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(HANSARD)

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

BROADCASTING REQUIREMENTS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians benefit from a competitive media in all markets.

Since 1961 the city of Pembroke has operated a licensed television station, first as CHOV, a CBC affiliate, later as CHRO, a CTV affiliate, and currently as A-Channel Ottawa, a Citytv member.

Each time the Pembroke TV station has been sold, local viewers have experienced declining local content and there have been severe job losses. CRTC requirements for local broadcasting have been routinely abandoned or discarded.

There has been an abdication of the responsibility of the local Pembroke station to serve the market that its licence is intended to serve. This has occurred despite conditions that have been put on the Pembroke licence renewal in the past to protect local community content and jobs.

It is our hope that future programming plans and commitments will be effective in ensuring that Pembroke's A-Channel will focus and keep its orientation on Renfrew County and the upper Ottawa Valley before any sale is finalized.

The residents of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke are calling upon the CRTC to return A-Channel to its roots in Pembroke, where it belongs.

WHEELS IN MOTION

Hon. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was just 20 years ago when a young man captured the hearts of Bramptonians and Canadians.

Rick Hansen, a paraplegic, wheeled around the world to raise money for spinal cord research. His incredible journey also helped teach Canadians about the day to day difficulties faced by people in wheelchairs.

On June 10, the fifth annual Wheels in Motion event took place in Brampton. This event was very successful and raised about \$8,000 for the Blazers, a local wheelchair youth group. The money from the event will send some members of the Blazers to a summer camp that is wheelchair accessible.

In the future, Wheels in Motion wants to raise funds for wheelchair accessible picnic tables in Chinguacousy Park. I strongly commend Wheels in Motion for its efforts to help others.

* * *

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD

Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Matane's adapted work centre, Les Ateliers Léopold-Desrosiers, recently won one of the Desjardins entrepreneurship awards for financial and social performance at a seminar entitled "Les grands enjeux de SECOR/Les Affaires".

The purpose of this award is to highlight the excellence of companies that contribute to advancing our society and enriching the community.

This company, which has been around for 24 years, has adapted its work stations and equipment in order to provide employment to persons with disabilities.

In addition to its remarkable social commitment, Les Ateliers Léopold-Desrosiers uses mainly recycled materials, thus demonstrating a commitment to recycling.

I would like to warmly congratulate the management and staff of Les Ateliers Léopold-Desrosiers, who are deserving of this honour. This is a great example of the accomplishments and contribution to the community of one of our very own companies.

Statements by Members

[English]

ABORIGINAL WOMEN

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week the family of Kelly Morrisseau was heartened to hear that the Assembly of First Nations was increasing the reward for information on the murder of their daughter, mother, sister, aunt and cousin.

Aboriginal women in Canada are at least five times more likely than all other women to die as a result of violence. Indigenous women's organizations such as NWAC are working to raise the public consciousness through its Sisters in Spirit initiative.

Canadians need to be aware of the alarmingly high rates of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada. These tragedies must be averted in the future.

In the last two years, other murders of young women were accompanied by timely press coverage, including regular press conferences. Kelly Morrisseau deserves no less.

We should not have different values for different lives. Any woman's death should get the same attention. We should not let their stories fade from the headlines and our memories.

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DAINES RANCH RODEO

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today in the House and pay tribute to a true, hard-working Albertan from my riding.

Jack Daines is a 70 year old cowboy who runs the Innisfail Auction, which was started by his father Snowden in 1955. Jack, one of seven brothers, has played a huge role in central Alberta and everyone in all of Alberta recognizes his distinct voice and his leadership.

This week, the Daines Ranch Rodeo runs for five days. This rodeo, which was started in 1961, has run without government grants and has grown to be one of the major events in our provinces.

By his own admission, Jack always tells it like it is. He is a tireless worker in his business and community life. As he says: "Sometimes I see guys not doing a good enough job and I have to step in and get things done the right way. I guess I lead by example".

Our community is proud of Jack and his son Duane, who have always led by example, and it is my honour to recognize Jack and his family today in the House.

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[Translation]

SRI LANKA

Hon. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after a year during which the Sri Lankan army killed humanitarian workers and bombed civilians, we learned last week that Tamil civilians had been driven out of the capital at gunpoint.

[English]

When international groups protested these mass expulsions, the Sri Lankan defence secretary accused the international community, especially the U.K. and European nations, of bullying his country over human rights.

[Translation]

Meanwhile, the Government of Canada has remained relatively silent, and has not followed the lead of Great Britain, Germany and the United States by cutting off aid to Sri Lanka.

[English]

It is time for Canada to finally suspend aid and trade until the Sri Lankan government starts respecting the human rights of Tamil civilians.

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[Translation]

PAUL THOMASSIN

Mr. Luc Harvey (Louis-Hébert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to draw your attention to the fact that an illustrious Conservative, whom we in the riding of Louis-Hébert consider to be the party's living memory, is here in Ottawa.

Paul Thomassin, whose involvement in politics goes back to the time of the illustrious Right Hon. John Diefenbaker, is a model of commitment and devotion to the men and women of today who are deeply committed to protecting Canadian values.

I wish to express my gratitude to this 83-year-old activist and his long line of Conservative predecessors for their role in preserving the party memory and the basic values for which we have always fought.

The health of a democracy is inextricably linked to the vitality of the parties within it, and the Thomassin family's legendary political involvement in the Canadian federation helped re-establish a stable democratic changeover when our country needed it most.

I wish my friend, Paul Thomassin, good health and long life.

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● (1410)

SAINT-LAMBERT SESQUICENTENNIAL

Mr. Maka Kotto (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on July 1, 2007, the municipality of Saint-Lambert will celebrate its 150th anniversary.

Everyone, including the 22,000 residents of the municipality, is invited to participate in various events organized by the Saint-Lambert 150th anniversary committee, a group of volunteers who have spent the last several months organizing the festivities.

Among the upcoming events of note, I would like to highlight the publication of *Saint-Lambert au fil des ans / Saint-Lambert Through the Years*, edited by the Mouillepiéd Historical Society, which recounts the great events in the lives of residents of Saint-Lambert since 1857.

Statements by Members

The Bloc Québécois and I would like to congratulate the Saint-Lambert municipal authorities and all of the artisans who will be taking part in the 150th anniversary celebration for their contribution to this vibrant display of our collective memory.

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[English]

STEPHEN LEACOCK MEMORIAL MEDAL

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was my great privilege on the weekend to attend the 60th annual Stephen Leacock medal for humour presentation at Geneva Park, near Orillia, Ontario.

Each year the Stephen Leacock Association announces the winner of the Leacock medal for humour for the book judged to be the most humorous one published in Canada the previous year. It has done so since 1946, granting this prestigious medal to such literary icons and notable Canadians as Pierre Berton, W.O. Mitchell, Farley Mowat and Mordecai Richler.

This year the associates have awarded the medal and its \$10,000 prize, courtesy of TD Bank Financial Group, to author and CBC personality Stuart McLean for his book *Secrets from the Vinyl Cafe*. I would like to congratulate Mr. McLean for winning this award for a third time.

I would like to thank the Stephen Leacock Association for its ongoing promotion of Canadian literature.

* * *

MCCAIN FOODS

Mr. Paul Zed (Saint John, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of McCain Foods, a family business and world giant built on quality and on loyalty to Florenceville, New Brunswick.

Launched by brothers Harrison and Wallace McCain in 1957, the family business has been growing potatoes in New Brunswick since 1910.

McCain Foods is a Canadian multinational success story. As the largest processor of frozen potatoes in the world, it operates in 110 countries on six continents with 20,000 employees and has diversified its french fry business to include pizzas, juice and appetizers.

The McCain family continues to be one of Canada's foremost philanthropic families, donating millions of dollars toward worthy causes everywhere.

I salute the McCain Foods founders, the late Harrison McCain and of course our friend Wallace, whose heart is still in Florenceville and who remains one of Canada's leading business leaders, as well as late brothers Andrew and Robert and Andrew's son Allison, who is the current chairman.

I extend congratulations to them on their 50 years in business. On behalf of all Canadians, I wish them continued success in the next 50 years.

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are concerned about the Senate's wish to delay the budget vote, thereby compromising certain programs. Why did the Liberals and the NDP say no to restoring the fiscal balance that will allow Quebec to provide better services and improved infrastructure?

Why did they say no to giving Quebec farmers \$90 million to help deal with rising production costs?

Why did they say no to a tax break that will allow Quebec parents to save nearly \$300 million?

Why did they say no to the \$350 million to help Quebec reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution?

The House of Commons passed a budget that is good for Quebecers and Canadians. The Senate must pass it before the end of the month. I would ask my hon. colleague from Westmount—Ville-Marie to urge the Liberal senators to support the budget, since she acknowledged that “it is a budget that should please federalists in Quebec”.

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[English]

RACHELLE LEOST

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tragedy struck in Winnipeg last month when Rachelle Leost was killed by a drunk, underage driver of a stolen van, robbing Manitoba's Métis community of an active member and her three children of a caring mother.

We mourn the loss of Rachelle and all those who are victims of gun crimes, gang violence and car hijackings, crimes that can be prevented if the government would only move beyond its “get tough” rhetoric.

We need answers, not negligence and broken promises. Why has the government not kept its election promise of 2,500 more police on patrol? Why have crime prevention dollars not been fully spent? Why is it not supporting good ideas like the Winnipeg's North End Community Ambassadors program and the work Ndinawe does with the aboriginal community to help at-risk young people?

As the young students at Norquay School in my constituency said to the Governor General on her recent visit, “we want to walk around in our neighbourhood and feel confident”. They deserve nothing less.

Oral Questions

●(1415)

ORDER OF CANADA

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in the chamber today to pay tribute to an exceptional man who lives in my riding, well-known agriculturalist, Mr. Charles “Charlie” Scranton of Hazelbrook, Prince Edward Island.

Mr. Scranton was cited for outstanding service over three decades with Agriculture Canada's Poultry Division and developed one of Canada's leading herds of Hereford cattle. Over the years, Charlie was an avid supporter of the Easter Beef Show and Sale.

As well, Mr. Scranton worked for many years with Youth Outreach as part of his long involvement with the First Baptist Church in Charlottetown.

Once again, I would like to congratulate Mr. Charles Scranton of Hazelbrook, Prince Edward Island, for being named to the Order of Canada for his accomplishments in the industry, commerce and business category.

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[Translation]

WALID EÏDO

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Walid Eïdo, a Lebanese politician, was killed today in a bombing in Beirut, along with his son and six other people. Mr. Eïdo, who was in his sixties, was a member of the parliamentary majority led by Saad Hariri. This attack is strangely reminiscent of the tragic death of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who was killed in February 2005, and the assassinations of MP Gebran Tuéni and Industry Minister Pierre Gemayel.

Several countries have already condemned these acts of violence, including France and the United States. On behalf of my Bloc Québécois colleagues, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Mr. Eïdo's family, to the families of the other victims and to the people of Lebanon.

Freedom and justice are not achieved through violence, nor will they be stifled by violence.

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[English]

ALBERTA BYELECTION

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Progressive Conservatives lost a precious piece of political real estate last night. The seat held by former premier Ralph Klein went to Liberal Craig Cheffins in a byelection yesterday.

The loss of Calgary—Elbow should be considered both a symbolic and a political blow to the six-month-old Stelmach government. The PCs held this seat since they took it in 1971. Clearly, this would be a concern for Premier Ed Stelmach who is the only Conservative premier in Canada who is still on speaking terms with the Prime Minister.

Perhaps even more telling is the fact that part of Calgary—Elbow is in the Prime Minister's own riding, a Prime Minister who helped cause the defeat by his broken promise on income trusts.

On behalf of Liberals all across the country, I would like to extend our congratulations to Mr. Cheffins and Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft.

Maybe the winds that brought us Liberal governments in P.E.I. and New Brunswick are Alberta bound.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night, this democratically elected House of Commons overwhelmingly passed a budget that delivers tax relief for families and businesses: \$1.5 billion to support clean air and climate change projects; \$800 million more in predictable long term funding for post-secondary education; \$250 million for the creation of child care spaces; \$300 million to protect girls and women from cancer of the cervix; \$612 million to implement wait time guarantees; and much more.

However, today, in the unelected Liberal dominated Senate, a Liberal senator is promising that he and his colleagues will delay the passage of this federal budget. Even the Liberal finance critic says that the Liberals will continue to fight the budget, presumably in the Senate.

The Leader of the Opposition, however, indicates that the Senate should respect the will of the House of Commons. Who is speaking for the Liberal Party? Is it an unelected Liberal senator? Is it the Liberal finance critic? Maybe it is the Leader of the Opposition but no one seems to ever listen to him.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

ATLANTIC ACCORD

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, too often, the Prime Minister has broken his election promises without apology. Today, I am giving him the opportunity to do the honourable thing and apologize for his broken promises, starting with the promise he made to two Atlantic provinces and Saskatchewan to honour the Atlantic accord and exclude 100% of natural resource revenues from equalization, a promise that was clearly broken in the latest budget.

Will the Prime Minister do the honourable thing and apologize to these three provinces?

●(1420)

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have kept our promises regarding the Atlantic accord. These two provinces are getting the same amounts under the accords as before the budget. That is this party's commitment.

At the same time, thanks to a new equalization formula, Nova Scotia has gained another \$95 million. In addition, the new formula excludes 100% of natural resource revenues, just as we promised.

Oral Questions

[English]

INCOME TRUSTS

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with his broken promise, the Prime Minister made such a mess that Saskatchewan is now suing him.

Let us try it with income trusts now. The Prime Minister promised in his platform in the last election to “preserve income trusts by not imposing any new taxes on them”. Once in power, he brought in the punitive 31% tax. Thousands of citizens, especially seniors, lost billions of dollars.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and apologize to these citizens?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we brought that policy to the House of Commons and we explained the reasons we had to do it. The House of Commons supported that measure and it also supported measures to help senior citizens who may have been adversely impacted, measures which the party opposite voted against.

The hypocrisy over there knows no bounds. I have a whole series of quotes here of the Leader of the Opposition opposing even signing the Atlantic accord in the first place. Therefore, I was not surprised when we improved equalization that they voted against that as well.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no apology to the provinces or to senior citizens. Will the Prime Minister at least apologize to our veterans' widows?

In June 2005, he promised in writing to Joyce Carter of Nova Scotia, to:

...immediately extend Veterans Independence Program services to the widows of all Second World War and Korean War veterans...

After 16 months in power and two budgets, he did nothing. This is another broken promise.

Will the Prime Minister apologize to Joyce Carter and to our veterans' widows?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is well aware of its platform commitments and other commitments to Canadian veterans and we intend to act on those commitments.

I would point out that there were measures in this most recent budget to improve the lives of veterans, some important investments, and once again the Liberal Party voted against those benefits for veterans.

* * *

EQUALIZATION FORMULA

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for months the finance minister has told Canadians, “no province will be worse off in Canada as a result of the new equalization scheme”.

A study released today by the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council proves that the government is wrong. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador will lose \$1.4 billion. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island will also lose under this formula.

When will the Prime Minister and his Minister of Finance finally stop misleading Canadians?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, there is a difference between getting less money than they wanted and actually getting less money.

The fact is that under the new formula every equalization receiving province is receiving more money because the formula is an enriched formula. The only thing that can really change that in the future is if the economic circumstances of those provinces improve such that they move closer to the national average. That would be a good thing for all Canadians.

• (1425)

[Translation]

Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the authors of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council report concluded that this government's budget violated both the letter and the spirit of the accords.

Even the former Conservative finance minister, John Crosbie, said that the Conservatives were changing the equalization formula in a way that would nullify the principles of the accord.

The only people who are refusing to admit that the government is undermining the accords are the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance. Why are they refusing to admit they are wrong?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the new equalization formula is an enriched formula. That is why all the provinces that receive equalization payments are getting more money this year.

[English]

I think this debate is getting close to the level of the absurd. We were being accused of breaking the contract with the Atlantic accord. Now the premier of Saskatchewan, who has no accord, is going to sue us for breaking his accord. I do not even understand what they are saying any more.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised action on the environment. Yesterday the C.D. Howe Institute published a study that found that the government's so-called green plan is a total failure. In fact, according to economists who took part in the study, the government's plan will not even reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a single tonne by 2050. This is just another broken promise by the Prime Minister.

Will the Prime Minister finally admit that the intention of his green plan never was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but to protect his friends the oil companies?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not at all. The Minister of the Environment proposed a number of measures to achieve this objective. We do not agree with the estimates in this study. We are in consultation and developing a regulatory system. We intend to revise all these figures in order to ensure that we meet our targets.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister insists on moving forward with intensity targets instead of absolute targets. Does he not realize that lowering greenhouse gas emissions per barrel of oil from the oil sands will have no effect if the production of barrels is quadrupled?

Will the Prime Minister admit that his primary objective is not to cut pollution, but to protect the oil companies that continue to rake in profits and create pollution?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very important for Canada and for all the other countries in the world to have absolute reduction targets. This is an essential part of our plan. Regulating industry is the most significant part of our plan. There are also a number of other initiatives in the areas of energy and transport. For the first time, Canada has a real goal and real measures for achieving that goal.

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, at the G-8 summit, the Prime Minister argued in favour of the territorial approach to fighting climate change, indicating that the different starting points as well as the individual circumstances of each country should be taken into account. The same approach could also be used domestically by establishing absolute reduction targets, in keeping with the Kyoto protocol, for Quebec and for each province, leaving each to implement its own plan for achieving the desired results.

My question is simple. If this approach is good enough on the international scene, why is it not good enough for Canada?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the reason why we have more than just absolute reduction targets, and I emphasize the word “absolute” for my Quebec colleague.

It is very important for the government to acknowledge efforts made by industry in recent years. That is an essential part of our plan. We are in discussions with industry, throughout Canada and Quebec, to be sure that we will reach these sound objectives.

• (1430)

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says that he supports creating a carbon exchange and he voted in favour of the Bloc Québécois motion requiring the implementation of absolute targets, but he is doing the exact opposite. Even the C.D. Howe Institute, which is not known for its environmental inclinations, has denounced the green plan because, despite the promises, reduction targets will not be achieved before 2050.

Is this not further evidence that the purpose of the Conservatives' plan is first and foremost to please their friends in the oil industry?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not the case at all. We think it is absolutely vital that we work hard with the transportation industry, whether it be road, marine or rail transportation.

We think it is very important to work with the provinces. We are working very hard with trusts in order to support the objectives throughout Canada.

It is interesting to note that the Quebec Conservative caucus asked for more money for Quebec than did the Bloc Québécois.

[*English*]

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today a C.D. Howe Institute study is saying, “The government is likely to miss its 2020 emissions target by almost 200 megatonnes”. Its author added that the government should not be surprised about this because it has simply taken up the failed Liberal policies, by and large. Then the Montreal Stock Exchange CEO is saying that the government's rules and targets are too weak.

Surely these right-wing think tanks and business people are not part of the Kyoto socialist plot the Prime Minister was so paranoid about. If he will not take our advice on climate change, will he at least listen to his friends at the C.D. Howe Institute and business—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of the Environment.

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was with great interest I noted that the leader of the fourth party suggested that we take advice from that individual. He is the same academic who reviewed the opposition Bill C-288 and said it would have terrible economic consequences for Canada.

If the hon. member is going to accept all the advice from Mark Jaccard, maybe he should begin by accepting the advice of the foolhardy Bill C-288, something that he and his party have hung their own hats on.

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the only advice the Prime Minister is listening to at all is from George Bush.

[*Translation*]

Even the Conference Board has just given the Conservatives a D for their performance on the environment. During the G-8, the Prime Minister joined forces with George Bush to weaken the economic powers' commitment to fighting climate change.

He said that there was no way we could reach the greenhouse gas reduction targets if the United States did not sign an international treaty.

Does that mean that the government is giving in and that Canada will not sign a new treaty if George Bush does not sign it first?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for the first time ever at the G-8 summit, all nations recognized that having mandatory long-term greenhouse gas reduction targets is essential.

This is a very important declaration that includes the United States for the first time. It is therefore important to keep moving in this direction because this is a victory for Canada and the world.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a report released yesterday by the C.D. Howe Institute completely discredited the statements made by the Prime Minister during the G-8, in which he claimed that his climate change plan would save the planet.

Oral Questions

The report confirmed that Canada's emissions will skyrocket every year for the next 50 years. By that time, emissions will be 330% higher than the 2050 targets that the Prime Minister announced to the world.

Will the Prime Minister finally admit that his plan is a total failure?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have come forward with a whole series of initiatives to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this country.

We will regulate industry for the first time in Canadian history on this issue. We have a whole series of initiatives on transport, on energy efficiency and on conservation. We are working on a national effort.

We will even help Dalton McGuinty close down those dirty coal fired stations, something he promised to do, but a McGuinty Liberal did not keep his promise on the environment.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister reminds me of a school child who gets caught cheating on an exam.

Four reputable organizations, four independent reports, confirmed that the minister is deceiving Canadians. Even the government's own officials cannot back up his claims.

This ecofraud means consumers will pay billions of dollars for no real environmental or health benefits.

Why does the minister not just stop the charade and the schoolyard antics and bring Bill C-30 back to the House for a vote?

• (1435)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the single worst environmental promise that was made and not kept was the solemn promise made by a Liberal named McGuinty to close all the coal fired generating stations in Ontario by 2007. The reality is, it was a Liberal broken promise.

The Liberal Party has come forward with its own bill on climate change. Here is what the Montreal *Gazette* said. It said that it was intellectually bankrupt. It said that it was not a very tough scheme. It was bureaucratic, it was arbitrary, and it certainly would not be put in place in Canada to help us meet our Kyoto targets. I agree.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today the Conference Board of Canada reported that the Conservative government has failed on both the environmental and the innovation fronts. The report states that the government increasingly fails to meet the basic goals of a high and sustainable quality of life for all Canadians.

When will the minority government develop some long term policy that will benefit the future competitiveness and sustainability of our economy? When will it implement an innovation strategy that will not get a failing grade?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member asks, when? Last October, I say to the member. It is called "Advantage Canada". It was published last October. It is a medium and long term economic plan for our country, including an innovation advantage.

We have already begun implementing it in budget 2007, including the very beneficial accumulated capital cost allowance for manufacturing industries mainly in central Canada, which that member voted against.

Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it was more like "advantage Whitby" than "Advantage Canada".

Thanks to the Liberals' solid fiscal record, the government inherited a great deal to work with. Funding for the environment and for research and development suffered billions in budget cuts from Mike Harris's hatchet man in his first budget. Today the Conference Board reported the impact of that.

Why should Canadians have any confidence in a finance minister who is disingenuous about the promises he breaks and incompetent in the delivery of the promises he keeps?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite refers to the Conference Board report and the data that is in that report. I must point out to the member opposite that all of that data is from 2005 and before, the result of the poor productivity performance under the previous Liberal government.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in light—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Saint-Jean has the floor. He does not need help posing his question.

Mr. Claude Bachand: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your confidence.

In light of the report, released this week, condemning the fact that 40% of contracts awarded by National Defence were awarded without tender, we have to wonder whether a truly competitive process is being used for the major contracts that are currently being negotiated, including the contract with Lockheed Martin. This is far from the transparency the Prime Minister promised during the last election campaign.

To ensure that officials are not simply engaging in industrial profiling to benefit certain suppliers over others, will the government hold a real tendering process and allow Airbus to submit a proposal?

Oral Questions

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague used the figure of 41%, which he also used a few days ago, but it is not at all correct. The fact is that our government is making good on its commitment to rebuild the Canadian Forces. In the past year, this government has met the military's needs for new equipment and has made the most significant investment in the Canadian Forces in a decade. The figures my friend is using are not at all correct. We are giving our Canadian Forces all the equipment they need.

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I ask the government whether it is going to repeat what it did last year. In response to a question I asked the Minister of National Defence a few days before the end of the session, the government said that nothing had been decided. The following week, the government announced contracts worth \$20 billion.

Is the government waiting until the House of Commons rises to announce the signing of lucrative contracts, presenting the members of the House with a done deal? This would be unacceptable.

• (1440)

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will say again what I said yesterday. Our government is keeping all its promises to our armed forces. We are going to provide them with all the equipment they need. We are going to follow all the Treasury Board processes and respect taxpayers. Our armed forces need new equipment, and we are going to give it to them in a way that respects taxpayers.

* * *

QUEBEC'S FORMER LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in light of the findings of the auditors general regarding Lise Thibault, the Government of Quebec has asked Quebec provincial police to conduct, as quickly as possible, an investigation they consider appropriate under the circumstances, given that the government is both judge and judged.

Since the federal government is in the same boat, and moreover, since the \$700,000 in question comes from Canadian Heritage, will it follow the lead of the Government of Quebec and ask the RCMP to investigate and get to the bottom of this?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House I had the opportunity to state that abuse is not only unacceptable, but it is also inexcusable. The government is committed to getting to the bottom of this and to being transparent.

This is why, in January, we asked the Auditor General to investigate. We will ask the RCMP to conduct an appropriate investigation, given the Auditor General's findings.

Mrs. Vivian Barbot (Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, finally a real answer.

According to Ms. Thibault, it is common practice for lieutenant-governors to not submit receipts for some expenses, given that she considered this supplementary pay.

In light of this statement, does the government plan on modifying the auditing procedure to enable the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to require all lieutenant-governors and the Governor General to justify their spending?

[English]

Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have indicated, we take this very seriously. We have reviewed the Auditor General's report and the recommendations she has made. We will be implementing all the recommendations regarding the management of the expenditure process. We have spoken to Minister Pelletier. We will be working closely with the Quebec government.

We will take action. This is not acceptable. This is misuse of taxpayers' dollars and we will get to the bottom of it.

* * *

CHILD CARE

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government has a track record of broken promises, of deception, of cancellation and ripped up contracts. The Atlantic accord, Kyoto, Kelowna were all ripped up. Summer jobs programs were cancelled. Early learning and child care agreements were destroyed, and the result is the children of Canada have been left without quality, universal, accessible and affordable child care.

Will the children of Canada be forced to take the Prime Minister to court to get him to honour his word and deliver child care spaces for Canada's kids?

Hon. Monte Solberg (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the Conference Board of Canada report singled out the former government for its poor record on providing child care spaces. The fact is this government acted and acted quickly. Upon coming to power we put in place the universal child care benefit, something that gave parents choice in child care, which is what parents are asking for.

The sad fact is the leader of the Liberal Party in October said he would take that away. He has no faith in parents and he should be ashamed.

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the truth is the Conservatives have delivered nothing for Canada's kids. The truth is they have established a pattern of breaking contracts. One promise after the next has been broken. The truth is 125,000 child care spaces were promised and not one single space was delivered. Today the Conference Board said that our country is mired in mediocrity.

Why does the government not realize that by failing to invest in Canada's kids, it is risking our nation's economic productivity and prosperity?

*Oral Questions***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

● (1445)

Hon. Monte Solberg (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the truth is that with the universal child care benefit, the new child tax credit and the \$250 million a year for new spaces, we are now giving to parents, child care providers and the provinces three times what the Liberals were giving. We are getting the job done where the Liberals absolutely failed.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Ken Dryden (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we saw it again last week: the science of climate change and the great majority of the G-8 saying one thing, the Prime Minister another, his pride always getting it done; his problem, Canada's problem, always the wrong "it".

On the environment, Africa, our role in the world, our relations with the provinces, his strategy is to set the bar low, really really low, and then hit it decisively and call that success, but success for whom? For him politically? Maybe, but for Canadians, for the world, no.

When will the Prime Minister understand that?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think all Canadians should be very proud of the unanimous G-8 statement that committed the world to move toward obligatory reduction targets for all major emitting countries. Specifically Canada, the European Union and Japan believe that it should be half by 2050.

The previous government under the Liberals let the world down and now the world has left them behind.

Hon. Ken Dryden (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, getting it done wrong, decisively wrong; set the bar low and you get low.

How will history write about the 16 months of the Conservative government? About just how little was attempted, about just how little was done. For the government it has all been a campaign, a lot of politics and manoeuvring, signifying almost nothing.

With an election no longer imminent, the Conservatives have no direction and no idea what to do. When will they learn? A prime minister, a real leader, campaigns to govern, he does not govern to campaign.

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us not look at what the Prime Minister said. Let us look at what UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said at last week's G-8 meeting. He said that he welcomes that G-8 leaders have agreed on a strong and early action to combat climate change. He said that he is greatly encouraged by their commitment. He also said that the acceptance by the leaders is to be commended.

The member opposite used to go around Canada asking, "What stopped us? Why didn't we do better?" Maybe he could answer those questions.

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for 60 years first nations have been asking Ottawa to change the way it resolves land claims. For 13 years the Liberals ignored those cries and did nothing. In fact, under the neglectful Liberal watch the number of aboriginal land claims rose from 250 to 800.

Yesterday the Prime Minister, along with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, announced our Conservative government's plan to address the issue. Could the minister explain what this new plan will mean for aboriginal Canadians?

Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was indeed a historic day. The right hon. Prime Minister together with National Chief Phil Fontaine announced a historic plan that will revolutionize the land claims process. It will bring fundamental reforms, reduce the backlog, accelerate claims. There will be a fully independent tribunal with impartial judges. There is \$250 million per year set aside for 10 years.

