hot enough for you?”, or, “Is it cold enough for you?”, or, “How about that snowstorm?”, or, “What is tomorrow's forecast?” We are used to that.

This year especially we have been talking a lot about the weather because it has been an extraordinarily mild winter. It is not the first time we have had a mild winter, but this one has been especially so. Although I remember last year during the election, one particular Friday when I was campaigning in my riding of Halifax West in Nova Scotia, I was wearing a light fall jacket because it was 13° Celsius. I had never heard of a day in January in Halifax when it was 13° Celsius. My hon. colleague from West Nova would say that down in his part of the province, which is a little more south and people sometimes play golf there on New Year's Day, it is a bit milder, but I do not think it would be very often 13° on a day in January. That is extraordinary.

We are seeing more and more reasons to be concerned about our weather and about our climate. We know from scientists who measure these things that the 10 hottest years on record since human beings started keeping records of the temperature back in the middle of the 19th century have all been since 1990. We should be concerned about that.

I have a friend who is a meteorologist and who is very knowledgeable and interested in issues of weather and also science generally. He was telling me last fall, and I believe he was talking about last winter, that there was a point at which the gulf stream was actually interrupted briefly.

Tomorrow the new report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will be released. I saw reports earlier this week about that report and about things being said by the scientists at their meeting, which I believe is in Paris. They are concerned about whether the gulf stream will slow down.

Obviously, whether it is interrupted, slows down or whatever, any change in the gulf stream could have a dramatic effect on weather patterns in the northern hemisphere, particularly around the Atlantic. If we consider how much northern Europe depends on the gulf stream for its relatively warm climate, it could be devastated by that kind of change. It is not just Europe that could be affected. People who live in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, or any of the Atlantic provinces have to be concerned because the gulf stream has a very important impact on them.

*Business of Supply*

I learned a year or so ago, when I had the pleasure as minister of fisheries of visiting Sable Island, that the gulf stream is only about 50 miles, which I suppose is about 80 kilometres, from Sable Island. I could see how close it is to my province and my region and what an impact it obviously has. To see the gulf stream being interrupted is very worrisome.

[Translation]

We are very concerned about the changes that are taking place in our north. For example, roads and buildings constructed on permafrost are all at risk today. Even the migration routes of the caribou now appear to be in danger.

The caribou encounter problems because there is not enough ice. That represents a danger for them and forces them to change their route. Based on the way ice is formed in the north we know that polar bears are also at risk. All of this is very unsettling.

• (1235)

[English]

We know already that the report we are going to see tomorrow from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is going to be bleak and sobering news. It causes us great concern, and it should cause us great concern. But it is not the first time we have heard this. We have seen in recent years an increase in what scientists and meteorologists call extreme weather events, things like hurricanes, cyclones and large winter storms. In fact, within 12 months we have had in my province both hurricane Juan and what we called white Juan, a huge winter storm which dumped a metre of snow in 24 hours. I certainly had never seen that in my lifetime. It was pretty dramatic.

Hurricane Juan was devastating for a big swath of Nova Scotia. The impact was dramatic. I remember a few days afterward the defence minister at that time and I had the opportunity to fly over Halifax in a helicopter and to see the impact on Point Pleasant Park in Halifax, a beautiful park full of wonderful trees, many of which were downed like matchsticks. It was a dramatic and very troubling sight to see from the air.

We are also seeing rising sea levels. They are already impacting some countries. There are island countries in the Pacific that have already been inundated where people have had to be evacuated. They are the first examples of ecological refugees that we have seen.

I heard a scientist just last week talk about climate change and global warming. He explained that if one has a glass of water, as the temperature in the room rises, the water actually expands and fills up more of the glass. He was pointing out the concern we should have about our ocean levels. The rise in sea levels is not just because of glaciers and ice caps melting, which we should be very concerned about as well, but if there is a one degree increase in water temperature worldwide, it means that the water is going to expand and sea levels will rise for that reason alone. We also have to be concerned about the effect of the ice caps, both north and south, as a radiator for our climate, as a way of cooling off our climate.

It is encouraging that a lot of Canadians, a lot of people in the U.S. and hopefully elsewhere have seen the movie that Al Gore produced and starred in, *An Inconvenient Truth*. It certainly had an impact on me when I saw it last year. It was one of the reasons that my wife and

I decided to buy a hybrid vehicle. The fact is it has been a benefit. With a hybrid vehicle the maintenance costs actually go down. Over a five year period it has been shown that hybrid vehicles have much lower maintenance costs, and obviously, one is going to pay less for gas. We are certainly paying less for gas even though there was a little more initial capital cost and that is a concern.

There is a report in the *Globe and Mail* today that refers to a survey by Maritz Research in Canada. It said that when buying a vehicle the consideration of whether it is environmentally friendly ranked 23rd among 26 reasons for buying a vehicle. The top three considerations were value for money, fuel economy and reliability. It is good that fuel economy is one of those considerations because clearly, with a hybrid vehicle one will benefit from the fuel economy.

The point I am making is that we all have to get engaged in this issue. We all have to find ways to do better. I certainly want to keep doing better. We have done something but we have to do more things it seems to me in my home and in all homes across the country to help combat climate change. The government has to do more in terms of the variety of measures that it can take to improve the situation and to combat climate change.

There is as we know a very narrow range of conditions in which human life can exist. We see that when it gets cold. When we go outside on a day when it is  $-15^{\circ}$  or  $-20^{\circ}$  we realize that we cannot stay out very long without being warmly dressed. It is amazing how quickly it goes from a temperature that is reasonable, livable and comfortable to one where it is not comfortable. It is a pretty small range. Once we go outside that range, things become unlivable if we go to extremely low temperatures, unless we are in the Antarctic and we are really prepared for it, but in reality, for most people we cannot survive in those extreme low temperatures or in extreme hot temperatures if they are above  $140^{\circ}$  or  $150^{\circ}$  for example.

[Translation]

What has been the response of the Conservatives? After a year in power, they are still blaming the Liberals for everything. The Conservatives continue to tell us that we did not do enough; but in the past they opposed every action to fight global warming. They are still displaying signs of that attitude.

Yesterday, journalists asked Conservative members whether they believed that increased greenhouse gases have caused global warming. Most of those members refused to answer the question.

[English]

The Conservative member for Wetaskiwin, Alberta, a member for the Conservatives on the environment committee, was asked if he believed in the science of global warming. What did he say? He said, "I am going to have to defer on that one". When asked if he believed in the science of global warming, he said he would have to defer and he would not answer the question. That is unimaginable.



*Business of Supply*

• (1240)

**Mr. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member but first I want to point out some facts.

The fact is that under his party's watch, Canada was 35% above its Kyoto targets. The fact is that under his party's watch, Canada slid to 28th out of 29 OECD countries in air quality rankings. The fact is even according to the deputy leader of his party, the Liberals did not get things done on the environment. Clearly in 13 years they did not get it done.

Speaking of being 28th out of 29 OECD countries, to use a hockey analogy which I like to use, I think about an NHL team near the bottom of the standings. This NHL team has a dismal power play and is ranked, let us say, 29th out of 30 teams, second from the bottom. So bad is this team that the coach resigns and the general manager identifies the power play as the number one problem. The Liberals are like that hockey team.

What is puzzling is that when the Liberals had the chance to get a fresh start, they chose to promote the power play coach, the environment minister, who had been responsible for the astonishingly low performance in the first place. That is who they promoted as head coach, the person who had led them to second last place in the league.

Based on the Liberal Party's dismal record, do you not agree that it is refreshing to see some actual action on environmental issues? Would you not agree that this motion and what is happening in the environment committee are real efforts to change the channel on Canadians and deal with your political—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I would remind the hon. member for Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont to address his questions through the Chair and not directly to other members.

The hon. member for Halifax West.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of serving on a committee with the hon. member until recently. We got to know one another quite well. I think we are friends. I realize those are the rules and I will certainly follow the same rule, but I want to make it clear that I am not offended in any way by that.

I may not agree with his comments, and I do not, but if he looked at the record he would see something quite different from what he suggested. In fact, there was a whole series of measures that the Liberal government brought in, which the Conservative government over the past year cancelled. It has brought in a few weak facsimiles of some of those programs.

For instance, the EnerGuide program was cancelled by the Conservatives. They also cancelled the one tonne challenge program. On the Thursday before Easter last year the Conservatives cancelled 17 different initiatives all at the same time. They are going to claim that the programs were all terrible and not one of them was any good. That is a little rich. It is like the suggestion that none of these measures that were in place had any impact whatsoever or ever could have any impact.

If the Conservatives want to say the programs were not perfect and point out concerns or problems, that is fine, but it is not credible

to suggest that there was nothing there at all. The fact of the matter is the Conservative Party is not credible on this issue.

Look at what the Prime Minister said in his fundraising letter in 2002. He said, "Kyoto is essentially a socialist scheme to suck money out of wealth-producing nations".

• (1245)

**Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned that we all have to be engaged. When I hear that, I turn to low income Canadians.

In the past we had programs such as EnerGuide that not only helped save precious little income that lower income Canadians have but it helped them promote good health because of the health of the home and it allowed them to live in the dignity of their own home. The added bonus it seems was the reduction of greenhouse gases.

I was hoping that the hon. member could give a little more detail and comment on how lower income Canadians have been abandoned with the introduction of, for lack of a better word, what I would call Liberal-like programs introduced by the Conservative Party.

**Hon. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I had just begun to talk about the EnerGuide program in general, so I am pleased to have a chance to talk about the fact that we also had an EnerGuide program for low income households. It was a very important program to assist those households that could not themselves afford the costs of upgrading their homes, households that needed assistance with the cost of upgrading their homes to make them more energy efficient, to lower the heating costs, and to lower the amount of greenhouse gases produced.

When we heat our homes, not enough of us use solar heat, and I suppose more of us should. I am fortunate that my house has it. The house I bought happened to have it for heating water. However, I think we have to do more. Many of us heat our homes with oil, wood, electricity or natural gas. All of those of course produce greenhouse gases. We ought to look for ways to reduce them. That was the idea of both the EnerGuide for low income households program and the EnerGuide program, both of which I think were important programs.

**Hon. Helena Guergis (Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the Minister of Natural Resources.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on the environment today, as it is an issue that is extremely important to my constituents in Simcoe—Grey and of course to all Canadians and the international community.

Need for action on climate change has strengthened with each passing year. It is too bad that the former Liberal government turned its back on the subject and on Canadians. After 13 years of inaction, \$40 million talkfests, champagne parties and promises, we are 10 years behind because the Liberals chose to do nothing.

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When we look at the science that underpins the climate change issue, we see that there are several things we can agree on. Greenhouse gases are increasing in Canada's atmosphere. In fact, under the previous Liberal government, they rose a staggering 35% over a very short period of time. We also know that the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will continue to increase unless we do something to reduce our emissions.

We must ask the question of why this is: could we have been in a different position? Here is what the former environment commissioner had to say about the inept Liberal government's record on the environment in her 2006 audit report:

Since 1997, the government has announced over \$6 billion in funding for initiatives on climate change. However, it does not yet have an effective government-wide system to track expenditures, performance, and results on its climate change programs. As a result, the government does not have the necessary tools for effective management, nor can it provide Parliamentarians with an accurate government-wide picture on spending and results they have requested.

She did not stop there. She went further, stating that:

On the whole, the government's response to climate change is not a good story. At a government-wide level, our audits revealed inadequate leadership, planning, and performance. To date, the approach has lacked foresight and direction and has created confusion and uncertainty for those trying to deal with it. Many of the weaknesses identified in our audits are of the government's own making. It has not been effective in leading and deciding on many of the key areas under its control. Change is needed.

The former commissioner was right when she said change was needed. Canadians were fed up with the Liberal scandals and broken promises, so what did Canadians do? They kicked the Liberals out of office and ushered in a new Conservative government to clean up the mess the Liberals left behind.

Not only did we clean up years of corruption, scandal, mismanagement and waste, we are now cleaning up the undeniable environmental disaster the Liberals left behind for Canadians. Today, we have record smog days in Toronto, and Canada ranks near the bottom of industrialized countries when it comes to air quality. We have to ask ourselves: what were the Liberals doing for 13 years? Why did they not get it done?

Canada's new Conservative government has taken action on the environment. As has already been mentioned, in the last two weeks alone, we have invested \$230 million in the research, development and demonstration of clean energy technologies. Also, we announced more than \$1.5 billion in funding for the ecoenergy renewable initiative to boost Canada's renewable energy supplies, and we unveiled our plan to invest approximately \$300 million over four years to promote smarter energy use and reduce the amount of harmful emissions that affect the health of Canadians.

Last fall, we introduced Canada's first clean air act. By introducing the clean air act, we have put forward a number of tools that will help Canada address its air quality by reducing greenhouse gas and smog emissions simultaneously. This is the first time that Canada has regulated reductions in both air pollution and greenhouse gases. Internationally, we are the first country to regulate all sectors in an integrated and coherent manner.

We also introduced a clean air regulatory agenda that will regulate both indoor and outdoor air pollutants as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

We are providing stronger energy efficiency standards on consumer and commercial products.

We have already established new emission standards for on-road motorcycles.

We are setting the stage for mandatory fuel consumption standards on the vehicles Canadians buy.

● (1250)

But the Liberals do not want to see any progress on the environment. They are pulling every trick in the book to stall the special legislative committee looking at the clean air act. They want to drag out hearings for months, which is interesting in that it is coming from the former Liberal government that, when in power, said it had a plan to address the environment. But we never saw it. Consequently, what has Liberal inaction meant to Canadians?

In terms of temperature, the changes in Canada have generally been higher than the global average. This is particularly true in our northern regions. The "Arctic Climate Impact Assessment" was published not long ago and received wide media coverage and public attention, as it should. The report served to highlight the rapid changes occurring across the Arctic and concluded that the Arctic has been warming at about twice the rate of the rest of the world.

A whole suite of changes is evident across the Arctic, which has led many to consider the Arctic the canary in the coal mine, an early indicator of what may come to other regions of the world. In particular, the observed reductions in sea ice have been much commented on, since the implications of this trend, were it to continue, are very significant for Canada and for the globe.

For the Inuit, the reductions in sea ice put in jeopardy their traditional hunting and food sharing culture, as reduced sea ice causes the animals on which they depend to decline and become less accessible.

With reduced sea ice, shipping through key routes such as the Northwest Passage is likely to increase. This could bring new opportunities, but it is also an additional environmental concern.

We have also seen impacts of the changing climate in other parts of Canada. In B.C., infestations of the mountain pine beetle are wreaking havoc on the forest industry. In recent years, prairie drought has cost the agricultural economy billions of dollars. On the west coast, we have seen several extreme storm events in recent months. In eastern Canada, we have experienced an unusually warm early winter.

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These events, while not individually traceable to climate change, are consistent with expectations of more extreme weather in the future. These impacts are a threat to our citizens and to our environment and have enormous economic impact.

In summary, Canada's new government is extremely concerned. That is why we are taking concrete actions to deal with climate change and air pollution to improve the health of Canadians.

• (1255)

**Hon. Gary Lunn (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise on debate today and I am happy to talk about the environment.

First, everyone should be aware of the enormous opportunities for Canadians in this country. We are blessed with an enormous amount of natural resources. We have the second largest oil reserves of any country in the world. We have the largest amount of uranium. We produce an enormous amount of natural gas. We are one of the largest producers of hydroelectricity in the world.

With these opportunities also come responsibilities. It is our responsibility as a government to ensure that we look after all of these resources. They are the backbone of the Canadian economy, which is very important to our quality of life. We also need to put the economy in balance with the environment while ensuring that we have our energy security. That is why, in one year, our first year in office, our government came out with very decisive, focused leadership that is going to deliver concrete results.

Early in our term of office, we brought in new funding and new tax incentives to increase public transit ridership. We committed to increasing, for the first time in this country, to a 5% average for biofuels on fuels right across the country. It is good for the environment to ensure that we have this average. The biofuel industry is taking off. We will be there to support it.

One of my first actions as Minister of Natural Resources was to announce over half a billion dollars to clean up some of the nuclear legacy liabilities at Chalk River that have been there for decades, something on which the previous government refused to show leadership. It would not make the commitment on something that was urgent. It was one of our first actions.

Of course our government took a very bold approach to bringing in Canada's clean air act. When we move past all the partisanship and actually read the act, we can see what it will deliver. It is the first time that any government in Canadian history has undertaken to regulate every single sector, the oil and gas sector, the automotive sector, the industrial sector, and to reduce not only greenhouses gases but also pollutants that create smog and have a direct impact on our health. The previous government refused to do this. The previous government never mentioned it.

We also heard my colleague from Nova Scotia, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, make a very significant commitment to clean up the Sydney tar ponds.

Our government is taking concrete action that will deliver results. We want to engage all members of Parliament in this House to work with us.

I know that the new leader of the Liberal Party wants to pretend he is a great environmentalist. I noted yesterday that he and his entire caucus showed up in the House of Commons wearing green ribbons. Putting on green ribbons does not make us environmentalists. Putting on a green ribbon will not reduce greenhouse gases; it is going to take concrete action.

The previous old Liberal government had 13 years in office. In their dying days in office, the Liberals actually started to suggest that they cared about the environment. By that time, not only did the old Liberal government lose the confidence of the House, it went on to lose the confidence of the Canadian people because of a lack of leadership and a lack of action. We have done more in one year than the old Liberal government even came close to.

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

**Hon. Gary Lunn:** Members opposite are chuckling and laughing, but let us talk about the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development. Let us look at some of her reports and see how the Liberals responded.

• (1300)

Let me read for members from the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's report of 2000. She says about the Liberal government that "it continues to have difficulty turning commitment into action".

Members are laughing and saying that I should not read from talking points. This is not a laughing matter, I would put respectfully to the Liberals across the way who are heckling. This is from the Commissioner of the Environment. Now they are now calling her reports a joke, but we have taken them very seriously. She went on to say in 2000 that there were:

—persistent problems with the federal government's management of key issues like climate change, toxic substances and biodiversity...As a result, commitments made to Canadians were not being met.

That was in the year 2000, but let us go on to her next report. She had many volumes. I met the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development numerous times. She is an individual who was very committed. She kept trying to make concrete, positive suggestions to the old Liberal government. She wrote another report on sustainable development in 2001. What did she have to say in that report? It reads as follows:

As evidenced by the continued upward trend in Canada's emissions, the government has not succeeded in transforming its promises into results.

Those are the words of the environment commissioner. I know that Liberal members do not like to hear this. They had a chance. Not only did they have a chance to show leadership, which they failed, but they had a lot of people telling them they were failing, getting an F, and not getting the job done. That was in 2001.

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The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development wrote another report in 2002, desperate to get action and desperate to see some progress on this file. What was her first sentence? She stated that the federal government's "sustainable development deficit continues to grow". That was according to Johanne G  linas, Canada's Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

These are the actual documents I am reading from. This is the record. This not the opinion of a partisan. This is not the opinion of the Conservative Party. This is the opinion of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development. These are all documents of Parliament.

In 2004, she went on to write another report, in which she asked:

Why is progress so slow?...I am left to conclude that the reasons are lack of leadership, lack of priority, and lack of will.

Year after year, the environment commissioner was begging the old Liberal government for action. She was pleading with the Liberals. Their record was abysmal. Greenhouse gases in this country skyrocketed under their leadership.

They signed an international agreement, the Kyoto protocol, and then did nothing. The Liberals signed this protocol in 1997, 10 years ago, saying that in the next 15 years we would reduce greenhouse gases by 6%. That is what they said. They had to reduce greenhouse gases by roughly 1% a year.

Those greenhouse gas levels have skyrocketed year after year. They are 35% above the targets, so how does anyone with any credibility have the gall to come in sporting a green ribbon and thinking that suddenly they actually believe in the environment? The Liberals had 13 years to deliver results and all they want to engage in is partisan criticism, while our government is committed to delivering actual results.

The last audit of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, which came out shortly after we took office, again focused on the previous government's record. The results were the same. She stated that:

—funding was complex, leading to confusing targets. We found five Treasury Board decisions that authorized funds for the program and which did not clearly describe emission reduction results expected for this money....

There were no results, yet the Liberals want to stand up in question period and actually have people believe they are serious about this.

• (1305)

How can any Canadian take anyone from the Liberal Party seriously when the Liberals sat in power for 13 long years? The new leader of the Liberal Party was at the cabinet table for 10 years. He ended up at the cabinet table as the environment minister and his results were zero. He did not get the job done.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a quick series of questions for the minister, and I thank him for his remarks although I disagree with them wholeheartedly.

First, can the minister comment on former Prime Minister Joe Clark's comments as reported in the *Montreal Gazette* today? The report states explicitly that:

He also cited the Harper government's repudiation of the Kyoto climate control treaty, signed by the previous Liberal administration—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I will remind the hon. member for Ottawa South that we do not refer to other members by their surnames. We use either their titles or riding names.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** I did not refer to another member.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I believe I heard you use the Prime Minister's name.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Do you mean the former prime minister, Joe Clark?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I thought I heard you say the name of the Prime Minister.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** No.

**Some hon. members:** You did.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I will check the blues, but it never hurts to be reminded.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** I will start again, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the correction.

Let me ask the minister directly, quoting from the *Montreal Gazette* today. This is a comment that is attributed to the former prime minister of Canada, Joe Clark. It states:

He also cited the Harper government's repudiation of the Kyoto—

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** Order. That time I know I heard it. Even if hon. members quote reports or newspaper articles, it is still important to remember that rule. Let us try to wrap this up as quickly as possible.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Mr. Speaker, it states:

He also cited the [new] government's repudiation of the Kyoto climate control treaty, signed by the previous Liberal administration.

Former Prime Minister Joe Clark says:

There is no question that it injured our international reputation.

Can the minister please explain to Canadians why a former prime minister and leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada would make such a statement?

**Hon. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, I think what is happening here is that we have inherited an abysmal mess from the old Liberal Party. Its record on the environment was disastrous. Greenhouse gases skyrocketed under the old Liberal Party. There is no question that we have an enormous amount of heavy lifting to do on the environment because of the mess we inherited.

Even if greenhouses gases had held the line, or if they had gone up by even 5% by the time we took over the government, we would have had a fighting chance, but they went up 35%. The Liberals did nothing. In less than one year, we have committed \$2 billion on energy programs that will directly reduce greenhouse gases. That money will be invested in new technology to clean up conventional energy. We will be putting clean renewable energy on the grid, more wind energy and things like tidal energy, and we are encouraging Canadians across the country to do their share as well through energy efficiency.

*Business of Supply*

The Liberal government did not get the job done. We are delivering with concrete results and real action.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the Minister of Natural Resources that his party has already been in power for more than a year and all that we have seen and heard has been criticisms of the Liberal party.

Let me tell the minister that we are fed up with listening to this criticism of the Liberal party. We know that they did nothing. They did not do anything, period. That is all.

However, that is not my question. Here is my question. Will the minister share with us the foundation and details of his philosophy that he is using to establish his new energy plan? In particular, how does it deal with natural resources? Will his plan be based on the polluter-pays or the government-pays approach? The two are very different, and I would be very anxious to hear the minister give a clear answer to the question.

[*English*]

**Hon. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member is looking for what we have done. In our first year of office, let me reiterate, we have made a huge investment to increase public transit ridership. We have brought in mandatory renewable fuel content. We have brought in \$2 billion of energy efficiency programs. We have brought in half a billion dollars to address nuclear liability cleanup. We have put money into parks and we have restored parks. We have put \$30 million in British Columbia toward the rain forests. We put in \$300 million over four years for a chemical management plan, which is something that has never been done.

All of these are very substantive and concrete results.

As for the last question, absolutely, the polluter will pay, without question. If members look at our clean air act, they will see that we have made it very clear. Early in 2007, sometime in the first session, we will be bringing in short term and medium term targets, but we want to get the targets right. We want to consult with all the sectors and—

• (1310)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** Order, please. If the hon. member for Mississauga South can keep his comment or question very brief, I will allow one more.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. Action plan 2001, \$1.1 billion in funding; action plan 2002, an additional \$400 million; climate change plan 2005, another committed \$10 billion by 2012; the climate fund, \$1 billion; the partnership fund, \$250 million; the one tonne challenge, \$120 million; EnerGuide; and the \$1.8 billion for the renewable power. Those are all items the Liberal government brought forward. The member has misled Canadians by saying that there was nothing done. In fact—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** The hon. Minister of Natural Resources has less than 30 seconds to respond.

**Hon. Gary Lunn:** Mr. Speaker, the member was right when he said “we committed”. They did commit but they did not deliver. I am reading from their own budget plan of 2005: \$200 million over the

next five years for renewable energy. I checked up on it. They never spent a dollar. They did not get the job done.

A \$200 million investment for sustainable technology for conventional energy. Guess how much money they spent? Not a dollar.

Yes, they made commitments and, yes, they gave promises but they did not get the job done.

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to debate one of the most important issues that Canadians face in the 21st century, global warming and climate change.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Vancouver Quadra.

The motion that stands before us reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House:

- (a) there is overwhelming scientific evidence that the world's climate is changing as a result activity and this poses the most serious ecological threat of our time;
- (b) the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety;
- (c) the government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments;
- (d) the government must establish a 'cap and trade' emission reduction system and regulations for industry; and
- (e) the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action.

My colleagues in the Liberal caucus and the Liberal Party have supported the Kyoto protocol since it was first negotiated in 1997. In a nutshell, the Kyoto protocol represents an international treaty that recognizes the scientific fact that increased emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases are causing global warming.

