



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 144 • NUMBER 005 • 2nd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, January 30, 2009

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, January 30, 2009

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1000)
[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from January 29 consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and of the amendment.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso.

I rise to comment on a budget that is thankfully a more realistic response to our economic needs than the fiscal update we saw from the government last November.

If we take away all the political drama and games last fall, at the heart of the matter was the most partisan document that had ever been presented by any government in Canadian history. It claimed that the surplus budgets would continue. It offered no stimulus package. It played games with the public financing for political parties and most troubling of all, it treated the Canadian public with a lack of honesty and respect.

The story the government tells has gone through an amazing transformation over the past five months. In September the Prime Minister claimed that there would not be a recession. In October he promised that he would never run a deficit. In November he pledged that he would deliver multiple years of surplus budgets. In December he predicted a \$20 billion deficit. Now we have just found out that over the next two years, the deficits will be totalling an astonishing \$64 billion.

While I am pleased that Canadians are finally beginning to get a true picture of the government and the health of our economy, I am also very concerned about a number of issues with this budget, but I will focus only on the infrastructure funding that is needed now.

I believe it is very important that the promised infrastructure funding that each community across the country needs should be

diverted now. In my riding of Newton—North Delta, both the Corporation of Delta and the city of Surrey have sent a number of shovel-ready projects that are waiting for the federal funding to begin.

While there is \$7 billion of new money that has been offered for infrastructure projects, it is also a fact that the government has a shameful record when it comes to distributing these moneys. In the past three years, over \$2 billion in budgeted infrastructure spending has not been used due to the mismanagement of the government. In 2007 the \$9 billion building Canada fund was introduced to provide much needed funding for a long list of infrastructure needs from coast to coast to coast. Unfortunately, in the first year, the building Canada fund flowed only \$20 million into this economy.

Canada can no longer have these kinds of delays and failures. Municipalities are desperate for the federal government to come to the table, and it is the time to act immediately.

I want to talk about my constituents and what the municipal leaders are telling me.

I talked to Delta councillor Bruce McDonald yesterday. He told me that the Boundary Bay Airport had committed money for improvements from the province and the private sector, and it is waiting for the partnership from the federal government. Boundary Bay Airport is the fifth largest airport in Canada.

In Surrey, to take one example, we have an urgent need for a new RCMP detachment building to serve the city's rapidly growing population. This facility will create local jobs and is essential to protect the safety and well-being of our community.

These are the priorities that my constituents and municipal counterparts are talking to me about, the kind that they need now. The sense of urgency is real and there is a common desire to get down to work.

It is because of these expectations of Canadians that my leader and our party have put the government on probation. Because of the Conservative government's poor track record, we are calling on the government to accept mandatory reporting requirements so the Canadian public knows if the money promised in the budget is getting to those who need it the most.

• (1005)

Transparency and openness are the only things that will allow the government to regain its credibility on the economy and the quality of these upcoming reports will be the test of whether the government is defeated or not.

The Budget

The official opposition has only one priority at this moment: we must work together to get the economy back on track. At this point, nothing else matters. As representatives of the people, it is imperative that we work together for the best interests of Canadians to face today's challenges head on. We need to read the budget, reflect on it and then work together to improve it. These are the times to seek out common ground, not narrow partisan interests.

Our Liberal approach is to offer amendments to improve it, not to oppose it without a thought about its objectives or without any consideration for the plight of Canadians facing a tough financial crisis.

At the end of the day, this is all about accountability. Ironically, that is a principle that the Prime Minister has preached about for many years. In the past, when we talked to Canadians, they all agreed that he had not been able to deliver on his lofty promises. Now is the time to prove that he can be a man of his word and ready to show Canadians that the books are not being hidden from the public.

We, as the official opposition, have a duty to ensure that the responsibilities of the government are fulfilled. The government is in need of adult supervision. The mistakes of the past can be avoided in future if the guidance of Liberal experience in economic management is followed.

Year after year of balancing the books, paying down the debt, gaining confidence in the economy and cutting taxes is a record that has been erased in the last short three years. However, Canadians can now be assured that the Liberal Party will be guiding the economy into a better place from this point forward. Canada needs our support for the budget to weather this financial crisis and once again lead the G8 in economic growth, a feat that regularly occurred under the leadership of Liberal prime ministers.