The most accurate comment being offered by National Chief Phil Fontaine was:

It's a good day for all of us. The...government, the first nations community, the country. We now have a real opportunity, Canada has, to finally resolve these claims.

* * *

● (1450)

SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the softwood sellout orchestrated by the Liberal turned Conservative international trade minister has had catastrophic results for ordinary Canadians. Thousands of jobs have been lost in the billion dollar giveaway. Now we learn that he is committing the same crime, giving away our shipbuilding industry to the European Free Trade Association.

Clearly, countries such as Liechtenstein have smart and savvy negotiators and they simply outclass the desperate minister. Why is the government acting like Liberals and selling out Canadian shipbuilding with a deeply flawed agreement? Why does everything he touches turn into a disaster?

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows that this is the first free trade agreement Canada has signed in the last six years.

As far as the shipbuilding industry is concerned, this trade agreement has the most generous provision for shipbuilding of any sector in any free trade agreement in the history of Canada.

Oral Questions

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): The reality is, Mr. Speaker, we are talking again about thousands of lost jobs that will result from this giveaway. Not satisfied with selling out our shipbuilding industry, the minister is pushing now to sell out our automobile industry in his farewell tour. He wants a signature, the illusion of accomplishment, at the end of a short and sordid political career.

Will the Prime Minister finally stand up for Canada and stop the minister from harming our auto industry and our shipbuilding industry, like he destroyed the softwood industry?

When will these agreements come here for a vote so that Parliament can save the industries that the minister has sold out?

Hon. David Emerson (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I did not finish on what we are doing for the shipbuilding industry.

We have a 15 year phase-out and no tariff reductions for the first three years. We have a shipbuilding policy that will ensure the construction of ships in Canada for the next 15 to 20 years, spread continuously to ensure the full utilization of shipyards.

We have also, through the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry, replenished the funding and added to the funding of the structured financing facility for the shipbuilding industry.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 22, 2005 the current Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food supported a motion which stated that the government should instruct its negotiators at the WTO to work to “ensure that the supply management sectors are subject to no reduction in over-quota tariffs and no increase in tariff quotas”. The minister supported that motion.

Why then does the government not allow our trade negotiators to fully participate in WTO discussions with a mandate to support our supply management producers?

Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only did all members in the House of Commons support that motion, certainly we campaigned on that motion during the last federal election. Both the Minister of International Trade and I have been in Geneva and Davos and other international forums defending supply management.

The instructions to our negotiator are exactly what the House of Commons passed. There are no ifs, ands or buts; there is not a piece of paper between. Our official position and the position of the House of Commons is that we support supply management. We have taken steps to do that time and again. Whereas the Liberal government used to talk about it, we have actually done it. We support supply management.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister absolutely misrepresents the motion. The motion simply instructs the government to negotiate from a position of strength, a bottom line where the nation stands with our supply management sector.

Is the Prime Minister, by withdrawing the negotiator from sensitive industry discussions, ensuring the death of supply management? Is that his purpose? The government not only is trading our supply management system away, it is losing it by default.

Will the minister accept his responsibilities, support our producers, use the motion as leverage and get the job done?

Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when dairy producers asked the Liberal government to use article XXVIII to protect the industry, what happened? Not a thing. This government moved and used article XXVIII.

They asked the Liberals to move on compositional standards to protect them from the intrusion of MPCs into this country. What did that member and the rest of those guys do? Not a darn thing.

What we have done is we have said we are going to protect supply management. We stand with supply management. When we negotiate, what would the member have us do, sell out supply management? What we do is we stand solidly with the producers and we say no change to over-quota tariffs, no tariff rate expansion. We are with supply management.

* * *

● (1455)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the Conservatives have been in power, they have not been walking the talk, and we saw proof of this again today. The Conservatives and the Minister of International Trade are destroying an industry that does not need subsidies, but rather unwavering support to remain competitive.

When will the Minister of International Trade listen to the needs of our poultry producers and reverse his decision to allow for increased imports of poultry from outside Canada? When will the minister firmly support supply management, once and for all?

[English]

Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been asked this time to kind of repeat what I said last time but maybe not so quickly. I think the hon. member should listen up.

Oral Questions

We support supply management. We campaigned to support supply management. We have instructed our negotiators to support supply management. We intend to continue to support supply management. Read my lips. They are safe. They are with us, not with you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, clearly the minister has changed portfolios, because the question was addressed to the Minister of International Trade.

While Canadian poultry producers, including those in Madawaska—Restigouche, provide a high quality product under supply management, the Minister of International Trade, without any reason, decided to allow an additional 8.7 million kilograms of chicken to be imported from other countries.

How can this government claim to defend supply management and poultry producers when it is jeopardizing the very future of our producers, not to mention jobs that are very important to rural communities in Canada?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Secretary of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very strange to hear members of that party say such things. Let us consider what has been accomplished in the last 14 months. Concrete action has been taken. We are talking about action here, and not just empty rhetoric. That is all we heard for the past 13 years, and our supply managed sectors suffered as a result. We, on the other hand, are taking action.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on May 1, the Minister of Public Safety let it be known that he shared my concerns about the presence of a sexual predator, Clermont Bégin, in a halfway house located on a Government of Canada property near an elementary school. On May 23, the trustees of the Montreal school board unanimously voted in favour of a resolution demanding that pedophiles no longer be assigned to halfway houses located near schools.

Has the Minister of Public Safety directed Correctional Service Canada to cease this practice?

[*English*]

Hon. Stockwell Day (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I cannot comment specifically on this case, but in instances like these, representatives from Correctional Service engage with local officials to see if there are some things that can be done to mitigate the risks. There are things already in place. I am very concerned about these types of eventualities also.

One thing that would help is if the opposition members would support our Minister of Justice when he looks at legislation on things like making it a little more expeditious to deem dangerous offenders as dangerous offenders so they would not get out of jail in the first place. We would appreciate some support on that.

[*Translation*]

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there have always been significant delays in the establishment and funding of government programs for the homeless. This year, as every year, emergency transitional measures have been put in place in order to avoid an interruption of service even though the needs of the homeless increase every year.

Can the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development confirm that, this time, the new homelessness partnering strategy will be put in place on time, enabling community organizations to receive funding as of January 1, 2008?

[*English*]

Hon. Monte Solberg (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the situation for homeless people. In fact, we moved very quickly to ensure that funding agreements were in place under the national homelessness initiative.

Under the new homelessness partnering strategy, we are already seeing some new programming. However, to ensure that we do not miss a beat and that people are protected, the national homelessness initiative will go forward until the projects currently under way are finished.

* * *

● (1500)

[*Translation*]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF CANADA FOR THE REGIONS OF QUEBEC

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government has refused to allocate funding to extend the runways at the Saint-Hubert and Trois-Rivières airports. In both cases, the extensions are required for local economic development. These two airports are located in regions that did not elect a Conservative member.

However, the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec was able to find millions of dollars to extend the runway at the Alma airport, which is located in his own riding.

Is the Conservative government in the process of punishing the regions of Quebec that did not elect Conservatives?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, indeed, the Alma airport did receive a contribution through one of the six new tools we have implemented called community economic facilities for the regions. The same goes for the others, like Sept-Îles, which enlarged its wharf.

The role—the purpose—of the Economic Development Agency of Canada is to help vulnerable regions and regions in difficulty.

Oral Questions

The budget for Abitibi-Témiscamingue went from 4% to 7% this year; for the Eastern Townships, it went from 5% to 8%; for Quebec City, growth ranged from 7% to 22% because of the 400th anniversary and so forth. We are helping regions in difficulty.

* * *

[English]

THE BUDGET

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal senators continue their threat to ignore the will of the House of Commons. Regarding the budget, Liberal Senator George Baker said:

—I would say I'm duty-bound not just to interfere with it but to vote against it and do whatever I could to delay it.

Last night the House of Commons voted in favour of the budget, but a delay in the Senate could result in the loss of some very important funding.

Could the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development tell the House the effect a delay in passing the budget will have on Canadian workers?

Hon. Monte Solberg (Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an important question. We already know the Liberal leader said that he would take away the universal child care benefit from Canadian parents, and I cannot understand that. Now he is prepared to let unelected senators take away the 40% increase for post-secondary education, \$500 million in support for training, \$250 million for child care spaces, a doubling of the training program budget for aboriginals.

He might think it is unfair, but it is really his job to stand up to unelected Liberal senators.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the June 7 speech to the natural gas conference in Ottawa by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is creating confusion in the Northwest Territories. In his speech the minister said, "It may be necessary to reconfigure and reinvent the project". The confusion the minister is creating through this piecemeal approach is just one more reason that Canada must have a strategy on energy security.

Will the Conservative minister clearly state once and for all what his government's real position is on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline and end this confusion?

Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and his party have frequently commented about big oil and big gas. I actually recall one memorable exchange where the term "big ass" was in fact used.

The hon. member himself has repeatedly expressed his opposition to the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. To the amazement of everyone this past weekend, he called on the government to subsidize the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

Perhaps the NDP members could explain why they are opposed to a private sector pipeline, but in favour of the same pipeline if it is publicly subsidized.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister does not know the difference between a subsidy and ownership, and he should learn it.

In the same speech the minister said that the Conservative government would want to do the same thing the Liberals wanted to do, give away the royalties that really belonged to the average people of the Northwest Territories.

The northern royalty rates are already so low they constitute a giveaway of the oil and gas.

Will the minister please explain how following the discredited Liberal plan to give away the royalties will benefit the working people of the north?

Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government will follow a Conservative plan. I have made it very clear that this project is a piece of basin opening, private infrastructure. It is an important project to the country, but it is one that must be constructed by the private sector. It must make sense to the shareholders of the companies that construct it. That is the way this project must proceed.

* * *

● (1505)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been extensive consultations and I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, in relation to the proceedings for Wednesday, June 13, and notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practices of the House:

1. the ways and means motion number 21 be deemed adopted;

2. at 5:20 p.m. the member for Burlington and sponsor of Bill C-279 may make a statement of not more than ten minutes in relation to the said bill and following the statement Bill C-279 shall be withdrawn from the order paper and government orders shall be taken up during the time provided for private members' business;

3. after 5:30 p.m., the Chair shall not receive any quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent, provided that at 9 p.m. the House shall adjourn to the next sitting day or when the debate on all of the following is completed: Bills S-6, C-51, C-61, C-59, C-23 and C-11, whichever comes first; and

4. when no member rises to speak to the motion relating to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-11 the question shall be deemed put, a recorded division deemed requested and deferred to Thursday, June 14, at 3 p.m.

The Speaker: Does the hon. the government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

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)

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BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT

(On the Order: Ways and Means:)

June 12, 2007—Consideration of a Ways and Means motion to introduce an Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act, the Wage Earner Protection Program Act and chapter 47 of the Statutes of Canada, 2005—The Minister of Labour

(Motion deemed adopted)

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order arising from question posed during question period by the leader of the official opposition to the Prime Minister with regard to the VIP program and the written promise by the Prime Minister to extend those benefits to all veterans and widows upon taking the reins of power.

It was obvious from the answer from the Prime Minister that he knows nothing about the issue. He shared nothing on the specific issue. It must be because he forget about this issue.

I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to table the written promise from Prime Minister to Joyce Carter.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to table the letter?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the House of Commons report to Canadians for 2007.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government response to 11 petitions.

* * *

[Translation]

BANKRUPTCY AND INSOLVENCY ACT

Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-62, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies'

Routine Proceedings

Creditors Arrangement Act, the Wage Earner Protection Program Act and chapter 47 of the Statutes of Canada, 2005.

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

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Parliamentary delegation of the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association respecting its bilateral visit to Egypt from March 4 to 6, 2007.

● (1510)

[English]

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association regarding its parliamentary mission to the country that will next hold the European Union presidency, Lisbon, Portugal, and its participation to the second part of the 2007 ordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, April 12 to 20.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 21st report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to Bill C-33, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act, including amendments in relation to foreign investment entities and non-resident trusts, and to provide for the bilingual expression of the provisions of that Act, with amendments.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

In accordance with its order of reference under Standing Order 108(2), your committee has considered a motion recommending the government amend the phosphorous concentration regulations in order to phase out concentrations of phosphorous in dishwasher detergent and laundry detergents and agreed to it on Tuesday, June 12, 2007.

HUMAN RESOURCES, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

[English]

In accordance with its order of reference of Tuesday, November 7, 2006, your committee has considered and held hearings on the subject matter of Bill C-6, An Act to amend the Aeronautics Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, and agreed on Monday, June 11, 2007 to report it with amendments.

* * *

CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-458, An Act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (library materials).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill would do two things. It would preserve a reduced rate for postage on books between libraries and expand the library book rate program to include magazines, records, CDs, CD-ROMs, audio cassettes, video cassettes, DVDs and other audio-visual material, something Canadian libraries have been asking for since 1967.

I would like to thank Erin Crandall for her tremendous work on this bill on my behalf and on behalf of Canadians.

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

* * *

UKRAINIAN FAMINE AND GENOCIDE MEMORIAL DAY ACT

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-459, An Act to establish a Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day and to recognize the Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as an act of genocide.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this year Ukrainian Canadians mark the 75th anniversary of one of the most heinous crimes in modern history, the state sponsored famine of 1932-33 perpetrated by the Soviet regime of Stalin against the Ukrainian people.

Called Holodomor, which in Ukrainian means murder by hunger, millions of Ukrainians were stripped of their produce in a forced farm collectivization campaign that killed close to 10 million Ukrainians and was devised to destroy aspirations for a free and independent Ukraine.

For decades, the truth about this horrific crime was suppressed by Soviet authorities. The omission of this forced famine and genocide from our history books is very troubling to me, which is why today, as a Ukrainian Canadian myself, I am introducing an act to establish Ukrainian Genocide and Famine Memorial Day.

This bill would not only designate the fourth Saturday of November as a memorial day for the Ukrainian famine, but it also acknowledges the famine as an act of genocide.

I would like to thank the continued efforts of the Ukrainian Canadian community that has worked tirelessly to bring public awareness to the Ukrainian famine and genocide.

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

* * *

● (1515)

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION ACT

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-460, An Act respecting conscientious objection to the use of taxes for military purposes.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to again introduce a private member's bill seconded by the member for British Columbia Southern Interior, which would allow Canadians who object on conscientious or religious grounds to paying taxes for military purposes, to divert their income taxes into a special conscientious objector account. That account could only be used for purposes other than military expenditures.

This bill would recognize the deeply held views often related to deeply held religious convictions of some Canadians of participating in any way in the activities of war and the accumulation of weapons, sanctions and perpetuates killing and violence.

The bill would provide an important option for conscientious objection and ensure that the tax dollars of those Canadians who hold these beliefs are spent for peaceful purposes.

A particular feature of the bill is that regulations should be developed in consultation with the Canadian yearly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers; the Conference of Mennonites in Canada; Conscience Canada; the Mennonite Central Committee in Canada; and Nos impôts pour la paix.

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

* * *

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

BILLS S-6 AND C-61

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties and I would like to move the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practices of this House, Bill S-6, An Act to amend the First Nations Land Management Act, and Bill C-61, An Act to amend the Geneva Conventions Act, An Act to incorporate the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Trade-marks Act, shall be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at the report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: Does the hon. Leader of the Government in the House have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Routine Proceedings

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[English]*

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

[English]

BILL C-59 AND BILL C-51

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practices of this House, after no more than one speaker per party and provided that the members may be permitted to split their time by so indicating to the Chair, for the second reading stage of Bill C-59, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (unauthorized recording of a movie), and Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, Bill C-59 and Bill C-51 shall be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at the report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: Does the hon. the government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

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)

DAILY ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the next motion is a simple one. I move:

• (1520)

[Translation]

That, notwithstanding the motion adopted pursuant to Standing Order 27, the hour of daily adjournment for Thursday, June 14, 2007, shall be 9:00 p.m.

The Speaker: Does the hon. Leader of the Government in the House have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

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.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Jay Hill (Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions and I think you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That 12 members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to travel to Victoria, British Columbia from August 19 to 22, 2007 to attend the Conference of the Canadian Association of Public Accounts Committees, and that the necessary staff do accompany the committee.

The Speaker: Does the hon. the chief government whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

VISITOR VISAS

Ms. Ruby Dhalla (Brampton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of numerous constituents in my riding of Brampton—Springdale and Canadians who would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Republic of Poland has successfully joined the European Union, that it is an active member of NATO and that it is promoting peace and security globally.

The petitioners, and the Canadian Polish Congress in particular, which represents over 800,000 Canadians of Polish heritage, are urging the Canadian government to ease visa requirements for people coming in from Poland. They feel that this will increase family visitation, tourism, cultural exchanges and trade missions between Canada and Poland.

FISHERIES ACT

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—Richmond East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present a petition today from residents of mostly Cranbrook and the Creston area of British Columbia, sports fishermen who are opposed to the new Fisheries Act. In their view the act was written by bureaucrats for bureaucrats and effectively removes any legal rights that they feel they have as fishermen. They are calling upon the government to scrap Bill C-45.

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Johanne Deschamps (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as the Bloc Québécois critic for the status of women, I am pleased to present two petitions containing over 1,350 signatures of men and women in Quebec. The petitioners are calling on the Prime Minister to honour his commitment and immediately bring back the court challenges program and the original criteria for the women's program, and re-open the regional offices. I thus present these two petitions.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

CHILD CARE

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by almost 100 people in my communities of Coquitlam, New Westminster and Port Moody who say that high quality child care is of benefit to all children. They say that it enhances their health and school readiness and that it reduces family poverty and promotes social inclusion.

They also say that the \$1,200 allowance that the government has brought forth is poorly designed because it discriminates against lone parents and two income families.

They call upon the Government of Canada to provide multi-year funding to ensure that publicly operated child care programs are sustainable. They want to see child care protected by enshrining it in legislation with a national child care act.

I am pleased to present these petitions from the people of my communities.

SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the students, residents, volunteers and employers in my riding of Sydney—Victoria.

The petitioners state that they are opposed to the drastic funding cuts to the summer student employment program and they are calling upon the federal government to reinstate the funding to provide these much needed jobs in an already economically depressed area.

FISHERIES ACT

Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to rise today to present a petition on behalf of concerned fishermen who urge members of Parliament to act now to stop the passage of Bill C-45 and to allow further input from the fishing industry into the new Fisheries Act.

• (1525)

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as Bloc Québécois critic for citizenship and immigration, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of the Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes, the Canadian Council for Refugees and the Ligue des droits et libertés. The petition is entitled “Lives on Hold” and calls on the government to regularize the status of people from moratorium countries.

Ms. Meili Faille (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to present a petition signed by approximately 100 people, calling once again for the implementation of the Refugee Appeal Division.

[English]

FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting two petitions today.

The first is signed by 105 people and concerns the re-establishment of a federal minimum wage. The federal minimum wage was

eliminated by the Liberal government in 1996. A \$10 an hour minimum wage just approaches the poverty level for a single worker and would mean a great deal for so many low income workers across the country.

A federal minimum wage would of course establish a benchmark for working people in provincial jurisdictions as well, right across the country. That is what happened when it originally was introduced back in 1965. I am pleased to present this petition calling for the reinstatement of a federal minimum wage at \$10 an hour, which is also asked for in my private member's bill.

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by 145 people from my community and is in support of my once in a lifetime bill on family reunification. It recognizes that the most successful newcomers are sponsored by family members so they can reintegrate easily into the community.

The current family class rules are very restrictive and mean that too many family members are not eligible, so the petitioners are calling on Parliament to ensure that Canadian citizens and landed immigrants have a once in a lifetime opportunity to sponsor a family member outside the current family class, as currently defined in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and to pass my Bill C-394.

INCOME TRUSTS

Hon. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Jeremy Knox of Burlington, Ontario, I am pleased to present a petition that addresses the income trust broken promise. Mr. Knox remembers the Prime Minister boasting about his apparent commitment to accountability when he said, “There is no greater fraud than a promise not kept”.

The petitioners remind the Prime Minister that he promised never to tax income trusts, but he recklessly broke that promise by imposing a 31.5% punitive tax that permanently wiped out over \$25 billion of the hard-earned retirement savings of over two million Canadians, particularly seniors.

The petitioners therefore call upon the Conservative minority government to: first, admit that the decision to tax income trusts was based on flawed methodology and incorrect assumptions; second, apologize to those who were unfairly harmed by this broken promise; and finally, repeal the punitive 31.5% tax on income trusts.

TERMINATOR SEED TECHNOLOGY

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions from constituents in my riding.

The first is a petition signed by some 510 people from my riding in regard to a ban on terminator technologies. These constituents come from Nanaimo, Lantzville, Parksville and Qualicum Beach, largely from Vancouver Island. They want Parliament to take note that terminator technologies or genetic use restriction technologies use genetic engineering to render seeds sterile at harvest and thus prevent farmers from saving and replanting seeds.

These petitioners take note that in March 2006 the United Nations convention on biological diversity was changed to strengthen the global moratorium, and they would like the Parliament of Canada to enshrine in legislation a permanent national ban on terminator technologies.

LABELLING OF PHARMACEUTICALS

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is one to require labelling for acetaminophen. There are some 50 signatures here from people who are concerned that acetaminophen is the most common pharmaceutical involved in unintentional and intentional poisonings. They note that both acute and chronic overdose can lead to potentially fatal liver toxicity.

There are over 250 products that contain acetaminophen and the petitioners are asking that Parliament enact legislation requiring appropriate warning labels for this product in order to protect Canadians.

EQUALIZATION

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct honour of presenting to this House of Commons a petition on behalf of a gentleman named Steve Saunders of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. It states that the undersigned residents of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador would like to draw to the attention of the House of Commons that during the last federal election a promise by the Prime Minister was not kept regarding the equalization formula.

It is an honour for me to present to this House no less than 20,000 signatures collected in what appears to be a short period of time. I may like to avail myself of some of our pages to help me with the reams of paper that I am in possession of, but it is indeed my honour to present these 20,000 signatures to the House.

• (1530)

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have before me a petition with approximately 250 signatures from CAW Local 127. They are calling for major changes to the Employment Insurance Act.

[*Translation*]

SUMMER CAREER PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present here today a second petition calling on the government to bring back the summer career placement program. These 74 names can be added to the 660 signatures that were presented on April 16, 2007.

The bungling that hindered budget allocations to the organizations that had applied is perfect proof that the new way of doing things and the Canada summer jobs program do not meet the needs of those

Routine Proceedings

organizations. Accordingly, the Conservative government should act responsibly by bringing back the summer career placement program, as called for by the petitioners.

[*English*]

INCOME TRUSTS

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to defend this income trust broken promise petition on behalf of Bob Matwichuk of Calgary, Alberta, as of last night the home of Liberals, who remembers the Prime Minister boasting about his apparent commitment to accountability when he said, "There is no greater fraud than a promise not kept".

The petitioners remind our Prime Minister that he promised never to tax income trusts and then recklessly broke that promise by imposing a 31.5% punitive tax, wiping out over \$25 billion of the hard-earned retirement savings of over two million Canadians, particularly seniors.

The petitioners therefore call upon the government to: first, admit that the decision to tax income trusts was based on flawed methodology and incorrect assumptions; second, apologize to those who were unfairly harmed by this promise; and third, repeal the punitive 31.5% tax on income trusts.

I thank Mr. Matwichuk for his concern for all Canadians and their hard-earned savings.

REFUGEES

Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition that relates to the fact that Canada has been a land of hope for newcomers and particularly for refugees. Canadians are proud of our multicultural society.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to welcome the stranger in need, to significantly increase the number of refugees that Canada accepts annually, to lift barriers that prevent refugees from reaching Canada, and to provide international leadership to address the causes that force people from their homes and prevent them from returning.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce several petitions signed by several hundred people in my riding in northwestern British Columbia. They have identified that with a \$51 billion surplus in the employment insurance fund since 1994, and with only half of the workers in Canada actually being able to qualify for this fund, the government should introduce the 28 recommendations from the standing committee, which were adopted by all parties.

Routine Proceedings

A second set of petitions of several dozen to 100 names also asks the government to in effect partition the employment insurance jurisdiction in northern British Columbia, which seems, by the government's admission, to have inadvertently locked in areas that are doing extremely well economically and have less than 3% unemployment with areas that have in excess of 80% unemployment. It seems only fair.

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my last set of petitions, consisting of several hundred if not close to several thousand signatures, the petitioners are demanding that the government live up to the Government of Canada's signature as a nation on the Kyoto protocol, and adhere to long and medium term targets that are identified in the protocol, as the government seems wont to do but is incapable of actually performing.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in order to present a petition on behalf of a group of residents of northern Ontario who are calling on Parliament to amend the Criminal Code as it pertains to human life in subsection 223(2).

I respectfully submit this petition to the Clerk of the House.

CANADA POST

Hon. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of Miramichi I have two petitions to present pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first petition, signed by hundreds of residents, expresses concern with the privatization of rural post offices and those in cities as well, and calls upon the government to desist the further privatization of post offices through Canada Post.

• (1535)

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Charles Hubbard (Miramichi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a large number of residents, the second petition indicates concern that the veterans independence program has not yet been extended to the spouses of veterans and calls upon the government and the Minister of Veterans Affairs to do so as soon as possible.

[*Translation*]

INCOME TRUSTS

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Jeff Malcolm of Woodstock, Ontario, I present a petition regarding the broken promise pertaining to income trusts.

Mr. Malcolm recalls that the Prime Minister was bragging about his so-called commitment to accountability when he stated that there is no greater fraud than a promise not kept.

The petitioners remind the Prime Minister that he promised never to tax income trusts but that he shamelessly broke his promise by imposing a punitive tax of 31.5%, which wiped out \$25 billion that more than two million Canadians, mainly seniors, worked so hard to save for their retirement.

Therefore, the petitioners are calling on the government to do three things: first, to admit that the decision to tax income trusts was based on a flawed methodology and incorrect assumptions; second, to apologize to those who were unfairly harmed by this broken promise; third, to repeal the punitive 31.5% tax on income trusts.

[*English*]

The Speaker: The time for presenting petitions has expired.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 204 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 204—**Ms. Dawn Black:**

With regard to detainee handling in Afghanistan: (a) at what time was Canada first granted formal access to Afghan monitor detention facilities in Kandahar; (b) how many Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) officers were in Kandahar in August 2005, and what was the number for each month since; (c) did CSC direct their officers to specifically monitor detainees taken by Canadians and held in Afghan custody, and, if so, what form did that direction take; (d) what type of investigation was begun by the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces following the publishing of reports of torture in the *Globe and Mail* on Monday, April 23, 2007, and when was it commenced; (e) what is the number of detainees transferred to Afghan custody since the signing of the December 18, 2005, "Arrangement for the Transfer of Detainees Between the Canadian Forces and the Ministry of Defence of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan"; (f) following the processing of transfer documents and the release of a detainee to Afghan authorities, how are National Defence Headquarters, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) and the Minister of National Defence informed of this transfer respectively; (g) when was information about the Department of Foreign Affairs country reports, starting in 2002, describing torture and inhumane treatment in Afghan prisons as "common", first released outside of the Department and when were i) the current and previous Foreign Affairs Ministers made aware, ii) the current and previous Defence Ministers made aware, iii) the current and previous Prime Ministers made aware; (h) when were negotiations begun on the arrangement for monitoring access announced by the Minister of National Defence on Wednesday April 25, 2007, and i) when were negotiations concluded, ii) when was the CDS made aware of the arrangement, iii) when was the Minister of Foreign Affairs made aware of the arrangement, iv) when was the Prime Minister made aware of the arrangement; (i) what monitoring and capacity building has taken place on the part of the Government of Canada with respect to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC); and (j) what has the AIHRC reported to Canadian officials regarding the condition of prisons and prisoners in Kandahar, and what have they reported regarding the treatment of detainees transferred by Canada to Afghan custody?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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 notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

DEVILS LAKE DIVERSION PROJECT

The Speaker: The Chair has received a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Winnipeg North. I will now hear the hon. member.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 52 to ask you to agree to an emergency debate on the operations of the Devils Lake outlet in the state of North Dakota.

I believe we do not have a minute to lose. The situation is extremely serious, with the tap having been turned on and the gates opened at 2 p.m. this past Monday, June 11, so that water is now flowing through the Devils Lake outlet into the Sheyenne River and into the Red River, making its way into Canadian waters, meaning that a death sentence for the sixth Great Lake in this country in effect has been delivered.

We are talking about the largest inland fresh water fishery in Canada, with contaminated water moving our way containing foreign materials and at least three parasites not found in Canadian waters.

Two years ago this issue came before the House on a crisis basis. That crisis was averted through work by all levels of government on both sides of the border in seeking a cooperative arrangement and ended up with governments agreeing to an approach that involved the installation of an advanced filter system that was supposed to have been installed beginning in August 2005. That installation of a sophisticated filter system has not occurred and the crisis is now back.

We are dealing with the possibility of polluting an entire Canadian ecosystem, with very invasive species making their way into the Red River and Lake Winnipeg. We are talking about the possibility of serious contamination and pollution of our water systems and we are talking about a brewing international incident.