Naturally occurring greenhouse gases, mostly carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane and water vapour, are present in the atmosphere due to both natural processes and human activities. Greenhouse gases help to regulate our climate by trapping heat from the sun in the lower atmosphere, warmth that would otherwise escape back into space. This greenhouse gas effect keeps the average temperature on earth at approximately 15°C. However, over the past 200 years increased atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases have accumulated as a result of human activity, mostly from burning fossil fuels, oil, coal and natural gas.

In Canada, the growth of greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to increased coal consumption for electricity and steam generation, growth in fossil fuel production that is largely for export and increases in energy consumption arising from transportation needs.

*Business of Supply*

There are some people, however, who continue to blindly deny scientific facts and prefer to bury their heads in the oil sands. One person in particular, the current Prime Minister, has yet to publicly acknowledge the science of climate change and global warming.

In fact, when the Conservatives outlined their five priorities in the last election, I can assure the House that the environment did not even make it on to the list.

This week we were reminded of that when we learned that our current Prime Minister, who once served as leader of the Canadian Alliance Party, publicly stated that:

Kyoto is essentially a socialist scheme to suck money out of wealth-producing nations.

He used this appeal as a fundraiser for his party claiming that:

The Reform Party defeated the Charlottetown Accord in an epic struggle in the fall of 1992. Now the Canadian Alliance is leading the battle against the Kyoto Accord.

It is no wonder recent polls show that Canadians have a hard time swallowing the Prime Minister's sudden conversion to environmentalism. It is much more likely that the Prime Minister is embracing political opportunism and simply fueling public cynicism.

Today, 40% of Canadians rate the Conservative government's track record on the environment as poor. Why is that? It is because one of the first acts of the Conservative government was to dismantle all the environmental initiatives launched by the previous Liberal government.

In 2005, we had a comprehensive plan set in place but the Conservatives quickly cancelled project green. They cancelled the one tonne challenge that asked ordinary Canadians to do what they could to reduce their consumption of energy. They cancelled the popular EnerGuide program that gave homeowners grants to improve their energy efficiency. They cancelled funding for scientific research aimed at sustainable development.

However, the Conservatives love to repeat the monotonous mantra that the Liberals achieved nothing on the environment file in 13 years of government.

● (1315)

I would like to remind the Conservatives that it was a Liberal government that joined with 168 other countries in the world to sign the Kyoto protocol in 1997. It was a Liberal government that introduced the Canadian Environmental Protection Act in 1999. It was also a Liberal government that ratified the Kyoto protocol in 2002.

Last October, the former environment minister introduced the clean air act which quickly went over like a lead balloon with Canadians. In fact, less than two months after introducing this flimsy document, the environment minister was quickly sacked by the Conservatives. The so-called clean air act is completely unnecessary because the federal government already has all the legislative authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

Currently, we collect information on greenhouse gases through three departments and three key pieces of legislation: Environment Canada under the authority of the 1999 Canadian Environmental Protection Act; StatsCanada under the authority of the Statistics Act;

and the Alberta environment department under the climate change and emissions act.

Canadians know that the clean air act is nothing more than a political ploy. The fact is that the Liberal government had an eight year, \$10 billion plan called project green. The Conservatives, in a zealous pursuit of their ideological rhetoric, cancelled everything. They have been in office now for more than one year and Canada still does not have a plan to reduce greenhouse gases or deal with climate change.

By abandoning the Kyoto protocol, the Conservatives have severely damaged our international reputation by ignoring international law and our international commitments to 168 other countries.

We cannot afford to waste another year playing politics with the environment. Canadians will not tolerate this kind of behaviour and will remember the Conservatives dithering on the most important challenge facing the planet.

I ask that instead of declaring war on the Kyoto protocol, the Prime Minister should focus his energy on working with the international community, working with other parties in this minority Parliament and working with Canadians to leave an environment legacy that generations of future Canadians will inherit.

● (1320)

**Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, perhaps my Liberal friend could answer some questions.

The member talked about a time of minority government in the House, but from 1993 to 2004 the Liberals had an absolute majority in the House. They could have done anything it wanted. They were unstoppable, other than the fact that they did not know how to move ahead.

We have a number of plans on which we clearly want to move ahead. We recognize that we are a minority government but we have already been able to move ahead on these plans. We have invested \$1.6 billion in the ecoenergy renewable initiative over 14 years which will open up all forms of clean, renewable energy, such as wind, small scale hydro, solar, biomass, geothermal and tidal. It has the effect of adding up to 4,000 megawatts of new, clean electricity.

The same result would be had if a million cars were taken off the road in terms of us implementing this plan. The ecoenergy technology initiative, \$230 million over four years, a total investment in S and T and energy related areas to \$1.5 billion, and \$300 million over four years in the energy efficiency initiative dealing with increasing energy efficiency in homes and buildings.

*Business of Supply*

I wonder if the member opposite could help us by putting aside the rhetoric of who said what when. These plans are on the table now and we would like to move ahead on them. For some reason, which we do not understand, for the 11 years that the Liberals had an absolute majority they did nothing.

From the lessons of their failures, could the Liberals share with us what stopped them so that we can move ahead? Will they be supporting us in these initiatives?

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Mr. Speaker, for 11 years we had to clean up the Mulroney mess. The Conservatives left the country in a financial disaster. The former Liberal government had to first get that mess out of the way. This is another mess that the Conservative government will be putting this country into. It deleted the whole environment program and deleted \$5.1 billion. Then the Minister of Natural Resources was proud of the fact that he put in place \$2.1 billion.

The government has no credibility. The Prime Minister keeps calling Kyoto as being something of a socialist nature that is sucking funds out of the wealthy nations. Canadians do not believe the validity of the Conservative government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Harvey (Louis-Hébert, CPC):** I would like to address several questions to my colleague. I am pleased to be a member of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development. Does my colleague know what percentage of the experts who appeared before the committee told us that the objectives of the Kyoto Protocol could be achieved within the scheduled deadlines? It was less than 5%. In fact, none of the experts said that the timetables of the Kyoto Protocol that were signed by Mr. "Do you think it is easy to make priorities?" were realistic.

Commissioner Gélinas also judged that the efforts agreed to by the Liberals, again by Mr. "Do you think it is easy to make priorities?", would have reduced emissions by a single tonne, while our objective is 270 tonnes.

More than 5,000 people will die this year because of the terrible quality of the air they breathe. Would the member please tell me how the purchase of credits from Russia will improve the situation for those 5,000 people?

[English]

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi:** Mr. Speaker, I used to sit on the environment committee so I am very interested in hearing the misrepresentations again. Here go the members of the Conservative Party on the environment committee who could not even answer and said they were going to defer on this one when asked about climate change. When one does not believe in climate change or GHGs, how can one even have credibility?

In fact, Madam Gélinas, who was the commissioner, said that if we would follow the way we were going we would meet the 2015 targets. The Liberals had made arrangements with 735 large final emitters to ensure that they had statutory reductions. We had worked on the EnerGuide program. We had done all sorts of things, but the Conservatives want to delete it from the website and go to la-la land.

● (1325)

**Hon. Stephen Owen (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise today to speak to this important motion. I thank my colleague from Don Valley East for her important remarks.

I would like to add to this debate by speaking positively about the future. We have had many accusations back and forth, and that is understandable I suppose. This is, I think, the meta-issue of history, of a degradation of our climate and our planet. Never before have we been so exposed to danger for actually deteriorating human life and all life on earth.

We can recall those first Apollo pictures of the earth and the images they have created in our minds of a blue and green gem floating in, for all we know, an endless infinite universe of rock and fire. That gem is unique to our knowledge, and yet we are taking a risk with it because it is not actually a gem. It is actually only an eggshell; it is not solid. It is a tiny eggshell of blue and green over rock and fire. To think that we as a species would put at risk that extraordinary unique piece of magic floating through the universe is really an existential march of folly more than we have ever seen in society.

I am very pleased that whatever shortcomings or inadequacies the government or previous governments may have taken toward environmental degradation, that we are all coming together. This motion focuses us on the opportunity to state the absolute imperative of dealing with this in the most serious possible way.

It was interesting to hear a panel of people speaking about climate change on CBC Radio's *The Current* this morning after the 8:30 news. These people came from business, the environmental sector and from the scientific sector. Mr. Thomas d'Aquino, who is the CEO of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, not generally known as an eco-freak but rather known as someone who takes a very serious business-minded approach to matters, quoted Michael Porter, the Harvard competitive guru seen as the person who has the best grasp on why competitive economies are competitive around the world.

In 1990 he was commissioned by the Mulroney government and produced a report on the competitive nature of Canada. His main recommendation was that the lack of competitiveness and productivity in the Canadian economy was because our environmental standards were too low and that northern European countries, where they had higher environmental standards, were the ones that had the most competitive economies. Companies working under that sort of regulatory and fiscal regime were more competitive and more creative. They invested more in research and development. They protected themselves, for instance, from consumer boycotts that are against environmental practices that are damaging in other countries. They created spinoff technology industries that they could sell to the rest of the world.

As the world focuses more and more on the dangers of climate change, those technologies are going to be immensely important. We in Canada should be investing in those companies, as Mr. d'Aquino was recommending, and in those technologies, so that we can lead and supply the world with what is going to become and is increasingly being seen as an absolute historical imperative.

*Business of Supply*

Sir Nicholas Stern, in his report that was issued a few weeks ago, compared the vastness of the economic damage that will be done if we do not deal with climate change to being greater than that of both the first and second world war. That is the scale we are talking about. It is absolutely breathtaking and it is something that we altogether as parliamentarians must take on the responsibility of solving.

• (1330)

We need regulatory and fiscal powers to do that. There are two critically important principles in environmental science and in fact in the whole issue of sustainability. One is the precautionary principle. I hope all of us in this House now have gotten over whatever our hesitation may have been in the past, that we have gotten beyond the notion of questioning the science of climate change.

In terms of risk assessment and dealing with risk, the precautionary principle would cause us to act positively. The consequences of severe climate change will be catastrophic even if the chance was fairly small, but in fact it is the overwhelming preponderance of scientific evidence in the world that sees this as a rapidly changing climate in historical terms, with the acceleration being caused by human activity. The precautionary principle says we must act. Now it is coming into all of our consciousness that we have not acted fast enough and we are going to have to do it together.

The other principle is polluter pay as a basic bedrock principle of environmental stewardship. We simply cannot have companies or individuals any further using the atmosphere as a toxic waste dump, and we can set the example in this country. It simply cannot happen. We know, and any economist will tell us, that if we are going to have a sound working economy, we have to internalize any negative externalities that the activities of those companies or persons cause. We simply have to cost out the price of pollution. We can call it a carbon tax or costing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We can call it internalizing negative externalities. We can call it whatever we want, but the point is, it is paying for the damage that is being done as we go.

The wonderful thing about that, and we have suggested in this motion a cap and trade system, is that we can actually let the market work in a way that is most efficient and effective by costing those greenhouse gas emissions. They can be capped at a reasonable point to start and then those caps can be dropped, so that people and industry have to successively reduce them over time as they develop the technology, as they rebuild their manufacturing plants, and as they add new processes.

We can use the market to cost it and then a trading system can allow companies that can easily reduce GHGs, because of their procedures or because of their technologies, to get credit for it and to sell that credit to other companies that can take longer times perhaps to replace their capital equipment. That is a reasonable way to do it, but it can actually start accelerating very quickly.

We can also, and this is immensely important, use fiscal mechanisms to determine behaviour and incent proper behaviour. We can have tax shifting. We want to make it neutral but we can do it in a fair way. We can take away incentives that cause bad behaviour, polluting behaviour by taxing it, or removing the tax benefit and putting the tax benefits on the development of renewable energy technologies. We can use incentives and disincentives in a very effective way.

Certainly, in North America and increasingly in China and India, we know that vehicle emissions are a major cause of pollution and greenhouse gases. California has just announced the highest levels of vehicle emission standards in the world. We can go to that level. If they can do it in California, we can do it here. There is a way that we can actually do that without crippling or damaging the automobile industry and of course that is an important part of the Canadian economy. By what is called niching, we can cause automobile manufacturers to make a certain proportion of models of their automobile production low or no emission vehicles, but they can spread the cost of developing that technology across their whole manufacturing units. And over time, of course, those percentages would have to increase.

• (1335)

Those are some ideas for us to positively go ahead, and I look forward to comments and questions from colleagues.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I liked how my Liberal colleague said that environmental standards in Canada were too low. I would like him to tell us what environmental standards he was referring to and how they could be improved in the case of the oil sands. On that point, the former Liberal minister at the time said that it was very difficult to slow down an economy that was starting up, and that in any developed country this kind of economic development could not be stopped.

In the case of the oil sands, could the member tell us what environmental standards should be raised, and how?

[*English*]

**Hon. Stephen Owen:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question is a critically important. I suggest this standard. Today we could go to zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, from the tar sands simply by regulation. The science is available in Canada today because of previous investments by the former Liberal government in research and development into carbon capture and sequestration. We have the technology today and the costs are manageable to go into carbon capture and sequestration on an industrial scale. This could be done immediately. That is the type of standard to which we have to look.



*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right to point out that we need to work together in the House to tackle this very important issue. However, he knows that his own Liberal Party has decided to put politics ahead of real action on the environment, by working with the Bloc to drag out committee hearings on Bill C-30 for another two months. This means the clean air legislation cannot pass before the federal budget, which will obviously be a confidence vote that could mean another election.

It is one thing that the previous Liberal government did not get the job done when it had 13 years, mostly in majority as my colleague pointed out, to accomplish virtually anything it wanted. It is far worse, though, that the Liberals are trying to correct their mistake by holding up legislation that would fix the problems they created.

What does the member have to say about the roadblocks his party is putting up, for purely political reasons at committee?

**Hon. Stephen Owen:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member has brought up this issue of roadblocks. In fact, we have all the legislative tools we need right now, through the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, to regulate greenhouse emissions. Therefore, who is holding up what?

Second, with regard to this mantra of 13 years, 11 years in majority, I repeat the observation from my colleague, the member for Don Valley East. The Liberal government was left with deficits of \$42 billion a year from the previous Conservative government. It took five years or more to get in touch with that. We have had seven or eight straight surplus budgets, with \$60 billion paid down on the national debt. It put us in a position—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** The hon. member for Mississauga South.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member was just getting into the issue that there were certain things in this world we could not stop by passing something today and then it coming to a slamming halt. It applies to a \$42 billion deficit that has to reverse over two, three, four years. It also, I assume, refers to the generation of greenhouse gases particularly, as an example of the significant growth in the oil sands, which has a dramatic impact on the current and projected levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Could the member amplify on that?

• (1340)

**Hon. Stephen Owen:** Mr. Speaker, it takes time to develop and invest in technology, which has been done. I mentioned carbon sequestration and capture as a technology that was developed through public investment in the country, when we had the financial resources to do it. It takes time to turn it around.

When we look at project green, the 2005 Liberal budget, which had \$5 billion of additional money to go in a number of directions, that built the framework and the first phase of successive years, going up to 2012, of meeting Kyoto targets.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would inform you that I will be splitting my time with the member for Brossard—La Prairie.

I am pleased to speak today to the motion addressing climate change and the Kyoto protocol, particularly because I am a member of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and we have spent the last three months examining the question of oil sands development in Alberta.

We did a serious study of this, in the course of which we held 29 meetings and heard nearly 100 witnesses. As part of that committee's work I even had an opportunity to visit an oil sands development site, Fort McMurray. I was able to get a concrete idea of the scope of that development and its effects on the environment in that part of the country.

We now know clearly that accelerating the development of this resource will increase greenhouse gases exponentially, and this will take us even farther from meeting the objectives in the Kyoto protocol, which is binding on Canada as a result of its ratification on December 17, 2002.

The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Johanne G  linas, told us, on January 18, it is very doubtful whether the reduction we have committed to under the Kyoto protocol can be achieved, unless the oil sands issue is considered a high priority and tackled head on. She also said that whatever measures the federal government may put in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, if the question of the oil sands is not addressed, all these efforts will have no effect, because the increase will continue exponentially.

Before proceeding, I would like to add a brief comment more directly related to Quebec. While the oil industry is said to contribute significantly to the economy of Alberta, its contribution to the economy of Quebec is less obvious. That industry alone is responsible for half of the increase in greenhouse gases since 1990.

Rising exports are causing the dollar to go up, and this in turn causes problems for the manufacturing industry as a whole. The never-ending increases in the price of fuel cost our economy dearly. In other words, what happens is a transfer of wealth from the economy as a whole to the oil industry, and the best way to remedy that problem is to make the oil companies contribute, through the tax system.

Before proceeding, I would like to remind this House of what this motion says:

That, in the opinion of this House:

- (a) there is overwhelming scientific evidence that the world's climate is changing as a result of human activity and this poses the most serious ecological threat of our time;
- (b) the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto Protocol in their entirety;
- (c) the government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments;
- (d) the government must establish a 'cap and trade' emission reductions system and regulations for industry; and
- (e) the Canadian Environmental Protection Act is available immediately to launch the necessary action.

*Business of Supply*

I would remind the House that the Liberal motion before us today is in many ways a duplicate of the Bloc Québécois motion, which called for an effective and equitable plan for complying with the Kyoto protocol, and was passed in the House of Commons on May 16, 2006.

At the same time, it is unfortunate that, in less than a year, two motions addressing the Kyoto protocol have been debated in this House. This is a rather clear sign that the current Conservative government refuses to recognize climate change and does not feel bound by Kyoto. These debates are necessary because the Conservative government does not get it.

During the break, I met several primary school students and the first questions they asked me were: Why doesn't the government like the Kyoto protocol?

• (1345)

Why does he not understand that this is about our future, and that the most important thing we have to do is protect the environment?

Citizens have also contacted me about this issue. It makes no sense to them that politicians are still debating the importance of environmental issues, because it is perfectly obvious to everyone that climate change is threatening our planet and that the environment is in trouble.

It is perfectly clear to the Bloc, and that is why we made this issue a priority years ago. It is clear to us that humans are playing a major role in greenhouse gas emissions and that we are therefore very much to blame for climate change.

That is why we recognize that we have to act immediately and that is why we are constantly pressuring the current government—as we did the former government—to take concrete action. Speeches are all well and good, but our fellow citizens are demanding action. Seventy-six per cent of Quebeckers think that the government should do whatever is necessary to meet the Kyoto targets. We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet the Kyoto targets. Period. The people know it and the Bloc Québécois knows it, but the current and former governments do not seem to be clued in.

Everyone knows that the Conservative government is against the Kyoto protocol, which is not particularly surprising, given what the current Prime Minister said in 2002 when he was leader of the Canadian Alliance. He said:

Implementing Kyoto will cripple the oil and gas industry. Workers and consumers everywhere in Canada will lose. There are no Canadian winners under the Kyoto accord.

At that time, the priorities of the Alberta member for Calgary Southwest, now the Prime Minister, were obvious. The Minister of Natural Resources is in the same camp; this is what he said as a member of the opposition on December 3, 2002:

—I will start off with a very bold statement, that Kyoto should not be ratified. It is based on uncertain science with new doubts coming to light almost daily. It is based on poor economic models which hide the serious damage that will occur to Canada's economy.

On October 9, 2002, he said:

Kyoto will damage our industry but not rescue our environment. It is the worst of both worlds. Working Canadians simply cannot afford to lose \$40 billion in such a pointless exercise.

It is not hard to see where the current Minister of Natural Resources' priorities lie when he talks about “our industry” and “losing \$40 billion”.

Action taken by the Conservative government proves that its newly found interest in the environment is nothing more than pretense. The government is reinstating programs that it suspended, or even abolished, when it came to power, labelling them as inefficient. The Prime Minister has never wanted to give Quebec the \$328 million needed for the Government of Quebec to attain the Kyoto objectives in its territory.

By digging in its heels and rejecting the protocol, the government lost face with countries that had ratified the Kyoto protocol. It refuses to establish clear targets even though the oil industry is asking for them. I quote Suncor's Stephen Kaufman:

Our comments regarding legislative provisions were that a policy to reduce carbon monoxide must be established with specific targets for emission reductions for the entire economy.

In closing, we will support the Liberal Party's motion as long as the credible plan called for includes the demands of the Bloc Québécois, that is respect for the Kyoto targets, a territorial approach—because Quebec already has its own greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan—, establishing a carbon exchange in Montreal and the \$328 million needed by Quebec to attain its objective of reducing emissions to 6% below 1990 levels.

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## ROYAL ASSENT

• (1350)

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** Before questions and comments, I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received, which is as follows:

Rideau Hall  
Ottawa  
February 1, 2007  
Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bill listed in the Schedule to this letter on the 1st day of February, 2007, at 11:36 a.m.

Yours sincerely,  
Sheila-Marie Cook  
Secretary to the Governor General

The schedule indicates the bill assented to is Bill C-3, An Act respecting international bridges and tunnels and making a consequential amendment to another Act.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—THE ENVIRONMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry. I am having a hard time understanding her position. She mentioned in her speech that 76% of Quebecers wanted the government to take effective measures against greenhouse gases. I wonder what her party did in 13 years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, since emission levels rose by 35% during that time. If her party really wants to take action on the environment instead of supporting endless motions, what is she willing to do? Is she willing to set partisan politics aside and support the clean air and climate change bill our government has introduced to put an end to the alarming rise in greenhouse gas emissions?

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for his question. Our message is that the Bloc Québécois is recommending and asking that the government set targets so that all the stakeholders can do their part.

It is not the Bloc's idea to call for targets in order to establish a carbon exchange in Montreal, for example. I will quote Rob Seeley, vice-president, sustainability and regulatory affairs, with Alban Sands Energy Inc. This man works in the oil industry, and he says:

—as the government goes forward and makes regulations with respect to greenhouse gases, it should consider what we would call market mechanisms in these regulations. The regulations need to be appropriate, but at the end, I think industry is preferable to what we call market mechanisms that would have emissions trading, and therefore reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> could be considered as offsets. It's another way of funding or financing these kinds of investments.

I take a great interest in everything the Minister of Natural Resources writes and says, because I am the natural resources critic. As he himself said in the Winter 2006 issue of *Canadian Natural Gas*, “I do believe that while the government can offer support, it is the marketplace that drives and demands—.”

• (1355)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** We will continue with questions and comments.

The hon. member for Yukon.

[*English*]

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I think most members in the House know, climate change is occurring faster in the Yukon, the northwestern part of the Arctic, than any other part of the world. It is like the canary in a coal mine. It has very dangerous effects.

To work on that, the federal government has been funding an excellent institution, the Northern Climate Exchange. It is centred in Whitehorse but covers the entire Arctic for some programs. It does excellent work and makes suggestions on adaptation, but the Conservative government has cancelled it. It is going to let it expire on March 31, unless we hear some news. The employees are getting ready for layoffs.

I would like to know if the Bloc Québécois would support the members of the House who think it is very important to have institutions like that one which fight climate change and which do such an excellent job, with northern scientists and staff. Would the Bloc support having the funding reinstated on March 31?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for the question. I am not familiar with the issue raised.

However, I can say that the Bloc Québécois will fight to bring to an end the tax breaks given to oil companies, particularly the accelerated capital cost allowance for oil sands.

In view of anticipated investments of \$31 billion by 2008, my colleague surely realizes that the oil companies will be able to write off an additional \$15 billion over three years and not pay taxes on it.

The Conservative government is in a hurry to set targets so that the industry and the important players can take concrete action and invest their money in tackling climate change, which has a serious impact on our environment and our entire planet.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her thoughtful intervention in this important debate.

The reality is there is a significant change in the mix of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada particularly as it relates to the oil sands. The production of oil in the oil sands has increased dramatically, whereas in the United States it has been relatively flat and in the Middle East it has gone down. Relative to other countries, our performance on Kyoto targets relative to the targets of 6% below 1990 levels continues to grow. That is the fact, but does the member and her party believe that Kyoto is still a target worth pursuing with all of the energies that we have in the best interests of our children and grandchildren?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I believe that the Bloc Québécois position is quite clear in this regard. We must do everything possible to achieve the objectives of the Kyoto protocol. These are attainable if the government takes concrete action to achieve real, tangible results.

In our case, this will come about with the measures recommended by the Bloc Québécois, such as the territorial approach, the carbon exchange—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** We have now reached the time for statements by members.

The hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[English]***TAXATION**

**Ms. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as Canadians enter that much maligned time of year known as tax season, an unfamiliar sensation will accompany the process of filing one's tax returns, a feeling of relief. Canada finally has a government that recognizes the best place to keep Canadians' hard-earned money is in the pockets of Canadians, not in the hands of government.

Many new measures have come into effect that will significantly reduce the tax burden for Canadians, including: a permanent reduction in the lowest personal income tax rate; increases to both the basic personal and age credit amounts; new tax credits for children's fitness and public transit passes; the landmark decision of this Conservative government to allow income splitting for pensioners; and so much more.

Canadians should get used to the feeling of tax relief come tax time because this government, unlike the tax and spend and tax again Liberals, is committed to reducing the tax burden for hard-working Canadians.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, February is Black History Month. This is a time to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of black Canadians who have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate and prosperous nation that we know today. It is also an opportunity for the majority of Canadians to learn more about the experiences of black Canadians in our society and the vital role that community has played throughout our history.

Every year Canadians are invited to take part in festivities that commemorate the legacy of black Canadians past and present during Black History Month. This is a time to celebrate their many contributions which have allowed Canada to become the multi-cultural and diverse nation it is today.