The premier of Manitoba has spoken out and indicated that he is very disappointed by the decision of North Dakota to operate this prior to the installation of permanent and effective treatment measures. He is talking now about retaliatory measures and we have a very serious situation brewing.

The premier of Manitoba has mentioned that this has been an issue raised by the Prime Minister of Canada with President Bush on two separate occasions. He mentioned that the Prime Minister of Canada raised this matter directly with Governor Hoeven of North Dakota last year in Gimli.

Government Orders

This is a matter with serious consequences for all in this country. It is a matter of great urgency. I beg of you, Mr. Speaker, to consider arranging for an emergency debate at the earliest opportunity.

● (1540)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North for her submissions on this point. I am going to take the matter under advisement and I will return to the House in due course with a decision with respect to the debate.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs is rising on a point of order.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED CONDUCT OF MEMBER FOR CALGARY EAST

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last Friday the member for Brampton—Springdale raised what she called a question of privilege concerning a conversation at a meeting held last Thursday.

I leave the issue whether this is really a question of privilege in your wise judgment, Mr. Speaker, which I know will be fair based on my past experiences of your rulings.

I know the member for Brampton—Springdale was hurt that she was not successful in her attempt to become the president of the Canada-India Parliamentary Friendship Group. I know she blames me for that. However, the decision was for the members to make.

Mr. Speaker, I at no time acted or intended to act in any manner to intimidate the member for Brampton—Springdale. I believe we are here to work for our country.

I call on the member for Brampton—Springdale, and equally applying to me, to work together to support the new office bearers.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC) moved that Bill C-59, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (unauthorized recording of a movie), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to open up the debate on Bill C-59, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (unauthorized recording of a movie).

Camcording is the most significant threat facing the motion picture industry. One good camcorder can trigger an avalanche of illegal downloads and result in bootleg copies in street markets around the world.

Government Orders

In recent months, there has been well-publicized criticism of Canada from some in the United States film industry claiming that Canada is a haven for illegal camcording. For example, in January of this year the *Globe and Mail* reported that the Hollywood-based president of domestic distribution for one of the major U.S. movie studios had sent a blistering letter to the chief executive of Cineplex Entertainment, Canada's biggest cinema chain.

The letter identified Canadian theatres as a source of illegal camcording and threatened to stop sending copies of all its films to 130 Cineplex movie houses or push back Canadian release dates.

It is also true that the United States trade representative and other American politicians have expressed concerns about Canadian camcording.

Last Thursday, after the government gave notice that it would be introducing anti-camcording legislation, an article entitled "Ottawa muscles in on video piracy" appeared in the *Globe and Mail*. The article recalled that Canada was placed on a United States government watch list for a lack of intellectual property rights enforcement, along with the notorious film piracy hubs such as Lebanon, China, the Philippines and Russia.

It might be argued that we are responding to the United States motion picture industry to take action against camcorders, but I would like to emphasize that this issue is important to Canadians as well. The motion picture sector is an important component of Canada's cultural industries. Canada not only has a vital domestic film industry creating films by Canadians for distribution domestically and internationally, but it is also an important part of the U.S. film industry which locates much production in Canadian locales.

Canada is also part of the U.S. domestic market for film exhibition with Canadians enjoying the first release of major motion pictures at the same time that they are released in the United States.

Unfortunately, this makes Canada an attractive venue for camcording: the making of unauthorized copies of first release films that are in high demand around the world where these films have yet to be released.

Digital technology and the Internet have facilitated the illicit reproduction and distribution of films.

Canadian films are also subject to piracy as the notorious example provided by the pirated version of the Canadian blockbuster *Bon Cop, Bad Cop* available before its official release on DVD.

A decision by Warner Bros., announced on May 8, to cancel all preview screenings in the country out of concern over piracy further illustrates the impact that this problem is having, and the problem is growing.

I do not want to leave members with the impression that under present Canadian law it is open season for camcording in Canada. I have pointed out on a number of occasions that there are provisions within the Copyright Act of fines up to \$1 million and imprisonment up to five years for anyone who copyrights material with intention to commercially use that.

However, we are responding to a growing problem, one that I believe has international repercussions since Canada is seen as a source for providing illicit copies of films for the worldwide market.

It is for this reason the government feels it is necessary to act. We are not in the business of facilitating this type of activity.

There is broad-based support from across the film production, distribution, and exhibition industry in Canada for an explicit legislative measure to stem the flow of illicit copies of films that are made and put into circulation. Accordingly, the government has taken decisive action that would make camcording movies in theatres illegal.

In doing so, Canada is joining in international efforts to protect the intellectual property interests of the film industry in Canada and abroad from those who would make unauthorized copies of newly-released movies either for their own use, with or without participation of others, for the purpose of selling, renting or other commercial distribution of pirated films.

In the time left to me today, I would like to say something about the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code contained in Bill C-59.

The proposed legislation is aimed at deterring unauthorized camcording activities in movie theatres in Canada. Our main purpose in amending the Criminal Code instead of the Copyright Act is to ensure that local police and not merely the RCMP are engaged in an effort to stop camcording.

● (1545)

At present local police forces are not accustomed to enforcing the Copyright Act and therefore are reluctant to respond to calls from theatre owners. They are also reluctant to respond because of the difficulty in obtaining the evidence to prove the intent of camcording for commercial gain, as I indicated. That is a deficiency in the current law.

Currently, the Copyright Act only provides offences against camcording when it can be linked to copyright infringement and that is not what happens in these cases. They get these individuals, slip them a couple of hundred dollars to do the job, and they are not in the business of commercial redistribution, so that is what the bill takes aim at.

It would amend the Criminal Code to create two new offences; first, which we can call simple camcording that would prohibit the recording of a movie in a movie theatre without the consent of the theatre manager; and second, we can refer to as camcording for the purpose. That would prohibit the recording of a movie in a movie theatre without the consent of the theatre manager for the purpose of selling, renting or other commercial distribution of a copy of the recorded movie.

Government Orders

Simple camcording would be a hybrid offence punishable on indictment by imprisonment for not more than two years or on summary conviction by six months imprisonment or a fine of \$2,000, or both. It would establish a clear prohibition on conduct which is a precursor to the more blameworthy criminal activity of camcording for the purpose, or camcording as part of the DVD piracy operation under the Copyright Act.

Camcording for the purpose of sale, rental or other commercial distribution of a copy of the motion picture is a more serious offence. In addition to proof that the accused engaged in the unauthorized recording of a motion picture in a movie theatre, it requires proof that the individual did so for the purpose of selling, renting or other commercial distribution of copies of the film.

Camcording for the purpose would also be a hybrid offence but would be punishable on indictment for not more than five years imprisonment.

Bill C-59 would also provide the court with the authority to order the forfeiture of anything used in the commission of these offences such as the camcorder itself.

Camcording may constitute the first step for both copyright infringement and fraud, and in this context a person engaging in such activities could be found to be engaging in conduct that constitutes a criminal organization offence.

Criminalization of this activity in the Criminal Code could enhance the capability of Canadian law enforcement to combat transnational organized crime activities pertaining to the fabrication and trafficking of pirated videos. The enforcement of these new Criminal Code offences would primarily be the responsibility of the local police who are better positioned to respond to calls from local theatre owners and would be prosecuted by provincial prosecutors.

It is worth noting that on May 24 Japan's parliament passed legislation which criminalizes the camcording of motion pictures in theatres. Scheduled to go into effect in August of this year, the legislation prohibits the use of any recording device in cinemas and is punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment.

Mr. Speaker, I will end my remarks by thanking my colleagues, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Minister of Industry for their assistance, and of course the Minister of the Environment who was good enough to second this piece of legislation because I know of his concern in this particular area, as well as in many others. I know that all members of the House will want to support this piece of legislation.

• (1550)

Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the bill presented. The motion picture industry in Canada is very important to our economy. Overall it brings just under \$5 billion to the Canadian economy and employs a full time equivalence of almost 125,000 people.

The credibility of Canada, not only as a place to show films but as a place to make films, is important because we have Vancouver for example which is the third largest film production centre in North America after Los Angeles and New York.

In fact, in British Columbia the industry accounts for \$1.2 billion in the economy and employs over 35,000 people. The motion picture industry employs approximately 5,000 people in my riding of North Vancouver and it adds \$100 million just to the economy in my riding. It is very important to British Columbia and important to Canada.

This bill is to come into effect this fall. Has the minister had any estimate in preparing the bill as to how much piracy the producers believe is happening? More particularly I understand the bill is answering a very strong concern that has come from American film producers who we rely on very much in terms of our foreign production and that is just like tourist dollars coming in. I am pleased to see it happen and I wonder if he has had any particular estimate of figures.

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite correct. This has gained considerable interest within the American film industry. That is an important component of the Canadian film production industry on a number of levels. In addition, as the hon. member pointed out, there is a very strong Canadian film industry. I indicated that one of the Canadian blockbusters released recently was a victim of piracy.

This is a multi-million dollar business. I am told that literally within hours of one of these movies being released there are pirated copies out on the streets. It is quite incredible.

It costs millions of dollars. It is a threat to the Canadian film industry and the United States film industry. It is the kind of activity that we cannot tolerate in this country. When we see gaps in the law, as I believe there are, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that our laws are up to date and they are meeting the challenges.

I indicated in my comments that this type of activity can be related to organized crime. This is another scourge on which we have to take action. It is not only going after that individual who has a camcorder sitting in a movie theatre. This person is the first step in a long line of individuals who are out stealing other people's property.

There are losses of millions of dollars, but it certainly is the kind of activity we cannot tolerate. I certainly hope this would have the support of all members of the House.

• (1555)

Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is important to my riding. That is why I am very supportive of it.

I have introduced Bill C-453, which would call for the creation of a film secretariat. It could be called an industry advisory board, a permanent board. The idea is to bring the different sectors of the motion picture industry in Canada together in a way to work with the government, so we can help address the problems that come up and become aware of them.

Government Orders

In this case it is a problem they have in dealing with the distribution side of film. There are other sides relating to tax credits and the taxing of actors. There is a whole range of ways between the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Department of Finance and National Revenue that we affect the motion picture industry.

Does the minister have any other plans for assistance to this very vital industry? Does he think the concept of having some form of a major industry advisory board or a secretariat would be useful?

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the hon. member's private member's bill, I am sure it will be looked at very carefully by both of my colleagues, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Minister of Finance.

The hon. member touches upon one important aspect of the film industry. He elicited a number of concerns of that industry. This is something it is asking for specifically. It is something we can do as parliamentarians.

My concern, among others as justice minister, is to ensure that our Criminal Code is responsive to the type of activity that police confront. This is a specific response that can have a huge impact in a positive way on the motion picture industry, both the domestic and the foreign film industry. It is something that should commend itself to every member of the House of Commons. Then let us get it off to the Senate and have it passed there as well.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I very much welcome the bill coming forward. As chair of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, I know it has been a thorn in our side. We feel piracy is definitely theft, when one steals something and then sells it. It is no different than stealing a car, or stealing money or whatever.

It is in the right area now with the Minister of Justice. It is a justice issue, and I know the movie industry, both offshore and in Canada, will welcome this with open arms.

When will the bill come into effect? Could it be this fall?

Hon. Rob Nicholson: First, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for Perth—Wellington and thank him for his encouragement to bring forward legislation like this. I also thank him for all the work he has done in the committee. It is much appreciated by all members of the House.

The member has pointed out that what we are talking about is theft. We are talking about individuals going into someone's establishment, sitting there and then beginning to steal the product that is being shown on the screen. It is theft just like any other kind of theft and it is just as wrong as any other kind of theft.

We are bringing forward this amendment. We are putting it into the Criminal Code and responding to the concerns of people in this industry. We are responding to the concerns the police have in trying to enforce this provision, which was up to this point just in the Copyright Act. As I pointed out, there were changes within this area that the individuals were stealing this work or many times not in the business of distributing it for commercial purposes.

Therefore, we are zeroing in on that. Again, my job is to get this passed as soon as possible.

I do not want to get ahead of myself. I hope the House of Commons will pass this today and get it over to the Senate. I hope it will be expedited there, but the message we will send to the Senate is that we would really like to see the bill in place in law in Canada as quickly as possible.

•(1600)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how happy I am about the tabling of Bill C-59. For those who do not know—in addition to what the Minister of Justice said in his speech—two parties worked hard to get the government to finally table such a bill: I worked on behalf of the Liberal Party in my role as official justice critic, and the member for Hochelaga worked on behalf of the Bloc Québécois.

On March 2, I sent instructions to legislative services for drafting a private member's bill to amend the Criminal Code to include criminal offences, as in the government's Bill C-59.

Moreover, my Bloc colleague filed a notice of motion on March 13, 2007, with the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights regarding movie piracy in Canada. The notice of motion asked the committee to devote a sitting to analysis of this problem and to invite representatives of the industry and of the Department of Justice to appear before the committee. It also asked that this sitting be held no later than the committee's last sitting in June.

The minister could have recognized the hard work of my colleague from Hochelaga and of the Liberals on this issue. But he did not, and I do not know why.

[*English*]

The issue of movie piracy is a serious issue for the Canadian industry, the film, movie production, movie distribution industry, as my colleague from North Vancouver mentioned.

I draw the attention of the Speaker to the fact that I will be splitting my time with the member for North Vancouver.

I can give just one example. In 2006 there was a camcording illegally made of a film in a Canadian theatre. That illegal pirated copy went to Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, Fiji, the United States, elsewhere in Canada, Peru, Venezuela, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, the U.K., the Ukraine, Hungary and Russia. Copies of the DVDs are made, bootlegged and then sold. That is not all. It was also released on the Internet by 11 different pirate groups. There were streaming sites, new groups, auction sites and P2P networks.

It is a serious problem. The Canadian Motion Picture Distribution Association estimates that in 2005 its members lost \$180 million U. S. due to movie piracy in Canada.

Unfortunately, while Quebec is the heart of Canada's cultural industries and has a vibrant film production industry, it has also, via Montreal, become the place for movie piracy.

Government Orders

I have had cinema theatre owners meet with me in Ottawa from Montreal and describe specific events where individuals were illegally camcording. The police were called and the police refused to come. As the Minister of Justice mentioned, the RCMP has experience in applying the Copyright Act, but not the local police.

Let me just give a couple of facts. The Canadian Movie Picture Distribution Association and some of its members has already estimated that the source of illegal camcording of certain blockbuster films, came primarily from Montreal. Those films were *Borat*, *Eragon* and *Night at the Museum*.

Mr. Snyder, who is Twentieth Century Fox's Hollywood based president of domestic distribution, said that at one point in 2006, Canadian theatres were the source for nearly 50% of illegal camcordings across the globe.

For the third year in a row, the U.S. government has placed Canada on its watch list for a lack of intellectual property rights enforcement. As the minister mentioned, that puts our country, Canada, in the same country as notorious film piracy hubs like China, Lebanon, the Philippines and Russia.

That is not all. In the United States the government acted in 2005. The U.S. President signed the Family Entertainment and Copyright Act, which made camcording in a theatre, without the consent of the owner, a federal felony. Now 38 of 50 states have specific state laws that impose criminal sanctions against camcorder pirates with both fines and jail time.

●(1605)

Here in Canada we do have the Copyright Act and under the Copyright Act, exhibitors have the ability to lay a criminal complaint before the police and to have that person charged criminally. The problem is, in order to charge someone under the Copyright Act, we have to prove that the individual camcording in the theatre not only does not have consent of the owner but also is doing it for distribution purposes. That is virtually impossible.

In order for the RCMP and local police to be able to do that, they have to mount and invest serious human resources, serious financial resources, and sometimes those kinds of investigations can take several years in order to be able to make that kind of proof before a criminal court.

Let me give the House an example of one of the few film pirates that Canada actually arrested and prosecuted. Several months ago, the police in Richmond B.C. raided a small business in a strip mall, seizing thousands of counterfeit DVDs. The owner, 46 year old Chiu Lau, was arrested and fined for his third time in three years under the Copyright Act. Last Remembrance Day, Lau pleaded guilty to 83 counts under the Copyright Act. What was his sentence? He received a \$5,000 fine and a 12 month conditional sentence. He was confined to his home from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. It is ridiculous.

The Liberals will be supporting Bill C-59. I am proud that by the actions of this Liberal Party, this Liberal caucus, by my actions as the justice critic for the Liberals, and by the actions of my colleague of the Bloc Québécois, the MP for Hochelaga, that we were able to bring pressure to bear on the government, which appeared to not be doing anything for some time, and finally did in fact decide to move forward on this.

I would like to congratulate the government for moving forward on this legislation. I would like to congratulate my colleague from the Bloc, the MP for Hochelaga. I would like to thank my Liberal colleagues, who will be supporting this bill.

We do wish to see this bill fast tracked. In fact, we had even offered not to have any speakers if the government would also have no speakers. The government decided, in its wisdom, that it did want the Minister of Justice to speak to it, and therefore Liberals will be speaking to it, and I assume the Bloc and the NDP.

Kudos to the movie industry here in Canada for bringing this to our attention. Kudos to the members of Parliament who will be supporting this bill.

●(1610)

Mr. Don Bell (North Vancouver, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill. I had not planned on that when I asked my question, but I certainly appreciate the opportunity because, as I said earlier in my comments, the motion picture industry is very important to Canada.

It is very important to the provinces, as well as cities, because when these productions occur in the cities and towns across Canada revenue comes in that would not otherwise. In the case of foreign films, it is almost like tourist dollars. In the case of domestic films, it helps build the base for a quality industry in which we have skilled technicians who are recognized, for example, the world over as being the equal of the best that there are in Hollywood. Canada is an attractive place for films to be made.

We have competition now from around the world. There is competition from Ireland, Europe, some of the former Soviet territories and the United States. Individual states are very aggressively pursuing the motion picture industry. We have competition from Mexico, Australia and now even from Asia. It is important that we look at the motion picture industry as a package and the areas where we are able to assist the industry in Canada. One of the areas, aside from that which I mentioned and will refer to again, is having confidence that we are going to take steps to protect the quality, quantity and pricing of these films once they are produced.

My colleague from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, the Liberal justice critic, made reference to the costs involved. She mentioned the loss of annual revenue at \$118 million U.S. to Canada while the annual consumer spending loss to the economy is estimated for 2005 at \$225 million in total. Not only that, the tax revenues that were lost as a result of piracy in Canada in 2005 was estimated at \$34 million. That is money directly out of the economy. It is not only hurting our image as a film producing and distributing nation, but it is hurting our economy directly.

Government Orders

I have some interesting quotes. For example, we have support for this bill, dealing with video piracy, from the Canadian Association of Film Distributors and Exporters, the Motion Picture Theatre Associations of Canada, ACTRA, IATSE, which is the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and the Directors Guild of Canada. These are the businesses whose products and professionalism are being pirated and discounted by virtue of this.

Doug Frith, who is the president of the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association and provided some of these figures earlier, said:

Canada has a serious intellectual property crime problem, and clear action to strengthen Canada's IP enforcement system is long overdue.

In 2006 overall, Canadian camcorders were the source of approximately 20% to 25% of all illegally camcorded films from the major motion picture studios that appeared either online or as illegal DVDs around the world.

Despite the gravity of the problem, Canada has failed to enact specific legislation to effectively deter camcorder thieves...But we cannot be successful without laws that act as a deterrent and ensure authorities to take effective action to stop movie theft and send a message that criminal activity will not be tolerated in Canada.

As a further example, a movie that was produced and created in Canada entitled *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*. It was produced in Montreal by Kevin Tierney, the Montreal based producer. He said:

A man was caught last year selling illegal copies of Bon Cop Bad Cop door in Montreal, ahead of the date the movie was available on DVD...The man had 2,500 copies of the movie when police picked him up.

Those 2,500 copies are stolen. It means that money is not only stolen from me—it's stolen from the actors, writers and directors and rights holders for Bon Cop.

That is the kind of action that hurts the willingness of these companies to come to Canada and produce here. It also hurts their willingness to come and distribute their product here. We saw the potential that some of these movie chains were in fact not going to have the opportunity to release these films in Canada.

● (1615)

Certainly, I would again compliment the member for Perth—Wellington as the chair of the heritage committee, the action by the heritage committee, and the action by our justice critic. As I have mentioned, the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, and the member from the Bloc also shared an interest in this.

This is something that I believe is important to Canada. It is important to members of this House because the film and motion picture industry is important to Canada. I have already indicated the figures in my previous comments and how important it is to Canada, with \$4.8 billion to our economy. Just under 125,000 full time equivalents are employed. I mentioned British Columbia and why it is important to me because it represents \$1.2 billion to the B.C. economy. It represents \$100 million alone to the economy in my riding.

I know how hard the industry has worked to build itself up in Canada to be credible, not only in the production end but in the distribution end as well.

I believe that this is a very good step in the right direction and I hope that we will see more steps taken, as I have suggested in my private member's bill, which is Bill C-453, which would see the creation of a Canadian motion picture industry secretariat. This would be an opportunity for the various sectors of the motion picture industry to come together to advise Parliament on a regular basis on

what steps need to be taken legislatively or other means available to the Government of Canada to ensure that we have an internationally competitive film and motion picture industry in Canada, both in terms of domestic films and foreign films.

I should just clarify that domestic films are the kinds of films we produce here in Canada. They are creatively produced in Canada. The kinds of foreign films we talk about, and some people may think they are foreign language films, are actually films, for example, from Hollywood that are produced here. They could be any one of the blockbusters that we have seen. They are produced in motion picture studios across Canada.

We have had films produced in Alberta, such as, going back a few years, *Little Big Man*. There have been films produced all across the country and they bring opportunities for local actors, for even local citizens, to have bit parts in the movies and earn money. They certainly stimulate the local economy.

Overall, anything we can do to help the motion picture industry, I am supportive of as is our party. This bill is certainly a step in the right direction and we are pleased to support it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the government for responding to the requests made by certain parliamentarians who, I acknowledge, are from all parties in this House. Congratulations for responding to the presentations by the film industry.

I am a member from Montreal. You know that Montreal, Old Montreal, Saint-Joseph's Oratory, the Olympic Park and the major tourist areas of Quebec are sites often used by producers for filming. For example, Château Dufresne is located in my riding. I do not know if some of you have visited this middle-class residence that is open to the public.

Maisonneuve was an independent city annexed by the City of Montreal in 1918. The Dufresnes were philanthropists to some extent. They held various positions, including that of city engineer. They played a very important role in the development of what was a working class city. Maisonneuve was deemed to be the Pittsburgh of Canada, as industry was very prosperous, particularly what we would call traditional industries such as footwear and clothing manufacturers and the Vickers shipyard.

Thus, given that Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is a popular location for filming, we had to respond to the industry's concerns, especially since movies first and foremost require financial arrangements. There is perhaps a tendency to overlook that fact. It costs millions of dollars to make a movie. Producers receive support from public organizations; however, private capital is also invested. Therefore, in cinematography, in the film industry, the issue of intellectual property is important.

Government Orders

I will digress briefly. Counterfeiting, not just of movies but of other products, is a reality that should concern us. I see my colleague from Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, who was on the committee. Last night, I was rereading the Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security tabled a few days ago. This committee carried out a brief but rather interesting review of the entire issue of counterfeiting, including the issue of movie pirating. I will read from page six of the report:

To date, Canada has no comprehensive independent study of the impact of counterfeiting and piracy. That being said, the Manufacturers and Exporters of Canada estimate the economic impact of these activities to be between \$20 and \$30 billion a year. Chief Superintendent Mike Cabana (Director General, Border Integrity, Federal and International Operations, RCMP) for his part said that “[w]hile the RCMP are not prepared to give exact figures [...] I’m comfortable stating that the impact [of these activities in Canada] is easily in the billions of dollars, and it is growing.”

Why read this excerpt from the report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security that has roughly 14 recommendations? Because, of course, this may seem trivial, but everyone has a responsibility, as parliamentarians, citizens or consumers, to ensure that the products we consume are not counterfeit. We have to be careful not to encourage the counterfeiting phenomenon.

This reality applies to the film industry, for which Montreal is a major centre. Distributors come to shoot scenes at the St. Joseph Oratory, at the Château Dufresne, in Old Montreal or at Olympic Park. The industry has rallied together.

• (1620)

The Canadian Film and Television Production Association has made representations to the minister and all the opposition parties. It was these representations that prompted me to propose a motion in March in the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

The motion received almost unanimous support. All the government members supported the motion, and I thank them for that. All the Liberal colleagues supported it as well, with the exception of the hon. member for Scarborough Centre, who felt there was duplication—which was not the case. Of course, the Bloc Québécois supported the motion, as did our NDP colleagues.

My motion was the following. I will read it to remind everyone of its importance and how it responds to a concern felt by a number of parliamentarians. I proposed that the committee consider the following:

Whereas since the discovery of the first case of camcorder piracy in Canada in 2003, more than 90 films have been copied in more than 40 different movie theatres in Canada;

Whereas in 2005, the counterfeiting attributable to copies made in Canadian movie theatres accounted for roughly 20% of all copies recorded in a theatre on a camcorder;—

According to the American Film Distributors' Association, Canada was responsible for 20% of international film pirating. It is even reported that Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Prime Minister discussed this when they met. Arnold Schwarzenegger's movie career is well known. Some people even joke that he is my double.

I will now read the second part of the motion:

It is moved:

That the Standing Committee on Justice devote a sitting to analysis of the problem of pirating of films in Canada, and that representatives of the industry and of the Department of Justice be invited to appear before the Committee;

That this sitting be held no later than the Committee's last sitting in June.

I withdrew my motion because the government introduced its bill, which all the House leaders agreed to fast-track. This House could dispose of the bill today.

What was the issue? What was the problem? Unauthorized reproduction of movies or cinematographic works is prohibited. The Copyright Act provides for a fine of \$1 million or up to five years in prison. The problem was this. According to the manager of the Star Cité movie theatre on Pierre-De Coubertin Avenue in Hochelaga, people would come into the theatre with miniature camcorders or similar equipment and, using the appropriate technology, would reproduce any popular movie that was in demand. When the manager called the local police, they refused to intervene, for two reasons. First, unauthorized recording violates the federal Copyright Act, which the RCMP is responsible for enforcing. Not all communities have a unit that is available to take action against movie pirating. Second, the police said that it was necessary not only to catch the counterfeiter in the act, but to prove he or she was reproducing the film for commercial distribution. Neither was easy to do.

This is why the industry has asked for an amendment to the Criminal Code. When a provision is included in the Criminal Code, local bodies responsible for upholding the law—the local precinct in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, for example—can intervene and arrest individuals who violate the Criminal Code.

• (1625)

Once again, I am very happy that the voice of the industry, to which the opposition had lent its support, has been heard by the government. I hope that this House will quickly dispose of Bill C-59, that we will send it to the other place and that our colleagues will act quickly, because there are billions of dollars at stake here.

It is important to send a clear message to the international community that we will not tolerate what is going on now. We are concerned about protecting intellectual property and we want large film distributors to keep seeing Quebec and Canada as places where movies can be filmed, where they can be screened and where they can be premiered.

An American production company has already refused to hold advance screenings in Canada. This situation had to be fixed, since this industry is important to the economy, and impacts a number of different ridings.

I will conclude by congratulating the government for having listened to the industry and the opposition parties.

• (1630)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that was a very popular speech. It was interesting and I would like to ask a brief question.

Government Orders

I had a conversation with my team today on this subject and one member of my team emphasized that a balance is necessary between the new forms of media that exist now—YouTube and the others—and protection of the rights of the companies and artists who produce these artistic materials.

My question deals with the balance in this bill between the older media forms—films, movies, etc—and the new media forms. For people like Erin, especially, there is a lot of concern about the limits on transmission and the limits on copying the new forms. That is necessary because there are a lot of restrictions on artistic expression. That is my question for my colleague.

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

First, I believe the bill that we are now discussing deals only with the Criminal Code. There are some clauses that create two new infractions: the first being recording of a film without the consent of the theatre manager, and the second being, seeking to distribute that film for commercial purposes without consent. That is the objective of Bill C-59.

Obviously, I understand the question from my colleague. For example, the Bloc Québécois, through our spokesperson, the member for Saint-Lambert, has expressed concern over the disengagement at the start of the year by certain cablevision distributors who refused to make their contributions to the Canadian Television Fund. The balance that my colleague spoke about is certainly in the facility that we must afford to international distributors, but also in the encouragement that is necessary for Canadian internal, domestic production.

As I stated in my remarks, producing a film requires millions of dollars. Therefore, if we want to see cultural products that reflect Quebec and Canada, with domestic producers, it is obvious that some public funds have to be made available to producers. I must congratulate the Minister of Justice for his diligent work. However, I have very great concerns about the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Status of Women.

In all friendship, I must say that two ministers in this government make the opposition break into a cold sweat. First, there is the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Status of Women. I confess that she is rather hard to understand. In terms of policies, we have no idea where she wants to go and she has caused great concern over the whole question of festivals.

The Minister of the Environment is another case. He is a likeable person, but with regard to Kyoto and our international commitments, we also have grounds for concern.

So, I congratulate the Minister of Justice and I ask the two other ministers to come to their senses. I have a great deal of respect for the Minister of the Environment. I am told that he was one of the youngest ministers in the Mike Harris government. I invite him to come to his senses and become the champion of the environment. The member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie is available, at any time, under any circumstances, to meet with the Minister of the Environment. He will always find an informed member, moderate, balanced and knowledgeable of the issues, in the person of the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

• (1635)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would tell my colleague from Montréal that the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie is five days younger than I. So I have five days more experience.

Mr. Réal Ménard: How old are you?

Hon. John Baird: I am 38.

So far as I know, the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie just had his birthday. If he is watching us on television, happy birthday, Bernard.

This is also the first time that I have heard the hon. member for Hochelaga give a good speech. It was the first time that he has supported an initiative of a federalist government, and this after a motion was passed recognizing Quebec as a nation within Canada. I hope that all the speeches of the hon. member for Hochelaga will be just as good and will not be too long in coming. That was one fine address.

This bill was very important. I was happy to see the support that the hon. members gave it, at least those in the Liberal Party and the Bloc. I hope that maybe the NDP members will follow their example.

Mr. Réal Ménard: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend, the Minister of the Environment. We learned today that he is one of the youngest members of Cabinet. We wondered where he got that baby face, but now we know it is because he is not 40 yet. I encourage him to always keep his cool.

The Bloc is actually very happy to support this bill on the unauthorized recording of movies. I would also like to encourage the Minister of the Environment to start championing the cause of the environment and to set objectives and fixed targets. He should also follow the advice he is getting.

It is true that the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie does not seem to get any older. He is someone who gives it everything he has got. That is how things often are in our caucuses: we work with people, we are right there beside them, we become friends, and they just do not seem to get any older. The philosophers say that man is only part of the flow of temporality, or something to that effect.

Nevertheless, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his fine words.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Gatineau, Official Languages; the hon. member for Churchill, Aboriginal Affairs.

[*English*]

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I stand to speak in support of this bill which, by way of agreement of all parties, will go through the House today at all stages and will become law. This cooperation reflects a response from us demanding to deal with the piracy of movies.

Government Orders

The bill has basically three provisions of note. We are creating a new offence in the Criminal Code for videotaping a movie without the consent of a theatre manager. In clause 1 of the bill, no person is entitled to videotape the film that is on the screen.

I am being told by the member for Timmins—James Bay that I will be sharing my time with him. I did have a note of that, Mr. Speaker, but I think it might be a little Freudian that I buried it somewhere here in my papers. In all seriousness, I will be looking forward to the comments from the member for Timmins—James Bay who is our critic for heritage. I am sure he will have some very enlightened comments on the bill.

The second part of the bill would make it an offence, again without the consent of the theatre manager, to videotape the film for the purposes of sale or other commercial activity.

In the case of the first offence, which is simply videotaping without consent, there are certain penalties but they are of a lesser nature. If it is a situation where the person is intending to use the film for commercial purposes, which is the activity that we are most focused on preventing and, hopefully, stopping outright, the penalties would be more severe. If people are convicted of an indictable offence, they would be looking at a maximum of five years in jail.

The third provision in the bill, and it is an important provision given to the courts, is the right of forfeiture of the equipment that was used either for filming, copying or creating additional copies. This provision would give the courts the authority, on application from the crown prosecutor, to seize all those goods and forfeit them to the Crown. The one exception to the forfeiture is the situation where the property actually belongs to someone else. In those circumstances it would not be forfeited.

What we are doing here is responding to concerns that have been raised within the film industry here in Canada and within the film industry internationally, particularly in the United States, to this outright piracy of films. In that regard, the bill responds to that initial concern that we have had.

It also reflects on the current state of the laws, both under the Copyright Act and under the Criminal Code, which do not provide adequate response to this type of criminal activity, and, therefore, the need for it.

Members may have heard some of the other speakers mention a number of incidents but I want to mention one notorious incident that occurred in St. Jerome just north of Montreal. Two young men were in a theatre with a video camera, obviously intent on video copying the film on the screen, when they were accosted by the staff. The men told the staff that they had no right to demand they leave or that they not copy the movie because there were no laws in Canada requiring them to leave the theatre or to stop copying the film. At that point the staff persisted and one, who was a young woman, was actually grabbed around the throat and pushed. The police were subsequently called. When the police arrived they said that they had no basis on which to charge the men because there were no laws in Canada that would allow them to charge them, either under the Copyright Act or under the Criminal Code.

● (1640)

That incident in particular, but a number of other ones highlight the need for this bill and hence the support we have received from all parties in that regard.

I want to cover one other point and that is to perhaps express a bit of a concern over whether the bill would be as effective as we may have put out the image that it would be. I want to express some reservation about that and I do that in light of some of the background research I did in preparation for analyzing the bill and the need for it.

The United States addressed this problem at an earlier stage than we did. It does have a federal statute that is a little over two years old and there has only been one charge and one prosecution under it in the United States. A number of the state legislatures have also passed laws. California was the lead one. It passed it at the start of this year. Again, there have been no prosecutions whatsoever under that legislation. Illinois, one of the other earlier ones, has one a year or two old now with no prosecutions under that.

The point I would make from that experience in the United States is to perhaps caution how effectively we will be able to use this legislation. The notorious case that I described in St. Jerome will put a stop to that type of activity.

However, we know from information and research that we undertook in the public safety committee on counterfeit goods getting into Canada generally, but piracy of films as well, that a great deal of this activity is conducted by and paid for by organized crime and, in most occasions, at a very sophisticated level.

Although we would be stopping, fairly effectively with this legislation, the small operators, the success of it with regard to organized crime, to a great extent, remains uncertain. That may very well require additional efforts on the part of our governments, both at the federal and provincial level, and by our police forces right across the country to deal with the piracy of film and the use of counterfeit goods generally.

We are prepared to support this at all stages so we can put a stop to at least some of this piracy that is going on, to protect our film industry here in Canada and to protect our international reputation from this kind of conduct. We will be supporting it and we look forward to seeing what happens.

● (1645)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to the bill in cooperation with my colleague, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

New Democrats are pleased the piracy bill is before the House. It seems to me that it took a visit from *The Terminator* and pulling of all Hollywood films out of Canada to get the government to finally move on this, but I am pleased it did move.

A number of elements need to be examined in the legislation. One is the message it sends and the other is the efficacy of the legislation.

Government Orders

In Canada we do not support the illegal proliferation of bootlegged products, which are sold and undermine the intellectual investments and the massive investments that are made to make good films in Canada and around the world.

In terms of the efficacy of the legislation, my colleague, the member for Windsor—Tecumseh, raised the issue of how much this legislation will cover. I do not doubt that there has been piracy with camcorders, but I have questions about the numbers that are thrown around such as 20%, 40%, 70% of all bootlegged products go out of Canada. I do not think that will stand up to serious second scrutiny. Once the legislation is in place, it will give us a better chance to look at that.

Consumers do not want to watch something that was shot under a raincoat with a hand-held mic and a camera. They want quality. The quality of many of the bootlegged products out there is very high, which leads some to say that these movies are being cut much closer to source. Once this loophole in the legislation is filled, Canada will no longer be the whipping child for so-called piracy. The issue of where high quality bootlegged products are coming from will have to be addressed.

We also need to address copyright legislation for the 21st century. Piracy and bootlegging are different than the issue of remuneration of copyright, but there are overlaps. Sometimes the overlaps are confusing, but they are instructive.

Canada is in a position to come forward with copyright legislation for the 21st century. The biggest danger would be coming forward with legislation that was perfect for 1996, meaning that it would be all but irrelevant in the incredible changeover of digital technology that we see right now.

At this juncture in history, the movie industry is on the cusp of what happened to the recording industry back in the early part of this millennium. The band width now available on the Internet is almost at the point where people can start to stream movies quickly and efficiently. That will raise serious questions as to how we start to monetize this grey market exchange of intellectual goods on the Internet.

One model has been put out for us and that is the DMCA, the digital millennium copyright act, which was brought forward by Washington. Washington's trade representatives will do as much as they can to ensure that Canada signs on with a very similar restrictive copyright regime. However, there are a number of problems with that legislation.

Just a few months ago, I was in Montreal at an international conference on copyright and Bruce Lehman, who wrote the DMCA, was there. He was one of the key legislative planners who saw the legislation as a way of protecting the intellectual property of the United States. The message he gave in Montreal was that the legislation failed. His message to law students in Montreal was that Canada needed to learn from the U.S. mistakes and be ready to move forward. This is again talking about building 21st century copyright policy and not 20th century policy.

The fundamental issues that came forward came out of the 1996 WIPO treaty, which was supposed to deal with all the millennium issues. Unfortunately, the legislation was brought forward when the

FAX machine was cutting edge, so a number of changes have happened along the way.

● (1650)

One of the fundamental principles of WIPO is the ability of the copyright holder to place a digital lock, the DRM, on top of the product, so it cannot be used without permission. The digital lock model is definitely a model to be considered, but what we have seen in many places is the locks have been broken. In fact, in many of the key areas in music, Apple for example, say that if it is to compete, it cannot put the digital locks on because nobody will even buy the legal product.

Therefore, there is a question of how to deal with this. In the United States, the issue was if people broke the digital lock, the company would sue them. Then we had the instance of a bunch of 13-year-old kids being sued for downloading songs. At the end of the day, has that changed anything about the massive trade of songs and other merchandise on the Internet? It does not change anything, yet it creates a black eye for the music industry, which is trying to protect its property.

In Canada we saw the rise of the Canadian Music Creators Coalition. It said that there had to be another way to do this.

We need to start looking at how we monetize. The traffic is out there. Some very interesting models have come forward. With the peer to peer mechanisms out there, there are companies that can actually track how often a song is traded. They do not necessarily have to decide to look at which door it goes from, from whose house to whose house, but they can get a general sense of how many times a song has been traded on the Internet. That technology exists now. If we know how much product and what artist's music is being traded, then it is possible at some point to monetize this in the same way for radio play and for any other use of songs.

Therefore, the question is this. How do we start moving forward in the 21st century to monetize the value? The biggest threat we could have is to have outmoded legislation that will not address the problem. Once the bandwidths on the telcos reach the point, and we are almost at the point, where movies can be streamed at any point to anybody without any remuneration, then we will be into a serious problem.

The movie industry must be commended because it has begun to anticipate this. We have seen video on demand take a number of steps. It has seen a number of the mistakes that were made by the record industry. I am not kicking the horse when it is down, but the it really believed it could ride this out and it would go back to business as usual. It lost the market and that market will not return. However, the movie industry is it is starting to anticipate how to learn from those mistakes.

I will conclude with this comment. We saw the recent partnership between Warner Bros. and BitTorrent, where it allows them to do massive peer to peer trading. When Hollywood is saying that it cannot fight these guys forever so it should start working with them, it raises again the question of how to monetize this into the 21st century.

The New Democrats support the bill as it stands. Let us deal with the issue of piracy and with the issue of bootlegging, but let us start an honest, open discussion on how we can copyright in the 21st century that works for everyone.

• (1655)

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank both my colleagues for their eloquent interventions on this bill. I share their support for it, but share their view that it does not fully address the issue of copyright, nor even the issue of bootlegging film.

I come from Toronto and am pleased to represent a riding with so much artistic talent such as filmmakers, writers, musicians, painters and dancers. It is a very rich area and the whole issue of copyright is of great concern to my constituents.

Obviously we want to protect the rights of the creators of art and ensure that their rights, their work and their livelihoods are protected. However, we also want to adapt with the changing world of technology, and we do not want to be so restrictive that we are limiting educational institutions, universities and libraries in getting access to art.

Therefore, how does my colleague envision the changes with this technology affecting copyright and access by educational institutions while still protecting the rights of creators?

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, my colleague hit the nail on the head. Copyright has always been an issue of balance. It is the balancing of competing interests and it is messy. It is not an easy way of going forward, but it is possible. From previous legislative attempts, we saw there were major concerns about access for universities and schools.

The principle we need to start with, and I will put forward to the House, is a simple one. We have to get over our fear of the big, bad Internet. The Internet has provided possibilities for development for cultural expression, which were unimaginable 10 years ago.

When I first came into Parliament, we talked about the threat of the Internet, the threat of digital culture and how it would wipe out all our protected little Canadian industries like some big terrible cultural tsunami. We have to find out how we can start to use the digital culture so our immense cultural value that is being created can get out there. Again, I refer back to the Canadian Music Creators Coalition. It is starting to show some really interesting business models for success of Canadian artists internationally, based on the new music digital trading.

We have to look at where those successes are. We have to look at the issues of piracy. We have to deal with the issues of bootlegging. However, we need to start a serious discussion in order to ensure that our film, television and our audio visual content, which is very expensive, can be monetized at a value that can bring some return to our artists, but also ensure access for anyone, anytime, anywhere in the world.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Pursuant to order made earlier today, Bill C-59, an act to amend the Criminal Code (unauthorized recording of a movie) is deemed read the second time,

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referred to a committee of the whole, reported without amendment, concurred in at report stage, read a third time and passed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, considered in committee of the whole, reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed)

* * *

• (1700)

NUNAVIK INUIT LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT ACT

Hon. John Baird (for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians) moved that Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as parliamentarians, we are sometimes rewarded with moments of profound satisfaction, and today is one of them.

With the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement—the last Inuit land claim settlement in the country—we have now come full circle. The Inuit of Nunavik will once again become the owners of a group of islands totaling 5,100 square kilometres located north of the 53rd parallel.

In Inuktitut, Nunavik means “place to live”. From now on, 10,000 Inuit living in 15 communities scattered along the Ungava Bay and the east coast of the Hudson Bay will own the land they have been using for over 4,000 years.

This agreement was overwhelmingly supported by the Inuit of Nunavik. Indeed, some 78% of the eligible beneficiaries and 90% of everyone who voted supported the agreement. Such strong support is an excellent indication of the commitment of the Inuit people of Nunavik and just how important the agreement is to them.

I would also like to point out the measures set out in the agreement to protect the traditions that have ensured the survival of the Inuit culture. With the new act, the Inuit of Nunavik will have the right to harvest wildlife on the lands covered by the agreement, in order to meet their economic, social and cultural needs.

Thanks to this bill, and to the agreement at its foundation, the Inuit of Nunavik will own the surface rights and subsoil rights in fee simple. The islands belong to them without question.

These claims were particularly complex because of the overlap in the Nunavut land claims, the offshore land claims of the Crees of Quebec and the land claims of the Inuit of Labrador. It was impossible to settle the claims of the Inuit of Nunavik without first putting some order into these issues. It was essential to achieve the desired agreements to clarify the ownership rights on the land and the resources.

Here is an example. The Inuit of Nunavik and the Crees of James Bay had created three adjacent zones along the coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay.

Government Orders

To the north, was the Inuit zone, where the Crees of Quebec are permitted to harvest wildlife resources. The common zone is shared by the two groups. Finally, the southernmost zone will be the exclusive property of the Crees of Quebec, but the Inuit will be allowed to harvest wildlife resources in that zone.

In case of any disputes, the regulations provide for a resolution mechanism based on arbitration.

In addition to clarifying the territory belonging to the parties, this final agreement provides greater certainty about the future of the region.

It is in the interest of all parties to establish certainty regarding the use and ownership of the land and the resources. The certainty consists in replacing ambiguous ancestral rights with rights that are very precisely defined in the agreement. Section 35(3) of the Constitution Act, 1982 expressly grants the same protection to ancestral rights as to rights flowing from a treaty.

The benefits of obtaining certainty are clearly illustrated in another important point of the agreement: the creation of a new Canadian national park.

The Torngat Mountains National Park is a magnificent park of about 9,700 square kilometres with some of the most marvellous landscapes in Canada. It extends from Saglek Fiord in the south up to the northernmost point of Labrador, and from the border with Quebec on the west, to the Labrador Sea on the east.

The park protects a spectacular, untouched arctic area that is home to numerous archaeological sites and wildlife resources of great interest to Canadian historians.

● (1705)

Under the agreement, the Government of Canada will pay about \$94 million over 10 years to the Inuit of Nunavik, who will invest those funds for their future. This amount includes the transfer of \$54.8 million to the trust fund of the Inuit of Nunavik. The money will be distributed to some 10,000 Inuit of Nunavik, individually and collectively, to meet their educational, social, cultural and socio-economic needs. The great success of the Makivik Corporation shows that the settlement of land claims leads to the creation of businesses, jobs and new national and international markets, which strengthens the ability of First Nations and Inuit communities to meet the needs of their members.

That translates into a better quality of life for Aboriginal people, which is precisely the objective that we had set out to achieve. To guarantee that the economic development generated by this agreement procures sustainable benefits to the Inuit of Nunavik, the regulations provide for creation of several institutions public government. The Makivik Corporation will have legal authority to nominate 50% of the members of those institutions. For the first time, the Inuit of Nunavik will exercise real decision-making powers and be able to act decisively in the review processes that govern development of the region.

For example, the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board will be responsible for wildlife management and conservation. It will conduct research, monitor the allowable take, including the Nunavik Inuit share, and set quotas as needed.

For its part, the Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission will establish policies, objectives and goals to be used in managing the Nunavik Marine Region together with the federal and territorial governments. The Commission will also create land use plans for the development and exploitation of resources in the marine region.

Among other things, the Nunavik Marine Region Planning Commission will be responsible for assessing impacts, and will pre-select proposals for assessment. It will assess the impacts of proposed projects and monitor their progress.

As with all other land claims agreements, people will wonder which act takes precedence. I want to be very clear: all general federal, territorial and local legislation applies to the Inuit of Nunavik on the Inuit of Nunavik lands. Should incompatibility or conflict arise between these acts and the agreement, the agreement takes precedence, but only in cases of incompatibility or conflict.

It is clear that this final agreement, which has been so carefully drafted, seeks to strike a balance between the past and the creation of a better future for the Inuit of Nunavik.

This agreement is beneficial to all parties. We should celebrate this final step, which is a major achievement, and highlight its benefits for all Canadians. I therefore wish to reaffirm my support for this important bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-51 and encourage its passage. My leader supports the bill, as do, I believe, all leaders in the House today.

Many years ago a great Inuit leader, Zebedee Nungak, called for what he termed the completion of the circle of Confederation by the acceptance of Canada's Inuit peoples. It has taken too long, but we are moving closer to that goal.

I was greatly impressed by the briefings I received from Nunavik Inuit leaders on this treaty. The agreement, and the bill that implements it, reflects their objectives while respecting the rights and interests of my Inuit and other constituents in Labrador.

I wish to acknowledge in the House the president of Makivik, Pita Aatami, and my good friend and cousin, Johnny Peters, vice-president, representing the Nunavik Inuit.

I have had a warm relationship over the last decade with the leadership of the Nunavimmiut as we have collaborated in trying to ensure that all Inuit people in the Labrador peninsula are accommodated. This is a historic agreement for Canada, for Nunavik, for Quebec, for Labrador, and for all Inuit.

At the same time, the people of Canada and Labrador deserve honesty, accountability and clarity. Today I want to explore the implications of this proposed treaty. I also want to deliver a message that treaty making is the way of the future for reconciling Canada's sovereignty with all aboriginal peoples, Indian, Inuit and Métis.

Government Orders

We must certainly do better as legislators in moving the process of treaty making forward. Some of the major land claims we have faced were filed 20, 30, even 40 years ago, and most are still unresolved. Surely we can find a better way. Yesterday's announcement, unfortunately, does nothing to relieve the backlog in comprehensive claims.

I also have a special concern as the member for Labrador to ensure that the land ownership, the jurisdictional and the compensation aspects of this treaty are fully consistent with the honour of the Crown. I must be assured that the Nunavik Inuit and anyone else affected by the treaty are fully and fairly accommodated.

The bill before the House is a well crafted, well negotiated and fair expression of Nunavik Inuit interests on the offshore regions of Quebec and Labrador and in the overlap territories the Nunavik Inuit share with my other cousins, the north coast Inuit within my riding.

To be sure, as my friend in the other place, Senator Charlie Watt, has put it, the agreement could be better, particularly in relation to certainty and the continuing demand by Canada that aboriginal groups give up what is undefined about their rights, but the Nunavik Inuit have accepted the wording in the course of their negotiations.

The treaty strikes an important balance in providing Nunavik Inuit, as well as the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, northern Labrador, with solid, constitutionally protected rights and interests in the management of lands and ocean resources.

This treaty has been negotiated over a great many years. The deal has been approved and ratified by the Nunavik Inuit. It has been reviewed and signed off by the Nunatsiavut government, which will play an important role in implementation within terrestrial Labrador.

I am pleased that the government has recognized the hard work done by our previous Liberal government, as most of the federal work was done under our watch. I hope that the reciprocal arrangement defining the rights of Labrador Inuit in Nunavik will soon be finalized as well.

This treaty does not require provincial approval. All the offshore areas involved are fully within Parliament's jurisdiction. The land based impacts are within a national park reserve, the Torngat Mountain national park, to be created by this bill, which is also within federal jurisdiction.

The treaty affirms Nunavik Inuit interests and rights in the Labrador Inuit settlement area in accordance with an overlap agreement between the two Inuit organizations as originally provided for in the Labrador Inuit land claims settlement agreement.

The treaty respects the interests of Canadians, of Labradorians and of Labrador's aboriginal peoples.

I wish to highlight the next steps to bring reconciliation a final and deciding step closer to realization in Labrador.

• (1710)

This is a piece of a wider solution. Part of Canada's agenda must be a treaty with the Innu Nation of Labrador. These negotiations have languished for so long that the social and economic prospects for both the Innu and all Labradorians have suffered. It is important

to move ahead and closer to an agreement like those achieved by the Nunatsiavut and now the Nunavik Inuit.

The Innu Nation of Labrador has built important relationships with Nunatsiavut and their Innu brothers and sisters in Quebec. One day they will enjoy a renewed relationship with the provincial and federal governments through land rights resolution and self-government treaties.

Unfortunately, there are legitimate fears that the recent dismissal and shuffling of chief federal land claims negotiators may delay progress on the Innu Nation negotiations. This does not help.

There is also one last Inuit descendant group in Canada that must be accommodated in Labrador. I am, of course, talking of the Inuit-Métis of Labrador, of which I am one. This is a unique group, the only aboriginal people in the country to span the Inuit and Métis peoples recognized in the Constitution Act, 1982.

In 1996 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples took special efforts to assess and comment on the Labrador Inuit-Métis. In 2003 the Supreme Court of Canada also made specific mention of the Labrador Inuit-Métis in its Powley decision and clearly implied the need for a reconciliation for this unique people.

Only in southern Labrador have Inuit people been associated with Europeans for so long, in fact since the 16th century. Yet, we are clearly an Inuit people of mixed descent, unique in Canada. It is a historical and legal fact.

Last year the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador took these precedents into account and ordered the provincial government to accept reality: that the Inuit-Métis exist and have rights that are certain to be upheld in a court of law. The provincial position that Powley and other aboriginal jurisprudence do not apply in Labrador is simply not tenable.

The province, at least tacitly, has consented to the Nunavik-Nunatsiavut agreement, yet it continues to blockade progress by the Labrador Métis Nation. This is unfair, unjust and hypocritical. It is also contrary to the solemn, written promise made by Premier Williams during the 2003 election campaign. It does not serve the interests of the province of Labrador or of the Métis Nation.

It is for Canada, through Parliament, to take action to restore a fair and equitable basis for accommodation and reconciliation. In this spirit, yesterday, we heard the minister announce the creation of a special Indian claims tribunal. It is a step forward.

This acknowledged that in aboriginal claims and rights issues, it is important to provide an efficient and fair avenue for negotiations, and for dispute settlement where negotiations do not succeed. This is all part of the essence of reconciliation.

Although it is a step forward, I have expressed certain concerns about the tribunal. I would stress again that there must be progress on comprehensive claims, as well as on specific claims.

Private Members' Business

The 6,500 Inuit-Métis of Labrador living in isolated communities, as they have for time immemorial, have been waiting almost two decades for a response to their claim. They have been denied justice.

The royal commission in 1996 had suggested and recommended acceptance of the claim. In 2003 the Supreme Court also commented on the Inuit-Métis claim and clearly paved the way for acceptance. The people of Labrador are ready to accept the Inuit-Métis claim.

I have resolutions from the combined councils of Labrador, representing all municipalities, to the same effect. My friends and indeed relations from Nunavik have themselves been very sympathetic and supportive. It is time that the federal and provincial governments take action.

I have worked to break that deadlock. In 2003 I negotiated an agreement with the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to have an independent legal assessment done of this Inuit-Métis claim filed by the Labrador Métis Nation.

• (1715)

This is exactly the kind of alternative dispute resolution called for and must be respected through the creation of the tribunal. Yet, the independent assessment that was agreed to has not started.

It is now 17 months into Canada's tired—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but we have reached an order of the day. The member will be able to resume his comments when we return to government orders.

* * *

• (1720)

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

SPEAKER'S RULING—DEVILS LAKE DIVERSION PROJECT

The Deputy Speaker: Earlier today, the hon. member for Winnipeg North requested an emergency debate on the Devils Lake diversion pursuant to Standing Order 52.

The Speaker took the request under advisement and has asked me to inform the House that having considered the request, he has concluded that it meets the requirements of the Standing Order.

Accordingly, to give members an opportunity to prepare for the debate, it will be scheduled for Thursday, June 14, 2007, at the completion of debate on government orders, but in any event no later than 9 p.m. pursuant to special order adopted earlier today.

It being 5:20 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, I now invite the hon. member for Burlington to address the House concerning Bill C-279, An Act to amend the DNA Identification Act (establishment of indexes).

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

DNA IDENTIFICATION ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-279, An Act to amend the DNA Identification Act (establishment of indexes), as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, throughout the debate on Bill C-279 many significant facts have been stated. There are nearly 100,000 missing persons in Canada every year. Over 6,000 missing person cases are currently unresolved, with an addition of over 450 new cases per year.

There are over 15,000 samples of unidentified DNA recovered from crime scenes across this country currently stored in the RCMP's national DNA data bank here in Ottawa.

As well, there are hundreds of sets of unidentified DNA from Jane and John Does found in morgues across Canada.

Given the need for a DNA data bank and the widespread support from Canadians, law enforcement professionals, the provincial and territorial governments, a DNA database for missing persons housed within the national DNA data bank is on the horizon. Bill C-279 helps make that possible.

The public safety committee recently studied Bill C-279 and referred it back to this House. The committee recognized our need for a national missing persons index, an MPI data bank, as soon as possible, and supported my bill in principle, but recognized that more work needs to be done.

That work is being done and experts will be back in the fall to testify before the committee.

I am happy to tell this House that the Minister of Public Safety himself has expressed interest in looking into this concept as a possible future government bill.

Members from all parties have acknowledged their support and the support in principle from their respective parties.

Canada is the DNA leader. It is known for pushing the technology, how it handles DNA, and how it will handle a DNA data bank. We should support Canada's commitment as a leader in DNA and set a great example for other countries to follow.

I would like to thank Lindsey's mother, Judy Peterson, for inspiring this bill and the Minister of Natural Resources who has worked tirelessly on this issue before I took it over.

Bill C-279 may not exist after today, but the concept will and I will continue to work hard with our government to make this happen. At this time I would seek the withdrawal of my bill, Bill C-279, An Act to amend the DNA Identification Act.

Government Orders

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made earlier today, Bill C-279, An Act to amend the DNA Identification Act (establishment of indexes) is withdrawn.

(Order discharged and bill withdrawn)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

NUNAVIK INUIT LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I repeat that in 2003 I negotiated an agreement with the previous minister of Indian and northern affairs to have an independent legal assessment done of this Inuit-Métis claim filed by the Labrador Métis Nation. This is exactly the kind of alternative dispute resolution called for through the creation of the tribunal.

Yet, the independent assessment that was agreed to has not started. It is now 17 months into Canada's tired Conservative government. We ask, where is the action on reconciliation from the government? There will not be a completion of the circle of Confederation until all Inuit, Métis and Indian people are accommodated, and have their rights reconciled with the reality of Canadian federalism.

In supporting this bill and this treaty, I call on the government and on Parliament to include all of Canada's Inuit peoples in the circle of our common federation by resolving all the outstanding aboriginal land claims and rights issues in Labrador involving the Inuit, Innu-Métis and Innu. This treaty and this bill is one important step in that direction.

On behalf of all my constituents in Labrador, my sincere congratulations are extended to president Aatami, vice-president Peters, and all my relations within the Nunavik-Inuit family.

• (1725)

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, is passed, it would be a major step forward for the Inuit in my riding.

Back in 1975, the Nunavik Inuit and James Bay Cree signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the first comprehensive land claims agreement in Canada. At that time, the Government of Canada signed an undertaking with the Nunavik Inuit on land claims in offshore areas of Nunavik. The Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement deals with a number of issues related to land and resources in offshore areas adjacent to Quebec. It specifies property rights to the land and the sharing of resources, with financial compensation of course.