Let us all join together this month and celebrate Black History Month.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Roger Gaudet (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this week an important conference on climate change is being held in Paris, where hundreds of experts on the subject will be meeting to publish a comprehensive analysis of the situation. Given the urgent need for action and the planetary challenge that climate change represents, I invite you to take part in a broad mobilization to make our environmental concerns known.

The action is simple: today, from 7:55 to 8 p.m., give the planet five minutes of respite by turning off our electrical gadgets and lights. Not only will we save electricity, but doing this will have a

symbolic effect so that we can make the world's great decision-makers aware of the urgency of the situation.

I invite all members of the public to take part in this, a big initiative that calls for a very small action. The way for us to preserve our planet is to stand together and make ourselves heard. After all, this is a planetary problem, and the environment knows no borders.

\* \* \*

*[English]***BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as you have heard in the House already, February is Black History Month.

Black Canadians have long been at the forefront of Canada's successes as a nation at home and abroad. Ordinary hard-working Canadians, such as the railway porters, have played a major role in the struggle for equality and black rights. Through their unions black porters were at the forefront as community leaders fighting for employment equity and human rights.

My hometown, Hamilton, has seen many important milestones for black Canadians over the years.

John C. Holland was the first African Canadian to win an award for his humanitarian work, receiving the City of Hamilton's Citizen of the Year award in 1953.

Canada's first vice-regal appointment of a person of black heritage was Hamilton's much respected Lincoln Alexander in 1985. Linc, as he is warmly known in Hamilton, was also the first black member of Parliament and Canadian cabinet minister. Black Canadians are musicians, athletes, civil rights champions, writers, bankers, politicians, workers and philanthropists.

I will be celebrating Black History Month in Hamilton. I invite all members of the House to take the time this month to remember and celebrate the achievements—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

\* \* \*

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Ms. Nazanin Afshin-Jam, an exceptional young Canadian woman, led an international campaign to free Nazanin Mahabad Fatehi, the Iranian teenager who was condemned to death for defending herself and her niece from attempted rape by three men.

Ms. Afshin-Jam's efforts included public rallies and speeches, international media and a worldwide petition signed by over 354,000 people.

Yesterday, thanks in large part to this international pressure, Ms. Fatehi was released from Evin prison in Iran and reunited with her family.

To quote Ms. Afshin-Jam:

Action can be taken, and the power of the individual is so strong that you can make a difference, so much so that you can have influence in saving a human life.

I hope that all colleagues join with me in congratulating Nazanin for her efforts, and that we not forget the 23 other youths currently on death row in Iran.

\* \* \*

●(1405)

#### MAURICE HUARD

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, coming back to Parliament this week, we were confronted by the tragic news that the House had lost one of its family. Maurice “Moe” Huard was the Assistant Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms since 1993. He passed away at the beginning of January after a very brief illness.

All of us knew Moe because he sat at the end of this great House in that fine chair. He served with professionalism. Moe was a professional to the core, reflective of the 21 years he served with honour in our Canadian Forces as a medic.

Although he was a professional, Moe had a contagious joie de vivre about him and dispensed great humour to all who engaged him. Moe was a part of the professional cadre of men and women who serve our House and all of us so nobly in providing security.

On behalf of the Liberal Party and all members of the House, may I extend to his wife Maria and his colleagues our deepest condolences. Parliament lost a great friend in Moe Huard and in this we are all at a loss. We will miss him deeply.

\* \* \*

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the Liberal so-called leader. He was minister of the environment, minister of intergovernmental affairs, president of the Queen's Privy Council and he had the ear of two former Liberal prime ministers.

Today, he cannot even manage his own Liberal senators. His deputy leader and his environment critic have criticized him more than the Conservatives do. He cannot make up his mind on who to have as a shadow cabinet, on where he stands on same sex marriage, on whether to let ad scammers back into the Liberal family and on whether or not Canada can even meet its Kyoto commitments.

My question is, what is Kyoto to the Liberal leader? Is it his dog or an international agreement on greenhouse gas emissions? He had 10 years to make Canada's environment a priority, yet greenhouse gas emissions went 35% beyond even his own targets.

This Conservative government will get the job done. This Conservative government is a government of action.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### RURAL HEALTH

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a conference is being held in Drummondville today on rural health.

#### Statements by Members

Its objective is to build bridges between the farming community and the health and social services network.

It has been organized by the group Au Coeur des familles agricoles, a non-profit organization that works to prevent psychological distress among agricultural workers, under the theme "Getting to know farming better, to know farmers and their families better".

The connection between the general public and the farming community has grown increasingly tenuous. There is a clear lack of understanding of the challenges and issues facing the farming community on a daily basis. This conference will allow health services workers and community organizations to become better informed about those problems.

With greater knowledge they will be able to target their services more accurately and better meet the expectations of agricultural producers.

I am sure that this conference will be a success.

\* \* \*

#### QUEBEC SOVEREIGNTY

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, With the author Michel Tremblay, playwright Robert Lepage and singer Jean-Pierre Ferland questioning the sovereigntist plan and simply no longer believing in it, now one of the strongest voices for sovereignty, the president of the Conseil de la souveraineté du Québec, Gérald Larose, is saying there will not be a referendum during the next mandate of the Parti Québécois should it form the government under the leadership of André Boisclair.

We all know that the leader of the Bloc Québécois regularly consults with Mr. Larose, and did so as recently as last November regarding his position on the issue of the House of Commons recognizing Quebecers as a nation.

In light of Mr. Larose's comments, does the leader of the Bloc Québécois agree with him? One thing is certain, the big names of sovereignty no longer believe in it. The Bloc is proving to us, yet again, its eternal powerlessness.

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#### CARNAVAL DES COMPAGNONS

**Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I want to tell you about the largest francophone festival outside Quebec. The Carnaval des Compagnons is an annual festival in North Bay and this year it is being held from February 9 to 18.

When a few people got together in 1963 to think about ways to bring together the francophone community in my riding and to organize fundraisers, little did they know they were creating such a large-scale event.

For 10 days in a row there are all sorts of shows, sporting events, plays, traditional meals and a wide range of family activities. For many, the centrepiece of the carnival is Bonhomme Carnaval, the mascot of the event, whose identity is never revealed until the last day.

*Statements by Members*

The North Bay Carnaval des Compagnons is a magnificent festival that celebrates francophone culture. I want to congratulate the organizers and encourage my parliamentary colleagues and all Canadians to put on their toques and mittens and come enjoy the carnival.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two days ago, Dr. Gordon McBean revealed that when he briefed the Liberal cabinet in 2002 on climate change and Kyoto, an unnamed Liberal cabinet minister opposed taking any action, suggesting that the Liberals did not care about climate change, but only cared about doing things that would help them win an election.

Given his bragging record about the environment, will the new Liberal leader, who would have been at that cabinet meeting as the intergovernmental affairs minister, tell Canadians which Liberal cabinet minister made that remark? Was it one of the former Liberal cabinet ministers that he brags are still a part of his caucus?

Canadians would like to know who is this unnamed former Liberal cabinet minister who did not care about climate change, and if he is now the leader of the Liberal Party or one of his trusted shadow cabinet members.

\* \* \*

**SIX STRING NATION**

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on Canada Day this past summer on Parliament Hill, a constituent, Jowi Taylor, introduced his project Six String Nation which is unique in the world.

It is a guitar assembled from 64 pieces of Canadian history and heritage, reflecting the many diverse cultures, communities and characters of the country: a piece from the Golden Spruce of Haida-Gwaii, Louis Riel's schoolhouse and Maurice Richard's Stanley Cup ring. It even includes a piece from the Centre Block, part of Sir John A. Macdonald's sideboard and copper from the roof of the Library of Parliament.

In recognition of both the unique achievement of this one remarkable guitar and of the role of all guitars of all the musicians and songwriters who have made their own unique mark on Canadian culture, I have introduced a motion proposing that tomorrow be recognized, this year and every year, as Six String Nation Day.

Join Jowi Taylor, after question period, in the Commonwealth Room to hold this beautiful piece of history. Members' portraits will join the 3,000 he has already taken at events across the country, which reveal the true face of Canada.

\* \* \*

**GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

**Mr. Ken Boshcoff (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, organizations across my riding of Thunder Bay—Rainy

River are outraged at the funding cuts made to the youth employment strategy. Dozens have written to express their concerns.

The Township of O'Connor writes:

—it is deplorable that the Conservative Government would make such a significant cut to this most valuable program.

The Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre says:

The BizKids has taught over 300 students about entrepreneurship...in our community...If we are unable to receive a summer student, I am concerned that we will not be able to offer the BizKids program this year.

The Northwestern Ontario Sports Hall of Fame writes:

—I am "living proof" of the success of this program...it was a summer job, funded through this program, that led me to my current position...and...having just celebrated my 20<sup>th</sup> year as a museum director.

These testimonials and so many others express the value of the youth employment strategy.

I once again call upon the Prime Minister to reinstate the \$55.4 million that he recently cut from this most valuable program.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in 1926 a black historian in the United States, Carter G. Woodson, launched Negro History Week, which evolved into Black History Month in 1976, the year of the American bicentennial.

The City of Montreal began officially recognizing Black History Month in 1991, and the House of Commons and National Assembly soon followed suit.

Those public institutions share one objective—to recognize the cultural, economic and political contributions of blacks to our collective wealth. We will never forget that our history has been marked by the dreadful system of slavery, which cost black populations so dearly.

The Bloc Québécois is calling on the federal Parliament to designate August 23 as the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition and to recognize the slave trade as a crime against humanity.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[English]

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today marks the first day of Black History Month. Throughout February, we celebrate the contribution of black Canadians to our national history.

Notably, Queen's University is recognizing Robert Sutherland, who, in 1852, became the first black graduate at a Canadian university and, at the time of his death, was Queen's largest benefactor.

Black History Month was created in December 1995 when the House of Commons unanimously adopted a motion put forward by my predecessor, the hon. Jean Augustine.

In 1993 Jean Augustine became one of the first black women to be elected to the House of Commons and remains one of only two black women to have ever been appointed to the cabinet.

It is an honour for me to serve as member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore since Jean's retirement. Thanks, Jean, for Black History Month and thanks for a lifetime of public service.

\* \* \*

#### MEMBER FOR ETOBICOKE—LAKESHORE

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, recently the Liberal deputy leader admitted, "People are prisoners of their past beliefs." This must give his new Liberal leader fits.

Unable to change Liberal spots, let us look at the verbal crime spree that has landed the Liberal deputy leader in the political slammer for life.

The Liberal deputy leader supports the Afghan mission while accusing his Liberal boss of running away for, "political convenience". The deputy leader also accused first nations governments of lacking, "the capacity to deliver rights, justice and equality." Can the Liberal leader let him out of jail free? I hope not.

Unlike his boss, he also supports the U.S. in Iraq. "I've done so ever since 1992," he said. He is a Liberal serial offender.

On his Liberal leader's environment record, he correctly said his leader, "didn't get it done".

The Liberal deputy leader is caught in a prison of his own past beliefs. Now he is doing hard time behind the man he thought he would be. Talk about not getting the job done.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, not only did the Prime Minister paralyze Canada on climate change, notably by cancelling regulations on industry that he must reinstate right away, but he also attempted to paralyze the world.

When the world met in Bonn last May, the Prime Minister sent his environment minister to sabotage the conference. The Canadian submission to that conference said: "Canada will not support...more stringent targets in the future."

Can the Prime Minister assure us that he is not sending his minister to another United Nations conference to yet again block international efforts to fight climate change?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition in trying to deny his own record is descending into plots and conspiracy theories.

### Oral Questions

The simple fact is that the leader of the Liberal Party had 10 years to get the job done. He did not get it done. More important, he has already said that even if he came back into power, he still would not do it. He said in the *National Post* last year, and he repeated it again today along these lines, "I will be part of Kyoto, but I will say to the world I don't think I will make it".

He did not think he would make the targets. He did not get the job done. He never will get the job done.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if we have an additional year of paralysis in Canada, in 2008 it will be very difficult to be on time for 2012.

It was not only in Bonn that he tried to sabotage and paralyze the world. Just last November, at another international climate change conference in Nairobi, Canada was again embarrassed on the international stage by the Prime Minister. Other countries slammed Canada for turning its back on Kyoto and they underlined the contrast with the Montreal conference.

Can the Prime Minister assure us that sending his minister to Paris will not again—

● (1420)

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again the reason Canada is not meeting its international targets is because of 10 years of inaction.

Let me read from the 1998 report of the former commissioner of the environment: "—the federal government is failing to meet its policy commitments—".

She said in her 1999 report: "—additional evidence of the gap between the federal government's intentions and its domestic actions".

In her 2000 report she said: "—it continues to have difficulty turning that commitment into action".

I can repeat that for 2001 to 2005, ending in 2006 where she said: "It is increasingly clear that Canada will not meet its international commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions".

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is increasingly clear because the Conservatives killed the plan to do it.

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. We have to have some order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor to put his question. He will want to do that promptly as the time is running.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**AFGHANISTAN**

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, It is not only in terms of climate change that this government is embarrassing Canada abroad. A few days ago, the Minister of National Defence adopted the vocabulary of neo-conservative Americans when he said that our soldiers were in Afghanistan in retribution for the attacks of September 11.

The Prime Minister has still not denounced those remarks by his minister. I will give him the opportunity to do so today.

Can he declare that Canada will always intervene in the world, not for retribution, but to help preserve peace and security for all people?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, of course, we are there to help the Afghan people; but, once again, the leader of the Liberal Party is trying to change the subject of the environment and his failures that are documented in the 10 reports of the former Commissioner of the Environment.

The leader of the Liberal Party has said himself what would happen if he were returned to power, "I will be part of Kyoto, but I will say to the world I don't think I will make it".

He did not make it and he still has no intention of succeeding in the future.

[English]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, how can the government represent Canada overseas if it cannot even explain to Canadians at home what we need to do in Afghanistan? This mission is not about retribution; it is about reconstruction. It is not about revenge; it is about rebuilding.

What is the minister of defence doing to re-balance the mission to increase development and reconstruction, so that our military efforts can actually succeed in building support for the Karzai government in the Kandahar region?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker—

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

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is Thursday; it is not Wednesday. Hon. members should calm down. The Prime Minister has the floor to give an answer to the question.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper:** Mr. Speaker, let me tell the House what this mission is about. It is about the best traditions of this country: brave men and women putting on the Canadian uniform, defending freedom and democracy, and protecting the rights of people around the world. That is what they are doing. Our job is to support them. The deputy leader of the Liberal Party knows that, and he should tell his leader that.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has committed \$100 million for development in Afghanistan, but this House remains completely in the dark about how those funds are being spent.

Can the Minister of International Cooperation tell us what accountability measures are in place to ensure that the funds dedicated to assistance and reconstruction are being spent wisely and for the direct benefit of the Afghan people?

● (1425)

**Hon. Josée Verner (Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we know, at the request of President Karzaï, the Government of Canada has made a commitment to assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

I would like to invite the member to consult the very complete Internet site that we put in place yesterday. He will find not only the amounts invested in Afghanistan, but also the results and the progress that we have made since we, on this side, committed \$100 million per year.

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**AEROSPACE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the Boeing file, the Minister of Industry affirmed that the Quebec aeronautical industry could easily get its share of contracts and that the government would ensure that the contracts resulted in some good technology transfers.

Is it naïveté that causes the Minister of Industry to talk this way and to think that Boeing, all of a sudden, by chance and of its own free will, would prefer to give contracts to its Quebec competitors rather than its subsidiaries and partners in the rest of Canada? Is this naïveté or bad faith?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government is rebuilding the Canadian Forces. There will be benefits for all regions across Canada.

We can see the attempts by the Bloc Québécois to pit Canada's regions against one another where this contract is concerned. It is making these attempts for one single reason, namely to hide the true problems of the sovereigntist movement.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if demanding justice and fairness means dividing Canada, well, draw your own conclusions.

Canadian automobile workers are publicly calling for the Quebec ministers in this government to intervene so that the same measures put in place to protect the automobile industry in Ontario are used when it is time to protect the aerospace industry.

What are those ministers doing?

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to be able to answer my colleague's question. What are we doing? We have policies that mean we are responding to the needs of the military, of our soldiers.

Furthermore, there will be over \$13 billion in economic spin-offs in Canada, and this will be good for Canadian aeronautical companies and the economy of Canada. We should be proud.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government is about to do a great injustice to the aeronautical industry in Quebec by refusing to force Boeing to ensure that 60% of the economic benefits of the C-17 contract go to Quebec.



*Oral Questions*

The Minister of National Defence is going even further. Can he confirm for us that the government has decided to finance aerospace contracts through cuts to contracts that have already gone to Quebec for multi-mission vehicles, as was stated yesterday and today in the *Ottawa Citizen*?

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to speak up and tell the House about the benefits that will flow from these contracts. I do not think that the opposition understands these benefits very well and how useful they will be for Canadian companies.

We are going to help Canadian high-tech and aerospace companies benefit from advanced technologies that will enable them to remain competitive on the international scene. That is what we are doing.

I am proud to be part of this government, which keeps its word.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of skating around in what the Minister of National Defence had to say, as well as the other ministers from Quebec, in regard to these major investments in military equipment. Based on the information in the *Ottawa Citizen*, the national defence minister is just adding insult to injury by depriving Quebec of both aeronautical contracts and military equipment contracts.

What are the Quebec ministers waiting for to stand up, speak out and defend Quebec?

• (1430)

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing. We are standing up at the decision-making table in this government.

That is something the Bloc Québécois can never do. It will never be able to stand up, defend Quebec's interests and act on behalf of Quebecers because it is forever in the opposition.

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#### COMMISSIONER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the dismissal of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development came as an unpleasant surprise. Ms. Gélinas provided a non-partisan voice here on matters of the environment. Her studies were always based on science and fact. And now she is gone.

Will the Prime Minister support a proposal, an amendment to the legislation, proposed by the NDP to ensure that the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development will be a senior public servant who answers directly to the House and its members, and to no one else?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government regrets Ms. Gélinas' departure. At the same time, legislation exists and the legislation is clear: the position of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development is within the Office of the Auditor General, but both report directly to Parliament.

We are certainly willing to study the NDP leader's proposals.

[English]

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we will see if there is action forthcoming.

When we watch this environment file, when we watch Mr. denial and Mr. delay bickering back and forth endlessly across this chamber citing all kinds of quotes, we know that Canadians are suffering and global science will tell us tomorrow that the entire world is suffering, and is suffering more and more.

Now we learn that greenhouse gas emissions are rising by more than 90% from coal-fired generation plants in Ontario. I want the Prime Minister to stop hiding behind Liberal failures. The Liberals promised to close those plants and they did not.

What is the Prime Minister going to do? Is he going to put limits on pollution from coal in Ontario?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the NDP will know that the present Government of Ontario made a commitment to the people of Ontario some years ago to close down the coal-fired plants. I think concern about those plants is widespread. We are going to be engaging the Government of Ontario and others in the next few weeks to make progress on this and other related files.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, former Conservative prime minister Joe Clark said he was worried about Canada's foreign policy moving closer to that of the U.S.

Mr. Clark commented that this exclusive alignment, together with a lack of priorities for developing countries and the deterioration of our relations with China, are undermining the credibility of our country.

When will the Conservatives stop moving closer to U.S. foreign policy and return to an independent Canadian foreign policy?

[English]

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clark, of course, has a distinguished record as a former prime minister and a foreign minister. He was a member of the Conservative government of the day that signed the free trade agreement and the historic acid rain treaty.

Those are landmark accomplishments that demonstrate the utility of working in a respectful businesslike way with the United States of America to achieve more for the citizens of both countries.

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on most international files, the Prime Minister has introduced himself to the world as an ideological ghost of President Bush. Mr. Clark warns that unless Canada's foreign policy remains independent we will debase our international currency.

*Oral Questions*

Does the foreign affairs minister agree that Canada has now reached the point that his former leader says is alarming due to the near exclusive relationship that the Prime Minister enjoys with President Bush?

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will not get into a discussion of ghosts of Gomery, the gun registry or the HRDC scandals, but what I will say is that Mr. Clark, like most former prime ministers and most former ministers of foreign affairs, has very strong, passionate opinions about important issues of the day.

We respect those opinions, but our Prime Minister and this government are moving forward with an agenda that is forwarding the interests of this country in a very meaningful way and making our mark on the international stage with distinction.

\* \* \*

•(1435)

**GUANTANAMO BAY**

**Hon. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a similar vein, in the last five years, the American detention centre at Guantanamo Bay has lost its legitimacy. Hundreds have been imprisoned but only a few have ever been charged with a crime. None know when or even if their imprisonment will end. Basic principles of human rights are flagrantly abused in ways that tell others it is acceptable to ignore the rights of their citizens.

Why does the government allow its perennial fear of offending the Bush administration from doing what the world calls out for, including former Prime Minister Clark, which is the closure of this unacceptable detention centre?

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that this would come from a former foreign affairs minister because this took place very much under his watch. I do not recall him being on record raising the concerns that he is now raising in opposition.

However, having said that, we have made these views known. We know that there is intention in the near future to see this facility closed. Clearly, Canada has a grave concern about any human rights violations that take place. We have been given assurances that all proper humanitarian efforts are made to protect the rights of detainees.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, five years is different from the immediacy of what happened some years ago when we were there and we had to deal with it, and the government knows that.

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

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Genuine security is based on human rights—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. We must have some order. The member for Toronto Centre could not be sitting much closer to the Chair but with all the noise I am having real trouble hearing him. I would ask hon. members to calm down and have their discussions about the questions and answers outside later. It is far more stimulating there than in here.

The hon. member for Toronto Centre.

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize that respect for human rights is important for our own security and for the future of our countries and reaction around the world is telling us that actions like Guantanamo Bay are making the United States less secure and less able to fight extremism by promoting human rights.

We put it to members of the House that in failing to protest, the government makes Canadians complicit in this behaviour and, in the end, makes Canada less secure.

Will the Prime Minister now pick up the challenge and speak for Canadians and tell President Bush that we need to have that—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, both this government and previous governments have always condemned torture and human rights violations. However, it is a bit rich now, the feigned indignation coming from the former foreign affairs minister, to stand and give us a lecture when we could easily turn the question back to him. This file did not just start when we took office. The member has as much to answer for as anyone in posing those questions.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after his meeting with Claude Bécharde yesterday, the Minister of the Environment refused to speak to the media. The previous day, he said that projects put forward would have to meet criteria that were acceptable to the federal government in order for Quebec to receive a proposed \$328 million payment. In essence, the Minister of the Environment has reached the same point as his Liberal predecessor, who ruined everything with his interference and intransigence.

Should we see this as a sign that he plans to take the same approach and negative attitude toward Quebec as his predecessor?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I had a very good meeting with my colleague, the environment minister of Quebec. I am absolutely certain that we can achieve better results by working with this minister than with Quebec's former environment minister, André Boisclair.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment says that he wants to know Quebec's greenhouse gas reduction targets before paying the promised \$328 million.

How can the Minister of the Environment have the gall to demand reduction targets from others when his government is unable to announce any of its own, when Quebec unveiled its plan some time ago and when this plan is recognized as the best in Canada?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell my Bloc colleague that I never said there were conditions, because we never gave an answer. I was at the meeting yesterday to find out what Quebec needs, and I understood the importance of the environment and actions to reduce greenhouse gases. I am very impressed. The minister gave me a great deal of information about the work that has been done in Quebec. I am quite willing to work and to continue to work with him to reduce greenhouse gases.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

**GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS**

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, for years the Conservatives criticized the Liberals for their partisan appointments. It seems like the Conservatives have caught the same bug because they have appointed the Conservative candidate for the riding of Mississauga—Streetsville, Mr. Gill, to the Citizenship Court, leaving the way clear for the Prime Minister's special advisor on the Middle East, the most recent defector to the Conservative Party.

How can the Prime Minister explain that after vehemently denouncing the partisan appointments of the Liberals, he is using the same method to compensate this defeated candidate for services rendered?

*[English]*

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to appointing only qualified people to positions like citizenship judges. In terms of the citizenship judges, the process that was put in place by the previous Liberal government was for a former Liberal staffer to do the vetting.

Obviously that is not a transparent and accountable process. We will be bringing in a new process that will actually serve the interests of Canadians and ensure that citizenship judges are qualified and accountable.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in this context, we see that the Federal Accountability Act was nothing but smoke and mirrors and hypocrisy.

Will the Prime Minister admit that this partisan appointment flies in the face of the Federal Accountability Act because at the first opportunity he has used the same approach he criticized the Liberals of using by appointing cronies to sort out his party's problems?

*[English]*

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government makes no apologies for making very qualified appointments and that is the test that we make.

In the case in question, the senior judge from the citizenship court, who is responsible for that process, indicated that "the recent nominees were indeed qualified to do the job and trained to carry out their duties".

We are proud to once again have appointed qualified people to serve Canada.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***AERONAUTICS INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since the Minister of Public Works and Government Services still does not have the courage to appear in this House, he was questioned in the other chamber about the economic benefits associated with the purchase of C-17 aircraft from Boeing. We were told that this was a matter of regional economic development, and that the Minister of Public Works and Government Services was therefore not responsible for the issue. He therefore did not answer. He has no answer here and he has no answer there.

Can we at least know who is responsible for this untendered contract? Is it the unelected Minister of Public Works and Government Services or one of his colleagues?

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think that my opposition colleague is a little upset because we are doing what his party never did for the last 13 years, that is, letting contracts that have benefits for Canadian society as a whole, at the best possible price.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what we do not do is kneel down before the Americans.

What we know is that an unelected minister is responsible for signing a contract worth several billion dollars without inviting bids. Those billions of dollars belong to Canadians.

What we have is a minister who cannot answer for his actions here in the House. He does not want to answer in the place where he is. So much for transparency; so much for accountability.

Can we at least know whether the Minister required, before signing, that Boeing commit to making new investments in Canada? Have we been had a little or a lot?

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, over \$13 billion in economic spinoffs will be invested in high quality technology for firms in the aeronautics industry and other industries. That is what the military purchases will secure for Canadian companies. I do not understand why my opposition colleague is opposed to benefits for all Canadian companies.

**Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the years, governments have all ensured that for every dollar spent to purchase military equipment there would be a dollar of economic benefits for Canada.

For the C-17 purchase, can the Minister of Industry assure us that the spinoffs for Canada will be 100% of the value of the contract?

● (1445)

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and I congratulate him on his appointment. The answer to his question is yes.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, reports indicate that Boeing will in fact not be required to invest 100% of its \$3.4 billion contract value into direct industrial benefits here in Canada.

Why is the minister allowing Boeing to rewrite Canada's industrial and aerospace policies? Why is the Canadian Minister of Industry failing to fight for Canadian industry by ensuring that 100% of the benefits will be direct benefits here in Canada?

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to ensuring that we receive dollar for dollar in Canadian industrial benefits. It is most important for us and we will have that. There will be direct and indirect benefits for Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one year ago, Canadians elected a Conservative government to bring responsible management back to Ottawa after 13 years of Liberal mismanagement.

Allegations concerning the misuse of public funds and the waste of Canadian taxpayers' money, firearms that remain unaccounted for and numerous financial irregularities have been reported with respect to funding for the Kanesatake Mohawk police.

Can the Minister of Public Safety tell us what he plans to do to expose yet another Liberal fiasco?

**Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there are serious allegations of mismanagement concerning funding for the Kanesatake police service. Unlike the former government, our government does not tolerate mismanagement of Canadian taxpayers' funds. We want answers to our questions and we want to find out who is responsible. I have asked for a forensic audit. I intend to shed some light on yet another Liberal fiasco.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CANADIAN TELEVISION FUND**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a confession to make. I had thought that the attack on the Canadian television fund and the outrageous spectacle of cable TV barons publicly defying their licence was a result of the fact that we have a minister who just cannot stand up and do her job. However, now I learn, from the details of her back room meeting with industry, a whole different picture. Industry says that the CTF is “dead, done, gone” and that it has the minister on its side.

Was the minister simply unable to stand up to the cable TV barons or was she in for the fix from the get-go?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again the member is over-exaggerating to say the least, misleading the House. Once again he proves he does not know this file, he does not know the industry and he does not know the responsibilities of a member of government.

One thing I will say is this government understands that we have a serious situation in hand. I have met with the participants and I will continue to meet with the participants. We will take the necessary steps to ensure that Canadians have a good Canadian production industry and a strong broadcasting system.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, let us be perfectly clear. The minister who is charged with defending the Canadian television fund has been an opponent of this concept from the beginning.

When she was the CRTC commissioner she was the dissenting voice against the creation of the cable production fund. She was opposed to making cable companies pay up and now she is in a position to oversee the killing of this fund.

I want to hear from her that she will stand up to the industry officials and defy what they said. When they say that this fund is now dead, done, gone, where is she taking her orders? Is she taking them from her pals in industry, or is she going to take them from this House of Parliament?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government and I as the minister are committed to all Canadians.

Again I point out that misleading and deception do not serve Canadians at all. I have always stood up for Canadian productions, but I have also always stood up for cable subscribers. I have always stood up to ensure that the needed resources for any Canadian industry should be there and that responsibility should be shared fairly and equitably across the system.

\* \* \*

● (1450)

**STATUS OF WOMEN**

**Hon. Maria Minna (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on January 19 the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women promised to go to Vancouver to meet with women's groups regarding the cuts and changes to Status of Women Canada. That was almost two weeks ago. The minister still has not set a date. These Canadian women are still waiting for their calls to be returned.

Will the minister tell the House why she promised to meet with these women's groups when she clearly had no intention of actually meeting with them? Is it that she cannot face them because she cannot defend her cuts?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the hon. member meet with that other hon. member because again, it is a matter of misleading and deception.

I have contacted those groups. We have offered them dates. We are still trying to find a mutual date. I have talked to them. It is my intention to fulfill that commitment. We have talked to them on the phone. We have offered them three dates. They have not been able to meet. We are now offering them some other dates.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Maria Minna (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us see another side. The provincial and territorial status of women ministers are meeting in Toronto today. They are meeting to develop a strategy to convince the federal minister to rescind her cuts to Status of Women Canada, but the minister was not invited because every time she has met with this group she has shown a complete lack of interest.

Why does the minister think Canadian women will take her seriously when she has been shunned by her own ministerial colleagues?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I met with my counterparts in October and November. I have spoken to them on the phone. My provincial counterparts are working very constructively with me in ensuring that we do make a difference in the lives of Canadians.

Again, it is another deception. Minister Papatello's letter says that the intent of their meeting which I welcomed and encouraged was to review the processes to make the FTP more meaningful. It is not as she portrayed. Consequently, I would suggest that the people of Ontario also be careful because Liberal ministers do mislead.

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**CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week as a result of the government's actions Standard and Poor's downgraded the credit rating of the Canadian Wheat Board.

Of course, the Minister of Agriculture shouldered no responsibility, although, and I quote, "Standard and Poor's expects the government support of the Canadian Wheat Board will continue to deteriorate as long as the current government lasts".

I challenge the minister to stand in his place and point to a single phrase from Standard and Poor's that blames anyone other than this government for what is happening.

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am puzzled by Standard and Poor's report given that the Government of Canada maintains its support for the Wheat Board. It maintains government guarantees for the Wheat Board. Basically, unless Standard and Poor's is judging Canada as a whole, I do not understand.

What I do understand is that what hurts the Wheat Board is continued accusations that it is going to close its doors. We say it is going to stay viable, it is going to stay powerful, it is going to stay optional for Canadian farmers down the road.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, some support.

The Minister of Agriculture has the audacity of saying that others, including the Wheat Board, are to blame for the new rating. This is an outrageous example of blaming the victim.

Multiple reports, including the minister's own rogue task force, have made it clear that the Wheat Board cannot survive in a dual

marketing role. Yet the government, wearing its ideological blinders, refuses to acknowledge the fact.

How much more damage does the government plan to inflict on the Wheat Board and its international reputation?

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know what does hurt the reputation of the Canadian Wheat Board. It is when the Wheat Board posts on its own website predictions of its own demise. That hurts the Wheat Board.

I think also what hurts the Wheat Board especially with farmers is when it gives out a half a million dollar bonus to its employees instead of returning that money to the farmers where it belongs.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

[Translation]

**AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD**

**Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the matter of milk protein imports, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food had promised that the issue would be resolved by January 22. Mediation between processors and producers was inconclusive and there is every indication that the minister is buying time and does not intend to settle this matter.

Can the minister tell us what he is waiting for to take action? His attitude thus far indicates that he has no intention of making a decision, as he had promised before negotiations and mediation failed.

[English]

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are working closely with the dairy farmers of Canada and with the dairy processors trying to resolve some of these problems, including the importation of milk protein concentrates and other problems.

I have a meeting next week with the dairy farmers at their annual convention on Wednesday. I will be speaking there. I am sure we will have a good exchange of ideas. I hope to fill them in on the latest steps we are going to take.

[Translation]

**Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on June 13, the House of Commons adopted a Bloc Québécois motion which set out specific criteria for limiting massive imports of milk proteins. On October 12, the Minister of Industry promised that the government would fulfill its responsibilities while the Secretary of State (Agriculture) confirmed that January 22 was the deadline. Both were quoted in *La terre de chez nous*.

Does the minister realize that his irresponsibility is costing milk producers \$250 million per year, some \$125 million since last June?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Secretary of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, negotiations have taken place between producers and processors. The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food was involved and now we see that there is no consensus. The options are on the table. The matter is being studied and we will take action.

No one can say that we are not taking action because we are the first government that has taken action in this matter.

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**HOG INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it looks like the Olymel hog slaughterhouse and meat processing plant, in Vallée-Jonction, which employs 1,100 workers, will be closing. Hog farmers do not know where they will be taking their animals. The Minister of Industry is confident that Olymel's plant in Alberta will be able to prepare chilled pork as well as the one in the Beauce.

Will the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec allow the pork industry in Quebec to disappear because the member for Beauce believes that guaranteeing quality of life for his voters is tantamount to patronage and political interference?

**Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we cannot remain indifferent when faced with the possible layoff of 1,100 individuals by an important company such as Olymel.

We hope that the two parties will go back to the table. Such job losses have a huge economic impact in a region and we believe that the parties can find a solution and come to an agreement.

\* \* \*

[English]

**SPORT**

**Mr. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are all aware that doping in sports remains an ongoing issue in the world's sporting community.

As we lead up to the 2010 Olympics hosted by the City of Vancouver in British Columbia, could the Secretary of State for Sport tell the House what action Canada is taking to ensure that Canada's 2010 Olympics will be doping free and serve as an example to young people around the world?

**Hon. Helena Guergis (Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his attention to this important file. Canada has played a leading role in the development of the International Convention against Doping in Sport. Nations worldwide are working very closely with the sport community to create an environment that will enable athletes to compete on a very level playing field.

Canadians can also be very proud knowing that their contribution will help strengthen anti-doping activities ensuring that our very talented and very dedicated athletes rise to the top and to the podium.

**STATUS OF WOMEN**

**Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there are some real contradictions here in the House. Organizations and activists have been protesting the egregious cuts to Status of Women for months. One group, as was pointed out, was forced to occupy the minister's B.C. offices.

The minister promised a meeting in person in Vancouver. We are not convinced about this. If the minister is so willing to meet, will she meet this group before March 31 when the funds run out, or do they have to occupy her offices again?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I will be meeting with them. We have offered them dates. Every date I have offered them has been prior to March 31.

• (1500)

**Mrs. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the minister has no credibility because the truth is all provincial ministers for the status of women are meeting in Toronto today. They did not invite the federal minister because she has shown no interest in working with them. She has complete disregard for the status of women. She slashed the budget, closed 12 regional offices and changed the mandate making it impossible to promote women's equality.

Will the minister just admit that she is not up to the job and step down before she does more harm to women's rights?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was informed by the host of that meeting that they are meeting so that they can make the FTP process more meaningful and action oriented. I encourage that. I think it reflects that there is a need for a change in approach. I certainly will work with them to make sure we do things that are meaningful and action oriented.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Bryon Wilfert (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a Norwegian-led effort to develop an international treaty to prohibit the use of cluster bombs is set to get under way in Oslo on February 21. Canada has always been a leader in the efforts to ban weapons that present significant risks to innocent civilians.

The Norwegians are using the Ottawa convention on the banning of anti-personnel landmines as a model for this effort. It would be an international embarrassment for Canada not to attend. Countries such as the U.S. are attending. Canada has yet to confirm its attendance.

I urge the Prime Minister to get off the fence and send a representative from Canada to the meeting. Could he confirm our attendance?

*Points of Order*

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has always been in favour of banning the proliferation of cluster munitions that cause terrible harm, drastic harm to human life. An invitation has been extended by the Norwegian government. The Norwegians have been leaders in other areas of concern where we participated in the past.

We will make a decision in the very near future. This international conference is scheduled toward the end of February. We are looking at this invitation. We will make a decision soon.

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**SENATE TENURE LEGISLATION**

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal dominated Senate is blocking debate on Bill S-4 which would impose a limit of eight years on the tenure of senators. It seems that the new Liberal leader has refused to encourage his Liberal senators to move forward.

The unelected Liberal dominated Senate is continuing in its stubborn filibuster on Bill S-4. Although the Liberal leader is on record as supporting Senate term limits, it seems the new Liberal leader has failed to get his senators to move forward on this bill.

Could the Minister for Democratic Reform please tell us when we will have an opportunity to—

**The Speaker:** The hon. government House leader.

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, incredibly today marks the 257th day that the bill limiting Senate terms to eight years has been languishing in the Senate. The two paragraph bill is only 66 words long. How hard have the senators been working? That is a rate of four days for each single word in a bill so large.

Although the Liberal leader said he supports term limits, he is apparently so impotent that his unelected senators feel free to ignore his will, adjourning debate every time the bill comes up. When it comes to leading his own senators, it seems he cannot get it done. But the bells are ringing until 3:50 today. He could go down the hall and tell his senators to do what he says, but I bet he cannot get it done.

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

[*English*]

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the government House leader, in the usual tradition, could give the House an indication from the government as to what the program is expected to be for the balance of this week and through next week.

As I ask the question, which is the usual tradition on Thursday, I would like to congratulate the new House leader for the government and wish him well in his new responsibilities. I would ask him specifically, since there has been so much information leaked by the government about prospective budget dates, would he be in a

position to clear up the confusion about when the government will table its budget this spring?

• (1505)

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fine words of welcome from the opposition House leader.

Today, of course, we will be continuing with the opposition motion. Tomorrow we will continue debate on the report stage amendments to Bill C-31, the election integrity act amendments with which we are all familiar.

For Monday and Tuesday, we are intending to call Bill C-26 on payday loans, which is at third reading, Bill C-32 on impaired driving, Bill C-11, the transport act, and Bill C-33, the technical income tax bill.

On Wednesday we hope to begin debate on the third reading stage of Bill C-31, followed by Bill C-44 relating to human rights.

Thursday, February 8 shall be an allotted day. Next Friday we would like to begin debate on the anti-terrorism motion that would extend the application of certain sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act that are due to expire.

Finally, as members know, democratic reform is a priority for Canada's new government, and given that the Liberal leader has publicly expressed his support for term limits for senators, could the official opposition inform the House as to when it can expect the unelected, unaccountable Liberal senators who are delaying and obstructing that bill to give us a chance to consider it here in the House of Commons?

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**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, during question period, in the parry and thrust of debate, I believe that the heritage minister egregiously overstepped the line when she accused me of misleading the House. I would ask her to retract that, being that I take it very seriously when I bring forward facts to the House.

I would like to reiterate what I asked the minister, which was about the fact that the CTF was in crisis. Certainly that has been proven. I asked her because of the fact that the cable giants were publicly defying the terms of their licence. That is a fact.

I pointed out details that had come from her meeting. That has been reported in the industry, with the industry paper saying that its members came out of that meeting saying that the CTF was now dead, done and gone, and that they have a minister who is listening to their concerns.

*Business of Supply*

Then I raised the question of how she has a historic antipathy toward the whole notion of production fund obligations. In 1993, she wrote in a CRTC dissenting declaration that while she was prepared to—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member may want to put all kinds of facts on the record, but points of order are not opportunities for debate.

The member has raised a point of order. He has said the minister used words that were incorrect in her answer by suggesting that the hon. member had misled the House. Now he is putting another set of facts here, which could go on for some time. I respect the fact that he may be interested in doing that, but there are ways he can do it. He can arrange for a late show, for example, in respect to the question he asked today, and have a much more extended debate on the subject then. In terms of the facts, that is exactly what he should do.

With respect to the statement the minister made that the hon. member misled the House, I point out to him that the Chair has never ruled, that I am aware of, that stating that a member has misled the House is out of order. “Deliberately”, yes, but members mislead the House for various reasons. Members may make a statement that is perfectly correct, but the person hearing it is perhaps not thinking straight, gets things mixed up, is misled, and therefore thinks the House has been misled because the person thinks everyone thinks like that member. Misleading the House has never been unparliamentary that I am aware of.

While I respect the hon. member's objection, I do not believe he has a valid point of order in that the minister, and I listened very carefully, did not say that he deliberately misled the House, which of course would have invoked all kinds of censure from the Chair. I respect the hon. member's view, but in the circumstances I do not believe he has a valid point of order.

We have another point of order, this one from the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the same response from the same minister, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, she quoted from a letter received from an Ontario minister, Minister Papatello. Having quoted from that letter, the minister should be tabling that letter for the House, I believe, so that we can all read it at our leisure. I would invite the government House leader to make sure that happens forthwith.

**The Speaker:** I am sure the hon. government House leader will take the point of order under advisement and return to the House in due course with his response.

Is the member for Eglinton—Lawrence also rising on a point of order?

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. During question period, in an exchange between the government House leader and a member of the Bloc Québécois regarding the processes followed for making appointments, specifically with regard to citizenship court judges, I believe the government House leader is very interested in ensuring that the correct process attributed to us is actually identified, us being the former government.

The government House leader indicated that a former Liberal staffer vetted all appointments. The fact of the matter is that in order for someone to have become a candidate, he or she would have had to write an exam, submit to an oral examination, be brought into a list, go through a—

•(1510)

**The Speaker:** I am sure the House is delighted to hear about this process, but it does not sound to me like a point of order. It sounds like an explication or explanation of what the minister was trying to say in his answer that is perhaps more detailed.

We recognize that in question period there are limits of 35 seconds on the answer, so the minister could not have gone on at length about the previous process if he had wanted to, not at the length that the hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence is doing so now. Since it does not sound to me like a point of order, I think we will move to the next subject, which I hope will be orders of the day.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

#### OPPOSITION MOTION—THE ENVIRONMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Hon. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe that you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That at the conclusion of today's debate on the Opposition Motion in the name of the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, all questions necessary to dispose of this motion be deemed put, a recorded division deemed requested and deferred to 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 5, 2007.

**The Speaker:** Does the chief whip of the official opposition have the consent of the House to propose this motion at this time?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Marcel Lussier (Brossard—La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Beauharnois—Salaberry for kindly sharing his time with me.

The motion from the Liberal Party is divided into five broad statements. The first of these statements is that the world's climate is changing as a result of human activity. In my opinion, the government should immediately recognize this statement and accept this as a fact. In addition to accepting it, the government has a duty to disseminate this message by all available means and to publicly promote in our schools and universities the message that our planet is changing as a result of human activity.



This government has the very important responsibility of alerting the public with the help of tools such as films, including, for example, the film by Al Gore, the former vice-president of the United States. It is readily available in all good video outlets. As the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley proposed in his remarks, panel discussions and other activities surrounding this film also constitute a very significant factor that has to be considered. Scientists and upper-atmosphere chemical analysis confirm to a large degree that our planet is changing as a result of human activity.

The second main statement in the Liberal motion declares that the most serious ecological threat of our time is climate change caused by greenhouse gases. I do not need to remind members of the observations that have been made recently in the north, showing melting glaciers and the threat of higher sea levels. Let us also consider the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, along with the risk of losing certain wildlife species. In Canada, the species most at risk is the polar bear. That could result in a very significant ecological imbalance in our north and that imbalance could have repercussions on Canada's fishery.

The third statement in the Liberal motion is that the government must reconfirm Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto protocol. The Bloc Québécois is very clear on our approach. We want a territorial approach and that way, we know that Quebec can achieve its reduction objectives by targeting the biggest producers of greenhouse gases. Quebec does not need a reduction plan for its coal-fired generating stations. There are none in Quebec. Less than 3% of Quebec's energy is produced with fossil fuels or nuclear power.

According to the latest government information, Quebec's electricity is 97% hydro. In 2002, 60% of Canada's electricity was hydro, thanks to the 97% share in Quebec. The second largest power source was coal.

The picture is different in the United States. Fifty per cent of its production is coal-generated, followed by nuclear at 20%, natural gas at 18%, and barely 7% for hydro.

Mexico too is heavily dependent on fossil fuels. Taking together oil, which generates 40% of Mexico's electricity, natural gas at 33%, and coal at 8%, we find that 81% of Mexico's electrical production comes from fossil fuels, in comparison with only 12% from hydro.

● (1515)

These three countries therefore have different problems. The best way to reduce greenhouse gases differs, therefore, from one to the next. The same is true of Canada itself, since the provinces do not emit greenhouse gases in the same way.

We feel, therefore, that the sectoral instead of territorial solution proposed here, which the government wants to adopt, is inappropriate and unfair. It overlooks the polluter pays principle. Quebeckers have made wise choices. They did so in the past by investing massively in hydroelectricity.

The table illustrating the increase in greenhouse gases shows that Quebec saw its emissions rise by 6.6% between 1990 and 2003. This increase was due largely to the transportation sector. The increase here was 19.9% between 1990 and 2003. At the same time, industry cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 6.8%. During this same period,

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the residential, commercial and industrial sectors also saw their emissions rise by 19%. These figures show very clearly what area Quebec should target in particular: transportation.

The Government of Quebec has included the transportation sector in the plan of action it has given us for 2006-2012. It focuses on achieving reductions in the transportation sector by promoting mass transit. The \$328 million that the government is asking the federal government for is specifically for mass transit, commuter trains, improved subways and more priority traffic lanes. Urban transit and mass transit are very important in the Government of Quebec's plan of action.

The government is also addressing the automobile sector. It wants fleets of ecological vehicles for its staff, its government and its many ministries. It will move swiftly in this area over the next six years by investing in hybrid cars with low fuel consumption. The \$328 million will be well used. The objectives are clearly focused and well outlined.

The Government of Quebec has a well-structured plan and its objectives are well known. They can be found in a document prepared in 2006 entitled, "Quebec Action Plan for Climate Change". In order to reduce greenhouse gases it is very important to reduce fuel consumption in Quebec. The best way to do so is to promote mass transit.

Let us now talk about the credible plan that the government is asked to create. The former government had a green plan that had disastrous results, as we know, since it was based on voluntary programs. Environmental groups regularly propose credible plans to solve the problem of greenhouse gases.

● (1520)

Just look at the Coalition Québec-vert-Kyoto, which targets 11 very important elements for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We also have proposals from the Climate Action Network, which identifies seven very specific points for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. There are even ordinary citizens sending us ideas.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. members for their attention and I am prepared to answer their questions.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government seems to indicate that one of the problems it has with all of this is that we are well beyond the targets of 1990, in fact a 6% reduction over 1990 levels, and that somehow nothing has been done to stop that and reverse it in some short term period.

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The government itself, in its draft clean air plan, had set targets out to 2050 in achieving some sort of long term targets, so there seems to be a contradiction. The former government has been criticized for not making progress in the short term, when the government itself is not prepared to even make any progress until some 46 years out.

Would the member like to comment on the realistic approach, or maybe unrealistic approach, that the so-called new government has toward climate change solutions?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for that question.

I would like to see the figures for the current government's action plan. The figures are clearly set out in Quebec's plan. We know what the Government of Quebec's plans are for transportation, industry, waste material and agriculture. It is this overall plan we are not seeing.

Quebec's plan, which is very well laid out, as I mentioned, also sets targets. The federal government's green plan has no targets. We are waiting for these targets, which will tell us where the government plans to direct its efforts.

Blame is laid on Canada or the policies of the previous Liberal government and people talk about a 30% to 35% increase, but we also need to look at the different provinces and where this 30% increase is coming from.

I explained earlier that the target in Quebec is 6% and that we can reach it or reduce emissions to 1990 levels and by a further 6%, which was the Kyoto target. But I think that the other provinces need to apologize and say where they are going to target their efforts.

We have heard a bit about Ontario's program, which will target coal-fired plants, but have we heard anything about greenhouse gas emission reductions by oil companies in the west?

• (1525)

[*English*]

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what has been most dispiriting in the House, and I think to all Canadians, is this. We are dealing with what polls show is the most important issue affecting Canadians, yet we are seeing a steady flow of diatribe and a lack of solutions coming from the Minister of the Environment.

With this most important issue, there are solutions the government can adopt based on existing technologies, and I will give two of them.

First, the most effective way of reducing the burning of fossil fuels and the production of greenhouse gases is how we build our homes and buildings. We can use existing technologies in fact to reduce, by up to 70%, the utilization of fossil fuels and how we heat buildings.

The second thing we can do, as an example, is have vehicular emission standards. We could remove vehicles that were built pre-1986, which produce 47 times the emissions of those built after 1996.

Does my hon. colleague not think that the government has an obligation and a responsibility in the House to articulate very specific solutions to reduce the burning of fossil fuels and the production of greenhouse gas emissions and that those are two solutions that would work?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Lussier:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his question. I quoted a document earlier in my presentation. If the government wants tips on how to reduce oil consumption, I suggest that it refer to the document put out by the Government of Quebec, entitled "Quebec and Climate Change, A Challenge for the Future". This report suggests many solutions, too many for me to list here. I suggest that people consult "Quebec and Climate Change, A Challenge for the Future", dated October 16, 2006.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Susan Kadis (Thornhill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Don Valley West.

I rise today proudly representing my constituents in Thornhill who wish to make their voices heard loudly on this compelling issue of our time. The residents of Thornhill want a sustainable environment, one where they can breathe clean air, where their children will have a healthy long life and ensure that their children's children have a healthy planet they can call home.

Like many of my constituents, I am deeply concerned that our environment is deteriorating at a rapid rate before our very eyes under the current minority Conservative government. By not charting a course that will put Canada in the lead, the Conservatives are abandoning our environment, the health and welfare of Canadians, the need to combat climate change and map out a strategy for the transition to clean energy, putting our future well-being and prosperity in jeopardy.