The Bloc Québécois will support the bill to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The wishes of the people of

Nunavik are very clear in this regard. When the referendum was held in October, 2006, 81% of the people of Nunavik cast a ballot. This is a very high figure. In addition, 78% of them voted in favour of the agreement, thereby enabling the Makivik Corporation to legitimately sign it on their behalf. The purpose of the agreement is to resolve a land problem that is central to the hunting, fishing and trapping lifestyle of the Nunavik Inuit. It reflects the democratic choice of the people of Nunavik. It took 15 years of negotiations between the Inuit and the Government of Canada before this agreement could be signed on December 1, 2006.

In contrast to what many people think, the Nunavik Inuit—whom we are basically dealing with here—consist of around 10,000 people living in some 15 municipalities scattered along the shores of Hudson Bay, Ungava Bay and Labrador. Canadians still seem to know very little about these people who pay taxes without ever getting the benefit of roads, railways or adequate services. Their culture, based on their survival methods, has made them very community-minded. In each village, they are divided into several different groups whose jobs are determined by the needs of the community. There are hunters, trappers, fishers, and people engaged in various other activities.

Every participant in these groups uses their own tools and personal equipment, such as boats, engines, all terrain vehicles and trucks, which, in these circumstances, are considered recreational equipment unlike anywhere else, where they would be viewed as commercial equipment. Gas is now almost \$2 a litre. What is more, gas for the equipment and tools is not tax deductible as it is in our communities. Ironically enough, they pay the most tax in Canada per capita—dollars/value. Take for example a car for which we would pay \$30,000. Add another \$2,000 to have it transported by boat and you end up paying federal and provincial sales tax on \$32,000.

And what about daily needs such as food, clothing and drugs? The area along the coasts is very important to the survival of the Nunavik Inuit, who live on the coast and not inland. These activities are important for harvesting flora and fauna, which they do, and for preserving their culture. The Inuit have been inhabiting and using this area for almost 4,000 years for hunting and fishing for food. They also use this area for transportation. Some 75% of the Inuit's traditional food comes from the marine life found in this area. The Inuit are the occupants and guardians of these shores, thereby allowing Quebec and Canada to justify occupying the land. They ensure the sovereignty and surveillance of these lands. And what do they get in return? As Rangers or researchers of whale and seal populations or marine life, they receive salaries below the minimum cost of living in this sector, only to be replaced by officials hired to verify their skills.

Private Members' Business

● (1730)

In your opinion, what skill would be more convincing than 4,000 years of practice carried on from generation to generation? Considering it has never been disputed, should this practice not count for more than theories acquired off site and out of season?

We are reaching the point where malnutrition, housing that does not meet minimum public health standards and toxic substances leaking—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am sorry to have to interrupt the hon. member for Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

INCOME TRUSTS

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of Motion M-321.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion M-321 under private members' business.

Call in the members.

● (1800)

[English]

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley.

Mr. Bill Casey: Mr. Speaker, I missed my whip so much I voted the wrong way. I would like to change my vote. I voted yea, but I would like to vote nay, please.

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

*(Division No. 203)***YEAS**

Members

Alghabra	Bagnell
Barnes	Beaumier
Bélangier	Bell (North Vancouver)
Bevilacqua	Bonin
Boshcoff	Brisson
Brown (Oakville)	Byrne
Chan	Coderre
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cuzner
D'Amours	Dhaliwal
Dosanji	Dryden
Easter	Eyking
Folco	Godfrey
Goodale	Guarnieri
Holland	Hubbard
Jennings	Kadis
Keeper	LeBlanc
MacAulay	Malhi
Maloney	Marleau
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	McCallum
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McTeague
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Neville
Owen	Pacetti
Patry	Pearson

Peterson
Redman
Robillard
Rota
Savage
Scott
Simard
St. Amand
Szabo
Thibault (West Nova)
Turner
Wilfert
Wrzesnewskyj

Proulx
Regan
Rodriguez
Russell
Scarpaleggia
Sgro
Simms
St. Denis
Telegdi
Tonks
Volpe
Wilson
Zed- — 74

NAYS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Albrecht	Allen
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Angus
Arthur	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Baird	Barbot
Batters	Bell (Vancouver Island North)
Bellavance	Bevington
Bezan	Bigras
Black	Blackburn
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Boucher
Bourgeois	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Brunelle
Calkins	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Carrier
Casey	Casson
Chong	Chow
Christopherson	Comartin
Comuzzi	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cummins	Davidson
Davies	Day
Del Mastro	Demers
Deschamps	Devolin
Dewar	Doyle
Duceppe	Dykstra
Emerson	Epp
Faillie	Fast
Fitzpatrick	Flaherty
Fletcher	Freeman
Gagnon	Galipeau
Gallant	Gaudet
Goldring	Goodyear
Gourde	Grewal
Guay	Hanger
Harris	Harvey
Hawn	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Jaffer
Jean	Julian
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Khan	Komarnicki
Kotto	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Laforest	Laframboise
Lake	Lalonde
Lauzon	Lavallée
Layton	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	Lussier
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Malo	Manning
Marston	Masse
Mayer	McDonough
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Merrifield	Miller
Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nadeau
Nash	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
Oda	Ouellet
Pallister	Paradis
Perron	Petit

Picard	Plamondon
Poilievre	Prentice
Preston	Priddy
Rajotte	Reid
Richardson	Ritz
Roy	Savoie
Schellenberger	Shipley
Siksay	Skelton
Smith	Solberg
Sorenson	St-Cyr
St-Hilaire	Stanton
Strahl	Sweet
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Verner	Vincent
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Wasylcia-Leis
Watson	Williams— 174

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

Hon. Jay Hill: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding an order made previously today, if you were to seek it you might find unanimous consent of all members present this evening to support this motion unanimously.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to support this motion unanimously?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 204)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Albrecht	Alghabra
Allen	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Angus	Arthur
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Bagnell
Baird	Barbot
Barnes	Batters
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bell (Vancouver Island North)	Bell (North Vancouver)
Bellavance	Bevilacqua
Bevington	Bezan
Bigras	Black
Blackburn	Blais

Bonin	Bonsant
Boshcoff	Bouchard
Boucher	Bourgeois
Breitkreuz	Brison
Brown (Oakville)	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinoogee
Brunelle	Byrne
Calkins	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Carrier
Casey	Casson
Chan	Chong
Chow	Christopherson
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Crête
Crowder	Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)
Cullen (Etobicoke North)	Cummins
Cuzner	D'Amours
Davidson	Davies
Day	Del Mastro
Demers	Deschamps
Devolin	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dosanjh
Doyle	Dryden
Duceppe	Dykstra
Easter	Emerson
Epp	Eyking
Faille	Fast
Fitzpatrick	Flaherty
Fletcher	Folco
Freeman	Gagnon
Galipeau	Gallant
Gaudet	Godfrey
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gourde
Grewal	Guamieri
Guay	Hanger
Harris	Harvey
Hawn	Hearn
Hiebert	Hill
Hinton	Holland
Hubbard	Jaffer
Jean	Jennings
Julian	Kadis
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Keeper	Khan
Komarnicki	Kotto
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Laforest
Laframboise	Lake
Lalonde	Lauzon
Lavallée	Layton
LeBlanc	Lemay
Lessard	Lévesque
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	Lussier
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Malhi
Malo	Maloney
Manning	Marleau
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Masse	Mayes
McCallum	McDonough
McGuinty	McGuire
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McTeague
Ménard (Hochelaga)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Merrifield	Miller
Mills	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Nadeau	Nash
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
Oda	Ouellet
Owen	Pacetti
Pallister	Paradis
Patry	Pearson
Perron	Peterson
Petit	Picard
Plamondon	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Priddy	Proulx
Rajotte	Redman
Regan	Reid
Richardson	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy

Routine Proceedings

Private Members' Business

Russell	Savage
Savoie	Scarpaleggia
Schellenberger	Scott
Sgro	Shipley
Siksay	Simard
Simms	Skelton
Smith	Solberg
Sorenson	St-Cyr
St-Hilaire	St. Amand
St. Denis	Stanton
Strahl	Sweet
Szabo	Telegdi
Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)	
Thibault (West Nova)	
Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	Thompson (Wild Rose)
Tilson	Toews
Tonks	Trost
Turner	Tweed
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Verner
Vincent	Volpe
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Wasylycia-Leis
Watson	Wilfert
Williams	Wilson
Wrzesnewskyj	Zed— 248

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion agreed to)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

HERITAGE LIGHTHOUSE PROTECTION ACT

The House resumed from June 11 consideration of the motion that Bill S-220, An Act to protect heritage lighthouses, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-220 under private members' business.

● (1810)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 205)

YEAS

Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Albrecht	Alghabra
Allen	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Angus	Arthur
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bagnell	Baird
Barnes	Batters
Beaumier	Bélangier
Bell (Vancouver Island North)	Bell (North Vancouver)
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Bezan	Black
Blackburn	Bonin
Boshcoff	Boucher
Breitkreuz	Brisson

Brown (Oakville)	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Byrne	Calkins
Cannon (Pontiac)	Carrie
Casey	Casson
Chan	Chong
Chow	Christopherson
Coderre	Comartin
Comuzzi	Crowder
Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley)	Cullen (Etobicoke North)
Cummins	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davidson
Davies	Day
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dewar	Dhalwal
Dosanjh	Doyle
Dryden	Dykstra
Easter	Emerson
Epp	Eyking
Fast	Fitzpatrick
Flaherty	Fletcher
Folco	Galipeau
Gallant	Godfrey
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gourde
Grewal	Guarnieri
Hanger	Harris
Harvey	Hawn
Hearn	Hiebert
Hill	Hinton
Holland	Hubbard
Jaffer	Jean
Jennings	Julian
Kadis	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Keeper
Khan	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Layton
LeBlanc	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Malhi
Maloney	Manning
Marleau	Marston
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Masse
Mayes	McCallum
McDonough	McGuinty
McGuire	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McTeague	Merrifield
Miller	Mills
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Nash
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
Oda	Owen
Pacetti	Pallister
Paradis	Patry
Pearson	Peterson
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Priddy	Proulx
Rajotte	Redman
Regan	Reid
Richardson	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Savage	Savoie
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Scott	Sgro
Shipley	Siksay
Simard	Simms
Skelton	Smith
Solberg	Sorenson
St. Amand	St. Denis
Stanton	Strahl
Sweet	Szabo
Telegdi	Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)
Basques)	
Thibault (West Nova)	Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)
Thompson (Wild Rose)	Tilson
Toews	Tonks
Trost	Turner
Tweed	Van Kesteren

Van Loan
Verner
Wallace
Warkentin
Watson
Williams
Wrzesnewskyj

Vellacott
Volpe
Warawa
Wasylcia-Leis
Wilfert
Wilson
Zed — 208

NAYS

Members

Bachand
Bellavance
Blais
Bouchard
Brunelle
Crête
Deschamps
Faille
Gagnon
Guay
Kotto
Laframboise
Lavallée
Lessard
Lussier
Ménard (Hochelega)
Nadeau
Perron
Plamondon
St-Cyr
Vincent — 41

Barbot
Bigras
Bonsant
Bourgeois
Carrier
Demers
Duceppe
Freeman
Gaudet
Guimond
Laforest
Lalonde
Lemay
Lévesque
Malo
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
Ouellet
Picard
Roy
St-Hilaire

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

NUNAVIK INUIT LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, before I was interrupted, I was talking about malnutrition, housing not meeting minimal public health standards and seepage of toxic substances in the water table, which will create huge costs in terms of transportation and medical care, costs that will become difficult to recover in the context of a vision of social and economic well-being.

My comment deals with how slow the various governments are in responding to the urgent needs of these populations with respect to housing, as provided under the James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement. In fact, 14 people from three generations now have to live under the same roof. This creates all sorts of health issues and major problems.

To mention only a few examples: lack of privacy to allow young people to study and sleep properly, tuberculosis and mildew problems resulting from overcrowding, and cases of incest due to close proximity. As if that were not enough, there is now global warming caused in large part by the friends of this government to

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contend with. Add to that the government's lack of action on this issue, and we are sitting on a time bomb.

Passing Bill C-51 would enable the Inuit to manage the development of the Nunavik marine region themselves. The agreement entered into by the parties empowers the Inuit to protect their environment, stimulate their economy and improve the well-being of their communities.

This proposal raised sufficient interest that 81% of the population voted 78% in favour of the agreement, authorizing Makivik to sign it in order to address a land problem affecting the lifestyles and the hunting, fishing and trapping habits of the Inuit who are responsible for the survival of the population of Nunavik.

With this agreement, the Inuit own 80% of the offshore islands—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Yvon Lévesque: That does not seem to bother very many people, because you can hear them all over the place. Their actions speak louder than I can.

The Inuit will receive financial assistance to implement the agreement.

It took 15 years for this to happen. Incredible. It is pathetic to see so much of this department's substantial budget go to legal fees. It is not that I take issue with the fact that the department has lawyers or with their usefulness, but I think the people have reason to believe the system is being abused.

A joint management board will be set up to ensure the Inuit are involved in managing their lands and resources.

In my opinion, section 5.2 of the agreement, which provides for the creation of the Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board, is unclear. The board includes only three representatives of Nunavik. The Makivik Corporation is certainly aware of this and has certainly informed the people of Nunavik, who support this agreement. Considering that they are willing to go ahead, we are here to support their legitimate claims.

Even though the Government of Quebec is not a party to the agreement, it has examined the agreement and has not found anything that requires amending.

This agreement is a first step. Recognition of land claims is always important for a people, but given the situation at present and the many needs the Inuit have, it is a small step.

The Inuit need decent incomes, appropriate tax credits, road and rail development and affordable, good-quality food. They also need equitable transportation costs, because they need to be able to make contact with people in the rest of their country at prices that are affordable and comparable to what other Canadians pay.

Beyond wealth, Quebec and Canada need to be presence to affirm the sovereignty of their respective territories and, as for the environment, the effort required today is certainly much less than the drastic corrective action that will be necessary in the very near future.

Government Orders

The Inuit, whether from Nunavik or from Nunavut, also hope for the creation of a standing committee so that Members of Parliament will take an interest in and examine their living conditions and their very particular difficulties, in terms of their culture, their distinctive geographic location and their very difficult but energetic economic activity.

• (1815)

If adopted, Bill C-51 will officially result in creation of the Tornat Mountain national park in Labrador, a landscape of some 10,000 square kilometres that deserves to be recognized.

Adoption of Bill C-51 is a first step forward for the Inuit of Nunavik. The recognition of a territory is always an important stage in the evolution of a people. However, in the present circumstances, considering all the socio-economic needs of the Inuit of Nunavik, the Government of Canada must continue and increase its efforts, jointly with the Inuit, to improve their well being.

Regardless of the wealth of the territory of Nunavik, Quebec and Canada need the presence of the Inuit to impose their sovereignty. The effort called for today is certainly easier to bear than the correction would be necessary and which would call for draconian measures in the very near future.

For many years, successive but different governments have shown a shocking lack of awareness of the realities of this area, of its people, of its needs and the dangers that threaten it. We, too, could be accused of genocide if nothing is done about the environment. What other countries did with weapons, we could do through collective poisoning.

On a number of occasions, we have seen the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs accusing the opposition in the House of delaying implementation of this bill. In fact, was it not rather to camouflage his inability to convince the Cabinet to act? To consider that would be preferable to using blackmail in an effort to adopt other, less noble bills.

On the subject of the problems facing the Neskapi, we heard the representative of the government tell us that we have come full circle. But there is another nation living in the territory of Nunavik. They are the Neskapi, and the government is their trustee. Before granting governmental autonomy to Nunavik and creating problems between two nations, the government has a duty to settle those problems itself.

As we can see, the circle is still far from complete, as the representative of the government claims.

• (1820)

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Before calling for questions and comments or resuming debate, as the case may be, a number of conversations are going on in the House, which makes it difficult for the Chair and for the people who have the floor. I ask people who are having conversations on the floor of the House to maybe have them somewhere else so the proper respect can be shown the people who do have the floor.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of Bill C-51. I know New Democrats are anxious to see this bill passed rapidly through this House.

In 1975 the Governments of Canada and Quebec, along with the Cree and Inuit groups in Quebec, agreed to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the first modern day land claims settlement. That agreement was an important step towards recognizing the rights of the Nunavik Inuit. It does not, however, adequately address all the issues surrounding the traditional territories of the Nunavik people.

Over 30 years later, Bill C-51 picks up where the James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement left off, addressing the use of land and resources off the northern coast of Quebec and Nunavut. Bill C-51 would bring into effect the Nunavik Inuit Land claims agreement, which was agreed to by the Governments of Canada and Nunavut and the Makivik Corporation, a group representing around 10,000 Inuit. This all took place in late 2006.

The agreement addresses the use and ownership of Nunavut land and resources in James Bay, Hudson Bay, Hudson Strait and the Ungava Bay, as well as a portion of northern Labrador. The agreement gives control of 80% of the land in the Nunavik Marine Region, nearly 5,100 square kilometres, to the Nunavik people. They will also retain full control of any resources found on these lands.

The Nunavik Inuit land claims agreement is a fair deal for the Nunavik people. I agree that we ought to bring this agreement into force. Too often land claims are finally settled, only for aboriginal people to face unreasonable and unnecessary delays in the implementation of these deals. In fact, that is what I wish to address with part of my time today. Claims need to be backed by adequate financial resources to ensure implementation. They need to be a government priority and the government must give land claims implementation its full and unwavering support.

The Land Claims Agreement Coalition is a group comprised of aboriginal leaders from across Canada. The Land Claims Agreement Coalition has talked about the fact that treaties get signed, but the implementation is often very slow in coming. Many governments over numbers of years have talked about how important these agreements are in terms of providing a better quality of life, education, quality of water, housing and they often can lead to greater economic self-reliance and a better quality of life. They talk about the fact that these objectives must not be abandoned.

I want to quote from the conference the members of the coalition had last year. The said:

Objectives Must Not be Abandoned

However, in the experience of the members of the Coalition, the ink is barely dry on each land claims agreement before the federal government, and especially its officials, abandons any talk of those objectives, and proceeds instead on the basis that the government's sole responsibility is to fulfil the narrow legal obligations set out in the agreement, in the hope, presumably that everything will work out. The members of the Coalition are not aware of any policy having been explicitly adopted by the Government of Canada that the objectives of entering into the agreement are to be forgotten or ignored once it has obtained the Aboriginal signatures on the document. And yet that has become the entrenched attitude of Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

This attitude has led at least some of the Aboriginal peoples who have entered in good faith into these modern land claims agreements to conclude that there have been deliberate, continuing efforts on the part of the federal crown to minimize, frustrate and even extinguish the rights and benefits the Aboriginal parties expected would accrue from their treaties.

Those are very hard words.

In case we just talk about criticism, the Land Claims Agreement Coalition has extended to the Government of Canada a chance to enter into a mutual discourse. In their paper, "A New Land Claims Implementation Policy", they make several recommendations to strengthen the land claims implementation process. These include:

Recognition that the Crown and right of Canada, not the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, is party to our land claims agreements and self-government agreements.

There must be a federal commitment to achieve the broad objectives of the land claims agreements and self government agreements within the context of the new relationships, as opposed to mere technical compliance with narrowly defined obligations. This must include, but not be limited to, ensuring adequate funding to achieve these objectives and obligations.

Implementation must be handled by appropriate senior level federal officials representing the entire Canadian government.

There must be an independent implementation audit and review body, separate from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

● (1825)

For too long, the government has treated land claims as contracts between INAC and other departments, when they are clearly negotiated as agreements between nations. The institutional framework of the federal government's approach to implementing land claims must change if it is going to keep pace with the legal and constitutional realities of modern treaties. Yet as the Land Claims Agreement Coalition says:

There has not appeared to be any understanding that these agreements are not ordinary contracts, nor has there been any senior oversight of the agreements by institutions that transcend the various departments of the federal government...What is called for is a change in the perspective...

These are important words in the context of this current agreement. Although we celebrate the signing of this agreement, we must also remain vigilant to ensure that these agreements are implemented and do not end up being just another piece of paper that has first nations and Inuit taking these agreements to court as we have seen with Nunavut.

The land claims must be more than a simple real estate transaction. The relationship between aboriginal groups and the government must be defined in ways that ensure the continuing interests of claimants are recognized to provide for the economic, social and cultural needs of aboriginal peoples. This policy enjoys the support of aboriginal peoples and informs some land claims negotiations.

Living up to this policy will require continued effort by all parties to make sure land claims are implemented in ways that benefit both Canada and aboriginal peoples. This can be accomplished by the government providing support, financial and otherwise, to ensure land claims negotiations produce strong, forward-looking partnerships between aboriginal peoples and the government.

Part of the reason I want to speak to Bill C-51 is also to give some attention to another first nation, the Naskapis. They are a small community who traditionally lived on the inland portion of the

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Ungava Peninsula. Unlike their Inuit neighbours who traditionally lived on the coast, the Naskapis have always been an inland people. Their land was also included in the James Bay Northern Quebec agreement. However, their rights were not protected by that treaty. The Naskapis were not allowed to take part in the negotiations of the James Bay Northern Quebec agreement even though it included ceding title to their traditional lands.

The net effect was that the Naskapis land was divided between the Inuit and to a lesser extent, the Cree, as if the Naskapis had never existed, this despite the fact that the Naskapis had made it clear to both the Government of Canada and the government of Quebec that they desired to negotiate a treaty. The lands of the Naskapis could have been excluded from those negotiations, but it was not.

I want to read from a document entitled "The Inuit Regional Self-Government and the Naskapi Nation". In this document they say:

When, in late 1975, the signatories to the JBNQA agreed to negotiate with the Naskapis a settlement of their claims, the first thing that the Naskapis had to do was to ask the Crees and the Inuit to "give them back" their lands and rights. You can imagine how humiliating that was.

The Naskapis did win back some of their territory, but not all. Historic communities and burial grounds were not returned to their control. Chief Philip Einish wrote to members of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs on June 6, 2007, to let us know of their concerns around the process after this land claim bill is passed in the House. I want to be clear. I spoke with Chief Einish and he and the Naskapis are supportive of Bill C-51 and want to see this long-standing claim of the Inuit settled. However, they do hope that the passage of this bill gives their own work to maintain and enhance Naskapi control of Naskapi more impetus. The Naskapis are simply asking for some justice in their own process.

I will read from a letter sent to the committee. This is from the letter of June 6, and it refers to the threat. It says:

The Inuit, the GoC and the GoQ have negotiated an agreement-in-principle...that contemplates, among other things, the possibility of granting new governmental powers over Naskapi lands to an enlarged de facto Inuit government.

The parties cannot affect the treaty rights of the Naskapis without their consent but they are behaving in a way that potentially threatens the very survival of the Naskapis both economically and culturally.

The transfer to the Inuit-dominated Nunavik Assembly of new legislative powers would threaten the Naskapis, because the Nunavik Assembly would be much more likely to favour Inuit interests over Naskapi interests that would be the GoQ, which currently holds all or most of the powers in question.

It is in this sense that the rearrangement of governmental powers contemplated in the AIP [the agreement in principle] is considered by the Naskapis to be such a fundamental change to the dynamic enshrined in the JBNQA...and that it would be a grave injustice and tantamount to a breach of their treaty rights if their consent is not given, since the existing legislative limits placed on the KRG in the JBNQA...with regard to Naskapi traditional lands are in themselves a Naskapi treaty right.

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●(1830)

I want to emphasize that the next step in the negotiations of the self-government agreement in Nunavik gives the government an opportunity to address this long-standing inequity. The Inuit of Nunavik want to occupy their rights to self-government over their traditional territories and they should be able to occupy those rights.

The Naskapis also desire to occupy their rights to control their traditional territory, rights that have been taken from them. In exchange for the new and varied power that the governments of Canada and Quebec will be granting to the Inuit, they should ask for the assistance of the Inuit in correcting the injustice done to the Naskapis. Even so, the Naskapis are not saying that the self-government agreement with the Inuit should not take place. They recognize that all aboriginal people should have the right to self-government. However, they want some assurances from the government that it will not grant any new powers that affect the land of the Naskapis unless the Naskapis have agreed.

I would also like to point out that the Cree-Naskapi Commission in its 2006 report to Parliament had a specific recommendation about this:

The Government of Canada, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach and other parties concerned should forthwith settle the mandate of the Naskapi-Inuit-Canada-Quebec Working Group which should commence to address the concerns of the Naskapi Nation respecting the current negotiations on the establishment of the Nunavik Government.

This is a reasonable request. I will continue to ask the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for his assurance that the Naskapis' concern will be addressed before any agreements are executed.

In conclusion, peoples who are affected by this agreement are simply asking that their rights are also recognized. I would encourage all members of this House to support this very important piece of legislation. Certainly the New Democrats will be. I look forward to its rapid passage.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague's discussion on this land claim issue.

I know from my time working with the Algonquin nation in Quebec on what was unceded aboriginal territory never covered by treaty, we had spent a great deal of time working on land claims research to deal with the outstanding land issues. One of the problems the Algonquians faced, and in fact one which first nations across the country face, is the government says it wants certainty, and what it means by certainty is the extinguishment of all land rights in exchange for a dollar figure or a certain amount of land. Yet these rights are guaranteed, first under the Constitution section 35 rights, and in court decision after court decision, including Delgamuukw, Haida, and Taku River.

We are now finding in our region a growing concern from industry. Industry wants to work with the first nation communities. Industry wants to work on the territories, but it is in a position where it cannot negotiate because the first nations cannot negotiate because the federal government as well as the Crown under the province are not at the table and they have been holding up these agreements. The tradition of the federal government with first nations was that if the

first nations did not like it, they could take the government to court. Land agreements that could have been signed and moved forward were not signed. In fact there have been all kinds of question marks right across our northern territories.

Now industry is actually trying to move ahead in the vacuum where government should have been, as its fiduciary responsibility, trying to make agreements with first nations. There are first nations that want to move ahead because they need economic development as well, and yet they find themselves in a bind because the federal government and the provincial governments have been basically obstructing the process to resolve the issues.

I would like to ask the member whether she has seen this pattern across the country. What steps do we need to take to have a proactive government finally move forward so we can have not just certainty on the land for first nations maintaining their rights, but also proper economic development that they can partake in?

●(1835)

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the member has raised a very good point.

The member is well aware that I am from the province of British Columbia where the treaty process has been exceedingly slow. I would argue that in part it is because oftentimes federal government negotiators do not come to the table with a mandate to actually settle the treaty. What often happens is that there is a changeover of personnel, or they are junior level negotiators, or they do not come with a mandate to actually move these things forward.

There is something called the unity protocol that has been signed by 60-plus first nations in British Columbia. It sets out a framework that would actually expedite the treaty process. The Hul'qumi'num treaty group, from my riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan has been taking a lead on this. In fact the unity protocol was signed at the Snuneymuxw Longhouse just outside Nanaimo.

The unity protocol would address some of the very important issues the member for Timmins—James Bay raised. It is that kind of certainty that would actually provide some economic impetus for first nations and for other communities. I would urge the government to take a very serious look at things like the unity protocol to help move the treaty process forward.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her fine speech and the work she continues to do in repairing the relations particularly in British Columbia between first nations and non-first nations people.

So much harm has occurred over the decades, nearing a century now, by governments that act in bad faith time and time again. First nations return to the table in good faith attempting to restore and re-establish a relationship.

The particular question I have for my colleague is with respect to the new agreement that is coming forward. There are seven or eight I think is the current total of what we call modern day treaties, treaties that have been established over the last 15 to 20 years. In my part of the world in the northwest it is the Nisga'a who have established a treaty. It seems that, similar to the court cases that have to be brought by first nations, it is not so much the initial winning of the court case but it is the establishment of law after that. The fight continues on.

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I am wondering if she could indicate for the new people who are signing a treaty what some of the pitfalls are that are being witnessed by these modern day treaty groups who have formed a coalition around themselves, for example, James Bay and some others. The government seems to not understand what it is to finally have established some terms of reference that this new group should be aware of.

A lot of Canadians will say that once a treaty is signed, it is done, and will walk away. A lot of first nations groups will assume that new relationship is now cast but in fact the case is otherwise. The establishment of a treaty is only one piece and there is a huge education process that has to go on for government in the next stage of development of the relationship.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize some of the very good work the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley has done in his own community around first nations issues.

Rather than use my words, I would like to quote from the Auditor General's report in 2003. She said:

For example, INAC seems focused on fulfilling the letter of the land claims' implementation plans but not the spirit. Officials may believe that they have met their obligations, but in fact they have not worked to support the full intent of the land claims agreements.

Those are the Auditor General's own words. The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley raised a very good point. Oftentimes people feel that the work is done and they can dust off their hands and go home once the treaty or the land claims agreement is signed. In fact, that is when the heavy lifting starts. We found that with the Carcross first nation, with Teslin Tlingit, where they are struggling with their agreements around justice, for example.

Just because a self-government agreement, a land claims agreement or a treaty is signed, it does not mean the work is over. That in fact is where we really require the government to come with the honour of the Crown and its fiduciary responsibility to ensure that those agreements move forward in an expeditious manner.

• (1840)

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, I found the last comment by my colleague to be very interesting.

We have seen case after case where the federal government signs agreements and then breaks them. For example, in 1998 the federal government under the Liberals at that time signed an agreement with the people of Barriere Lake to rebuild a community that was absolutely shattered. As soon as the agreement was signed, the government walked away and the government has done nothing in that community since. The levels of poverty and the tragedy that is Barriere Lake remains an open sore today.