There is worldwide recognition, backed up with concrete scientific evidence and wisdom, that the climate is changing at a rapid rate as a result of human causes that require man made solutions. This is a global, borderless problem. The IPCC report, which is due to be released tomorrow in Paris, states "the warming of the climate is unequivocal". A solution will require the efforts of all citizens of the globe and all countries to do their parts. This can only be done with strong leadership and multilateral action. Canada has an absolute obligation to future generations and to all citizens of the planet to make the fight against global warming a top priority.

Canadians are already feeling the effects of climate change as extreme weather has become the phrase of the 21st century. As each summer gets hotter, we see the number of severe storms and floods increase.

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Global warming is a real and serious threat to our planet, which cannot be ignored. The Conservative government's role is to work on behalf of Canadians. It cannot afford to abandon Canada's commitment to the Kyoto protocol. What I do not understand is, with this knowledge, why does the Conservative government have its head stuck squarely in the sand, which has cost Canadians one full year of progress on this most pressing issue of our time?

Under programs set in place by the former Liberal government, we already had a made in Canada approach and a plan to ensure that future generations would enjoy clean air, water, land and energy. Project green, the climate fund, the partnership fund and the EnerGuide program were all made in Canada. We had a progressive, collaborative and multilateral approach to achieve our goals and worked hard toward meeting our commitments to the Kyoto protocol.

The former Liberal government signed on to Kyoto as a partner in a global commitment to take action on global warming and the environment. How can Canadians trust the Prime Minister to take charge of the environment when the very same Prime Minister has said that the science of climate change is "tentative and contradictory". He ridiculed the Kyoto accord as nothing more than a "socialist scheme" and "environmental fraud". It is comments like these that make the House, and in fact all Canadians, seriously question the credibility of any plan or hastily put together announcement put forward by the government on the environment.

It is time that the government gets the environmental policy out of reverse, put us back in first gear and reconfirm Canada's commitment to Kyoto. The clean air act has done nothing except undermine Canada's long-standing commitment to protecting our environment. The act allows for greenhouse gas emissions to rise until 2025, delaying action for decades, decades in which a firm commitment and action on environmental protection is critical to our planet and future generations.

Not only has the Conservative government called into question Canada's commitment to the environment on the world stage and caused international embarrassment with its isolationist approach, it has also cut important federal partnerships with the provinces and territories, increasingly narrowing our capacity to lead and diminishing our national potential. Last year the Prime Minister refused to honour a \$538 million agreement between the governments of Canada and Ontario to shut down coal-fired electricity production plants. Further, the minority government refused to honour commitments in the partnership fund to fund climate change programs undertaken by provinces and municipalities, for example, resulting in a \$328 million loss to the province of Quebec alone for its Kyoto plan.

The provinces want to effect change in the environment and so do Canadians. Why is the Prime Minister ignoring these clarion calls and sending successful programs to the cutting room floor? The proof is loud and clear in the Conservative's swift actions to arbitrarily gut 92% of the program funding for climate change programs based strictly on ideological reasons and not in what is in the best interests of Canadians.

● (1530)

The Conservatives cancelled and shut down successful climate change programs in Canada like the one tonne challenge, EnerGuide, the wind power production incentive and the renewable power production incentive and then, a year later, they turn around and reintroduce many of the same programs, watered down and wrapped with a big blue ribbon and try to pass them off as their own.

I know first-hand that the residents of Thornhill do not need to be woken up by polls to the importance and urgent need to take steps proactively to protect the environment. I have met with and have received letters and e-mails from Thornhill residents of all ages, backgrounds and professions. The message is consistently clear. They are calling for a federal government that will be responsible on climate change and the environment and not sit on the sidelines. Canada needs to be at the table internationally.

Canadians also want to know what they can do. The way they see it is that the more we can do now, the more their children and grandchildren will benefit down the road.

My constituents want a federal government that will take steps toward protecting their health, their safety and their infrastructure, the fate of all which rests squarely on a sustainable environment. Thornhill residents value deeply our quality of life like all Canadians. They want a more energy efficient and sustainable economy that will provide and ensure a better quality of life for themselves and for generations to come.

The previous government, under the leadership of the Liberals, did set in place a multifaceted foundation, a plan with a mission: to combat the damage done and prevent further damage from occurring through education, conservation and refocusing our need for energy through the development of renewable and clean energy sources and innovative technology.

The one tonne challenge provided funding to grassroots organizations in their efforts to educate and engage Canadians to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as to launch a national educational program and campaign to make Canadians more aware of our habits, our energy use and encourage, by virtue of that, our conservation.

In total, the previous Liberal government committed \$4 billion in the 2005 budget for its climate change plan, which included expanding the one tonne challenge as well. Programs, like the EnerGuide for houses retrofit and the EnerGuide for low income households, were exactly the positive, cost effective, made in Canada energy efficiency programs the Conservatives themselves endorsed in the last campaign.

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On hearing of the cancellation of these programs, the York Regional Municipality, among others, immediately passed a motion outlining the detrimental and far-reaching effect this decision would have in our community and our country. It requested the federal government to reconsider its faulty decision. For low income households that were struggling with the 60% rise in home energy costs between 1992 and 2005, this program achieved two important goals: conservation and real savings for Canadians who needed it most.

These programs were oversubscribed. The Liberals set in place a program that was well received. It was engaging Canadians who wanted to contribute and who wanted to be part of the solution of preserving our natural environment, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and offered them the great opportunity to save their hard-earned money by reducing their energy bills at the same time.

There is no logic in systematically dismantling programs and then resurrecting them a year later when the government realizes the horse has left the barn and it needs to quickly show some action.

The issue of climate change, as I have said before, is a borderless issue and one where strong leadership and a will for collective responsibility is a prerequisite for making progress on climate change. The Conservative government, with its ill-conceived clean air act, is abrogating its responsibility, just as it has demonstrated with its short-sighted cuts to other areas such as literacy and women's programs. It illustrates definitively a complete disconnect between Conservative members and the needs of Canadians.

We must fully honour our commitment to Kyoto. The Liberals have laid the groundwork and now we must move forward decisively. We must rejoin the battle on climate change, not retract. We must return to Kyoto. Reducing greenhouse emissions and cleaning up our global environment with our international partners together is critical to the future of our planet and to all of us. Instead of playing politics and focusing attacks on the opposition, the government should be attacking the issue head on.

There is no silver bullet and no single policy or program that will immediately solve the challenge we face in protecting our environment. We need to take action now, together. We must be fully committed partners. We must take action on all fronts in developing energy efficiency, encouraging and supporting innovation and renewable energy sources so that we and future generations can enjoy clean air, clean water and clean land.

We are global citizens and we must not turn our backs on our collective responsibility. Canada needs to recommit to fully honouring the principles and targets of the Kyoto protocol now in their entirety. The government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitment.

• (1535)

**Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member on the issue of technology.

I hear time and time again that Ontario is shutting down its coal-fired plants. Ultimately, that was a promise made and another promise broken by the provincial Liberal government. It made that bed and it should sleep in it. I would like to ask the member a

question about the silliness of such a suggestion because, obviously, that would require the Ontario government to simply purchase more power to replace the lost power from coal-fired plants in Michigan that produce even more pollution.

Technology exists and has existed for quite a while for clean coal which would reduce the pollutants by 90% but the federal Liberal government did not get the job done. Whatever will get votes is what the provincial Liberal government does.

In Ontario, on the hottest days when power usage is at its peak, the government sends out a brownout warning and factories shut down their consumption and fire up diesel generators to produce their own cogeneration. On the hottest days of the summer in Ontario the answer is to not to use technology but to shut down the coal-fired plants, which means using thousands of generators that pollute the air even worse.

Is the member aware of any other technology, for example, tidal turbine? This government put a tidal turbine in the ocean—

• (1540)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** The hon. member for Thornhill.

**Mrs. Susan Kadis:** Mr. Speaker, the government sent the wrong message to all industries. It sent the message of retraction, as I said before. Its naysayer attitude is undermining the capacity and the great drive of many as we speak now to develop this new technology. It is precisely because of the 13 years that the member's party was a government in waiting that it did not come up any clear alternatives to Kyoto rather than repackaging our ideas as its own.

It is one thing to build on improvement but it is another to do nothing at all and set the wrong tone. The government is sadly lacking in leadership and stewardship on this most important issue. It is very disingenuous for anyone from the Conservative government to talk about moving forward when all it has done is steadily move us backward and lost time.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I remember taking part in an argument about how to move forward on the environment under the former government and the plan that the Liberal government was absolutely committed to then was voluntary emission standards for industry. It said, "We are very positive. We are working with industry. Voluntary emissions will get the job done". Now of course we are 30% higher.

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At the time I thought that voluntary emissions was sort of like voluntary drinking and driving regulations with the Liberals saying not to worry, they will be able to buy sobriety credits so that for people who get caught once driving drunk, they can buy a sobriety credit. That seems to me to be the emissions trading scheme that they were floating. No wonder people are cynical. We have seen this tossed around like a political football for years and nobody has moved forward.

We have an opportunity in this Parliament before the next election to come forward with something. Right now we have the clean air act, which I will say is probably the most useless act ever brought into the House in its entire history, but right now we have an opportunity, if all four parties agree, to get this passed and to put in the clear mandates and limits. We can actually get something done for the Canadian public.

As New Democrats, we are pushing to get this act in as soon as possible. I am asking the member if the Liberal Party will work with the NDP, the Bloc and the Conservatives to ensure we come out of this Parliament with something that we can take back to the Canadian public and say that we actually did something for a change instead of just talking about it.

**Mrs. Susan Kadis:** Mr. Speaker, I wish it were true but the reality and the facts speak for themselves. The NDP has no credibility on this issue as it helped to support the backward motion of the Conservative government, triggering the election that effectively killed Kyoto, Kelowna and the national child care and early learning programs.

The NDP does not want to move forward. It has shown it with its actions. It has no credibility whatsoever. We are the only ones who actually put in place a plan and never moved with the government and the opposition to dismantle it—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I would ask all hon. members to allow the people giving responses or asking questions the opportunity to do so.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Don Valley West.

**Hon. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do today is discuss three points. One of them is very much inspired by the intervention by the Minister of the Environment this morning who described Kyoto as a distraction from better ideas like Bill C-30. He said, as well, that Kyoto was a 50 year marathon.

Today I want to do three things. The first is to show why Kyoto is not a distraction; far from it. It is a crucial and essential component to any climate change plan in Canada.

Second, I want to say that if we are going to have a 50 year marathon we need to get out of the starting blocks sooner rather than later and now is the time to do it.

I also would like to describe what the elements of a real climate change plan would look like as opposed to the dribble of reannouncements in a weakened form of things that we introduced, as well as Bill C-30, which, as the member from Timmins pointed out, is one of the worst pieces of legislation ever to hit this House, even though he decided to bring it back for reasons that are not entirely clear to us.

If time permits, my third point will be to set out four criteria by which any climate change plan can be judged for its effectiveness.

I will begin with the necessary connection between Kyoto and a climate change plan in Canada. By definition, climate change is a global problem requiring a global solution. The Kyoto protocol is the only global forum in which the world can come together. Despite the imperfections of the protocol, it is the only global forum in which we can collectively advance this file.

It is true that Canada's greenhouse gas emissions are only 2% but if we expect others, as the government does, such as India, China and the United States, to do their part, we need them to join in, not for us to leave Kyoto or to ignore Kyoto. We need to stay in and we need to stay in in good faith, as we did under the previous government, to do our part and to help others, particularly developing countries, do their part as well. A global problem demands a global solution and the only global structure for doing that is the Kyoto protocol.

Kyoto will help a Canadian climate change plan. First, it puts our targets and goals into an international framework. It gives us a sense of deadlines, a sense of urgency. If we do not set these targets and these deadlines we will take no action whatever.

Second, if we in good faith attempt to meet our targets and timetables, we leverage our success and results to get other countries to do their part. It also sets in perspective what is our fair share of this problem. We cannot do this in isolation for a global problem.

The third point is that the Kyoto protocol is the only one which gives us access to international mechanisms, like the clean development mechanism, to help other countries, particularly developing countries, meet their targets. It also has the effect of making life easier for Canadian industry.

We forget that when we agreed to international mechanisms, like the clean development mechanism, which allows us to work with other countries to get credits, it was at the request of the Canadian business community.

It is interesting that in one of today's newspapers Stavros Dimas, who is the environment commissioner for the European Union, said this of the clean development mechanism:

This [mechanism] allows national governments to meet part of their Kyoto target by financing emission-reduction projects in the developing world. One tonne of carbon dioxide has the same effect whether it is emitted in Montreal, Mexico or Mumbai. Currently, 168 countries, covering over 90 per cent of the global population, can engage in this emerging carbon market.

Using CDM allows the EU to meet its Kyoto target at lower cost. Most importantly, it also supports investment to boost clean growth in developing countries, demonstrates the potential of new, clean technologies, allows developing countries access to modern technologies and gives EU companies access to new markets. It also means that many more countries benefit from participating in the global effort to limit climate change.

● (1545)

That is why we need to be in the Kyoto protocol and that is why there are these references in the motion today that we must do our part within that framework.

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The second question I asked was: What were the elements of a plan B, a serious plan, as opposed to dribs and drabs of announcements in a feeble form of projects that were cancelled a year ago, and of a bill which confuses climate change with air pollution?

The problem we face in reducing greenhouse gases can be divided into more or less six equal components.

Greenhouse gases are produced by electrical generation, upstream oil and gas, heavy industry, residential and commercial, transportation, and agriculture and waste. Each one of those, if we are going to have a solution, takes a treatment and a set of projects, and a set of programs to deal with. They are interrelated, but they are also separate.

How do we imagine undertaking this great enterprise?

It seems to me that if climate change is the problem which every scientist in the world describes and has the economic consequences which Sir Nicholas Stern has described if we do not take action, we need to imagine ourselves mobilizing as we did during the second world war, mobilizing our economy, mobilizing our industry.

It is worth noting that we did that in a five-year period. We went from zero military production to full military production in a five-year period. We knew how to do it as Canadians. That happens to be exactly the same time that remains between now and 2012, the first Kyoto implementation period.

When we did it in World War II, it had the effect of totally transforming the Canadian economy, of creating a great industrial power. That is the way in which we need to view our tackling of the six great challenges, the six more or less equal slices that will require our solution.

What we need, in effect, is to couple our meeting of Kyoto targets, a response to global warming as a new industrial and, I would add, agricultural strategy which will transform Canada's economy for the 21st century, based on energy saving, innovation, and new techniques for agriculture and natural resources.

This will be a great project for Canada. It is never a mistake to undertake measures which save energy, and a great deal of what we are talking about, five-sixths of those slices, are directly about energy.

Finally, I said that there were four criteria by which any plan which addressed these six issues would be judged.

First, does it actually lead to measurable greenhouse gas reductions?

Second, is it efficient economically? Does it help us to be competitive and innovative? Do we undertake measures which are the cheapest way of getting there, as the European commissioner suggested?

Third, which is of concern to all of us, is, is it politically saleable? Is it socially just? Are we being unfair to certain segments of the population? That political test, which is our business, is hugely important, but I think the Canadian people want us to show political

will. I think the climate, in every way, has changed not only the natural climate but the political climate.

Fourth, whatever measure we undertake, is it administratively feasible? Is it the simplest way of getting there? Which leads us to market-based regulation solutions like cap and trade which is probably, as we have learned in the fight against acid rain, the simplest, most elegant way of bringing around real reductions of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gases.

We know that if industry is set a target, given a cap, it will find a way, without our telling it what it is. It will be incented to produce surpluses, to trade and sell to other industries. This is the success, to date, of the European model.

So, with those words, I heartily endorse this motion and wait for questions.

● (1550)

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the presentation of my Liberal colleague. He knows, as we all do, that Canadians are asking for much more than what we have seen so far from the government, where the Prime Minister is Mr. denial and the Leader of the Opposition is Mr. delay, on this critical issue of climate change.

We are seeing the impacts this winter, certainly in British Columbia in the Vancouver region. We have seen the impacts firsthand of the fact that this file has been neglected for the last 14 or 15 years. Evidence has continued to mount and no action has been taken.

We in the NDP forced a parliamentary committee to be put into place that would actually draft the legislation that Canadians are calling for. The Conservatives are of course trying to delay the legislation. The member has made a presentation that very effectively shows that perhaps the Liberal Party has learned something. Why are the Liberal Party members on the committee pushing for delay? Any work coming forward would come after the budget is presented. We do not know if Parliament will even be in session after the budget is presented.

My question to the hon. member is quite simple. Will the member convince his colleagues and push himself for a timeline that will bring this legislation that is sorely needed by Canadians back to Parliament within four weeks as the NDP proposed and as the NDP has been pushing for? It is a very simple question. I hope the member will have a simple answer.

● (1555)

**Hon. John Godfrey:** Mr. Speaker, the NDP is totally muddled on this issue. The member for Timmins—James Bay just told us that Bill C-30 was the worst piece of legislation ever to hit the House. We agree with him, as did the Bloc Québécois and the major environment groups. We said to kill it dead.

Why then would the NDP wish to revive the worst piece of legislation ever brought before the House? The NDP agreed with us that we do not need the legislation. We can legislate and use all the regulatory power of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act now. We do not even need the bill.

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Therefore, why would the hon. member suggest reviving something his fellow member described as the worst piece of legislation ever brought before the House? We can do it better with existing legislation.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Don Valley West for articulating a series of very constructive and specific solutions to deal with a problem that is gripping the nation and the world.

I want to focus on three areas where perhaps he can enlighten us. First, does he not see that the government is employing a tactic of essentially taking our old ideas, dressing them up, watering them down, and reintroducing them as its own? For example, there is the EnerGuide program that he was involved in.

Second, does he not see that tax shifting is something that could be utilized by the government now with existing legislation in order to use economic and financial carrots and sticks to move both industry and non-industrial polluters into utilizing alternative sources of energy and reducing their production of fossil fuels?

Third, does he not see that the impact of reducing our fossil fuels is intimately entwined with our security sector? By reducing our dependence on fossil fuels from the Middle East, we will be able to have a lessened dependence on this very volatile area and, therefore, disengage ourselves from an area that is fraught with all manner of security problems that is impacting upon Canadians today?

**Hon. John Godfrey:** Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to yes, yes and yes. That would be short.

In terms of the first point which is the rehashing of the previous Liberal government's programs which were dropped a year ago without evaluation and which were praised, by the way, by the late, lamented, Commissioner of the Environment, who said that they were effective. What we see now is a feeble simulacrum of those programs. They are a shadow of what was proposed. No one believes the government.

In terms of the second point of tax shifting, this must be part of the package. I would remind members of the House that we had a binding deal with the large final emitters which had a regulatory regime which was going to be in place by 2008. It was not voluntary. It would have yielded 45 megatonnes of carbon dioxide.

Finally, on the fossil fuel point, where Canada unlike Europe is less dependent on foreign fossil fuels, the point is that we do as a world society need to make the shift from a diminishing resource, both in terms of natural gas and oil sooner rather than later, both because the cheap stuff is running out. The longer we use it the more we add to the burden on the atmosphere.

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak today to this motion and to highlight the efforts of Canada's new government to undertake and deliver real environmental improvements through targeted infrastructure investments.

I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague from Louis-Hébert. I will outline for Canadians and parliamentary colleagues how this government is delivering true environmental benefits across Canada through its targeted infrastructure spending efforts.

I will also highlight how the government is working extensively with partners at the provincial and municipal level to focus our efforts on infrastructure priorities. These priorities include improvements to Canada's water supply and improvements to mass transit that are paying immediate dividends in improving the quality of life.

However, first, I think it is important to provide some background on Canada's infrastructure needs. The former government did not focus its resources on closing the infrastructure gap and that has resulted in significant challenges and pressures on this country's infrastructure.

[*Translation*]

Actually, according to a study by Transport Canada, the economic cost of traffic congestion in Canada's large urban centres is estimated at about \$3.7 billion a year—close to \$1.7 billion alone in the greater Toronto area.

This calculation does not include the financial impact on our health and our quality of life. Transportation is one of the largest sources of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, and this sector will play a major role in our efforts to improve air quality for all Canadians.

As we know, today's economy requires major movements of goods and people, and this has impacts on the environment such as air and water pollution.

These environmental impacts are transformed into real social and economic costs, and have an impact on Canadians' health and quality of life.

[*English*]

Growth in trade and the continued dominance of just in time delivery models in the freight sector are also leading to significant increases in activity. Overall, freight movement is expected to increase by an incredible 60% between 1990 and 2020, with the largest growth in the aviation and trucking sector.

From 1995 to 2003, the freight moved by truck measured by tonne-kilometres increased by 63%. What do those numbers mean? They mean major air pollutants from transportation activities including carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and volatile organic compounds have been increasing, leading to the formation of ever increasing amounts of smog.

Transportation has been linked to 81% of Canada's total carbon monoxide emissions and to 60% of Canada's total nitrogen oxide emissions. Transportation is also the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. Total transportation related greenhouse gas emissions increased by 20% between 1990 and 2003.

Approximately two-thirds of these transportation related greenhouse gas emissions occur in urban areas. Smog has been linked to numerous health related problems including cardiovascular ailments and respiratory diseases, notably increased asthma rates particularly among children.

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●(1600)

*[Translation]*

I will try to give you an idea of what this represents in costs for Canadians. The Asthma Society of Canada estimates that more than \$12 billion is spent annually on asthma care and treatment. Close to 12% of Canadian children suffer from asthma and every year nearly 150,000 Canadians go to emergency rooms because of an asthma attack.

Is reducing traffic congestion the only solution to the problem? Unfortunately not, but reducing traffic congestion by promoting the use of mass transit will improve our living conditions in the long term. And if that means that fewer Canadian children will suffer from asthma, it will be even better.

To this end, we have presented measures to encourage the use of mass transit, while investing in the growth of mass transit programs.

As the government, we believe that we should provide the necessary means to ensure that Canadians use mass transit more. So we have, for example, dedicated \$1.3 billion to mass transit in order to relieve congestion in our urban centres, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and improve the quality of life in our cities—\$900 million in a trust for mass transit infrastructure, and \$400 million in the form of agreements with the provinces and territories.

When I was chairman of a transit corporation, I was able to see not only how important public transit is in a growing community but also how urgent it is to provide stable, foreseeable funding for it. When we talk about transportation, however, we must not think solely in terms of big money and big projects.

For a lot of people, going to work or other places and then getting home is an everyday concern and accounts for a significant share of their personal budget. It has been calculated, for example, that in 2003 a Canadian household spent an average of \$8,353 on transportation—less than on housing, but more than on food.

That is why the new government is giving public transit users a federal tax credit to cover the cost of their monthly transit pass.

●(1605)

*[English]*

This investing in helping Canadians with the cost of bus passes is a tangible effort to provide them relief from the burden of transit costs. Our priority is clear. We will help Canadians by helping the Canadian economy, and we will help the Canadian economy by investing in environmental improvements that enhance the lives of Canadians. This vicious circle has at its core the recognition that this is a joint effort and the federal government must partner with and support other levels of government.

*[Translation]*

As well, all of the infrastructure programs announced by the new government include environmental objectives, such as reducing greenhouse gases and improving water and air quality.

*[English]*

As this government's first budget and economic update and forecast make clear, we are committed to long term investments in infrastructure. We are developing an infrastructure plan now.

*[Translation]*

In developing this plan, we consulted the provinces, territories and municipalities and a number of stakeholders about the most effective way to use our investments in infrastructure to promote a more competitive and productive economy, improve the quality of life in Canadian communities, make concrete improvements to the environment, ensure transparency and be accountable to Canadians.

In the near future, and with a view to the commitment we have made to restore the fiscal balance in Canada, we will be announcing how we intend to cooperate with our partners to ensure that Canadians benefit from the money allocated to infrastructure. We have already made concrete investments in improving the environment. Members will certainly understand if I offer them a few examples from my own province to illustrate the approach being taken across Canada.

For example, we are investing up to \$36.5 million in the St. Charles River water remediation project, near Quebec City. This initiative will involve the construction of retention ponds, among other things. We are investing up to \$58.5 million to upgrade the Atwater water treatment plants in the Montreal region to standard. Throughout Quebec, from Lac-au-Sable to Magog to Chelsea and Rawdon, money is being invested to improve and remediate water quality.

I could also talk about the effort being made in respect of the gasoline tax, but I will leave it to my hon. colleagues to ask me questions about that.

●(1610)

*[English]*

**Hon. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the minister. The first is that I am a little puzzled that in a debate which is essentially about climate change and the Kyoto protocol he would continue as it were to muddy the air and indeed the water by continuing to confuse climate change, air pollution and water pollution. They are all important questions but they do demand different solutions and they have totally different consequences. One is local by character and another is global. I wonder why he introduced that diversion on water treatment plants.

Second, on transit passes, where the advertisement claims that so many cars will be taken off the road and so many drivers will be induced to join the subway system, how does he deal with the inefficiency of that since the people who are most likely to claim transit passes for tax purposes are people who are currently using the system, not people who will be induced out of their cars? It is known in economics as literally the free rider problem.

If he would address those two questions I would be most appreciative.



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**Hon. Lawrence Cannon:** Mr. Speaker, I remember when I sat as a town councillor going to Winnipeg to plead the case alongside my other colleagues from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to have the former government support and sustain the transfer of gas tax money to municipalities so that we could support public transit, act on not only the demand side but also in order to be able to do it and increase the offer.

Those are two elements that my hon. colleague should remember. He should know it full well because he did exercise this task within the previous government. He should also know that congestion is a major problem. He should also know that when we talk about greenhouse gases we are also talking about air pollutants. He should also know that he should be giving his support, like the Canadian Medical Association, to Bill C-30 that helps reduce greenhouse gases. That is what he should be doing and not systematically saying—

[*Translation*]

“Take it or leave it”, “we fight climate change or we do nothing”. We have seen where doing nothing has gotten us. It has embarrassed Canada on the international stage. It was the previous government, led by Paul Martin, that created that situation.

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I remind the hon. minister not to refer to another member by his or her name but by the member's riding or title. The hon. member for Mississauga South.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government's criticism of the EnerGuide program was that there was an energy audit requirement to ensure that the money in fact delivered real efficiencies in home heating and fuel savings.

With respect to the transit pass credit, however, there is no apparent way of checking that it will yield results. This is the accountability angle which is missing from the transit pass credit. It appears that 90% of the money being invested is only going to subsidize the cost of existing transit riders. Without investment in new infrastructure, there is no possibility of increasing ridership to deliver any benefits.

How does the minister square spending that amount of money which, by the government's own criteria, would be much worse than the situation it criticized with EnerGuide?

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon:** Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge that my colleague has made a good point in raising that, but he has omitted to tell us that this government committed \$1.3 billion to help support transit in the country.

On the one hand, yes, we are giving tax credits so that Canadians can use that and support the transit system, but on the other hand, we have given \$1.3 billion. In my home province, \$312 million has been given to the provincial government so that it can support the nine transit corporations in the province of Quebec with their projects in terms of building a better infrastructure.

Is the member asking me whether or not we are consequential with what we are doing? The answer is yes, because we are working on both levels.

● (1615)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Harvey (Louis-Hébert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to explain the government's intentions with respect to solving the problem of greenhouse gases and air pollutants emitted by certain sectors of the Canadian economy, especially industry.

On October 19, 2006, the government introduced Bill C-30, Canada's Clean Air Act, which gives the government additional, greater powers to take the necessary action to protect the health of Canadians and our environment. The bill strengthens the government's ability to regulate air emissions, including greenhouse gases and other air pollutants such as sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide.

The bill is currently before committee and I am eager to work with the opposition to move forward with this important piece of legislation. Immediately after introducing Canada's clean air act, the government published a Notice of intent to develop and implement regulations and other measures to reduce air emissions, which clearly establishes the government's plans to reduce the greenhouse gases and air pollutants caused by industry, transportation, and commercial and consumer products, as well as to adopt measures to improve indoor air quality.

The notice of intent highlighted the importance of regulating industrial greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution given that industry produces about half of all emissions in Canada, both greenhouse gases and air pollution.

The government will propose mandatory targets for the reduction of emissions in the short, medium and long term. We also plan to adopt an integrated approach to emission reductions so that measures adopted by industry to reduce one type of emission, such as air pollutants, will not lead to an increase in another type of emission.

With regard to short-term targets for greenhouse gases, we are committed to targets that will produce results that are better than those proposed prior to 2005. For air pollutants, we plan on establishing fixed emission ceilings that will be at least as rigorous as those of governments that are leaders in environmental performance. This is an important measure that no previous federal government has implemented.

We are attempting to find the best means for industry to achieve the targets. We wish to ensure that we are putting in place a regulatory system that will allow industry to choose the most cost-effective means of attaining emission targets while continuing to meet environmental and health objectives.

We also strongly believe that it is important to support the development of transformation technologies to reduce greenhouse gases—technologies we need to achieve the necessary reductions so we can prevent irreversible climate change.

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Fighting climate change and reducing air pollution is not a short-term undertaking, and these problems will not be solved by short-term policies. Fighting climate change and air pollution requires long-term solutions. That is why we have asked the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy to advise us on specific emission reduction targets for the medium and long terms for Canadian industry so that we can reach our health and environmental goals while maintaining a stable economy.

At the end of last year, officials from my department, Health Canada, Natural Resources Canada and Industry Canada travelled across the country consulting the provinces and territories, industry, aboriginal groups and environmental groups about how best to establish such regulations. We also received over 800 comments from the provinces, industry, environmental organizations and private citizens about the proposed regulatory regime. Nearly all of the comments supported the government's short term measures to fight climate change and air pollution.

I would like to emphasize the fact that we are currently putting all of our efforts into developing that regulatory regime, which will establish realistic short term emissions targets for industry, as well as compliance mechanisms.

• (1620)

The purpose of this framework is to set short-term targets that will put us on the right track to achieve our long-term objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% to 65% by the year 2050, which would improve air quality all across Canada.

We are working relentlessly to complete this regulatory framework. For example, we reviewed the standards set by other governments regarding air pollutant emissions for all industrial sectors, in order to identify primary environmental standards in the world. We organized workshops with experts to discuss two main compliance options: an investment fund to support the development of technologies, and the exchange of emission rights. The discussions that took place at these workshops are helping us make an informed decision on the development of compliance mechanisms.

These measures clearly illustrate the government's intention to regulate the industry's emissions. We have made a lot of progress and we will soon release our proposed regulatory framework. We will be the first federal government to make regulations to help the industry reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

We intend to continue cooperating with the provinces and territories, the industry and other groups as we develop the regulatory framework and the regulations themselves.

We are not doing this in an unreasonable fashion. We have emission reduction targets that are logical and that will not jeopardize our country's economic growth. Indeed, experience shows that environmental protection can also generate economic benefits.

The industry is not the only source of emissions, but it is a major one. My colleagues will talk about recent announcements on programs and measures to reduce greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions in other areas, including the residential, commercial and transportation sectors.

So, the government has already taken the first steps towards regulating greenhouse gases and air pollutants, and other measures will be taken in the coming weeks. Through Canada's Clean Air Act, we are also working to strengthen the government's ability to implement such regulations in a cost-effective fashion. We are looking forward to working with opposition members to further this critical issue.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while I listened with interest to my colleague's speech, I still do not feel much comfort. This past Christmas, we had an unprecedented situation in Timmins: no snow. In January, people went through the ice and drowned, which is an unprecedented situation. Trucks could not travel up the ice road until middle to late January, and then only pickup trucks because there was not enough ice on the James Bay frontier, again completely unprecedented.

People in my riding asked me how it was possible that the government could talk about dealing with greenhouse gas emissions when the Prime Minister in his end of year address referred to them as "so-called greenhouse gases". The sense I have from people in my riding is that the Prime Minister simply does not believe it. By calling them "so-called greenhouse gases", how much clearer can he be in his skepticism?

Through the entire last Parliament, we sat and listened to the Conservative Party come up with every crackpot theory under the sun about climate change, whether it was the flatulence from the dinosaurs still up in the clouds to the rain patterns over the Pacific. We have not heard the government clearly say that climate change is a direct and dire threat. The former minister spoke strictly of smog.

Will the member stand up and say that the Prime Minister does believe in the science of climate change? We have not heard that and people back home simply do not believe the government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Harvey:** Mr. Speaker, watching weather reports for one day, one week or one year does not provide an appropriate assessment.

Here is a case in point. Two years ago, we ran out of letters in the alphabet to name hurricanes in the Atlantic ocean. Last summer, there were no hurricanes to speak of, only a few tropical storms. But our focus was on the year when Katrina caused considerable ravages, not so much because of its force, but because the levies keeping the water out of New Orleans were very old and failed. Had these levies not failed, the damages in New Orleans would never have been that extensive.

It is therefore not enough to watch weather reports for one day or one week. We have to be careful not to make mistakes. Yesterday, the temperature was minus 20. We have been having cold weather. One should not rely on the weather reports for December 30 or January 1, but rather on reports for a full year.

• (1625)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the prior government there was \$538 million dedicated to closing coal fired plants in Ontario and a further \$328 million to support Quebec's Kyoto plan, which was highly touted. There was \$120 million in the one tonne challenge, which was well under way. There was the EnerGuide, another \$1.8 billion into renewables, and \$200 million for the development of technologies.

The government, through its speeches today, has basically said the Liberal government did nothing, but all of these programs that are nothing were all cancelled by the government. So if that is the benchmark, that all those things are nothing, we can imagine what happens when we cancel nothing and eliminate all these important projects.

My question has to do with the reintroduction of the EnerGuide. The government says that we are going to have a watered-down version of the EnerGuide program for consumers, but it is going to deliver more dollars to the consumer than ours, which required an audit to determine that any moneys paid were for legitimate environmental progress in terms of home heating or retrofitting.

Will the member explain, in regard to moneys the government gives to Canadians who retrofit their houses, how it is going to check that they are actually are spending the money on issues related to greenhouse gases?

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Harvey:** The answer is quite simple, Mr. Speaker. A 10% administration fee will be set aside. The fact is that I have a hard time figuring how the Liberals could justify a program requiring that 50% of the funding go to administration.

I want to tell the Liberal member that working in the private sector is sometimes useful in understanding that 50% in administration fees is totally and completely unacceptable.

I am proud to be helping to achieve an estimated 90% in efficiency.

[English]

**Hon. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Newton—North Delta, my very capable colleague.

I am very pleased to speak to the motion today. Like many colleagues here, I think some votes are more memorable than others. The vote on Kyoto, which happened in December 2002, was a very memorable one for me. I was sitting in the corner to the right of me and a group of pages were lined up along the wall on both sides. They were not working because it was after hours. I asked them why they were here. They said, very clearly, that it was a very special day in Canada's history and they wanted to be here for that. I will never

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forget that vote and that is why I am very proud to speak to the motion.

This issue is probably one of the most critical right now, not only for Canada but for the world. It has become a priority in the world as a whole, and 168 countries signed the Kyoto protocol. Every MP has to take this very seriously. The first step when we try to find a solution is to admit there is a problem. I believe that is at the core of what is going on today.

We are way beyond the point of having to convince people that global warming is a problem, but it seems that we still are. We must believe in the science. We must believe in our experts who are giving us the proper information. Every report that has come out lately has unequivocally indicated that we are in a global warming phase and it is caused by human beings. However, it seems the governing party does not necessarily agree with it.

As early as yesterday, when the Conservative members were coming out of their caucus, some of them were asked whether they believed in global warming. They indicated that they had to reserve judgment on that, which I cannot believe. We are not talking about three or four years ago when there was no information available. We are talking about yesterday. It is absolutely unacceptable. We have to believe that climate change exists if we are to believe there is a solution for it. How can Conservative MPs be the last people on earth to acknowledge that this exists?

If I am not mistaken, I saw a program the other day about a poll in rural China. As we can imagine, not a lot of those people have access to a lot of information. However, the number one priority with peasants in rural China was the environment. Probably for obvious reasons, people in China are having huge issues with the environment and it is probably affecting their daily lives. However, if it is the number one priority for people in rural China, it seems to me that members of Parliament on that side of the House, who should be aware of what is going on in the world, should be aware that it is a major issue.

One of the problems I see is the difficulty for the troops to be on board when the leader is not, and that is quite obvious. We saw it yesterday in the House of Commons. We asked the Prime Minister 18 times what he thought about Kyoto and would he reinstate it because he had put it totally aside. We did not get a clear answer. With those questions were 18 quotes from the Prime Minister indicating his disdain for this international accord. The Prime Minister called it a socialist plot. He still speaks about the so-called global warming issue. It is absolutely ridiculous.

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Despite that, we seem to be seeing some movement on this. There seems to be a bit of a born again environmentalist movement happening right now. We wonder if it has anything to do with the latest polls, which show that it is the number one issue with Canadians. It bothers me, as a member of Parliament, that a government would react only when it sees a poll. Before that, the environment was probably number 86 or 87 on the list of the Conservatives. It was not even in the top 20. That is a very bothersome indication.

It certainly begs this question. If the Conservatives had a majority government right now, would they make this total about-change right now? I think the answer is no. It is pretty obvious that if the government had a four year mandate, it would not be reinstating some of the policies brought in by the previous government. I think that is a scary thought for most Canadians.

The Prime Minister seemed to indicate that he prefers a made in Canada solution. It is quite obvious that his clean air act was an absolute bust. Even the *National Post* criticized it. The *National Post* never criticizes the Conservative government. That probably gives us the extent of how bad it actually was and how bad a policy it was.

• (1630)

We all realize that greenhouse gas emissions have no borders. The made in Canada solution is not the solution, and that has been quite obvious. This is why 168 countries have signed on to this international agreement.

I will speak briefly to Canada's reputation in this whole thing. Our country has taken one heck of a shot in the last little while because of our abandonment of Kyoto. There are other issues as well. The government's policy on foreign affairs has also been quite radical and disturbing. However, where we probably have been affected the most is with regard to the environment. I believe it is the first time in the history of our country that we have failed to honour its obligations to an international treaty.

I have constituents who have come back from Europe, one from France. People are asking what is happening in Canada. They cannot believe what is going on here. Obviously we are not the only people who are aware that there is a problem. Other countries are very much concerned with Canada's attitude toward the environment and other issues as well.

Canada has always been a leader on the world stage. We have never had to be dragged, kicking and screaming, to attend events or to lead them. We have always been a world leader when it comes to this. The conference in Montreal last year, chaired by our new leader, is a classic example of optimism when it comes to the environment. Canada showed its leadership and on the world stage, it picked up our image. We were a leader, not a follower, when it came to Kyoto.

We also have to build our credibility in terms of the damage that was done by the previous minister of the environment. The meetings in Bonn and Nairobi were outright disasters. At the same time, I really do not blame the previous minister of the environment. She was not given anything with which to work. She was told to go out there, stall and pretend that we liked Kyoto but not commit to anything. I feel badly for her. She was hung out to dry. We know that all the policy comes out of the PMO.

It is very important to know that Canadians want us to respect our obligations to Kyoto. That is pretty obvious right now.

We have all had our personal experiences with climate change. Last year I had the pleasure to visit Churchill. It was my first trip there. People here have indicated that the north is probably the first and the most obvious place to be hit by climate change. I did not think tundra melted, but in fact we saw 100 year old buildings that were tilting and falling apart because of that. The science is there, but also we are seeing it with our own eyes.

I also had the privilege of visiting the icebreaker, the CCGS *Amundsen*, which is an icebreaker that has been converted to an environmental laboratory. Dr. Barber from the University of Manitoba, along with his colleagues from the Université de Sherbrooke, talked to us about the north. He showed us the polar ice caps and the degree to which they have been reduced.

These are facts, and the experts in the world are confirming exactly what is going on out there.

They also talked about the disappearance of certain species of fish and the overabundance of other species. Global warming is changing things around to where it is denaturalizing nature as we used to know it.

Regarding the opening of the Northwest Passage, some people may say that economically this is not a bad thing for Canada, but we have to find other ways to build our economy. We should not count on global warming to be melting our northern passages.

We have all seen green Christmases. We are there almost every year now. It was 16 degrees in Montreal around Christmastime this year, which is totally abnormal. We have all seen the severe storms around the world, which is something that did not happen 10 or 15 years ago. These days it happens more frequently.

I will speak quickly to two things that we in Manitoba should be supporting to achieve our objectives.

The east-west power grid is something our party supported wholeheartedly the last time. We have 5,000 megawatts of power right now. Ontario needs 25,000 megawatts. It is clean energy. We should support this wholeheartedly.

The second project is a \$200 million investment in wind power in St. Leon, a small town. This is a huge investment which is very important for that town. Farmers also get an economic spinoff because they receive \$4,400 per windmill on their property. It added 100 megawatts of power to the grid in Manitoba.

Wind power and developing new hydroelectric power is absolutely critical. There are ways to achieve Kyoto.

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•(1635)

**Mrs. Betty Hinton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the words of my hon. colleague across the way. He stated many times that yesterday he asked the Prime Minister 18 times in the House of Commons if he agreed that there was climate change. Actions speak louder than words.

The Conservatives have made very meaningful strides in the first year of government to improve the environment. That is opposed to the record of the former Liberal government, which saw an increase of 35% in emissions, showed no plan and had no regulations. Its plan was to send \$5 billion to Russia for hot air credits and not change a thing environmentally.

I do not know how the member opposite thinks that sending money to Russia for plants that have already been closed down and allowing Canadian plants to continue to pollute is helping the environment. This may be Liberal thinking, but I certainly cannot follow it. It does not make any sense at all to me.

The Conservatives have actually made a difference. Look up the kinds of things that have happened. It is very clear that we made mandatory rules rather than voluntary rules. We have taken mercury out of the air. We have gone as far as banning items found in any Canadian household that are causing diseases. We have looked after the cancer issue or are well on our way to doing that. We have received support from the Canadian Medical Association. We have a thumbs up from environmental groups that actually care about what is happening in Canada.

Doing nothing for 13 years is what has given Canada its black eye internationally, as the member referred to it.

•(1640)

**Hon. Raymond Simard:** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if the Prime Minister were proud of his accomplishments, he would have said that he supported Kyoto and change. Yesterday there was dead silence in the House of Commons.

What the hon. member was speaking about does not affect climate change at all. It is something completely different. What the Conservatives are proposing to affect climate change is totally different from what the Liberals are proposing.

It seems to me that if there would not have been pressure from this side of the House and the Canadian public, the Conservative Party would not have reintroduced most of the Liberal programs. EnerGuide is finally back. I am not sure what it is called these days, but it was certainly a Liberal program, with some cuts to it. Most programs that have been reintroduced have had cuts as well.

Thank God the Liberals introduced some programs that the Conservatives could copy. Otherwise there would be absolutely nothing on the table right now.

**Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a very specific question about my riding. I know the member is quite familiar with my riding and some of the impacts that have happened.

The example I will give is there are schools actually waiting to go into the northern communities, 21 fly-in communities. The weather has become so warm that the ice roads are no longer safe. People are

risking their lives trying to drive on those roads. When it was common practice before, they were good for six to eight weeks. Now we cannot even get schools to stay there. Bridges need to be built, but none of the material can be transported simply due to the warm weather.

What does my colleague think about the impacts for the remote communities if we do not do something and if the government does not take some action?

**Hon. Raymond Simard:** Mr. Speaker, not only do I know the member's riding very well, but I had the pleasure of working up there for 18 years during the summertime and other times with my work. I had to drive on winter roads, so I know the situation extremely well.

If people are not bringing in materials by winter roads, the cost of bringing them by plane is abhorrent. No one can imagine the additional costs that would have to be incurred to bring materials up north.

The whole system is absolutely essential to the transportation system in winter. One of my NDP colleagues said the same thing a little while ago. Global warming is having an impact. It is not only an environmental disaster, it is also an economic disaster. When the Conservatives figure that out, maybe then they will move on this issue.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** We have time for a short question.

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Secretary of State (Agriculture), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am quite surprised by my hon. friend's remarks, given that, just yesterday, the Minister of the Environment said:

[*English*]

"At the outset of my remarks let me start of today by saying that I believe that climate change is a real and serious issue facing the world today. It is undoubtedly the biggest environmental threat that we are facing. Let me also say that this government recognizes that the Kyoto protocol is all about a global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions around the world and, most importantly, for us right here in Canada".

[*Translation*]

Did my friend note that statement yesterday? Did he hear it?

**Hon. Raymond Simard:** Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I fully understood the speech given by the Minister of the Environment. However, the question was put to the Prime Minister. When it comes to the issue that has the greatest impact on Canadians at this time, it seems to me that the Prime Minister of a country could rise in the House and show his support for the Kyoto protocol.

It is not up to the Minister of the Environment to speak for the Prime Minister. He has a certain responsibility to answer to Canadians. If he ever wants to be elected with a majority government, he must stand up.

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[English]

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is a country that is seen around the world as honest, diligent in keeping its commitments, and engaged in multilateralism as a responsible citizen. It is with great sadness, however, that I have witnessed the government abrogate our commitments to the world.

Under the Prime Minister's rule, Canada's government is not taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He is not promoting our responsibilities as a global citizen. He is not listening to the wishes of Canadians.

Not only has the Conservative government failed to build on the success of the first phase of the Liberal program, but it has actively taken steps to dismantle and hamper progressive work that had begun under Liberal governments.

In a gesture that smacks of cynical partisan politics, the Prime Minister is simply re-branding successful Liberal programs that only a year ago he cut. He and his ministers have ignored constructive recommendations. They insist they have a better approach. They insist that their new "hot air act" will get Canada on the road to an improved environment.

Was this because of some conversion on the road to Damascus? No, it was a conversion on the road to new lows in the polls for the Conservative Party, as my friend from Manitoba mentioned earlier.

The Conservative government is being particularly misleading with seemingly effective yet empty rhetoric. On the one hand, the Prime Minister harps on the point that "science has evolved several times in the last" several "decades". On the other hand, he has re-established proven Liberal programs of the past to deal with his political problems of today.

The Conservative government's ideological view with respect to the environment has been on display for all to see for the past year. A new minister with new talking points who is re-implementing Liberal programs is not going to change the reality of the disaster that is the Conservative record on the environment.

The government should take its cues from the citizens of this country who have been trailblazers in protecting the environment, people like Eliza Olson from my riding of Newton—North Delta, who is a tireless advocate for environmental issues and this year received Earth Day Canada's hometown hero award for her work as the president of the Burns Bog Conservation Society.

The government needs to follow the lead of people like Eliza and not seek to actively undermine the work of everyday citizens who know better. I am certain the government will never see an award for its work on the environment, but let us hope that the minister begins to constructively engage the world rather than undermine the multilateral efforts that we made to sign Kyoto.

I am not going to get into speaking to the science of climate change today as it is clear that climate change is a reality. Even the Conservative ministers whom the Prime Minister allows to speak publicly have finally acknowledged this as well. I have doubts, however, that the majority of the Conservative caucus actually holds this view given statements from many of their members, including the current Prime Minister, who was in opposition at one point.

It was not the Liberal Party that filibustered the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. It was not the Liberal Party that dismantled the Government of Canada's climate action plan, going so far as to even shut down the climate change website.

It was the Conservative Party.

No Conservative plan for the environment is even remotely credible without reconfirming Canada's commitment to honour the principles and targets of the Kyoto protocol in their entirety. I do not know if it has escaped the notice of the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment, but Canada signed an international treaty that we should all be under obligation to.

● (1645)

This is likely the first time that the Canadian government has sought to actively undermine and abrogate a treaty that this country has affixed its signature to. It is a disgrace.

The so-called made in Canada plan, designed in the White House, assumes the environment stops at Canada's borders. The bizarre nature of this approach is almost as bad as believing that climate change is not happening in the first place. Even worse, the excuse that we should not act because others are not sets a terrible example.

As a parent, the question I ask my children when they follow a bad example is, "If your friend jumped off a bridge, would you?" The Conservative government's answer to that, unfortunately, is yes.

As the Prime Minister said, "I don't think we should consider signing on to a deal that makes us virtually the sole country in the world that is going to take any action" on climate change.

The Conservative government must create and publish a credible plan to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to meet Canada's Kyoto commitments and it has not even tried to do so.

I find it incredible that the government introduced an act that does not even have the word Kyoto in its preamble. It is an act that was such a massive failure upon tabling that it was panned by every credible environmental group in Canada, and it cost the former minister of environment her job.

I find it beyond belief that the NDP members even think they can pass a few amendments to a fundamentally flawed bill, in one month, no less, and then claim it will be a credible bill. What is credible is the plan of our Liberal leader, an individual with a tremendous record in advocating for and delivering results on the environment.

I find it amusing when the Conservatives try to attack the credibility of our leader on this issue. They mistakenly believe that Canadians will take the word of the party whose leader has demonstrated verbally and through his writings that he is a climate change denier.

Even more amusing are the attacks on the Liberal's project green, which the Conservatives are re-implementing piece by piece. If proof is demonstrated in action, then the Conservative government is acting in a way that endorses the plan of our Liberal leader.

*Business of Supply*

The government can take immediate action by once again following our Liberal leader's plan and regulating greenhouse gases under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, CEPA, which exists right now. The previous Liberal government listed all six greenhouse gas emissions as CEPA toxic. In refusing to do so, the Conservative government is demonstrating that it is a climate change denier.

It is important, also, to note that CEPA is jointly administered by the Minister of the Environment and, more important, the Minister of Health. This is not just an environmental issue; it is also a health issue.

I would be interested in knowing whether the Minister of Health actually believes that greenhouse gases can be harmful to human health. If his answer is yes, then the minister has just made the case to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under CEPA, not only in the interest of the environment but in the interest of human health for all Canadians.

If the Prime Minister can break his promise to working Canadians on income trusts, then he can break his promise to the Conservative climate change deniers to not implement the Kyoto protocol. Anything less is an abrogation of the government's duty to Canadians and to the world.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo, The Citizenship Act.

[*English*]

**Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to commend my colleague on his speech and particularly on the fact that he talked about this being a worldwide problem.

We know how the Conservatives said in the last election campaign, and even before that, that they were going to work on a made in Canada solution, but when we are dealing with a world problem, we have to get the whole world outside.

I am glad that instead of being Kyoto climate change deniers, the Conservatives are trying to paint themselves as Kyoto climate change disciples, but before they get there, they really are going to have to do penance. They have to stand up and explain to Canadians why they were confusing them and why they were using the issue of stopping Kyoto to raise money. I think that is very important in terms of getting back Canadians' confidence in the government. The Conservatives have hard work to do.