My colleagues in the Conservative Party sit and snicker because they have not stepped up to the plate to address this long-standing breach of the federal government's obligations.

I would like to ask my colleague what she thinks about this.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, the member for Timmins—James Bay has raised a very good point.

Most people in the House are very well aware of the 2% funding cap that came into place in 1996. Again, the Auditor General has

raised this issue. She has pointed out quite eloquently that populations continue to increase in first nations communities and the funding has grown at only a little over 1.6%.

The member for Timmins—James Bay has classic examples in the communities of Kashechewan and Attawapiskat. Those communities are struggling with lack of clean water and lack of adequate housing, schools that are shut down and not reopened. We hear this over and over again.

If we are going to seriously talk about a nation to nation status, economic well-being and quality of life, we need to recognize that there needs to be adequate resources in place, which includes money.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made earlier today, Bill C-51, An Act to give effect to the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement and to make a consequential amendment to another Act is deemed read a second time, deemed referred to a committee of the whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

(Motion agreed to, bill deemed read the second time, considered in committee of the whole, reported, concurred in, read a third time and passed.)

* * *

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-23, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (criminal procedure, language of the accused, sentencing and other amendments), as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

The Deputy Speaker: There being no motions at report stage the House will now proceed without debate to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Hon. John Baird (for the Minister of Justice) moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Deputy Speaker: When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. John Baird (for the Minister of Justice) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-23, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (criminal procedure, language of the accused, sentencing and other amendments).

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Members in the justice committee have had a chance to study Bill C-23 and are now well aware that this bill is not about major substantive reforms. Bill C-23 proposes technical amendments to update, improve and modernize the law by enhancing the efficiency of criminal procedures, strengthening sentencing measures and clarifying court related language rights provisions.

I am pleased to see that most of the Bill C-23 amendments as introduced received support by committee members during clause by clause, which reflects a shared understanding of the importance of its reforms. I am pleased also with the collaborative work demonstrated by all members of the committee and I am sure that the members would agree.

This government has introduced several legislative initiatives in the House that aim at tackling crime which remains one of this government's key priorities. Ensuring that the law is up to date and efficient is an important component of this priority. The amendments, as introduced, have been developed in collaboration with justice system partners that were influential in helping us identify areas of the Criminal Code that were in need of change.

Bill C-23 touches on several areas of the Criminal Code. Most of the amendments are technical in nature and fall within three main categories, namely: criminal procedure, language of the accused and sentencing. I will address each of those in turn.

Most of the criminal procedure amendments are technical in nature and seek to improve procedural efficiencies and rectify certain shortcomings in criminal proceedings. These technical changes include amendments to: expedite the execution of out of province search warrants by allowing the use of current technologies; harmonize and consolidate provisions dealing with proof of service of documents; identify the proper appeal route for judicial orders to return seized property; and finally, to improve the process with respect to the challenge of jurors to assist in preserving the jury's impartiality.

Other Criminal Code procedure amendments of a more substantive nature include: the reclassification of the offence of possessing break-in instruments, which is currently a straight indictable offence, to a dual procedure offence to allow the prosecution to either elect to proceed by way of indictment or by way of summary conviction; the creation of an offence for the breach of a non-communication order imposed on an accused who is remanded to pre-trial custody; and, a new election right for the accused as to his or her mode of trial where a preferred indictment has been filed against him or her or where the Supreme Court of Canada orders a new trial.

On the issue of language of the accused, allow me to now mention not all but some of the language provisions addressed in the bill.

These proposals are the result of numerous consultations once again, not only with the provinces and territories but also with the Commissioner of Official Languages, the association of francophone jurists and its national federation. In fact, both the Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law and the Commissioner of Official Languages appeared as witnesses before the committee. They were generally satisfied with the proposals found in the bill.

They did, however, express concerns with respect to some of the amendments being proposed and these concerns were reflected in the amendments proposed by the opposition parties at clause by clause consideration of the bill.

The government supported some of these amendments that were consistent with the scope and the principle of the bill. Sections 530 and 530.1 of the Criminal Code have been in force across the country since January 1, 1990, and they grant all the accused the right to trial in the official language of his or her choice.

Numerous studies and reports have confirmed that barriers continue to stand in the way of the exercise of these rights. Moreover, court decisions have highlighted a number of interpretation problems. The amendments proposed by Bill C-23 would resolve these problems and thus contribute to the evolution of language rights in the criminal law context.

One important amendment would heed the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada by requiring the court to inform all accused persons of their right to be tried in their official language whether they are represented by counsel or not.

● (1845)

The Commissioner of Official Languages, in a 1995 study entitled "The Equitable Use of English and French before the Courts in Canada", had also recommended that all accused persons be better informed of their right to a trial in the official language of their choice.

Another amendment would require the charging document to be translated in the language of the accused upon request. This is a logical complement to accused persons exercising their language rights. By the same token, to satisfy the need for certainty and precision in criminal proceedings where the charging document has been translated, a further amendment would make clear that where there is an inconsistency between the original version of the charging document and the translated version, the original document ought to prevail.

Some of the other proposals found in Bill C-23 relate to bilingual trials and would provide the presiding judge with the power to issue appropriate orders to ensure that bilingual trials run smoothly and efficiently.

For example, Bill C-23 would require that, if the circumstances warrant, a joint trial in both official languages should be ordered in the case of co-accused who do not share the same official language. Such an amendment not only brings greater clarity to the code, but also ensures that a proper balance is struck between the rights of the accused person and the efficient administration of justice.

The language of trial amendments propose workable and balanced solutions to problems that have been identified and promise to bring greater efficiency to minority language trials. They will also ensure better publicity of the language rights provision in the Criminal Code.

Finally, dealing with sentencing, Bill C-23 proposes both technical and substantive amendments which are meant to streamline processes, clarify the intent of certain provisions and update the law in this area.

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Let me remind hon. members of some of the amendments that are of a more substantive nature. One amendment would raise the maximum fine that can be imposed upon conviction of a summary conviction offence. The current \$2,000 amount has remained unchanged over the last 20 years. As introduced, the amendment raised the maximum fine amount to \$10,000.

During clause by clause, the government supported an opposition amendment to reduce the proposed maximum fine to \$5,000, which is still a tremendous update over the \$2,000 amount that had been in place over the last 20 years and better reflects changes over that time.

The government believes that this amount would still meet the policy objective of updating the law in this area and would still provide the Crown with more flexibility to proceed by way of summary conviction procedure.

Another substantive amendment to the sentencing provisions of Bill C-23 provides the Crown with the ability to seek forfeiture of computers and other related property used in the commission of the offence with respect to Internet luring offences. This is indeed a substantive change that I think all members in the House can support, dealing with the forfeiture of the property of individuals who are involved in what is a very heinous crime.

As well, Bill C-23 would provide sentencing courts with the power to order an offender not to communicate directly or indirectly with victims, witnesses and other identified persons during their period of incarceration. A corresponding offence for breaching such an order is also proposed.

These amendments would provide the courts with an additional tool to protect victims of crime from unwanted communications. As this type of order is currently being imposed by courts at various stages of the criminal process, such as when an accused is remanded to pretrial custody or released on bail, this amendment would fill a gap with respect to such orders when an offender is serving a term of imprisonment.

Another important amendment includes the power of a sentencing court to refer an offender in appropriate circumstances to a provincially or territorially approved treatment program under the supervision of the court before sentence is imposed.

By delaying the imposition of the sentencing to allow an offender to have early access to treatment programs, the offender is given a strong incentive for behavioural change and successful rehabilitation.

I will now provide a few examples of the technical amendments. One of them includes a change that would provide a court of appeal with the power to suspend a conditional sentence order until an appeal from sentence or conviction is determined.

• (1850)

A series of other amendments would serve to clarify the application of impaired driving penalties. For instance, in response to uncertainty in judicial decisions with respect to impaired driving penalties, one important amendment would clarify that the minimum penalties that apply for a first, second and third impaired driving offence, such as operation of a motor vehicle while impaired and

refusal to provide a breath sample, do apply to the more serious situations of impaired driving causing bodily harm or death.

By the same token, this legislation would also make it clear that repeat impaired driving offenders, whose new offence causes bodily harm or death, will receive a mandatory period of incarceration and will therefore not be eligible for a conditional sentence order.

Another impaired driving amendment would clarify that an offender is only permitted to drive while being the subject of a driving prohibition order if the offender is not only registered in an alcohol ignition interlock device program, but also complies with the conditions of that program.

We as a government are proud of the work accomplished today with Bill C-23 and we hope the bill will be passed expeditiously. I would like to remind hon. members that the provinces, territories and other justice system stakeholders are keen to see this bill enacted, as it would improve the effectiveness of and access to the criminal justice system.

I, therefore, urge all members to join me in ensuring quick passage of Bill C-23 into law.

• (1855)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Brian Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will share my time with the member for Newton—North Delta.

I am pleased to rise in this House today to speak about Bill C-23, whose purpose is to make a number of amendments to the Criminal Code. This omnibus bill has to do specifically with criminal procedure, language of the accused, sentencing and other matters.

[*English*]

Bill C-23 is an omnibus bill, or what we like to call a cleanup bill, since its objective is to ensure the Criminal Code of Canada is keeping up with today's society in order to maximize its efficiency and make its application as simple as possible. Even though the Criminal Code is an old and warped document, it must be what our criminal justice system relies on.

I will give a bit of background. The first reading of this bill was on June 22, 2006. The debates at second reading were in October and second reading was in October. It was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and there the bill had five hearings in the month of May. Four days after the last hearing, the committee report was tabled.

As members can see, the bill moved along with some speed once the standing committee had a chance to deal with it, but there are many justice bills, items and reports before that committee which I sit on with the parliamentary secretary. We have been quite busy.

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However, I must say by way of background that it is quite unfair of the government House leader to say in the House that Bill C-23, this bill, a Criminal Code amendment, was held up “for 214 days at committee by the opposition parties”. This is a cleanup bill that we had repeatedly offered to fast track, along with a number of other bills, in order to ensure that non-contentious criminal justice bills would speed through Parliament.

Here we are in the dying hours and days of this session and we still do not have this non-contentious cleanup bill passed. It can be seen that the committee did its work in the month of May and was in no way delaying the bill. I think it is unfortunate that the government House leader stooped to such a level in falsely accusing the parties and the members of that committee of being dilatory.

Let us see what Bill C-23 is all about. The bill touches on a number of issues, including expanding the availability of non-communication orders to provide better protection to victims and other selected individuals from unwanted communications from offenders in custody.

The bill increases the maximum fine for summary conviction offences. These have not been updated in 20 years. The maximum fine under a summary conviction offence is \$2,000. It will move to \$10,000, which we can see in the most heinous of crimes under the summary conviction category might very well be appropriate.

Bill C-23 facilitates the efficiency of the execution of out of province search warrants.

It guarantees the right of the accused to appear before a judge and jury that will speak the official language of the accused. I cannot say how important this is in our bilingual province of New Brunswick and in the bilingual community of Greater Moncton that I represent.

I must say that this bill is a perfect example of how important committee work actually is. We have read a lot about how committees are dysfunctional or have become so because of the environment around here, but this bill was swiftly dealt with by a committee that acted very efficiently and very well. There was a camaraderie on the committee with respect to non-contentious bills, and a great deal of respect. The chairman of that committee, from Alberta, deserves great credit.

However, Bill C-23 is not bedtime reading. It is fairly complex and it is all about the details. A lot of time was spent in the committee going through the nuts and bolts of this bill.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights also spent the four sessions in listening to various experts, particularly with respect to language rights, on how this bill will indeed make criminal justice move more swiftly. Committee members from all four parties presented proposed amendments to make this an even better bill.

In short, Bill C-23 shows that when the government decides to work toward good policies, and put aside politics, this Parliament can work very well to achieve the greater good of a fairer and safer Canada for all law-abiding citizens.

As we get closer to the end of this legislative session, I do want to thank my fellow members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for their amazing work and for the great deal of work done at the committee and here in the House of Commons.

In particular, I have a good working relationship with the parliamentary secretary whose riding abuts mine. I have great respect for the way he has dealt with many of the justice issues before us. We have been very busy these past few months. Many bills were studied and many witnesses were heard from.

● (1900)

I spoke earlier about the committee members' commitments and I can think of one example that must be highlighted. The member for Yukon proposed five amendments, making this a better bill. The member for Yukon, not a particularly francophone-rich area, stood up for the rights of those who deserve to have trials in their own language.

Regarding one of his amendments in his own words from the transcript of the committee, simply put as only the member for Yukon can do it with his experience and his common sense, he said as follows:

The first one, this amendment, only adds the word “may”, and that's the only difference.

That is the guts of his amendment. He continued:

What the clause basically said before was that if there are witnesses who have different languages, then they have to have a bilingual trial. But a bilingual trial may not be the fairest in all cases; in fact, it may not be possible. You may not have bilingual prosecutors and judges, or it may prejudice one of the witnesses....

It may prejudice one of the witnesses or the accused to have a trial mandated in a language, in one or the other of the official languages. It is much better to put the permissive “may” in the amendments. That is what we are doing in this last bit.

I cannot underscore how important language rights are as the kernel of the bill. The essence of this bill is about the language rights of the accused in a trial process.

[*Translation*]

As the member for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, I must emphasize that this was very important for the greater Moncton area. Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe is one of the most bilingual ridings in the country.

Bill C-23 reinforces the right of accused persons to be tried in the official language of their choice, and more particularly, the right to a bilingual trial in cases where co-accused do not speak the same official language. This important measure will ensure that justice can be served to all Canadians in both official languages. Once again, this will ensure a fair and equitable justice system. It is also important to emphasize that we have a fair and equitable justice system. This bill will improve our existing system.

That being said, I am a little skeptical about the guarantees provided in the bill concerning the true linguistic ability of the parties involved. It is easy to use this bill and fancy speeches to claim that we are bilingual. We must have bilingual trials. We must protect the rights of those who need bilingual trials. It is easy to say, but the reality of doing it might not be so easy. The judge and jury must fully understand the accused and ensure that his or her rights are respected. That is why the amendments to Bill C-23 are necessary.

How can we ensure that the level of language comprehension is adequate and that people are truly bilingual? It is not easy to assess the ability of prosecutors, lawyers and the accused. Add in a judge and jury, and it becomes very difficult to be sure that language rights will be respected.

• (1905)

[*English*]

In short, this bill is all about making the justice system work better. I would like to commend all the parties who worked very hard in making sure this cleanup bill cleaned up a system that was in fact working very well.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of Bill C-23. I welcome many of these reforms mentioned in the text, but more importantly, I am pleased to stand behind any carefully planned legislation designed to modernize the criminal justice system and make it more efficient and effective.

The bill was tabled by the former justice minister on June 22, 2006. Despite the two previous attempts my colleagues and I made to speed the legislation along, first in October 2006 and then in March 2007, three months ago, here we are almost a year later debating a bill that should have been disposed of a long time ago.

What has held it up? If it were not for the Conservatives' consistent delaying tactics with respect to their own justice legislation, the bill would be through the House by now.

Let me briefly touch on some of the amendments to the Criminal Code that are proposed in Bill C-23. I think most of my colleagues will see why we should not delay this process, because the bill has strong reforms for criminal procedures and sentencing.

The amendments relating to criminal procedure include using any means of telecommunication to put forward warrants in a jurisdiction. Given the rapid rise of various forms of telecommunications with respect to emails and other means, this is clearly an overdue change. It finally brings our justice system more in line with new technology and it will make the warrant system much faster.

Other amendments related to criminal procedures include a change to the process with respect to the challenge of a juror. It will further allow for the preservation of impartiality of a jury by the judge.

They include a summary conviction trial with respect to co-accused that can proceed where one of the co-accused does not appear.

They include the reclassification of the offence of possession of break and enter instruments. Should the bill pass, this would become

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a dual procedure offence. The Crown can determine whether this offence should be prosecuted by way of indictment or by the faster procedure of summary conviction.

These are changes that we on this side of the House support.

With respect to the sentencing provisions, there are several steps that are being taken in the right direction. The most important is the power to order an offender not to communicate with identified persons while in custody, along with the creation of an offence for failing to comply with the order.

This is a step that I believe will have a very positive effect with respect to protecting victims. We can imagine those who have been victims of crime and those families who have lost loved ones. They actually still can be contacted by those who were convicted, with no real repercussions for those doing the contacting. One can imagine the mental anguish and fear this could cause.

The bill represents a strong reform with a clear message. A person who violates this order could be sentenced to two years for breaching this order in the case of an indictable offence, 18 months in the case of a summary offence, or in some cases there could be a fine. This will be particularly helpful in the case of women who have been the victims of violence.

• (1910)

In my own riding of Newton—North Delta there have been several high profile cases of violence against women. Those who have been lucky enough to survive, and sadly some have not, must be protected from any form of communication from an offender. These people are in prison and that sentence must include a non-communication order to protect those victims who have survived and their families.

Other important amendments with respect to sentencing include changes for those who drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs and are responsible for the injury or death of innocent Canadians. Living in a community like mine, where there is strong grassroot support for real action on drunk driving, this is a great step forward.

I believe that these changes will be well received and they are yet another example of what in fact the Conservative government has been delaying. Criminals are being sentenced every day, and every day we delay the passage of this legislation is another day that victims are not being protected by the government.

There is an amendment that will allow, if convicted, the forfeit of any equipment used in an offence of luring a child by means of a computer. I can only say that it is about time the Criminal Code caught up with modern technology. No one who is convicted of using a computer to lure a child should be allowed to keep the equipment they used. In my personal view, they should not be allowed to even use a computer after having used one for that purpose.

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I was proud to stand in favour of Bill C-22, another bill that was delayed by the Conservative government for partisan electoral reasons. It also focused on the importance of protecting our children. I am the father of three young children and I consistently speak in favour of and actively support any legislation that will protect their well-being.

I will also consistently speak out against a Conservative government that, while speaking in favour of protecting Canadians, actively seeks to delay important reforms for partisan electoral gains. Why? I believe the government delays bills like Bill C-23 so that the justice committee would not have to comprehensively review other justice bills tabled by the Conservative Party that members on this side of the House had concerns with.

Instead, the Conservative government, in a cynical attempt to overload a parliamentary committee with one-off bills, a tactic that is probably in some Conservative committee guide somewhere, does this in order to justify the untruth that the opposition is somehow trying to delay good justice legislation.

In mid-March, the Liberal opposition once again tried to move along Bill C-23, among other legislation, through all stages of consideration by the House. These bills would help police find criminals, protect children under 16, and put the onus on the accused for bail hearings of those who have been convicted of a firearms offence. What has happened? Once again the government has delayed its own justice legislation, including this one.

I believe that right thinking Conservative members must be outraged at these tactics by their leadership after many of my Conservative colleagues pushed for many of these changes for so long. I just hope that some of them begin to speak up and help get their own legislation through the House.

It would make me, as a legislator, feel better if the Conservative Party started tabling justice legislation for victims' rights and community safety.

Canadians deserve a government with the well-being of Canadians first and foremost on their mind instead of playing politics with the Criminal Code.

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Freeman (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-23 at third reading. The bill aims to amend the Criminal Code in a number of ways.

Briefly, the bill is essentially a complete update of many aspects of the Criminal Code. The goal of the amendments proposed in Bill C-23 is to contribute to the smooth functioning of the criminal justice system, which will facilitate the day to day functions of those who work within the system. The amendments contained in the bill fall mainly into three categories: criminal procedure, language of the accused and sentencing.

Several criminal procedure amendments serve to clarify the application and purpose of certain provisions, as well as to improve procedural efficiencies by permitting the use of modern technology and rationalizing existing provisions. Here is one of many examples.

The bill proposes amendments that would refine the jury selection process to better protect the impartiality of prospective jury members, as well as sworn jurors.

Concerning the language rights of the accused, the amendments in Bill C-23 would resolve many problems that arise from a poor understanding of sections 530 and 530.1 of the Criminal Code by the accused, members of the bar, the prosecution and judges. I would remind the House that those sections guarantee the right of all accused persons to have their preliminary inquiry and trial before a court that speaks the official language of the accused and to have a crown prosecutor who speaks the language of the accused. Accordingly, the amendments proposed in the bill also follow up on court decisions requiring that the charging document must be translated into the language of the accused upon request.

Lastly, concerning sentencing, the technical amendments proposed in Bill C-23 aim to clarify the intent of certain sentencing provisions and improve efficiencies in the application of certain court sentencing processes. For instance, one amendment would provide that an impaired driving offender subject to a driving prohibition order would only be permitted to drive if he or she were registered in an alcohol ignition interlock device program and in compliance with the conditions of the program. This amendment is intended to make it clear that the offender must not only be enrolled in the program, but must also comply with all the terms of the program during the driving prohibition period.

In committee, my colleague for Hochelaga and I scrutinized this bill. As I was saying, Bill C-23 is fairly technical and does not lend itself to partisanship. In general, the amendments suggested resulted from meetings and consultations with professionals from the departments. Crown attorneys consulted police and defence attorneys, among others. In addition, federal, provincial and territorial officials met to discuss this matter and then made recommendations to their immediate superiors.

After obtaining some clarifications from the government and witnesses, the amendments to the bill were often unanimously approved by members of the committee. Furthermore, the amendments made by committee members were minor and very specific to the language of the accused.

I want to say that Bill C-23 is a good bill. The amendments help the judges in their work by providing more discretion. These measures will provide judges with better tools to do their work properly, namely to determine the most appropriate sentence that, at the same time, will best serve the objectives of deterrence, reparation and rehabilitation. For example, Bill C-23 provides the power to delay sentencing so that an offender can participate in a treatment program approved by the province. In other words, the accused may finish his rehab program or an appropriate treatment program prior to sentencing.

Government Orders

Up to this point, my colleagues and I have all too often witnessed the denial by this minority government of the importance of rehabilitation. This is deplorable because rehabilitation is key to reducing crime in general. Furthermore, by removing judges' prerogatives to order sentences in the community would cause Quebec and the other provinces to assume the additional financial burden of having to imprison more people, while that money could be better spent on rehabilitation and prevention. Therefore, Bill C-23 is a step in the right direction.

I will add that the Criminal Code should be revised regularly so that people can have confidence in the justice system because they know that it is in step with new realities and that when mistakes are made, they are corrected without delay.

• (1920)

I remain convinced that my colleagues in my party and in the House share my point of view about justice and the administration of justice.

Bill C-23 is also interesting because it will harmonize the rules of service. According to the principles of natural justice, it is unthinkable that an accused person might be brought before the courts without knowing exactly why the law is concerned about him. When one is brought before the courts, one must not only have a clear idea of the charge, but one must also have complete access to the evidence.

In addition, Bill C-23 adds a number of aspects that I find interesting, including the use of telecommunications to forward warrants to be executed in a different jurisdiction than the one where the search took place and changes to the process with respect to the challenge of jurors in order to help preserve their impartiality. There is also the power to order an offender in custody not to communicate with identified persons and the creation of an offence for failing to comply with the order, which increases protection for victims.

These are good procedural advances, which will only accelerate the legal process. For many of these provisions, it sometimes takes many years before the effects are felt. From time to time, it is necessary to adopt a legislative measure like this bill in order to make these technical amendments. Criminal law is not unchanging; it is constantly evolving.

That is why we agree that Bill C-23 makes sense, since it has the virtue of clarifying the provisions of the Criminal Code and simplifying certain legal procedures. That is why the Bloc Québécois is in favour of Bill C-23 and will support it at third reading, in order for it to get to the Senate.

I will close by saying that Bill C-23 is not something we are used to seeing from this minority government in matters of justice. My colleagues know full well that Conservative bills on justice often have an American brand of conservative ideology, in other words, policing instead of prevention. Apparently Bill C-23 came from the last Parliament. It is a bill that the government has taken over from the previous government and that was supported by the Bloc Québécois during the previous Parliament.

I would add that my party defends the Quebec vision of justice based on fairness and balance between the offence committed and the punishment. The only way of achieving that is to entrust these

duties to magistrates, and to independent persons. For every category of crime the punishment has to fit and be fair. These are the values we defend here.

Quebec understands that, which is one of the reasons it sent a majority of Bloc members to the House of Commons, in other words, to defend the values of the nation of Quebec. We will be sure to affirm these Quebec values very soon during the national holiday on June 24; we will honour it by celebrating proudly.

• (1925)

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague's explanation of the position the Bloc has taken on Bill C-23. I agree with her that it is a very technical bill, so I am certainly not going to get into the specifics of the numerous recommendations that have been brought forward.

I was interested in the discussion on treatment programs because in another life I worked with people coming out of jail who were living on the street. My wife and I lived with them in the city. We dealt with the issue of recidivism all the time. I have to say that many of the criminals we dealt with were not particularly malignant people but they repeated dumb crimes time and time again.

We found they fell into a number of classic categories. There was the issue of mental illness, people who were basically unstable, and there was a lack of treatment programs for people who needed treatment for various addictions. An issue that we found much more prevalent was the lack of community support. Many who were basically free falling through life ended up repeating criminal acts because they knew it. There were even people who ended up back in jail because when they got out onto the streets they did not know any community, home or family.

What we tried to do in our community was provide some kind of support structure. Time and time again there was the issue of the need for treatment. Once people received treatment, especially for addictions, the ability for them to become participating citizens suddenly became a reality in a way that it could not matter how many times they returned to jail.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague what her thoughts are. If we are going to be dealing with people coming through the criminal justice system, we have to ensure that we deal with the need for community support in order to deal with them and their treatment problems, so that we can stop recidivism and turn them into citizens in our society.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Freeman: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question and the many comments that preceded it.

My colleague's concerns are exactly the same as those of the Bloc Québécois. We advocate a very preventive approach based on restorative justice. We believe we have to find ways to support people through prevention. Once an accused is found guilty, we have to give him all the support needed to lower the rate of recidivism. We share these concerns and that is what we are working on.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill C-23. It gives me an opportunity to go into one of my favourite topics, which is the approach the government has taken with regard to crime bills.

This bill is a good example. If the government expanded the approach it took in the bill to a number of the other crime bills, the House would become much more efficient at dealing with the required Criminal Code amendments and do so in a much shorter period of time, using our resources here, in particular the resources of the members of Parliament, more efficiently.

The bill addresses a number of problems that exist in the Criminal Code currently and have existed for quite some period of time. It is not a really long bill, but it is good number of pages and it does address a significant number of sections in the Criminal Code. It improves the Criminal Code, corrects the problems and addresses the reality that we move on. Communication techniques change and technology overall changes. We need to address those changes in our criminal justice system. The bill does that in a number of ways.

What jumps out at us, if we have been here for the government's current period of time, is it could have done the same thing in a number of other ways in a number of bills that we have dealt with in the House and in the justice committee. However, the government did it on a piecemeal basis. I use, as the classic example, the commitments that all political parties, perhaps the Bloc a little less than the others, made in the last election to deal with violent crimes involving guns.

We have just finished a second bill that dealt with the reverse onus for bail when an individual is charged with an offence, the allegation being of a violent offence with the use of a gun. A few months before that, we dealt with the use of mandatory minimums and other penalties, again for people who had now been convicted of violent crimes involving the use of a gun.

Rather than combine those two bills into one and have the witnesses come before our committee to speak to both bills, the government opted to present two separate bills. It took in effect about double the time to deal with them, when we could have halved that time if they had simply been combined. This has been repeated by the government on a number of occasions with regard to crime bills and criminal justice bills.

There is a simple answer as to why this is going on, of course, which is the Conservative government very much wants to highlight each one of these bill, each one of these issues. Rather than deal with them efficiently, it wants to play the political game of trying to get as much media coverage and attention in the country as it possibly can.

Quite frankly, that is shameful because it delays the legislative process quite significantly. It delays the use of these techniques to our police, our prosecutors and our judges, simply for the purpose of playing partisan politics with those sections of the code. Again, the government has done this over and over again.

Even this bill could have been combined with a number of others, obviously then a much larger bill. Witnesses who came before us on the issues in this bill are now coming before us on similar issues and

their expertise is being in effect wasted because we are hearing from them two, three and four times.

• (1930)

This afternoon we have even gone the route the justice committee has gone. It is so clogged with so many bills the government has now moved to appointing special legislative committees. This afternoon the individual who was in front of us had been in front of the justice committee and both legislative committees in the last three months on four different occasions. That is repeated over and over again.

The Criminal Code does need some significant updating. Again, one of the manoeuvres by the government, to follow its ideological bent, was to hamper the potential for that to happen by getting rid of the law commission. It would have been an ideal group to have done a major revamp of the Criminal Code and some other criminal justice bills, including our Canada Evidence Act. It could have brought that up to date and given the opportunity to the House to bring the Criminal Code into the 21st century, because in many respects it is not.

However, that opportunity has now been missed. There is no potential that I can see within government services right now for anyone to do that work. If we ever get this done, if the government ever gets its head wrapped around for the absolute need to get this done, we will pay a huge bill to buy these services, whether it be from universities, law schools or the private sector and other ways to get that total revamp of the Criminal Code, which is so badly needed.