I want to touch on another issue, but I do not think I will get an answer to it. Let me ask my colleague about it. The Conservatives are always saying the Liberals did nothing for 13 years. I think my colleague would agree with me that in the 13th year since 1993, with the 13th year belonging to the Conservative government, nothing has been done on climate change. The government delayed the implementation of Kyoto by a full year and for that it—

• (1655)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** The hon. member for Newton—North Delta.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for raising this issue. My friends on the other side keep talking about the 13 years of the Liberal record. I can tell members that I am very proud of the Liberal record. The former Liberal government was the only government that brought the country out of debt. It was only the former Liberal government that made Canada the first nation in the world where people wanted to invest.

When it comes to the environment, I will talk about two plans that we had. Even before we signed the Kyoto agreement, we included, in budget 2000, \$625 million for programs to accelerate climate change research and science and to reduce GHG emissions. In 2000, the Liberal government announced its five year action plan, with some \$500 million toward concrete measures to reduce greenhouse gases by about 65 megatonnes each year. If we look at the year 2003—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** I am sorry to interrupt, but we have to go on to the next question.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, no offence to my colleague, but having listened to this debate this afternoon, I must say that I find it absolutely dismal, because taking on the flat earth science crowd over there should be like shooting fish in a barrel, but what I am hearing from my colleagues in the Liberal Party is simply a lot of chest-beating about what was not done.

We were in the House when we heard the present Liberal leader's plan for the environment. That was voluntary emission standards. We were pushing, saying that we would never get to our targets if we simply allowed industry to self-regulate. That was the Liberal plan: self-regulation, no worries, everything would be fine. We did not meet any of the targets. They have been abysmal targets.

In light of this dismal, bitter back and forth between the Liberals and Conservatives, what I want to say is that we have the question before us and an opportunity to take action in this House. That means more than simply putting on a green scarf. We have an all party committee and we can put in serious long term commitments that would be binding on the present government and the next government.

Will the member work with us to ensure that this passes speedily so that at the end of this Parliament, whenever it may be, we can all go back to the Canadian people and tell them that for once we used this Parliament and all four parties to work together to deliver something? Or are we just going to hear more political hot air for the next year?

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Mr. Speaker, I must say that it is bizarre to hear the NDP members continuing to attack the Liberals when their party actually supports Kyoto. That is what I am talking about. We should be working toward a plan that is no less than the Kyoto plan. I am just wondering why my NDP colleagues are cozying up to the Conservative government, the party that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer):** Resuming debate. The hon. member for Western Arctic.

*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Victoria.

Members of the Liberal Party have been waving around a five year old letter from the Prime Minister when he was leader of the Alliance Party. In this letter the Prime Minister made statements about Kyoto being a socialist plan to export Canadian wealth. Yesterday it was the only question the Liberals could ask in the House, but both the Prime Minister and the Liberals are wrong. Shipping Canadian dollars to other countries as the Liberals would have done to meet Kyoto is actually a capitalist plan. It is a plan to ensure that corporations can continue to expand their markets and find a way to deal with Kyoto at the lowest possible cost without any worry about the effect on the global environment.

All around the world the successful countries that have dealt with climate change are social democratic countries which have values which the NDP also has. We have a plan to meet Kyoto and it is a plan based on social democratic principles which will build the Canadian economy, create jobs for average Canadians and save working families money on their energy bills.

One of the key elements in the NDP plan is to change how we deal with energy. Canada needs an energy strategy. We need to ensure there is clean energy available not just for today but for our children and grandchildren, not a plan that allows a laissez-faire system to exist in this country to recklessly produce and sell off our fossil fuel resources.

What would a strategy look like? The primary goal of an energy strategy must be to provide a secure energy supply sufficient to meet our needs. However, these needs primarily must be reduced. By reducing the needs it will enable the most rapid transition as possible to an energy regime based on conservation and the sustainable use of renewable energy.

The goal of an energy policy must definitely not be merely to produce as much energy as possible to meet a growing global demand with no regard for social and environmental impacts. Conservation and reduction of energy consumption must be one of the pillars of an energy strategy. Consuming less energy will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce air pollution and save ordinary Canadians money. Those are all laudable goals.

The second pillar of an energy strategy is to replace non-renewable energy sources with renewable ones. To do this our strategy would include actions to develop a thriving renewable energy industry in Canada, particularly wind, small hydro, solar and biomass. All of these are possible. All of these are important and all of these can happen in our system.

We need the creation of a crown corporation to assist communities, commercial and industrial interests at the community level, to help create these kinds of energy which are not transported mainly by pipes or transmission lines but really deal with how we use energy at home and in the community.

We need to install 100,000 solar roofs to get our solar energy program going. We are falling behind the rest of the world. Our country has an abysmal record of supporting solar energy.

We need to invest in cogeneration. One of the simplest and most fundamental ways that northern countries save energy is cogeneration; use the waste heat that is produced in industrial and electrical processes.

We need investment in sustainable public transport.

We need to provide funding to support the development of community groups and non-profit organizations to promote activities which have these values and put these values in front of Canadians which allow small businesses, individuals and community governments to make the best of the energy systems that are available to them.

A gradual transition to a sustainable renewable energy regime allowing maximum use of attrition and ensuring planned decreases in production can be accomplished and can save jobs, and can provide a reasonable transition to a new economy.

•(1700)

However, any strategy for Canada would be incomplete if it did not address fossil fuels. When we talk about addressing fossil fuels, I do not think we only want to talk about bringing liquefied natural gas into this country to replace a rapidly declining resource that was so mishandled through the 1980s and 1990s by successive Liberal governments.

The NDP strategy would conduct a complete assessment of federal subsidies and incentives to the energy sector, with input from relevant stakeholders, accompanied by the establishment of a specific timetable for the rapid elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies and incentives, particularly those associated with the oil and gas industry.

In order to share my time with my hon. colleague from Victoria, I will bring my debate to a conclusion.

Finally, an energy strategy for Canada must put Canada's energy needs first, not those of the United States, not made in Washington with the North American energy working group giving direction to this country. We need our own energy strategy. We need it in conjunction with the Kyoto plan. Without that energy strategy, we will not get to Kyoto.

•(1705)

**Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly agree with my colleague that we have to utilize alternative energy resources.

When Elizabeth May, the leader of the Green Party, was asked why she disliked the leader of the NDP so much, she responded very directly. She said it was because he conspired with the Conservatives to bring down the Liberal government on the eve of the climate change conference that was being managed for Canada by the present Liberal leader.

Would my colleague not agree with me that 2006 was a total waste for the Kyoto protocol because the NDP was instrumental in bringing down the Liberal government?



*Business of Supply*

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** Mr. Speaker, throughout the debate today we have heard constant accusations from both sides. Of course the Liberals want to bring the New Democratic Party into the game they are playing with the Conservatives of who is at fault here. The NDP is not interested in who is at fault here. We are here to do something for Canadians right now.

When we look at the Liberal record over many years on many subjects, there is an old saying which makes sense here, that the best indicator of future performance is the past performance. When we look at the past performance of the Liberal Party over 13 years, it was really a sham. How could anyone use the promises of that party in 2005 to judge its relevance for staying in office?

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, because people back home who are watching this important debate may find it confusing, I would ask my colleague if he would illuminate the two fundamental questions that are constantly being skipped over and not answered.

In terms of the Conservative Party, the fundamental question is whether those members really believe the science of climate change. Do the Conservatives really believe in greenhouse gases, or as the Prime Minister says, the so-called greenhouses gases? When the Conservatives are pushed on this, they change the subject.

However, there is an equally disturbing game being played by the Liberal Party. When we ask the Liberals what actual steps they will take to get something done in terms of working on an all party committee to bring in clear regulations, they throw the question around and say that it is the NDP or something else. The Liberals will not answer the question.

I ask my friend why does he think that the two main parties continue to play games in the House today and refuse to answer straightforward questions?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Western Arctic. I would appreciate a short answer because I would like to fit in another question.

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** Mr. Speaker, I think the situation is such that energy, the environment and climate change are important issues right now. There is the thought that we will come to a solution in this Parliament and that the four parties working together would take this out of the next campaign when we are next in front of the voters.

The Liberals want to keep some doubt in this process and I think that is something that is shameful. Let us get on with this and get it done. There are four parties here that are willing to work. Let us put this political partisanship—

• (1710)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt should be mindful that there is a minute for both the question and the answer.

**Mr. Bradley Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC):** I will make it very short, Mr. Speaker. I was interested to listen to the accusations ping-pong between the Liberals and the NDP.

Is the hon. member aware that when the Kyoto accord was ratified, the NDP government of Saskatchewan was opposed to Kyoto? Cabinet ministers criticized it. While it is fine for New Democrats in opposition to say one thing, when they are in

government they do something else. I wonder if my hon. friend was aware of that fact.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Western Arctic. We are running out the clock but I will allow you a moment to reply.

**Mr. Dennis Bevington:** Mr. Speaker, once again, none of this assists us in bringing forward the kinds of policies that are required to go in the clean air act to make this work for Canadians.

We are not living in the past. This is 2007. We need to move. Let us move on this issue. Let us make it happen.

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this very important issue, an issue that is crucial to our common future.

We will need to tell our children what we did about this issue while we still have the opportunity. We have seen today how difficult it is to get past this appalling partisan debate, this ping-pong back and forth.

Eminent scientists, like climatologist Dr. Andrew Weaver, have sounded the alarm and have called for immediate action if we are to prevent the feedback loop that is inherent in the climate change process.

Mr. John Robinson from UBC has said that the barriers to moving forward are not technological. He said that the fundamental things we need to do are policy changes that focus on the rules of the game with regulatory mechanisms.

I would like to try to deal with the motion at hand and what can be done to combat climate change. The issue of CEPA as a tool against climate change versus having legislation that would enforce action of the government has been raised several times by members of the Liberal Party. We have heard that CEPA allows government to act, and that is precisely the problem. It only enables government action. To actually get the action, we need to trust the government to act behind closed doors to do something.

I once heard a former environment minister lament that he could not get his cabinet colleagues to act on climate change, as he put it, to act in the public interest. That is what happens if we leave the process behind closed doors. To say that CEPA could be used to tackle climate change is asking Canadians to accept that the fight against climate change happens at the whim of government behind closed doors in cabinet. We need legislation to set concrete objectives on absolute reductions of our greenhouse gas emissions. We need legislatively binding targets.

Instead of talking about who is worse on the environment, let us talk about what needs to happen because, frankly, we have done a poor job. We need to look primarily at how we produce and how we consume energy. We cannot gloss over just intensity based targets or even look, as the Minister of Natural Resources seems to, at ways to clean up the dirty energy. He seems to have boundless enthusiasm for nuclear energy.

*Private Members' Business*

We need to look at absolute reductions of our energy production and consumption and we need to decouple economic growth from the consumption of fossil fuels, as both Liberals and Conservative seem reluctant to do in reining in the accelerated exploration of the tar sands. When we do get honest answers about why the Liberals have not acted on climate change in an effective way, they confess that they did not want to hurt the economy.

We need to take a lead on new technologies, look at solutions toward the bioeconomy and look at green technology, green energy. Thanks to the loud voice of Canadians, the government is finally starting to get it. While the government talks about taking action, we have proposed a legislative committee and invited all parties to bring their best solutions to allow us to come away from this Parliament having taken action.

I invite my colleagues to think seriously about what they will tell their children if we miss this opportunity.

• (1715)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** It being 5:15 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the opposition motion are deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Monday, February 5, 2007 at 6:30 p.m..

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think you would find unanimous consent to see the clock at 5:30 p.m..

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to see the clock as 5:30 p.m.?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN THE ISLAND OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND MAINLAND CANADA

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, CPC)** moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should, in cooperation with the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, examine all measures to improve transportation between the island of Newfoundland and mainland Canada, including a fixed link and renewal of the Marine Atlantic ferry service.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to put forward this motion on behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who are very anxious to improve the transportation system in our province.

Everyone will notice that the motion makes reference to the examination of all measures to improve transportation links. It stands to reason that if we, as an island province, are to realize our social and economic potential, then we need to examine the air, the water and the land transportation. Lately, of course, we are even examining under the land, which is very novel, indeed.

At one time, Newfoundland was strategically located with respect to air travel. Geographically, of course, we were a stepping stone for air travel between North America and Europe. People in places like Gander, Stephenville and Goose Bay earned their livelihoods on Newfoundland's strategic location. However, that is not the case today because modern jet aircraft no longer need these locations for service and, therefore, bypass these communities.

Combined with that reality is the fact that Air Canada is no longer truly a national carrier. These days Air Canada is just another commercial airline that happens to carry the country's name. It only goes where it will make money and very often it will go only where it can make an awful lot of money.

Air Canada also plays a large role on the world stage and, in competition between domestic and international air travel, our province is generally the loser. However, that is enough on Air Canada, which is an ongoing battle, and I will now talk about the gulf ferry service.

The gulf ferry service is our constitutionally guaranteed sea connection with the rest of Canada. For us, the gulf ferry service is an essential part of the Trans-Canada Highway, linking our section of the Trans-Canada to other sections crossing the nation. It is essential for getting fresh produce from all over North America to the supermarket shelves.

The complaints about the service are legion. It is usually crowded and messy, it is hard to get good sleeping accommodations and often it is unpredictable as well. Needless to say, numerous studies have pointed out the inadequacies of that system and there is hardly a Newfoundlander or a tourist in the country who cannot give chapter and verse about the shortcomings of that service. Therefore, an improved and upgraded system is very much in order, which is why this motion has been presented today.

We have all heard about the fixed link, which is mentioned in the motion, the fixed link between the island and southern Labrador connecting to Quebec's North Shore Highway and on to central Canada. That is an excellent project to pursue in the long term but we need to look at the fact that it costs \$1.7 billion to even talk about a fixed link. In the long term, it is a very good project to talk about but even if the project were started today, that kind of a project would take approximately 11 years to finish. However, in the short term, we need a vastly improved gulf ferry service.

• (1720)

I have raised the issue with my colleagues in caucus and I have received a very encouraging response. I am very pleased that the minister of transport is committed to improvements in that service and judging from the conversations that I have had with the minister, I feel confident that these improvements are on the way to being initiated.

The minister of transport should be commended. I am so pleased that he has an intense interest in my motion, that he was very quick on the draw to say that he supported the motion, and I want to thank him for it.

*Private Members' Business*

I am encouraged by the fact that the minister is going to bring forward a long term strategy on the future of Marine Atlantic, which would allow for input from people all over Newfoundland and Labrador.

I am told, as well, that a fleet renewal would be part of that strategy. Given the fact that we now have a new chair of Marine Atlantic and five new directors with business experience, I believe that there is hope for that.

I want to congratulate Mr. Robert Crosbie on his appointment. He is one of my constituents and I feel confident that, given his background, we are going to make some progress in improving that service.

I know I could mention other modes of transportation in the province; however, I only have 15 minutes. So, Marine Atlantic is my main focus.

I believe the province of Newfoundland and Labrador cannot become the tourist mecca that it is capable of becoming if we do not have a top notch marine Atlantic ferry service. We have only begun to scratch the surface of the tourism potential in our province. However, what we have to remember, when the tourist travelling by car arrives in North Sydney, is that we have to give that tourist every good reason to get on a ferryboat to cross that 90-mile expanse of water and come to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is very important that we have a good service.

By coming to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, let me tell the people of Canada, they are going to have a great experience. The people are second to none in our country, in terms of friendliness and wanting to welcome the tourists. When we look at the province itself, in terms of scenery, it is second to none anywhere in the world. We have to encourage the tourists to come to Newfoundland.

We are somewhat disadvantaged in that regard if the tourists are hearing that the ferry service is not what it should be for the modern day tourist. It must not be messy. It must not be crowded. Sleeping accommodations have to be excellent. When they get on board the ferryboat, it has to be a good experience for them. That has not been the case in the past. I think, and I hope, and I know, that is going to change. I am confident it will change under this government and I am confident that the minister is on the right track.

Another very important area of concern to me and to, I am sure, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, with respect to any new policy that might be developed for Marine Atlantic, is the stabilization of rates. We need a stable rate regime to ensure that the service does not become cost prohibitive, not only for the tourists, however important the tourists might be, but for the consumer as well.

• (1725)

Today the people of Newfoundland and Labrador feel that the ferry rate should be approximately equivalent to the cost that would be incurred travelling the same distance by road. I heard that roughly 15 years ago when I was the provincial minister of transportation. I am looking across at my colleague from the Burin Peninsula who is smiling, but people would say to me that the rate has to be equivalent

to what it would cost if we drove a car on that 90-mile stretch of road.

It was less important 15 years ago, I suppose, rates were down somewhat. However, today we have to look at rates and we have to make sure it is not going to become cost prohibitive because rates tend to sneak up and it becomes cost prohibitive for the consumer generally as well as tourists. After all, it is an extension of the Trans-Canada Highway, I agree, and it is a constitutionally guaranteed service. It was part of our Terms of Union in 1949, so it is reasonable given that we are an island province, that we should not be discriminated against in that regard.

Our tourism industry is dependent upon a reasonably stable rate. A reasonably stable rate is also very important for the average consumer because in a supermarket the price of virtually every item on the supermarket shelf is reflected by the cost of crossing the gulf and trucking produce to the supermarket shelf. Generally speaking, the price is going to be higher than what it would cost on the mainland.

No one is saying for a moment that it should not be higher. That is expected when we have to use two modes of transportation to get produce to the supermarket shelf. However, if rates do not remain stable and if we were subject to the vagaries of rate increases to reflect the cost of the service, then the price of shipping goods to the supermarket shelf and to our province generally would certainly be out of control. I am told that virtually 90% of our produce comes in by truck. Therefore, that gulf service is an absolute must for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Another very sore point I hear quite often in our province is the lack of freshness in fruits and vegetables. I know that is unavoidable in some instances. However, the reliability and speed of the service is important. The turnaround time is important. Good maintenance is very important as well to ensure a minimum of breakdowns. All these things enter into making the service a top notch, 21st century transportation system. As I said before, I know the minister is aware of all these points and I am confident he is going to address them.

I only have a couple of minutes left and I will devote that to our roads system. About 15 years ago we let our railway go in exchange for a deal from the federal government of approximately \$1.2 billion called "roads for rails agreement". I was minister of transportation at the time who signed that agreement which allowed for an awful lot of road improvements. It allowed for the twinning of our Trans-Canada Highway and of course it allowed for a lot of infrastructure to be put into the city of St. John's and the neighbouring communities.

As important as that is, we have to remember as well that we have to have a good ongoing maintenance system in the province so it is imperative that we have an ongoing Trans-Canada Highway federal-provincial upgrading agreement. There are over 900 kilometres of road between St. John's and Port-aux-Basques where the ferry from Nova Scotia docks. In the winter and in rainy conditions that can be quite a nightmare.

My time is up and I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1730)

**Mr. Bill Matthews (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize my long time friend from St. John's East. I was wondering what motivated him to bring this private member's motion before the House. I think he has explained that for us.

He is very right in that this is a constitutionally protected service under the Terms of Union between the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the great country of Canada. He alluded to the impact that the Marine Atlantic service has on goods and services coming to our province. He also talked about some indications that he has obtained from his colleague, the minister of transport.

I have a couple of things I would like to ask him. Does he have any guarantee from his colleague, the minister of transport, that the users of Marine Atlantic will not be facing any increase in user fees? The previous minister of transport and the previous government froze those fees for a number of years. We were then interrupted by the last election.

We froze the rates because we did not want the cost to the user and to the consumer in Newfoundland and Labrador to escalate. Therefore, I ask the member: does he have an undertaking from the minister of transport that those fees will not increase?

I am sure the member is very much aware that the former minister of transport also appointed a committee that did a total analysis and assessment on the Marine Atlantic services, and the requirements to make Marine Atlantic more effective and more efficient. That was chaired by none other than a former chairman and CEO of Marine Atlantic, Captain Sid Hynes.

Does the member think the minister has enough information now without undertaking another consultative process to make the decisions that are necessary for Marine Atlantic and give it the money to purchase purpose built vessels for the service?

**Mr. Norman Doyle:** Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to the minister quite extensively on this particular issue. While we do not have anything that I can report to the hon. member at this point, I am encouraged by the fact that the minister is going to bring forward a long term strategy on the future of Marine Atlantic and it will allow input from the people.

I am told as well that something very important is going to happen. We are going to be looking at fleet renewal which is part of that strategy and heaven knows we need some of our ferries replaced.

I have spoken to the minister on a whole range of topics as it relates to Marine Atlantic. Rates will be very important and rates will be very much a part of it.

I have a guarantee from the minister that he will look at rates. He will look at fleet renewal in consultation with the people and the new directors, and the new chair of Marine Atlantic. Quite frankly, I am very confident that at the end of the day, when the minister is finished looking at all matter pertaining to Marine Atlantic and to transportation generally as it relates to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, we will all be very pleased.

I am confident that he has a very intense interest in this issue and no sooner had I presented the motion, the minister contacted me to say he was very much in favour of it. Therefore, I am hoping that we will see some great improvements.

● (1735)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore will want to know that there is less than a minute for both the question and the answer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question will be quite simple. I was just in the great province of Newfoundland and Labrador meeting with the minister of everything, Mr. Tom Rideout. We talked about the possibilities of shipbuilding. As the hon. member for St. John's East knows, many of the ferries eventually will need to be replaced and I would like to get his views. Does he believe that many of these ships can be built in Canada including the shipyard at Marystown?

**Mr. Norman Doyle:** That is a very good question, Mr. Speaker, and one which has been a sore point with many people. When we look at the needs for shipbuilding in the country, especially for Marystown Shipyard, I think that is the goal for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Any ferries that might be built will have to hopefully utilize Marystown Shipyard as much as possible.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want first of all to thank my hon. colleague on the other side for bringing Motion 242 before the House of Commons. I would also like to thank the opposition leader for having appointed me the official critic for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, ACOA. It is a great pleasure for me to deliver my first speech.

As we know and as the hon. member said, what we need to do is look at all the measures that are possible and relate them to land, marine and other kinds of transportation. That being said, I clearly understood the hon. member's message.

As was very well explained and as all Canadians and people from Newfoundland and Labrador certainly know, the Canadian government has a constitutional obligation to provide ferry service. This ship link runs between North Sidney and Port aux Basques, Marine Atlantic, a crown corporation of the Government of Canada, fulfills this obligation of the Canadian government to provide a ferry service between Newfoundland and Labrador and the mainland.

Let us look at the situation with respect to this obligation. It is truly important for Newfoundland and Labrador to have a link with the mainland, especially for the transportation of goods and people. In order for a region to be properly developed, an adequate infrastructure must be provided.

That being said, with regard to the obligation to provide transportation and the importance of it, the entire question of economic development is dependent on a number of things—as I said earlier—such as transportation of goods. This makes it possible to supply the factories of Newfoundland and Labrador with the equipment they need to develop and provide good jobs for their workers. It also enables the province to continue to progress.

*Private Members' Business*

There is also the whole issue of tourist diversification. If we want to identify the problems and provide assistance, we also have to be able to offer different options and solutions. One of these solutions is to ensure that tourists can get to Newfoundland and Labrador, because they are necessary for the province's development.

We need to understand each other here this evening. I respect the hon. member's motion, because I believe that it is very important to look at the different options in order to ensure that we are able to provide the people of Newfoundland and Labrador with the tools they need.

Mr. Speaker, I have some questions about the motion. A report was commissioned by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2004. The purpose of that study, requested by the province and carried out by a university in that province, was to evaluate the situation in this regard. What is somewhat ironic, as far as the motion is concerned, is that this study cost the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador—the taxpayers of that province—over \$281,000 of money from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, ACOA.

This study was designed to evaluate the possibility of a fixed link between the island and the mainland. If this study was requested in 2004 and just completed in 2005—that is not so long ago—then why would the process have to start over? This question is very important and I think that during the next hour of debate the member for St. John's-East, who presented this motion, will have the opportunity to answer us.

What is even more worrying is that the member who is presenting the motion is also talking to us about ferries and says we should make sure that the Marine Atlantic ferries are providing the necessary tools to the people of his province.

● (1740)

In 2004, Marine Atlantic carried out an evaluation and did a study of the condition of the various ferries, the current situation and what it should do to secure the future.

I am going to mention what the study said. It is a special study from 2004, which included a recommendation that “The Corporation should develop a comprehensive vessel replacement plan based on operating needs and full life-cycle costs”. This is exactly what has been done. It is a part of the motion by my colleague opposite.

When we look at the situation, we realize that Marine Atlantic went even further by saying, in the management response to this recommendation, “The plan has been developed and the first stage is in place”.

So right now we are have with two reports: one commissioned and carried out in 2004 and another commissioned in 2004 and completed in early 2005, which cover the situation which the hon. member included in Motion M-242.

One certainly has to wonder what is the reason for carrying out another study. The idea is superb and really should be considered. The only thing that I wonder about is this: Do we have to re-do what has already been done? Do we have to start over with what has just been presented? Must we take public funds from the people who have contributed their tax dollars in order to pay for such studies? Do

we again have to take money from our citizens and do these studies one more time?

A politician told me the best way to do nothing is to carry out repeated studies. I believe that is the reality. By conducting studies and more studies, we end up not moving forward. Meanwhile, the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador require the necessary tools.

The concern that I have in dealing with the motion is that if we again undertake the same process that has already been completed, we will not advance. If there is no progress, what will happen to the people who now need renewal of their ferry service? Marine Atlantic must meet certain obligations. We know that it has to fulfill its responsibilities. The question must be asked: where is this headed?

The bottom line is does the member want to stand still or does he really want to be proactive and continue to help his constituents? I believe we can always examine Motion 242 in that light. We might also ask if the member would be ready to take the two studies that have already been paid for out of the public purse and implement them.

In my view, the member should certainly consider that. Once again, I wonder why my Conservative colleague wants to spend more public money. There certainly must be a reason. However, I am not convinced that we will get answers tonight.

The priority is to provide the tools to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is a priority for the Liberal party and for the Liberal members from this province. They want to make sure that their constituents have the tools they need to make progress. For that reason, can we not go forward immediately? Can we take the studies that we now have, which were requested and largely paid for by ACOA and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, in order to move forward and do more for the residents of that province? If we really want to help them, we must give them the tools to develop economically and improve their quality of life.

I am certain that before very long we will be able to get these answers. I hope that the member for Saint John East can give us some explanations about this motion that he has tabled in the House.

● (1745)

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise as transport critic for the Bloc Québécois to speak on Motion M-242 put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East. I shall read the motion again because it is important to understand its scope:

—That, in the opinion of the house, the government should, in cooperation with the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, examine all measures to improve transportation between the island of Newfoundland and mainland Canada, including a fixed link and renewal of the Marine Atlantic ferry service.

We must also look back in history a little. I heard members refer to what Canada's constitutional law provided in connection with Newfoundland's entry into Confederation. Let us look at this together. It will help the people of Quebec and Canada who are watching to understand.

*Private Members' Business*

In 1949, when Newfoundland, now Newfoundland and Labrador, joined Confederation, it was granted special status under the Constitution, more specifically term 32(1) of the Terms of Union, which states that "Canada will maintain in accordance with the traffic offering a freight and passenger steamship service between North Sydney and Port aux Basques, which, on completion of a motor highway between Corner Brook and Port aux Basques, will include suitable provision for the carriage of motor vehicles". That is what constitutional law provided.

Where do matters stand today? At present, Newfoundlanders travel to mainland Canada on Marine Atlantic ferries. Having been made a crown corporation in 1986, Marine Atlantic works in cooperation with Transport Canada under the terms of an agreement. Its 2005 annual report and 2005-09 business plan show that this crown corporation provides quality service and is cost-effective.

I would like to point out a few figures. There was a net profit in 2004-05. The corporation is doing well financially and has been posting gains since 2004-05. But good financial performance does not necessarily mean a company offers the best services. That is why, as my colleagues mentioned earlier, an advisory committee was created in 2004 to improve things. In March 2005, the committee submitted a report containing 41 recommendations to the federal Minister of Transport. I agree with some of my colleagues. Today, the member for St. John's East tabled a motion for more studies. I am sure that since I have a copy of the conclusions in the advisory committee's report, the member must also have a copy.

I would like to read the main recommendations submitted to the Minister of Transport in 2005: recognizing the essential nature of Marine Atlantic's services; renewing Marine Atlantic's governance structure; investing in Marine Atlantic's fleet and phasing in three larger vessels between 2006 and 2011; improving Marine Atlantic's efficiency by eliminating the drop-trailer service; improving the quality, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness of the service; improving relations with users and stakeholders through partnerships; passing savings and efficiencies on to users with a 15% rate reduction; stabilizing and predicting future rates based on inflation; stabilizing Marine Atlantic's annual subsidy; and relocating Marine Atlantic's head office to Port aux Basques.

I have quoted only a few of the 41 recommendations made by that advisory committee, which submitted its report to the Minister of Transport in 2005. That was not 20 years ago. This is 2007, so it has not even been two years since that report was submitted to the Minister of Transport. Today, the member for St. John's East says that the new Minister of Transport would agree to having studies done again. This is a matter of direct concern to me. Newfoundland and Labrador is a province, and an island, as we know. In Quebec, we have the Magdalen Islands. I quite understand that Newfoundlanders are having transportation problems. Earlier, my colleague from St. John's East said that air transportation is not what it used to be. There are problems with ferry service, and that is why a committee was created and recommendations were made directly to the Minister of Transport.

• (1750)

The people of the Magdalen Islands are in the same situation. They have transportation problems, especially in winter. Ferry

service is not always as effective as they would like, and the air transportation companies do not provide the service that they would like to see.

So yes, the Bloc Québécois is aware of the problems that people who live on islands have. We agree.

The first recommendation that must be made, however, is to establish an effective ferry service. That is what they would like to see. That is what the people of the Magdalen Islands are asking for, to solve the transportation problem in the Magdalen Islands: increase the number of ferries, ensure that there are ferries in winter, and all of that. These are justified requests.

One of the main recommendations made in the report submitted to the Minister of Transport in 2005 was to invest in the Marine Atlantic fleet, to move gradually to a fleet with three larger vessels between 2006 and 2011. No one could oppose this.

Once again, what the member is proposing in his motion is that more studies be done. You will understand that we cannot support this. It has been barely two years since a committee made those same recommendations. I am not talking about the number of ships, I am talking about what the people of the Magdalen Islands are asking for when they tell us about their ineffective transportation services between the islands and the mainland.

Magdalen Islanders are experiencing the same problems as the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am glad that a study was done there and that a committee made recommendations to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. What the Conservative member is saying in his motion today is that the studies are going to be redone. I have a real problem with that. He should have made specific demands in Parliament. We could have supported them to reinstate an effective service or establish a more effective ferry service, as provided for in the Canadian Constitution.

As I often say, it is all well and good to debate and talk here in this House, but maybe it is time to take action.

Understand that if the Bloc Québécois votes against this motion it is not because it is against the interests of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, who have a transportation problem. I am telling you: the Magdalen Islands are in the same situation. It is time to invest money and establish effective services.

We are pleased that, in Newfoundland and Labrador, a committee made specific recommendations to increase the number of ships and improve quality of service and on-time performance. The committee also recommended that the governance structure of Marine Atlantic be renewed; that its efficiency be improved by no longer providing a drop-trailer service; that savings and profits be passed on to users through fare reductions; that future fares be stabilized and anticipated. We already know all these things.

Again, today's motion proposes to conduct new studies, but this is difficult to accept, because such studies have already been made. We would love to see the government commission a study for Magdalen Islanders, to review their transportation problems. Moreover, after looking at the findings of that study, we could ask that investments be made.

*Private Members' Business*

Today, the Conservative member, who witnessed these studies—even though they were conducted under the former Liberal government—is again asking that more studies be done. Instead, he should have asked that the recommendations of the committee that submitted its report to the Minister of Transport in 2005 be implemented. Today, we could be voting on a monetary request to settle the maritime transportation issue that exists in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Of course, hon. members must realize that the objective pursued by the Bloc Québécois is that of efficiency. We have to put a stop to all the talking. Enough is enough. It is time to act. We thought that this is what the Conservative government had in mind. But the motion presented by the member for St. John's East is asking for studies that have already been made. Today, he should have tabled a motion asking for investments. Then would have been pleased to support it. We would support a motion asking for studies if it was for the Magdalen Islands, which have not had the benefit of such studies. Again, we would have supported a government motion asking for money. However, we cannot support a new motion asking for more studies.

• (1755)

[English]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as the federal NDP's critic for issues facing the great province of Newfoundland and Labrador, in a buddy sense of a way, I was recently in Newfoundland and Labrador and I had the opportunity to speak to Minister Tom Rideout, for whom I have great respect. We discussed various issues affecting the province. One of them, of course, was marine and transportation services to the province. He indicated to me that the fees being charged for Marine Atlantic services were anywhere from 50% to 60% of the fees themselves. In many cases, it is quite formidable and costly for people to access goods and services on and off the island.

My hon. colleague for Random—Burin—St. George's was correct when he said that the previous government froze the fees. We were hoping that there would be a complete analysis of the transportation costs to the good people of Newfoundland and Labrador so that there could be a thorough discussion, not only in the House of Commons but in the House of Assembly, to discuss where we go from here in assisting that province and developing its economy, not just through transportation routes but in other aspects as well.

One of the concerns we also discussed was the aspect that some of the ferries are getting quite old and need to be replaced. In the Halifax shipyard, we see the *Joseph and Clara Smallwood* vessel most of the time being repaired. It is about time that a fair number of these vessels be replaced.

We believe that with modern efficiencies and with Atlantic know-how, we could have those ships built right in Atlantic Canada. I will be biased and say at the Halifax shipyards but also in the Marystown yards or Lévis, Quebec, Port Welland or out in B.C. We believe that if the government really had a procurement process that was fair and that used Canadian tax dollars to assist in the building of Canadian vessels, sort of like the ferries and other vessels that we require for our services, then the so-called fiscal imbalance that everyone keeps talking about could be addressed through what I call fiscal development.

If we were to develop these yards and give them the new equipment to make proper sound investments, then the people of Atlantic Canada would not only have good, high-paying and highly-skilled jobs but Newfoundland and Labrador and Cape Breton would be able to get the vessels that they require.

My hon. colleague was absolutely correct when he said that one of the tragedies in a way but, obviously, agreed to, was the demise a while ago of the Newfie Bullet which was the rail service in Newfoundland and Labrador. As the hon. member said, it was exchanged for money to build up the infrastructure of the road system there.

I know anybody who has been there knows that there are many songs and many stories about many of the people who worked along the railway or the Newfie Bullet as they called it. It is absolutely wonderful that the people can retain stories of that very magnificent form of transport that they had for so long. Unfortunately, however, modern times dictated that we would put everything on the roads.

As my hon. colleague for St. John's East knows well, with that amount of truck traffic on the road and with the weather systems they have, the roads soon fall into disrepair. They need sound investments to ensure that the main transportation routes are not only safe but also efficient to allow goods and services to travel efficiently.

There were discussions before. If I am not mistaken I believe the premier of the province once discussed a fixed link between Labrador and that of the great northern peninsula in northern Newfoundland. That is a discussion that we have always said is worthy of further discussion, not just in the House of Commons but in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador as well because that would be a very expensive type of operation. Of course, it would need to connect to a road that goes down through Quebec and then onward into central Canada. I believe that would be a worthy discussion. I do not think it is right to say that we should forget the idea because it costs too much money.

As, hopefully, the province of Newfoundland and Labrador grow and as that region of Atlantic Canada grows, we think that it has great benefits for all of Atlantic Canada, including northern Quebec. We do need discussions regarding transportation services for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador but when we discuss that we are also talking about other provinces in the Atlantic and maritime regions.

• (1800)

We believe this is a good motion and we welcome the debate. However, we want to make sure that the hon. member knows quite well, as my hon. colleague from the Bloc said, if we are going to have further discussion, we would like to see results a lot sooner than we are seeing now. If that is definitely the intention of my hon. friend, then we would support that initiative wholeheartedly.

**Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my absolute pleasure to speak to Motion No. M-242, a motion to examine measures that would improve transportation between the island of Newfoundland and mainland Canada. I thank the hon. member for St. John's East for his hard work on this particular file and for his hard work on behalf of the people of Newfoundland.

*Private Members' Business*

I thank the Minister of Transport as well, because I am happy to report to this House that this government will be voting yes on this motion. I am proud of this government because this will help many of my constituents. As members know, I am from the third largest Newfoundland city in the world, and I am very proud of that fact, the northern Alberta city of Fort McMurray.

This government believes in, is working toward and is helping to build a world-class transportation system that serves all Canadians, along with the required infrastructure to support it. In fact, this Conservative government has made substantial investments in Canada's infrastructure that will benefit all Canadians, not just a select few. It will benefit all regions of Canada.

I have heard some comments by other members on this particular subject and I can assure all members in this House that this new Conservative government of Canada is improving transportation. We have looked at the studies that were done and the minister will act decisively. He is a decisive minister and this is a government of action that will get results for Canadians.

Look no further than budget 2006 where we committed \$16.5 billion in unprecedented federal support for infrastructure over the next four years. That unprecedented amount includes \$900 million in new funding for public transit. It also maintains the current funding under existing infrastructure agreements, such as the gas tax funding worth \$5 billion over the next five years. It also includes \$591 million in new funding for the all important Asia-Pacific gateway and corridor initiative that will help our trade and transportation routes all the way through Canada. It also includes funding for new infrastructure programs for provincial, territorial and municipal infrastructure.

Members in this House, especially the members opposite, should hold their breath until budget 2007 because they are in for even more surprises.

Since the last budget, we have consulted with the provinces and territories, the municipal sector and key stakeholders involved in the transportation initiatives across this great country. We have looked at more effective ways to use our infrastructure investments to promote a more competitive, productive economy, to improve the quality of life of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, to achieve tangible improvements in the environment, and most important, to ensure accountability and transparency for all Canadians, for all taxpayers.

We are acting on what we heard. In fact, advantage Canada, released at the same time as the economic and fiscal update, is an economic plan that is designed to make Canada a world leader for today and for future generations of Canadians.

A key element of this plan is the Conservative government's commitment to work toward a comprehensive plan to make up for the 13 years of bad management of our infrastructure that took place before this Conservative government was in office.

It includes long term, sustainable, predictable funding and a fair and transparent provincial allocation for program envelopes to support improvements to the core national highway system which is so important to every Canadian family; to move toward large scale provincial, territorial and municipal projects, such as public transit and waste water management, which has been falling apart for some

period of time, especially in my constituency in northern Alberta and across Quebec; and also for small scale municipal projects.

Over the next while and within the context of our commitment to restore Canada's fiscal balance, we will set out how we intend to work with all our partners, after listening to stakeholders, to put our infrastructure money to work for Canadians.

The federal government has a constitutional responsibility, and we heard that from the member, to maintain transportation services between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland. We will continue to fulfill that responsibility, but in order to do so and as this motion clearly states, we must examine specific areas to determine the best way forward.

• (1805)

Currently the south coast of Labrador is isolated from the rest of the North American road network. This cannot continue. This is pending, of course, the completion of the Trans-Labrador Highway. Therefore, completing this highway is a top priority for the province.

Prime Minister Harper indicated that the government would support this cost shared agreement, and we will.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The hon. parliamentary secretary knows already that we do not refer to other members by their names but by their titles.

**Mr. Brian Jean:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me a good opportunity to make sure that all Canadians know that the Prime Minister and this government will support this cost shared agreement.

It should also be noted that to ensure accountability to all Canadians, this funding is contingent upon a detailed business case. As always, the government moves toward items on the basis of transparency and accountability to Canadian taxpayers.

The province is also constructing a 250 kilometre route from Happy Valley easterly to Cartwright Junction. The project is half completed and scheduled to be finished in the fall of 2009. Completion of this route will mean that the Trans-Labrador Highway will no longer end at Happy Valley and will connect to Newfoundland via the ferry at the Strait of Bell Isle.

The issue of the establishment of a fixed link between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland of Canada has also been raised and has been studied. The Newfoundland and Labrador fixed link refers to various proposals for constructing either a bridge, a tunnel or a causeway across the Strait of Belle Isle, connecting Labrador's mainland with the island of Newfoundland, a very important issue to the people of Canada.

A pre-feasibility study looked at these three concepts. Road and rail modes for transport of vehicles through a tunnel were also assessed. It concluded that one of the tunnel options, a bored tunnel under Belle Isle at its narrowest point, is the most technically and economically attractive alternative.



The province has stated publicly that, in its opinion, the fixed link is a long term proposition and a national project that will need a significant infusion of financing from the federal government. It has also been mentioned that it is not a priority for the provincial government. As the member for St. John's East has mentioned, it is a long term solution that must be kept in consideration and seriously looked at in the future.

While it is not a viable option in the short term to improve transportation to the mainland, we can examine if there is a scope for additional work on the Trans-Canada Highway that would improve connections with the province's airport and ferry terminals, as has also been mentioned by the member.

Turning now to Marine Atlantic Incorporated, Canada's new government is committed to stabilizing Marine Atlantic and ensuring that the important services that it provides remains safe, efficient and affordable for Canadians. After all, Marine Atlantic fulfills Canada's constitutional obligation to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide a year round freight and passenger service. As many members in the House know, the corporation carries 27% of all passengers, 50% of all freight and 90% of all perishables entering the province, clearly a very important transportation link. The minister will announce a long term strategy on Marine Atlantic in the next coming weeks.

I will to turn finally to air transportation. The air industry continues to meet the needs of the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. Air Canada and WestJet both operate extensive services to other regions of Canada and both have recently expanded their capacity to serve Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition, three other airlines based in Newfoundland offer extensive regional service within the province. At present, air carriers provide scheduled service to a total of 21 airports in Newfoundland and Labrador, carrying 1.5 million passengers in 2006. St. John's International Airport has recorded four years of consecutive growth as has Deer Lake, which has nearly doubled over the last five years as far as passenger growth.

As I have outlined, the Prime Minister and the minister are committed to ensuring that Newfoundland and Labrador has a strong transportation system backed by investment in public infrastructure, not just talk as was so frequent for the 13 years of the prior government. This is a government of action that will get things done for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

This commitment has been demonstrated in a number of investments in both transportation and infrastructure, but we cannot rest on our laurels. That is why the government will move ahead to support this important motion.

• (1810)

**Mr. Bill Matthews (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the remarks of the parliamentary secretary. I want to thank him today for all the announcements that he has made on behalf of his government for improved transportation services in Newfoundland and Labrador.

It was very interesting when the member stood up and talked about Newfoundland's third largest city being Fort McMurray. This comes from a member who not too long ago said that those unemployed in Atlantic Canada should go to Alberta to look for

### *Private Members' Business*

employment. He said he would be supporting this motion put forward by my friend from St. John's East.

I wonder if the parliamentary secretary is supporting the motion to make Marine Atlantic services more effective in order to get more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to go to Fort McMurray, or is he sincere about improving the transportation services to the people of our province which are so badly needed?

The parliamentary secretary speaks about the previous Liberal government. The Conservative government has been in office for a year. We do not see too many results in transportation services by water, road or by air for Newfoundland and Labrador. As a matter of fact, our services have decreased and the levels have gone down.

I say to the parliamentary secretary that if he is going to stand in his place representing the minister and the government, he has to be sincere about what he is saying. He has to understand the issues. He has to understand our province. Obviously he does not. It is obvious that he does not understand a Marine Atlantic issue as would the member for St. John's East and my colleague from Gander and myself. I say that out of respect.

I remind the parliamentary secretary that we are not proud about the thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that had to go to Fort McMurray to work. We want them to work in our province. That is why we want to improve this service, to get employment opportunities within our province. We do not want to improve it so that more of them go to the area he represents. If the member gets us worked up enough, in the next election we may have to get a good Newfoundlander or Labradorian elected in his riding. There are enough of them out there that they could probably defeat the member if we went out there and put on a campaign.

We are not proud of that. That is not what we are here for. We are here because we are sincere about seeing this constitutionally protected service improved. The government is sitting on enough reports, paid for in part by agencies of the federal government, by Marine Atlantic and stakeholders in Newfoundland and Labrador, that make concrete recommendations to the minister and to the government on how to improve the service.

The people want purpose built vessels. The service has changed over time. Transportation methods and modes have changed over time. The department has enough information now to make the decisions that the parliamentary secretary talks about without talking about further consultations for other strategies.

I have a question for the parliamentary secretary and the member for St. John's East. In the member's motion he references consultations with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am wondering if there have been any discussions between the federal government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

The parliamentary secretary has been on his feet a number of times talking about a cost-shared agreement. What is he talking about? Has the province of Newfoundland and Labrador now agreed to cost-share some transportation initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador? Is this a total surprise to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as it is for me and my colleagues from Newfoundland and Labrador? I would not be surprised if my colleague for St. John's East is just as surprised with that information as I am.

• (1815)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

When Motion No. 242 returns to the House for consideration, the hon. member for Random—Burin—St. George's will have six minutes left to speak.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

### CITIZENSHIP ACT

**Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on an issue of citizenship, which has very much been in the news in the last number of weeks. It is an issue that we have been discussing in the House for over 10 years. It truly is unfortunate that we are still discussing it instead of actually taking action.

I said earlier this week to the minister:

Mr. Speaker, the current fiasco could have been avoided. In the last Parliament all parties recognized the urgency to update the current, archaic and discriminatory Citizenship Act that does not recognize people married in religious ceremonies abroad and considers their children illegitimate. Had it not been for the defeat of the previous government, Canadians would now have a new Citizenship Act.

Will the Conservatives keep their promise to update the Citizenship Act in line with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as they promised when they were in opposition?

That question was fairly straightforward and called on the government not to discriminate against religious marriages. That is exactly what is happening and it is having quite an impact on quite a few Canadians. I find it passing strange that a party, which supposedly promotes religious freedoms, would discriminate against them.

The minister responded to me by saying:

Mr. Speaker, the interim policy on same sex marriage has been annulled and Parliament voted on that issue. That is the law of the land and we believe it should apply equally to everyone.

I am pleased that the Conservatives have recognized same sex marriage, finally, but I am left wondering if they also recognize common law marriage. Why would we discriminate by taking citizenship away from people who were married in a religious ceremony?

What is even more disturbing is that we are talking about a young man 27 years old who lived in this country since he was a few months old and because his great-grandparents were married in a religious ceremony and did not have a civil ceremony, he had his citizenship denied because he was born out of wedlock. How ridiculous can we get?

I find it incredible that this allegation would be made in particular against the Mennonite community that has the highest of morals and is very much traditionalist on this.

We can fix this and we can fix this if the Conservatives keep their promise, in the last government and previous governments, that they would bring in a citizenship act that was in line with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In closing, I want to commend the work of CBC Radio on this issue. I encourage Canadians to engage in the debate because it is a critical debate. It impacts on hundreds of thousands of people, or even millions of people, who are Canadian citizens.

• (1820)

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a number of anomalies under the Citizenship Act and also raises the issue of amending the act. These issues surrounding the member's questions are not new. In fact, with respect to the Liberal government, Liberal minister after Liberal minister was aware of the issues surrounding citizenship anomalies and did nothing to help citizens caught up in this matter.

The Liberals had 13 years to do it and could not get it done. They had 11 years of majority governments and did nothing, absolutely nothing, to fix these problems. It is the height of hypocrisy for the Liberal Party and that member to claim the moral high ground on this issue.

While our Conservative government did not create the problem, we will fix the problem for the benefit of all Canadians in all categories. Recently the minister issued a statement to address some of these concerns. At this time, for the benefit of all, I wish to read from the minister's statement:

With the recent need to have a passport to fly to the United States, some people have questions about proving their citizenship, and some erroneous reports in the media have heightened people's concerns. I wish to address those concerns.

In almost all cases, anyone who was born in Canada is a Canadian citizen.

Some people are discovering that, after having lived in Canada most of their lives, they do not have citizenship. These cases deserve immediate attention and so I am making these individual cases a priority. I will use the powers available to me as Minister under the Citizenship Act to resolve these cases as quickly as possible. I have directed my department to deploy the resources necessary to do so.

While these steps are being taken, we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that these individuals will not experience any interruption in government benefits such as health care coverage or OAS payments.

While these cases are being reviewed, these individuals can rest assured that they can remain in Canada.

This government finds it unacceptable that law-abiding individuals who have been led to believe they were always Canadian citizens are not now having their citizenship affirmed.

This is precisely why the minister has instructed department officials that if an individual falls in one of the areas in question and has been recently notified that he or she is no longer a citizen while showing a significant attachment to Canada, our government will do everything necessary to make sure that citizen's status is made clear as quickly as possible.

In fact, the minister's recent actions have received support from stakeholders.

Let me quote from the January 26 edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which said that the immigration minister's "decision was welcomed by Bill Janzen, head of the Mennonite Central Committee", to which the member was referring, "who has been trying for several years to help an accumulating number of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Mennonites who have lost their citizenship, even though they were raised in Canada". Mr. Janzen stated, "We are really happy now that the government is committed officially and clearly to act quickly on these cases".

That is action when we have seen 13 years of inaction. We will see that we stand behind these citizens and make sure that they are recognized, as they ought to be.

**Hon. Andrew Telegdi:** Mr. Speaker, on the question of hypocrisy, when I was faced with an act that did not conform to the charter, I resigned as parliamentary secretary because I believed the Citizenship Act should conform to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. My friend over there who is now a parliamentary secretary perhaps could learn a lesson from that.

We are going to be holding hearings on this issue. I want the country to know. They will take place on Monday, February 12, Monday, February 19, and Monday, February 26, from 11 o'clock to 1 o'clock. They are going to be televised. I encourage people to be engaged with this.

The hypocrisy of the government's position happened just yesterday when it told Mr. Joe Taylor that it will go all the way to

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

the Supreme Court to deny him his citizenship. This man is the son of a Canadian veteran who fought for democracy and freedom. The government eliminated the court challenges program and is trying to bankrupt Mr. Taylor before he can get his citizenship.

• (1825)

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki:** Mr. Speaker, this problem did not arise overnight. This problem has existed for a number of years. It existed while the hon. member was the chair of the citizenship committee and it was not addressed. We are addressing it in the short term and will do so on a long term basis as well.

We have taken steps to add additional staff to the case processing centre in Sydney, in headquarters and in the call centre. We have implemented a dedicated referral line at the call centre for clients who wish to speak to an agent about their urgent situations. We will address it.

We have increased coordination among Passport Canada, Service Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency. This coordination is helping to fast track proof of citizenship for passports, assure continued benefits, and ensure safeguards against removal while cases are being examined.

We will continue to take steps to screen all incoming applications in order to identify cases that require urgent processing and cases that fall into the anomaly category. We will deal with them. We will take steps to ensure an expedited process.

We are taking steps. We are ensuring that something is being done. When that government—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau):** Order, please. It being 6:27 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a. m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:27 p.m.)



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