I started with the law school initially in 1969 and we needed to bring in a whole new Criminal Code, totally revamp it. That is almost 40 years ago now. We have not done that. We have done it piecemeal. Both Liberal and Conservative governments have tried to band-aid their way through the criminal justice system.

It is not the way to run a criminal justice system. It is not a way to deal with crime in society, but this is the way it has been done up to this point. We will continue to do it this way under the Conservative government because it simply does not have the vision of what is required to deal criminal conduct in our country in an appropriate manner.

With regard to the bill itself, there are several provisions that I will highlight, which will bring the bill somewhat up to date.

About two years ago we passed a bill on child pornography, which received pretty well universal support from all sides of the House at that time, but we missed one item. That was to deal with the issue of a person being convicted of a crime involving child pornography. There was no provision, and there still is no provision, in the Criminal Code to order the seizure of equipment, which might be computers, photographic equipment and a variety of a similar nature, and forfeited to the Crown.

That is one of the amendments in the bill, a badly needed one. Our police officers and judges have made very clear to us that they require this authority. Now it will be given to them.

Government Orders

Similarly, with regard to offences around illegal gaming, there was a real limitation on laying charges in certain circumstances because technology got ahead of the Criminal Code. That again has been corrected. No matter what the form of communication is, electronic communication, telecommunication or whatever, if it is being used for the purposes of illicit gaming, it is now an offence. Also there are provisions for forfeiture of that equipment. More important, it makes the use of that telecommunication device illegal and people can be charged for it as a separate and new offence.

● (1935)

One of the other points that caused me problems when I first saw the bill and on which I was successful in getting an amendment was that we were increasing the penalty on fines from an amount of what is now \$2,000 in the situation of a summary conviction offence. The bill originally proposed to move that amount to \$10,000. Those fines throughout my career were \$500 and then we moved them up to \$1,000. About 12 to 15 years ago we increased them to \$2,000.

When setting standard fines, even when they are at the maximum, we need to be sure we are not creating a set of circumstances that makes it impossible for individuals who are from the lower social economic classes of our society to pay the fine, as opposed to the alternative. It happens quite regularly where a person is given the alternative of so many days in jail, usually so many weeks or months in jail, or a fine of a maximum of \$2,000, as it was then.

There is a significant number of what I would say are non-violent, property type crimes where individuals are charged and convicted of those types of crimes and then are assessed a choice penalty: either pay this amount of the fine or spend 30, 60 or 90 days in jail.

If the person has an income in the six figures, a fine of a couple of thousand dollars is not a big deal to avoid spending that length of time in custody. On the other hand, for an individual with very low income, perhaps on a fixed income, the fine is insurmountable and the individual will end up spending time in jail.

We are always looking, within the criminal justice system, to strike the proper balance. Judges certainly take into account the economic circumstances of individuals but, whereas the government was proposing here to move the maximum fine from \$2,000 to \$10,000, the judges need to judge the fine in light of what the maximum is.

I want to acknowledge the new justice minister who understood the proposals I and some of the other members of the committee were making and accepted the fact that when we take into account inflation over this period of time, jumping it from \$2,000 to \$10,000 was unreasonable. We ended up compromising on a figure of a maximum fine that can be assessed in those circumstances of \$5,000. That amendment was moved at committee, accepted by all the parties and is now in the bill at third reading.

The other concern I had with the bill involved official language rights across the country. A number of amendments are in the bill but there are also some gaps. Some of the amendments that went through were, I believe, moved primarily by the Bloc Québécois but they were supported by the opposition parties in one case and in another by all of us supporting them.

A number of francophone lawyers associations from across the country, which appeared before our committee, told us about one of the major problems they ran into. Although we are providing a significant amount of service, translating documents at the time of the trial and onward, there are a number of documents that people are served with, and we are not talking a lot of pages, that are only written in the official language that is dominant in that area of the country and English, generally, is dominant in eight of the provinces. In New Brunswick, which is fluently bilingual, it is not a problem because most documents there are given in both languages or are at least available in both languages, and then there are areas in Quebec where the documents are only available in French.

There was some significant discussion in committee. We heard from the government that it would be very expensive to do this. After a more thorough analysis, it became obvious that it would be a relatively minor additional cost, but it would allow the individual to have full access to the criminal justice system from the start. From the time a person is charged, the initial document with which the person is served at that point and other documents that the person may be given during that period of time, some of which the person must sign, all of those could be relatively easily translated without a great deal of expense. That amendment went through.

● (1940)

One of the problems that we ultimately decided not to deal with but one I want to note was the concern over the availability of trials and granting judges authority to move trials from one region of a province to another. Initially we heard from some of the francophone lawyers associations that this amendment would limit the availability of trials if it went through.

Again, after some very lengthy involvement of the national francophone lawyers association and further discussion with the Government of Canada, the justice department and some of the provinces, it was determined that it might have a minor impact on the availability of trials in French. It is not a problem in New Brunswick or with trials in English in Quebec, but it may have a minor effect in some of the other provinces.

What was determined was that we would pass the bill as proposed by the government and monitor it over the next three to five years to see if it is having an impact, with an understanding by the government that if the number of trials in the other official language began to be impeded by this provision that it would be looked at again at that time. Hopefully a consensus would build that we revert to the situation where judges would not be able that easily to transfer trials from one region to another.

Government Orders

It can be appreciated that an accused party when faced with a transfer of a trial is looking at extra expenses. The person's lawyer will need to travel, the witnesses will need to travel and the person may end up spending time in hotels and having to buy restaurant food while the trial is going on in another region. That certainly could be and may, in some cases, be an impediment to the trials in the other official language.

As I said, the justice department through the justice minister has committed to monitoring the situation. If it becomes a problem we hopefully will deal with it and deal with it rapidly.

The end result of the process was a healthy one from a democracy standpoint. I think the justice committee got a full appreciation of the amendments we were making.

There are a number of other technical amendments in here that facilitate the transfer of criminal justice documents between provinces. That has been a problem in the past. These amendments would facilitate that and make it easier and increase the use and the transfer of these documents by fax as opposed to hard copies that had to be delivered.

As I said earlier in my address, this would bring these sections of the Criminal Code into the 21st century recognizing the advances we have made technologically and incorporating a number of those into the amendments and now into the ode once the bill clears this House.

Overall, it is the way we should be amending. Even better would be an overall complete review of the Criminal Code and bringing it up to date. I have one more point to make that highlights this. One of the members of the Conservative Party moved a private member's bill and, in the course of the debate, he was quite eloquent in pointing out some of the serious inconsistencies we have in the Criminal Code on the sentencing side, where there is, by all objective standards, a very serious crime with a relatively minor penalty. Side by side with it, maybe one section next in the Criminal Code, there is a less severe crime, again by any objective standards, but with a penalty that is even more severe.

We have a number of those. It is another example of this need to completely revamp the Criminal Code, bring it up to date and do away with a lot of the inconsistencies.

The NDP is supporting this bill as amended and we would like to see it in place as rapidly as possible.

• (1945)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

CANADA TRANSPORTATION ACT

Hon. John Baird (for the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities) moved the second reading of, and concurrence in, amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-11, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and the Railway Safety Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House today to support the amendments to Bill C-11 that the Senate passed and to explain why as well.

Bill C-11 primarily amends the Canada Transportation Act. The Senate amendments affect two provisions of C-11: one regulating railway noise and vibrations and one regulating airfare advertising. I will deal first with the so-called "noise" provisions.

The noise provisions give the Canadian Transportation Agency the authority to resolve disputes related to railway noise and vibrations. This is a great thing for Canadians. It has been hailed from Quebec through to the Atlantic provinces and all the way to British Columbia. A lot of people are looking forward to these amendments and that is why this government is moving forward with this agenda.

The agency used to adjudicate disputes related to noise vibrations and other nuisances. However, in December 2000 the Federal Court of Appeal ruled that the agency did not, that is correct, did not have the jurisdiction in such matters. As a result of that, it takes this government to bring clarification to the issue and Bill C-11 reinstates the agency's authority in this regard.

The amendments passed in the Senate deal with two elements that are at the heart of the noise provision. The first is the obligation that railways must live up to it and, indeed, the factors that are taken into consideration with respect to this obligation. There is also a coordinating amendment to the section that gives the agency the authority to hear a complaint and order corrective action, if warranted.

Bill C-11, as originally tabled in the House of Commons, proposed to add section 95.1 to the CTA. This section required that when constructing or operating a railway, a railway company "must not cause unreasonable noise". It also specified three factors to be taken into consideration in determining whether or not this standard had been met. These factors include: the railways' level of service obligations under sections 113 and 114 of the act; the railway's operational requirements; and the area where the operation or construction takes place.

Members should take note of the third factor, the area where the operation or construction takes place, because I will be dealing with that.

Section 95.1 was amended based on recommendations from the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and the amendment consisted of three main elements. First, it extended the agency's authority to vibrations as well as noise. This is very important. As we are aware, people who live next to railways must deal with the constant vibrations of idling engines.

Government Orders

Second, it changed the railway's obligations from "not causing unreasonable noise" to "cause as little noise and vibration as possible".

Third, it added a new factor, the potential impact on persons residing on properties adjacent to the railway. Coordinating amendments were also made to section 95.3 to reflect these changes.

Section 95.3 authorizes the agency to hear complaints and order the railway to take corrective measures. As I noted earlier, the Senate amendments change the obligation that is imposed on the railways. Under the Senate amendments, a railway "shall cause only such noise and vibration as is reasonable".

In addition, the Senate dropped the factor that was added by the transport committee, the potential impact on persons residing in properties adjacent to the railway. I do not want anyone to get upset at that because we feel we have covered that in other amendments and with the original text. Coordinating amendments were made to section 95.3.

The government supports the Senate amendments for various reasons. It establishes an obligation based on "reasonableness" and, as all members of the House know, reasonableness is found in many sections of the law and many acts throughout this country. In fact, this is the same concept that was reflected in the original Bill C-11.

The concept of reasonableness, as I said, is found in hundreds and hundreds of acts and has been judicially interpreted on countless occasions, so there is no question as to what judges will do once they find the issue of reasonableness as coming into consideration. These interpretations make an obligation based on "reasonableness" a lot easier to understand and circumscribe than one based on "as little as possible", which has very limited use in federal legislation.

The expression "least possible noise" was used in Bill C-26 in 2003, a predecessor of Bill C-11. It was changed in the next version of the bill in 2005 to reflect the notion of reasonableness because this is a concept that is used consistently in Canadian legislation.

Furthermore, it is a concept that the agency must apply on a daily basis. That is correct, on a daily basis. There are over 30 references to the word "reasonable" or "unreasonable" in the existing Canada Transportation Act.

● (1950)

A review of the agency's previous decisions on noise complaints clearly indicates that the agency applied the concept of reasonableness in rendering its decision. It is a concept with which the agency is very familiar and of course judges are familiar with it. In conclusion with respect to this, an obligation based on "reasonableness" is preferred to one based on "as little as possible". That obviously makes sense.

The government also supports the Senate's amendment that drops "the potential impact on persons residing in properties adjacent to the railway" when determining if a railway is fulfilling its obligations. This is very important but it is already included in the act.

The "area where the operation or construction takes place" will remain as one of the three factors. I will repeat that because it is very important: the area where the operation or construction takes place.

The government believes that this factor is broad enough to include the impact on persons living in homes or apartments adjacent to the railway. It is inconceivable that the agency would not take this into consideration.

Finally, the government supports the coordinating amendment to section 95.3 which brings the section into line with the amended language in section 95.1.

The amendments to the Canada Transportation Act passed by the Senate also affect air transportation.

This is such an important bill. That is why we are so happy to have some of our friends from the opposition support us on this endeavour.

Bill C-11 will improve protection for air travellers by requiring the agency to prescribe regulations on airfare advertising. The guidelines and objectives of the government regarding airfare advertising are clearly set out in legislation and will assist the agency to develop adequate regulations.

In the version of this bill tabled by the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in May 2006, the provision on airfare advertising indicated that regulations may be developed by the agency "on recommendation of the minister". The bill was subsequently amended following testimony before the standing committee last fall removing this particular stipulation and was adopted by the House on February 28.

Earlier in May the Senate committee on transport and communications heard from a number of witnesses from the air and rail industries. The committee supported the amendments regarding airfare advertising that were adopted by this House. That was good.

However, the committee also felt strongly that this particular provision should come into force at a later date, one determined by the governor in council. This is reflected in the amendment to the bill, a new clause 64, relating to the coming into force of the airfare advertising provisions.

The Senate committee was of the view that further consultation should take place between government, the airline industry and other interested parties, such as consumer advocacy groups in Canada, before advertising regulations are developed by the agency.

Very clearly we consult stakeholders on a continuous basis. We make sure that we listen to them and act on their suggestions.

The government agrees that additional consultations across Canada will help to ensure on a consistent and timely basis that all information and views are received and the development of the regulations would take into account the views of all stakeholders, as we usually do on this side of the House.

This government wishes to ensure that consumers are offered clear choices, so that they know what they are buying before they buy it, as it relates to advertising of air travel by airlines. The government is very aware of consumers' concerns that airfare advertising be clear, transparent and not at all misleading to consumers. Consumers have told us on a consistent basis that they want to be able to compare different airlines' advertised prices and to know up front how much they will pay for any air service that they wish to buy.

Government Orders

The additional time for consultation and review will be well used. We believe that these new amendments are excellent.

In closing, I urge all members to support Bill C-11 as amended by the Senate. Stakeholders were first consulted on amendments to the CTA in the year 2000 and after seven years they are very anxious for this bill to be passed, preferably before the summer recess.

I have one more point that is very important. This bill provides for a one time adjustment to the grain revenue caps. That is expected to save western farmers \$2 per tonne, or more than \$50 million per year. This government is standing up for farmers. Any delay to the passage of this bill will preclude the farmers from getting this money. We support this bill and we would hope that all other members come forward and support it as well.

• (1955)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that I was in the House when the parliamentary secretary addressed this issue because it affects my riding of Lac-Saint-Louis. Before I touch on that, I noticed that the parliamentary secretary gave his government a pat on the shoulder for bringing forward this legislation. I would point out that this legislation had already been introduced by the former Liberal government before it was defeated.

My question is with regard to information, and I ask this quite sincerely of the parliamentary secretary. If he cannot answer it tonight, I would like it very much if his department could give me the answer in writing.

There are two railway bridges side by side in my constituency from the town of Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue to the island of Île-Perrot. One is a CP rail bridge and the other is a CN rail bridge. I would not say the CP rail bridge is quiet, but it is reasonable. The CN rail bridge makes a horrendous noise whenever a train crosses. That bridge is located right next to the Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue boardwalk which goes along the canal.

Under this new legislation, would it be possible for citizens in my riding to launch a complaint and to eventually get CN to replace that old bridge with something that makes less noise?

• (2000)

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure to answer this question.

Yes indeed, this legislation clearly states the obligation of railways with respect to noise and vibration. The agency certainly has jurisdiction there. I would suggest the member contact it.

I would like to deal with my colleague's first comment about the Liberals putting legislation forward similar to this bill, which they did, but it took seven years and they did not get it passed.

I am proud to stand in the House today. Bill C-6, Bill C-11 and Bill C-3 were all on the order paper for seven years under the previous Liberal government and none of them passed. All three have now passed. Bill C-6 was passed by committee a couple of days ago. We are very proud of this government's initiative. In less than 18 months, three bills have been put forward that were never passed by the Liberals.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

I would like to ask him a question concerning the amendments made by the Senate that negate some important amendments made by the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities following submissions from a number of groups of citizens who live near marshalling yards and railway lines, and who told us about the problems they face as a result. This bill aimed to correct those problems.

I would like to know what he thinks of the fact that the Senate, in its so-called serious examination of the issue, met only with the railway companies, who indicated that things would be very difficult for them if the amendments remained as they were in the bill and that it would be very hard financially for them to meet the requirements. I would like to know what he thinks of the fact that the senators are not even meeting with the citizens' groups that would be served by this bill in an attempt to correct the situation.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, I understand the member's frustration with the other house. That is why I hope those members will support Bill S-4 and move forward with elected senators. That is a really good initiative.

I would like to thank the member and his party for their help on this particular piece of legislation. It was very helpful to hear from some of the groups. I think we worked cooperatively to get the best piece of legislation.

I cannot answer for the other place, but I can tell the member that I am confident with these two amendments that have been put forward that they will still meet Canadians' expectations from coast to coast and in those communities that are mostly affected by noise. It will do a better job because case law is already established regarding the term "reasonableness". I would suggest it will do a much better job than the changes would have done.

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a train goes right through the community of Fall River in my riding of Sackville—Eastern Shore. During the summertime we get complaints about train noise.

Some of the crossings have bars that come down and lights and some crossings do not. We have been consistently told by CN and others that a municipal bylaw has to be enacted in order to get bars and lights at every crossing throughout my riding.

Would this bill change that so the federal government could exercise some judgment or some sort of authority and ensure that all crossings, particularly those in my community, would have those safety bars and lights? Is it possible for the parliamentary secretary to tell me that this bill would do that?

Government Orders

● (2005)

Mr. Brian Jean: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to answer the member's question. The legislation will not address that specific need. I would suggest he deal with it by way of the municipal council. That would probably be the best way to deal with it. If his constituents have concerns with the noise in that particular area, they can take it up with the agency.

I look forward to the member's colleagues not filibustering any further on this legislation and to moving it forward. There are a lot of people who want this legislation. I would encourage him to talk to his colleagues to help us move this agenda forward and to satisfy the needs of Canadians.

Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know there are some people who were hoping that the parliamentary secretary's speech would have left me speechless, but I am afraid I am going to have to disappoint them in that regard. He actually said a couple of things that deserve the attention and the applause of everybody in this House, including those people who are watching democracy at work.

Members should take careful note and the parliamentary secretary will want to underscore this. He did two things tonight that are brand new for the Conservative government.

First, he acknowledged that the Senate, or as we say here, the other place, put forward two amendments that should be supported unanimously. He did not just say "the other place" or "the Senate". He said "the Liberal dominated Senate" put forward two amendments that deserve the unanimous support of this House. Can members believe that? I could hardly contain myself. If members can believe this, he was acknowledging that members of another party, this party, that members of another place, the Senate, could actually do something that the government did not think of without the help of opposition members. This deserves to be underscored over and over again. I thought that his reasons that those two amendments should be supported were very good.

This is an indication of what members on this side of the House have been saying for quite some time, that if there is good legislation or there is improved legislation, then it deserves to be supported because it represents the interests of all Canadians. Whether they are watching this debate live or on TV or whether they will be reading about it, it is something that is worth supporting.

I want to thank him for engaging all of his government caucus and saying that a Liberal amendment that came from the other place, the other house, is worth the merit of everybody.

The second reason I was almost speechless is he went to great lengths—and I know if we read the blues of the *Hansard* once again, we too will be surprised—and actually said that this bill was one of three bills that came from a Liberal government, that it deserved the attention it has received, that it has been passed in two forms so far, and a third one is coming up, because—are members ready for this—the government has received the cooperation of members of Parliament who want to make Parliament work. Do members know about whom he was speaking? He was speaking about my colleagues, Liberals.

The other thing is—be ready for this; I know that the Minister of the Environment is anxious to hear the rest—not only is he acknowledging that this was good legislation from the previous government, he also said on two occasions that the reason the bill did not go through in its former form is that he and his caucus were obstructionist. Thank God they are not faced with an obstructionist Liberal opposition.

This is just wonderful. I am going to accept on behalf of our colleagues in the other house the compliments which the government so ungenerously and so hesitantly wants to offer to the parliamentary approach with which we address legislation and the desire of Liberal members who want to make sure that legislation is perfect.

I must confess that being one of those members who was on the committee working with the parliamentary secretary and other colleagues from all parties, perhaps we should have reflected just a little more assiduously upon those two articles that the Senate felt in its wisdom needed to be improved.

● (2010)

I said there are too many big egos in this world that stand in the way of the right things, but we should not be accused of them in this House. So there were improvements. The idea of reasonableness was absolutely important and the parliamentary secretary has acknowledged that the legislation the previous Liberal government put in place included such wise statements.

He was saying, even though he regrets it as a partisan politician, and now there are people who are actually going to be listening to his response, there they are right there, that not only was the legislation forward looking but it was properly framed—

Mr. Joe Preston: You can hit them up for their lunch money.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: I think they are right, they are the right age.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): Order. I know the House is sitting a little bit later than normal, so perhaps some members are having difficulty dealing with that, but it is difficult to hear the member for Eglinton—Lawrence finish his remarks because of all the noise in the chamber. I would ask members to extend some courtesy to the member for Eglinton—Lawrence and hold off questions or comments until after he is finished his speech.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, thank you for being very helpful. The noise we were hearing was coming from the Minister of the Environment who was trying to establish a cheering session for me. He wanted to shake down some people in order to retire my debt.

But before my train of thought was interrupted so rudely, what the parliamentary secretary was focusing on was essentially the merits of a government that he wishes were still seated in its proper place on that side of the House.

The second best thing of course is that members of Parliament from this side of the House have worked, as they should, to ensure that legislation like this one, amended by the other place, deserves immediate and proper passage. So I thank him for supporting our amendments. I hope he encourages others to do the same.

Government Orders

Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always good to have the opportunity to rebut something that is said and I know it is unfair, but the Liberals did not get it done. They had seven years to get it done. They did not get it done.

The member and his colleagues from that party did indeed support the original amendments, so is there a lack of communication totally between his party and the Liberal dominated Senate? Is it totally no communication?

Why did the Liberals agree to one thing and now they are agreeing to another. Did they not communicate with the Senate before that because they did agree to that. I am lost because I know they did not get it done after seven years and it took 18 months for this Conservative government to get it done. That is why they should remain over there and support our initiatives.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, some of the member's colleagues should give him a road map so that he will not be lost.

As I indicated, the reason why things have been getting done is because there is a willingness on this side of the House to actually do things. We are prepared to do things that are right, but I want to thank the member once again for acknowledging that the amendments we put in place are the appropriate ones, and that he has stood up for about 30 minutes applauding them. I want to thank him for recognizing that the Liberal Party and the members in the other place have done what the Conservatives were unable to do. I thank him very much.

• (2015)

Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I heard the member speak for 10 minutes and he mentioned at the outset that he was speechless. Some of us perhaps wish that he had been speechless.

Aside from talking about shaking people down to pay his leadership debt, I did not hear one substantive comment about such an important issue relating to the Railway Safety Act or the Canada Transportation Act. If he has not read the act and understand the content of it, then he might have been interested in talking about the need for a rail transportation act in Canada.

Perhaps everything that he could say in answering this question could be covered in 15 seconds. I wonder if he would enlighten the House by talking substantively about Bill C-11.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, it would take a lot more than 15 seconds. I am glad to see that the hon. member has a good sense of humour as well. I guess it is about 8:15 p.m. and if the hon. member did have a sense of humour it must have run down a track at an awfully fast rate.

At any rate, the hon. member would know of course that we had the bill before. What we have been talking about are amendments to the bill, of course, in terms of substance for railway safety, railway efficiency, and talking about the way to move forward in terms of building an infrastructure that is consistent with Canada's needs not only for today but for tomorrow and to ensure that the mechanisms and the technology that is in place is consistent with the expectations of the Canadian public.

There is a lot more than the member would be able to understand in the few short seconds that she felt she needed to express her disappointment that she did not get everything that she wanted to get tonight.

The member might have followed the debate when it was held in the House at second reading, when it went through report stage and when it went into third reading. She might even have expressed an interest during committee.

It only lasted about six months, so in 15 seconds I would say that we never have to apologize for having taken care of the people's needs, people's safety, people's future and people's sense of progress and forward looking.

That is why we introduced Bill C-26 and that is why we were pleased to support this bill. That is why the members in the other place made the amendments they made consistent with all of those ideals to move this forward.

Some would say some of those people are unelected, but there was cooperation between Conservatives and Liberals. Even though they were upset, they were outnumbered two to one, they agreed that this was something that should happen.

The parliamentary secretary reflected the support that Conservative members gave to this amendment. Therefore I thank them all.

The hon. member wants to have a lesson on what is in the bill, no problem. She can call my staff and we will give her a seminar.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with fascination to my hon. colleague's use of a dictionary for the last 20 minutes. Like my colleague, I did not find anything of substance in it whatsoever.

I find it absolutely amazing that he now says that if we actually want to find out what is in the bill we will have to go back and study all the committee notes. He says we will have to listen to all the witnesses because he simply cannot stand up and articulate a clear position, so that people can see where the Liberals stand.

I do not want to be personal. There is nothing personal here. My granny never voted for the Liberals when she was alive. She certainly would not want to vote for them after she was dead, whether the member contacted her through the Ouija board or he signed her up.

I have gone back and I have checked the grave to make sure that it has not been tampered with, so I am certainly sure that none of my deceased relatives have voted for him for the leadership.

I do not want him to take that personally, but I do think it is incumbent upon him to be able to stand up in the 20 minutes he had, the 15 minutes, the 10 minutes, whatever, and give us an articulate, simple answer on where the Liberal Party stands on this, unless of course it is like so many things about the Liberals that they do not really stand anywhere.

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We might have to go through all the old red book promises to actually find an articulate position that might change from year to year. However, I did not hear it tonight. I think that it is incumbent upon the member, if he is going to speak for his party, to be able to stand up and give us a nice simple, concise explanation of what the Liberal Party actually does stand for, if anything at all.

• (2020)

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, if I started to give him facts, he probably would not know what they meant. If I started to speak in a concise, simple fashion, it would go over his head. However, as I said a moment ago, if he is inarticulate in the English language, I can revert to French.

[*Translation*]

I could say all the same things in French. Obviously, the NDP member did not understand anything about this bill. He did not understand it when we were discussing it here in this House or in committee. It would be nearly impossible to satisfy his wishes.

[*English*]

But no, I do not take things personally. If his grandmother wanted to sign up for the Liberal Party, we do not hold moments in life against anybody. One can sign any time one wants.

Hon. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the member of the NDP talk about what our party stood for, on questions and comments, it occurred to me that one of the things we stood for, and stand for, is early childhood education. The other things are Kyoto and Kelowna. That is what we stand for.

I think that is pretty important to say, when somebody from the New Democratic Party asks, “What do we stand for?”. We stood for all those things and that party helped to kill all those things. I wonder if my friend would want to comment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): I am not sure if there was anything in the question that related to the bill before the House, but if the hon. member for Eglinton—Lawrence wants to make a very brief comment, he may.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo hit the nail on the head. The NDP, in all of its hypocrisy and now we are getting serious, did not like what the Liberal government was doing—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Mr. Speaker, the member has not articulated anything to do with this bill. That question had nothing to do with the bill. I would like him to strictly go back to the issue, which is the bill. This question I find is again leading us down the garden path. I would like to hear him speak about the bill and no more—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): I am not sure if that is quite a point of order. I did remind the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo and the member for Eglinton—Lawrence to try to keep their remarks as closely as possible linked to the bill. There are about 30 seconds left for the member for Eglinton—Lawrence.

Hon. Joseph Volpe: Mr. Speaker, the bill is an important bill. As we said, we supported it. The NDP members did not support it when we were in government, They wanted the Conservative approach to

this and now they are complaining that the Conservatives are agreeing with the Liberal Party.

We know where we stand. We stand for all of those issues that the hon. member indicated. We stand on this issue of railway safety, the procedures that we have agreed to put in place, and that we have amended. The NDP members did not like it before and now they are saying they do not like it again. They want to be obstructionists. That is okay. That is their definition of honesty. Let them live with it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while I am generally recognized a fun loving person, I think that I will be somewhat of a party pooper this evening. I can see colleagues having fun, joking around and laughing. They are still at it. I understand that it is getting late, but I do not think that should prevent us from maintaining some discipline out of respect for the people we represent. I think that the least we can do is deal with the issue at hand seriously and stop this joking around that several gentlemen in this House have been engaged in for the past half hour. I say gentlemen because the only remarks showing any intelligence came from a woman, much to her credit.

I find it regrettable that, to some extent, democracy is under attack this evening. For one thing, with all the clowning around going on, I doubt that anyone who happened to tune in on the parliamentary channel tonight is still watching because, frankly, we have to admit that the level of debate is rather low.

In terms of democracy, a committee of elected members of the House of Commons is currently making amendments to a bill to give it more teeth and thus enabling it to better protect our citizens. This committee has unanimously approved these amendments. We tell our citizens and our electors that we have worked hard, done our job, acquitted our duty and given them a law with more teeth. Then unelected senators return the bill to its original state by removing the amendments that improved the bill and responded to the needs of the public.

I would like to point out that what is quite paradoxical is the fact that the amendments made by the committee of the House of Commons to give more teeth to the bill were adopted unanimously. I am perplexed by the comments of our Liberal colleague who spoke before me, was doubled over with laughter and practically mocked the work of the committees, because he was a member of this committee and supported the amendments. He subsequently accepts that the Senate committee that studied the issue removed the original amendments.

What is even more paradoxical is that the Senate committee was unanimous in its decision, which was the complete opposite of the decision reached by the members of Parliament. There is a contradiction. These results are not close. On the one hand, all members of the House committee stated that the legislation should have more teeth; on the other hand, the senators stated unanimously that the legislation should not be given more teeth.

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There is a reason for that. The reason is that members of Parliament asked people to appear before the committee, listened to what they had to say and understood them, whereas the senators did not. They did not go to the trouble of listening to people to learn about what they have to deal with every day because the railway companies operate their lines with no regard for the communities in which they operate. The senators did not take that into account, did they? No, they invited only railway company representatives, who told them that all of the parties represented in the House of Commons committee, who had adopted these clauses and amendments unanimously, were all wrong. According to these representatives, the railway companies know what is best for people. If there has been one case since the beginning of my brief political career—since I was elected in January 2006—that has shown just how useless the Senate is, just how harmful it can be, in fact, this is it.

I find the senators' behaviour unacceptable. First, because they did not even deign to consult the people, and second, because they introduced amendments not on matters that members of Parliament had forgotten to address or study, but on matters that they had studied and amended unanimously.

● (2025)

The amendment the Senate is proposing is to revert almost to the original wording. What does that mean? It means that the senators are telling the members of this House that, even though they worked on the bill for days, held consultations and met with a lot of people, they were all wrong and the senators are going to tell them how it is done. I want to say that the Senate is mistaken.

I would go even further. The behaviour of the Liberal and Conservative members is just as deplorable. They are supporting the unelected Senate and undoing the work done by all the members of the committee. This work will be undone because the senators have given in to blackmail and lobbying by the railways.

Moreover, neither the government nor the Liberal Party wants to tell the senators that that is enough, that the committee worked on this. Neither the government nor the Liberal Party wants to show the senators what we want in the bill or tell them that we are sending it back and that we refuse their amendments. Neither the government nor the Liberal Party wants to tell them to do what they have to do. Neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives want to do that. They will keep quiet and adopt the amendments. This is especially surprising coming from the government, because for days, weeks and months in this House, the government denounced unelected senators, denounced systematic obstruction, denounced the fact that these people undo the work of parliamentarians. Today, these members are keeping quiet, falling in line and accepting this, even though the position of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities was unanimous. I find this very unfortunate.

It seems to me that our Parliament, our House of Commons, would have sent a clear message to the senators if it had told them that, because we all agreed, they could not make any amendments on matters the members themselves had amended unanimously. It seems to me that this is what we should have done, but we did not do it. This is extremely regrettable. I hope there are still some Liberal and Conservative members who will change their minds before tomorrow's vote.

I am looking forward to hearing the Conservative member for Lévis—Bellechasse in particular speak in this debate. He has worked on the committee and brought in TV cameras to show what a great job he was doing and how hard he was working for his constituents. I am anxious to see whether he will vote against the Senate amendments tomorrow to be true to himself and say that he does not want to see the work he has done undone by the senators. I am anxious to hear what the hon. member for Lévis—Bellechasse will have to say. I am looking forward to him taking part in this debate. Sadly, he is likely to toe the line and vote in favour of the amendments proposed by the Senate, basically turning his back on the work done by the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, which achieved unanimity.

This is especially true since the need to pass this legislation quickly cannot be used as an excuse. This bill has been introduced in the House a number of times already. We could very well send the bill back to the Senate and tell the senators to do their job and return it without amendments. The senators themselves said in committee that they would not oppose it or block it.

If memory serves, it was a Conservative senator who said, and I quote:

They have further undertaken on the record that should the other place [that is us] dither and not approve it, they will move quickly to act with this engaged, non-partisan administration to pass the bill quickly through this chamber.

In other words, the senators are already telling us that, should the bill be sent back to them with the amendments having been rejected, they will not dig in their heels; they will send it back to us. Clearly, there is no reason to adopt these amendments.

● (2030)

The only reason would be if the Liberals and the Conservatives were using this, were hiding behind the Senate, to yield to the railway lobby.

For the benefit of those who did not have the opportunity to follow the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, I will explain what happened there. There are 308 members in this House. We all sit on various committees, and it is perfectly normal not to be able to follow everything that takes place. The amendments adopted by the House of Commons' committee were adopted unanimously. This was a compromise between some parties, including the Bloc Québécois, which felt that the bill was really not going far enough. Even with the amendments that were adopted, we still felt that it was not going far enough. We believed that the bill needed much more teeth.

On the other side, members from other parties, including Liberals and Conservatives, thought that this was already an improvement, and that even though we could maybe do better, they did not want to go that far. So, we made this compromise. This wording was adopted unanimously, to give more teeth to the act and to better protect citizens. We reached this compromise, even though it was not enough for the Bloc Québécois, but we told ourselves that we had to live with this decision. We achieved real gains for people. However, these gains were lost, because of the work of non-elected senators, but also because of the attitude of those members who are going to vote in favour of the amendments made by senators.

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I will try to convince them to change their minds by tomorrow. I would like to say a few things about the reality on the ground, the reality for the people of Pointe-Saint-Charles. First, I should point out that the people of Pointe-Saint-Charles did not build their houses next to the railway. Rather, the train now goes through their neighbourhood. As such, I find the documents that came back from the Senate transport committee to be somewhat disdainful. They practically say that if people decide to put their houses next to a railway, then too bad for them, they will just have to live with the noise. But that is not the case everywhere, and it is certainly not the case in a historic neighbourhood like Pointe-Saint-Charles. The neighbourhood had grown up over the years and then a railway was built right through it. Houses even had to be torn down for it. The railway companies have no right to refuse to pay attention to the communities around their rail lines or to say that it is not their, the companies', problem. They decided to build their railway there, so they should be responsible for paying attention to the community's needs.

I met with people who have trouble sleeping. I met children who have difficulty learning because they do not get enough sleep to concentrate in school. That worries me. It is a real problem. I do not think that the Senate committee heard about this, because not a single representative of the people appeared before it. People live with this problem day after day. Vibrations are also a big problem. Often, vibrations travel even farther than sound because they go through walls and physical barriers.

In Pointe-Saint-Charles, shunting happens in the middle of the night right on the lines, not in the rail yard. I can assure you that the operators do not care one bit about the noise produced by two cars when they make contact. The noise is sporadic. People can hear the cars running into each other.

This is what the expression "cause as little noise as possible" means in the bill. That is what it is all about. It is possible to make less noise in this case. Perhaps the railway cars could be gathered together at some other location. That would be one way of making less noise. Perhaps, they could slow down a little before the cars hit each other, so that there is less noise. This is what is meant by making less noise. It is a very clear notion. It is so clear in fact that it already exists in the Canada Transportation Act. We were told about this by Helena Borges, Director General, Surface Transportation Policy, at Transport Canada. She told the committee that, under section 95 of the act, which regulates the construction of railway facilities, railway companies must do as little damage as possible when building such facilities. "Do as little damage as possible", now that sounds a lot like "cause as little noise as possible".

• (2035)

So, this already existed in the act. It is already a well-known principle that is easy to understand. However, we are told that it could be subject to interpretation. It is no more so the case than when we use the term "reasonable".

What is reasonable for railway companies is not necessarily reasonable for people who live next to the railway tracks. This is confusing. However, if we say "as little noise as possible", the only question that the Canadian Transportation Agency has to determine is whether it is possible to make less noise. If it is possible, it must be

done, and if it is not possible, it is not done. It seems to me that this is just plain common sense. It would really have helped our fellow citizens, and it would have forced railway companies to really do their job, to surpass themselves, and to ask themselves, day in and day out, in the course of their operations, what they can do to reduce the noise level.

Furthermore, a second principle was introduced to the effect that the surrounding environment would have to be considered. The reason for introducing the principle is that, in listing the criteria that must be considered in assessing whether the companies are making as little noise as possible, there was a factor included that took into account the operational needs of railway companies. The Bloc felt that that should be removed. It is not a question of whether the railway company needs to make noise or not, but rather, whether the noise is bothering the people who live nearby.

There was quite a debate on this matter in committee. The advantages and disadvantages were weighed, and the economic impact was assessed. The compromise meant considering the needs of the companies. I think this is a good guarantee for them, one that protects them. In reaching its decisions, the agency will take into account their operational needs. This seemed to me to be a significant loophole, a considerable gap, that allowed them to continue to do as they please. To compensate, on the other side, we thought we would also ask them to take into account the setting in which they work. If they are in a marshalling yard that is isolated and out of the way, they can make noise. There is no problem if there is no one to bother except the hares. However, when they are located in a densely populated residential area where people live close to the railway lines, like in Pointe Saint-Charles, when rail lines run close to where people live, we will ask them to take this into consideration. I thought this was a reasonable compromise. I was not the only one to think so. I recall that all members of the House Standing Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities and all members of all parties agreed with this idea. Only the senators and the railway companies did not agree with us. Today and tomorrow, we will unfortunately probably see some members, people elected to represent their constituents, give in to the appalling blackmail by the railway companies and senators. I find it all very unfortunate.

I would like to conclude by saying that I believe this was a very sad part of our work. During the coming months and the coming election campaign, citizens from Quebec and elsewhere in Canada will have to be reminded about the role that Conservative and Liberal members played in this saga. They will have to be reminded that, in committee, they first responded to the demands of their fellow citizens, to the demands of the people. They did their work well. Afterwards, they wimped out and caved in to the Senate.

Government Orders

I am anxious to hear the explanations of the member for Lévis—Bellechasse on this issue. He made a lot of noise in the media, he bragged a lot and he put up a big show. I am anxious to see the member for Lévis—Bellechasse tomorrow. I hope he will be here and will rise to vote against the Senate amendments. I think that this is the only decent thing he can do if he wants to respect his constituents a little bit. If he does not do so, he will confirm what the Bloc Québécois always says, that is that the only party that is really able to represent Quebecers, without making any compromise and without ever abandoning them, is the Bloc Québécois.

● (2040)

The government always talks about the uselessness of the Bloc and the Conservatives think they are good and smart because they are in power. However, when comes the time to vote, Conservative members, as well as Liberal members, are not really free to do so in the interests of their fellow citizens. This is what we will see tomorrow during the vote.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was beside the hon. member when he was speaking of the manner in which the Senate has distorted Bill C-11. I can only agree with him on this point. However, I do not quite share his viewpoint when he states that the Bloc Québécois is the only party that represents Quebecers. I can provide two examples.

First, thousands of jobs have been lost in Quebec because of the softwood lumber agreement. Yet the Bloc Québécois voted in favour of this agreement, thus going against the interests of its citizens who depend on softwood lumber in their communities. The Bloc knew very well that they were effectively handing over its sovereignty in the forestry sector to Washington and the Bush administration. Nevertheless, the Bloc voted for this agreement which resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs in the forestry sector even though we had already won in the International Court of Trade.

Then, in yesterday's vote on the budget, the Bloc Québécois supported the Conservative government and voted in favour of a budget that does nothing for middle-class Quebecers. I understand its views on Bill C-11. However, I do not agree with how it voted on the softwood lumber agreement and the budget.

My question is straightforward. If the Bloc was right about Bill C-11, why did it let down Quebecers by voting for the Conservative budget and the softwood lumber agreement?

● (2045)

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Mr. Speaker, it might have been better if the hon. member for Victoria asked me a question, like the one she asked the Liberals, because her question surely would have been technical on the substance of the matter. After criticizing the insignificance of the Liberals and the debate, and the inability of this party, or at least the representative who spoke to us about the substance of the bill, I find it somewhat sad that the member from the NDP is doing the same thing and changing the subject, when he rose on a point of order a few minutes ago just to say that the hon. member was changing the subject and talking about something unrelated. That is what he is doing right now: by asking his question, he is displaying partisanship and talking about other things. He knows full well that I can talk to him about the budget and the billions of dollars Quebec got because of our hard work on the fiscal

imbalance. And we will continue to work hard because this issue is not resolved.

He knows full well that I can talk to him about the softwood lumber agreement. We did nothing but listen to Quebec unions, Quebec companies and Quebec employees who told us that even though the Conservatives negotiated a bad sellout agreement, we had to support it as a matter of survival. We only listened to our people. He knows full well that I can account for that. What I find too bad is that he knows that I am capable of responding to all these questions on Bill C-11. In my opinion, he could have found something intelligent to ask me on the subject at hand, instead of giving in to the same pathetic game that his Liberal and Conservative colleagues were playing a few minutes ago.

Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the monarchy, this genetic lottery, is a symbol that, unfortunately, still takes a lot of room in Quebec. We only have to think, for example, of lieutenant-governors, who do not have to account to citizens about how they use taxpayers' money. As for the Senate, an institution that dates back to the middle ages, it is totally obsolete, undemocratic and it has no purpose whatsoever. All the provinces have abolished their own Senate. Can my dear colleague tell me what we are waiting for to get rid of this totally useless thing that prevents democracy from existing?

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Mr. Speaker, in fact, today the Senate did more than just prove it is useless. Quebecers and Canadians could tolerate paying senators out of their tax dollars when they did no harm. But today, people in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada are realizing, as they will in the coming days and months, that the Senate is not only useless, but it can be harmful, as in this instance.

I am certain that my friend from Gatineau will agree that this is no excuse for the behaviour of the members, who are elected by the people, are sitting in this House today and can say no to the Senate. The fact that the Liberal and Conservative members are abdicating their responsibilities is every bit as unacceptable as the Senate's interference in the business of the House, the people's elected representatives.

Even though I take issue with the work the Senate does, that is no excuse for what the Conservatives and the Liberals are planning to do tomorrow. I find it just as reprehensible that they are going to vote in favour of the amendments made by the Senate. They bear some of the blame, including the government members who have been harping away for weeks and months about the behaviour of the Senate when they themselves are going to give in today to the Senate's reprehensible attitude.

● (2050)

Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question about content. I appreciated my colleague's comments. As he said, the committee did good work. I think that there are measures in this bill that would, for example, limit railway noise and reduce the cost to farmers. People would like these measures to come into effect.

Government Orders

Personally, I would have liked the bill on transportation and railways to offer a broader vision of the role that railways might play in Canada. But that is not mentioned. Nevertheless, we must be satisfied with this because it does contain some useful measures.

The amendments made by the Senate—which is not elected, as the member pointed out—avoid bringing clause 27 into force. This is one of the measures that would have protected travellers by providing complete information about costs. Would the member like to say a few words about the impact of these amendments on travellers?

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr: Mr. Speaker, I cannot complain that my colleague's question is too technical because I did ask for questions about content.

I will not engage in the kind of posturing that our Liberal friend demonstrated earlier. In all honesty, I must say that I am not a member of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. I worked on the trains and noise file because this is an issue that concerns the people in my riding. I thought that it was my responsibility and my duty, as the member for Jeanne-Le Ber, to spend some time in the committee when it was addressing specific noise issues.

Unfortunately, I did not attend the meetings about the parts of the bill that do not relate to train noise. I would not want to be so arrogant as to give any old answer, claiming to know what I do not. However, my colleague is welcome to ask my colleague from Alfred-Pellan, who is a member of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. He is very familiar with this bill and the Bloc Québécois' thoughts on that issue.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, even though my presentation will be split in half, with the time approaching 9 o'clock, I will try to get some NDP points across before we terminate this evening. I will come back tomorrow to talk more about Bill C-11. I am not sure that will interest the Conservatives in the room because I have to be critical about this one step forward and two steps back. This is the nature of the way Conservatives tackle transportation policy.

Bill C-11 makes some modest improvements in some areas, and I will come back in a moment to what the Senate has done to diminish those improvements.

At the same time as we are moving forward with C-11 and the Senate amendments, the government is now pushing Bill C-6, which will diminish airline safety in Canada, by handing over responsibility to the companies themselves. Some of these companies will handle it well, while other companies, as testimony very clearly showed, will not handle it in a responsible way. The government, unfortunately, is proceeding along the same path as the Liberals did by diminishing the type of air safety that Canadians want to see. I will have a chance to talk about that issue later.

I will come back to Bill C-11. The bill is disappointing because even though it does make some modest progress in a number of areas, it could have gone much further. The NDP offered up dozens of amendments to strengthen the bill, some of which we were able to

get through and some of which were rejected by the Conservatives and Liberals on committee.

The bill provides more honesty around airfares, something for which Canadians have been calling. Canadians are sick and tired of the manipulation they see around airfares and incomplete airfares being advertised. Bill C-11 does provide some modest framework around how airfares can be advertised.

This is one of the elements that was attacked by the other House. It is deplorable to the NDP that even though the provisions were modest, they could have been improved, but we see a step backward as the Senate amendments come back to the House.

There are some provisions in the legislation for shippers. Hopefully, other provisions for shippers will be contained in Bill C-58, which will be coming forward in the House. It is, by no means, as far as the government could have gone, and it is disappointing. We have taken one step forward, yet we see steps back in other areas.

There is finally a process in place for railway noise, and this is very welcome. As we saw under 13 years of Liberal government, nothing was done to address important issues for Canadians. Railways make excessive noise in urban communities.

We heard testimony from Mayor Wayne Wright of my riding of Burnaby—New Westminster. Brian Allen, who is a resident of Westminster Key, is a very strong activist for diminishing railway noise. The citizens of Westminister Key are constantly subjected to excessive railway noise. They provided some valuable input to the committee.

The NDP put forward amendments that would have provided a strict framework for railway companies so they could not make excessive noise in the evening and overnight, particularly when there are shunting yards in the area of the Lower Mainland, away from urban areas, in Port Mann. We offered those amendments after that valuable input from some of the citizens of New Westminster. We were able to incorporate some but not all of those improvements.

We have a step back with the Senate amendments. The Senate wants to take us backward to a time when railway companies could essentially prove reasonableness in their level of noise in urban communities, as opposed to what the transport committee actually came up with, which required railway companies to cause as little noise and vibration as possible.

We had modest improvements. We at least had a process finally in place after many years of the Liberals ignoring the issue. The committee put forward modest improvements, and the NDP wanted to go much further. The modest improvements have been thrown away and now the bill is back in the House.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (2055)

As parliamentarians, we have to take a stand against those Senate amendments. They water down what were modest improvements in Bill C-11 in necessary areas, areas that we had to attack, areas that Canadians looked for redress for some time, yet they were dealt with only partially.

I believe my time is up for this evening, but I look forward to coming back to this issue tomorrow.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster will have 15 minutes to finish his speech the next time the bill comes before the House.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on May 17, 2007, I referred to the minister responsible for official languages. The previous day, May 16, 2007, the National Assembly of Quebec passed another unanimous motion. All the parties of the National Assembly passed a unanimous motion demanding that decisive action be taken to defend and promote French.

An example of such action that had proven its worth was most assuredly the court challenges program, which was an essential tool. We all know what happened. The Conservatives eliminated it, without even discussing it with program officials.

The current federal government, that is, this alliance of Reformers and Conservatives, is being very hypocritical towards francophones in minority communities in Canada. The government is basically telling francophones that their rights matter, but they are losing their means of defending them.

I asked the minister for her reaction to the situation. Of course, since it was question period and not answer period, I was very disappointed by her answer.

For a right to have any significance, one has to be able to defend it. Eliminating the court challenges program goes against this principle. The court challenges program was created to avoid an unfair situation between parents and volunteers who want to tell the government—whether the federal, provincial, municipal government or any school board—that it is making a mistake, that it is doing something that violates the Canadian Constitution and interferes with the rights of the people who want to go to court. The government—the federal or provincial government—can show up with a team of lawyers, while the parents who want to have schools for their children or volunteers who want to ensure that their hospital does not close, do not have that kind of resources. The court challenges program was a very useful tool in that sense.

Thanks to two reviews of the program, one in 1997 and the other in 2003, it was shown that the court challenges program was more than adequate. In 1997, among other things, it was said that the court

challenges program made it easier to settle a number of disputes and largely contributed to clarifying constitutional rights. Just think about the recognition of minority francophones to manage their own schools.

Tomorrow, in the Standing Committee on Official Languages, we will have the opportunity to speak to someone who worked very hard on this level. He will tell us, for example, that parents in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, had to mortgage their homes to get francophone teachers in their community.

Another aspect became clear in 2003. It was said that the clarification process was permanent and, by all accounts, it would go on indefinitely.

The court challenges program is essential because society evolves. Furthermore, it reaches out to linguistic minorities as well as disadvantaged citizens.

On that note, I will leave the floor to my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages. I hope she will have better answers than her colleague, the minister.

• (2100)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the question from the member for Gatineau about the court challenges program and the responsibilities of the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages with respect to official language minority communities.

As he knows very well, a case concerning the court challenges program is presently before the courts. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for me to comment at this time.

However, I would like to make a few comments about what our government has accomplished for official language minority communities throughout our country. I am convinced that this will be of great interest to the member for Gatineau.

Since taking office, the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages has made a point of meeting official language minority communities in all regions of the country.

For example, in April, she participated in a round table in New Brunswick with young Acadians discussing the concerns of and matters of interest to young people. These youths were very engaged and she was quite impressed by their enthusiasm. We firmly believe that it is important to strengthen relationships with young people in order to ensure the future of the official languages.

She also had the opportunity to meet with many members of the network of associations in New Brunswick, including the Société nationale des Acadiens, the Société des Acadiens et the Fédération de la jeunesse francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Because we believe that young people are important, the Government of Canada has signed improved four-year agreements with the 13 provinces and territories for minority language education and second language learning. These agreements reflect our desire to invest in the future of Canada's youth.

In addition, our government is continuing to support new school and community centres. Two examples come to mind.

First, our government and the Government of Saskatchewan have signed an agreement to build and renovate school and community centres for the École canadienne-française in Saskatoon. This two-year agreement, worth over \$3 million, will help francophone youth get a good education in their own language.

Second, the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages recently signed a special agreement with New Brunswick to set up two school and community centres, one in Fredericton and one in St. John.

The concept of the school and community centre dates back to the late 1970s. There are currently about 20 such centres in the four Atlantic provinces, Ontario and the Prairies. These centres provide minority official language communities with a variety of activities and services in their language, which helps them preserve that language.

The Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages also recently announced funding to set up an institute to support the development of second language learning across Canada. The institute is based at the University of New Brunswick, which makes perfect sense, considering how important linguistic duality is to that province.

The federal government is also partnering with the Government of New Brunswick to implement its—

• (2105)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The hon. member for Gatineau.

Mr. Richard Nadeau: Mr. Speaker, we heard our colleague talk about various funding announcements, but she did not say a word about the court challenges program. Under the circumstances, however, I will take the liberty of reminding her about what makes the program so good and why her government will end up restoring the program in its entirety.

Whenever people's constitutional rights were breached, the court challenges program gave them the opportunity to make sure that their rights were respected. Furthermore, the court challenges program enabled people to take any government, not just the federal government, to court whenever it failed to respect their constitutional rights. The court challenges program is a positive tool to help citizens take on governments that have vast resources to defend themselves in court. This is a matter of equality, justice and democracy.

Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Speaking of justice, I would like to point out that all the work the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages has done makes me proud of our government's commitment in this area. I find that our government has shown a strong commitment toward linguistic duality and minority official language communities.

Adjournment Proceedings

The Minister of Finance, showing his unequivocal support, increased funding for linguistic duality and minority official language communities for the next two years by \$30 million. This new funding comes in addition to the envelopes already budgeted for the official languages support programs.

This additional funding has been allocated for after school and cultural activities and for community centres, and will help enhance the benefits related to linguistic duality for children, through exchanges and programs. This good news was received warmly by our partners in the minority official language communities.

• (2110)

[*English*]

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Tina Keeper (Churchill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to follow up on my question posed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on May 18. Similar to other responses I have received from the government, the answer I was given that day was empty, unsatisfying and entirely rhetorical.

However, providing adequate responses is not the only thing the Conservative government seems to be struggling with lately. In recent weeks it has grown increasingly evident that the government continues to struggle with maintaining strong partners within the Canadian federation.

It began by abandoning the historic Kelowna accord and ignoring first nations health, education and poverty issues, which has led to a deterioration of the government's relationship with first nations communities. We have seen the true colours of members opposite in their style of government as they have turned their backs on first nations and now they have turned their backs on Atlantic Canada and other provinces. Rather than working together in a collaborative fashion, we are witnessing a divisive and appalling approach to government. I encourage those sitting on the government side of the House to consult with Canada's first nations, Métis and Inuit on what true consultation actually means.

I would like to point out that the member referred to the Kelowna accord as a "quasi-plan". The member opposite used that term when he responded to my question on May 18. It reflects that party's inability to understand the issues facing first nations.

The Kelowna accord was the result of 18 months of aboriginal round tables, including all aboriginal groups in Canada. This was not to satisfy a legal obligation on consultation, which we know the Conservatives know nothing about, but was a good faith process.

Adjournment Proceedings

If the Conservatives could deviate from their slogans for a moment, maybe they could hear what first nations are saying on such issues as matrimonial real property, Bill C-44, the anti-poverty campaign and even the human rights complaint they have been forced to file against the government on first nations child welfare. First nations want change but not in the paternalistic manner of decades past in the days of the Indian agent.

In my question to the minister I cited Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine when he commented on the Kelowna accord. He said, "for the very first time, we had...a plan...based on reason, thoughtful consideration". He said, "That deal was set aside, dismissed".

Under the previous Liberal government, the Kelowna accord was built on a foundation of respect, accountability and shared responsibility. It outlined five year targets in the areas of education, health, housing, infrastructure and water.

What will it take for the government to take all issues relating to first nations, Inuit and the Métis nation in Canada seriously? Why does the Conservative government treat our partners within our federation with such disdain? When will it work with aboriginal leaders on all issues to improve the quality of life for first nations?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for bringing about this important adjournment proceeding tonight, although she might be forgetting what occurred yesterday when the Prime Minister, the Minister of Indian Affairs and others in our government announced what is an historic and important change to the Indian Specific Claims Commission by making it an independent body.

In fact, after meeting with the national chief yesterday, I can say that he was very pleased. He was happy to see such an important step forward for Canada's first nations people, so clearly the member seems to have missed some of the key details that have occurred in our new government's approach to aboriginal people. It is something that I am very proud of.

Today I am going to talk somewhat about the things that we are doing in government right now. I know that the member opposite has a shameful record that she has to prop up in regard to the Liberal Party, but thankfully our government is moving forward in working with aboriginal groups, the provinces and the territories to find workable and innovative solutions to address poverty among aboriginal people in Canada.

The government's strategy on aboriginal issues is clear: to collaborate closely with strong and willing aboriginal organizations, with provinces and territories, and with other partners to devise and implement effective solutions.

This strategy has produced and will continue to produce tangible and sustainable improvements in the lives of aboriginal people for two reasons: first, it focuses on specific challenges; and second, it will engage the very people most affected by these challenges to design and implement the solutions.

Initially, budget 2006 announced \$450 million over two years, with \$150 million in 2006-07 and \$300 million in 2007-08, to

support priority areas in education, for women, children and families, and water and housing. Budget 2007 confirms that the \$300 million from this budget will continue thereafter in an ongoing funding arrangement. It will provide ongoing capacity to deal with these priority areas.

The government is making progress on these priorities. For instance, on April 20 the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Minister responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation both announced the first nations mortgage market housing fund. This fund represents a real change in how Canada's new government supports housing on reserve and is an example of the type of innovative thinking we need to bring about a long term solution, not only for housing issues but for other major challenges that plague many first nation communities.

With regard to education, let us not forget about Bill C-34, the First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act. This act came about through collaboration between the government and the province of British Columbia and first nations in that province. Our government recognizes that first nations people and communities must determine their own educational needs and must have the tools to address them.

In collaboration with first nations, we have moved forward on other areas as well. Hon. members are well aware of the progress we have made in child and family services through the partnership we have entered into with the province of Alberta and Alberta's first nations, in the provision of safe drinking water to first nations communities, and in finding a solution to the difficult issue of matrimonial real property on reserve.

Housing, water and education, and support for women, children and families: these are the firm foundations we must build upon so that poverty in aboriginal communities can be eradicated once and for all.

• (2115)

Ms. Tina Keeper: Mr. Speaker, we have heard ongoing grandiose announcements from the government, but to date there has been no concrete action. It has failed to address the funding inequities for programs and services in first nations as well as the funding caps that are causing severe hardship through all sectors for first nations. I reiterate that the government has not met its duty to consult with first nations. Nor have its announcements of new funding been applicable to first nations.

Adjournment Proceedings

When the member opposite said in this House that the previous government “simply wanted to throw dollars at problems”, it revealed a naive if not callous attitude toward the people in our great country who have been forced to call on not only aboriginal people but all Canadians to address an anti-poverty campaign for first nations. I also remind the House that a human rights complaint has been filed against that very government—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs.

Mr. Rod Bruinooge: Mr. Speaker, of course the member raises the issue of human rights and hopefully we will be able to soon pass Bill C-44, which would extend human rights to first nations people on reserve.

She also raises the point of throwing money at a broken system. This is something that our government has taken major issue with,

because we feel the systems are broken. Investing money in broken systems is not the right approach for delivering to people on the streets of first nations communities.

This is one of the reasons why Canada's new government is moving forward for first nations people, thankfully, and bringing about system change to the Indian Specific Claims Commission as well as system change to the Canadian Human Rights Act, which would extend human rights to first nations people. Hopefully the member will help us in fixing the system.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Andrew Scheer): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9:19 p.m.)

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