The budget has potential, but it can only be realized if Canadians are convinced that their tax dollars are in steady hands and that the information they are being provided is accurate and true. That is why we are amending the budget and putting the Conservative budget on probation, to bring confidence back into the House of Commons.

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is probably appropriate to remind him that in the election in October 2008, Canada was facing some serious global financial pressures. When we went to the polls, the Canadian people looked at all the parties and all the leaders and made a very positive choice. They believed that the leader of the Conservative Party was the best person, leading the best party, to guide Canada through these difficult times.

The Canadian people have spoken, and I hope the Liberal Party will join the majority of Canadians and support the budget. I appreciate the comments they have made so far about how appropriate the budget is for Canadians. I can assure them that the Prime Minister of the government will certainly follow through on the plans that we have made and he will be a very strong leader through these difficult times where global pressures have put so many challenges on our economy.

The preparation work that the government did, getting our books and our fundamental financial tools in order, will help us get through this time of challenge as well.

I am sure the member realizes that. We look forward to the cooperation from his party in these difficult times.

● (1010)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George. In September the Prime Minister and the Conservative Party said that we were not heading into a recession and that they were going to bring in surplus budgets, budget after budget.

Through the united efforts of the opposition parties, we have brought out the honesty and the truth that we are now going through a massive economic crisis. It is the opposition parties that deserve the credit for bringing the truth and the real books out into the public today.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises many good points about how the building Canada fund has not flowed and he has made good points about the credibility of the Prime Minister to deliver what his lips say.

However, my question for the hon. member for Newton—North Delta is simple. Given that his words indicate he has little, if any, confidence in the Prime Minister, the government and this budget, why did he vote for the budget?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Superior North.

When it comes to the budget, my leader along with the other members of the Liberal Party went across Canada from coast to coast to coast. We listened to Canadians and they told us one thing: this is not the time to play partisan politics. They said that we should get behind it so we could bring the economy of the country to a good state.

We do not believe in the Prime Minister. Canadians do not believe in the Prime Minister's accountability. That is why we put him, the party and the budget on probation. Mandatory reporting to the House and to Canadians every three months will bring accountability.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to join in this debate and bring the concerns of the people of Cape Breton—Canso to this House and to this debate.

Imitation is sometimes considered flattery. When the government lifts aspects of another party's platform, that is considered flattery. If only one is taken, that is considered theft. When a government takes a number, then I guess that is market research. I have to commend the government on some aspects of its budget because it has done some market research.

I want to identify two aspects specifically and the first is the RInC program. The RInC program was put forward in our platform in the last election. It makes a great deal of sense because many arenas and facilities were built during the 1967 centennial year and through the early seventies. Many of these facilities need retrofits.

The Budget

My riding of Cape Breton—Canso has a number of facilities that need work, whether it is roofing, condensers or compressors. Whole physical plants require some type of investment. Many times the groups that operate these facilities are handcuffed financially. This program is going to pay dividends and hopefully offer some help. If those guys can get it off the shelf and get the cheques flowing, the program will help some small communities and municipalities that really need help in those areas.

The other aspect is the summer jobs program. I am sure there are people on the government side who are pretty uneasy with this one because they only have to think back two years ago when they carved the summer jobs program. We on this side of the House brought that fight to the government at the time.

Not for profit organizations were hurt by that. Small entrepreneurs and small businesses utilized the summer seed programs. Students were hurt by those cuts. We brought that fight to the House and we forced the government to put money back into that program. It would be great if the money gets out.

It is great that a program is going to be announced soon for summer students. I would hope that it would focus not only on not for profit organizations or those many community groups that operate summer programs but as well focus on small, independent entrepreneurs so there is some type of assistance for them. I would also hope it would be able to give students not just some summer employment but give them the experience of the first or second job as well, the work skills that are necessary to grow and become better citizens of our communities.

Those are two aspects in this sweater vested Parliament that we are in right now that are of concern to me and my constituents. We were sent here by our communities to try to make this government work and do what we can to help this economy along in these challenging times. That is what we as the official opposition are focusing on.

We can look at all aspects of the budget and cherry-pick if we like. We can say there is not enough in this area or that area.

My colleague from B.C. spoke so eloquently about the delay in getting this stimulus package out. We have known since June that the economy in this country and the global economy was going to face challenges. We knew back then. However, the Prime Minister thought that an election being called in September, really an unlawful and illegal election, would stimulate our economy.

We came to this Parliament following the election in October and the Speech from the Throne was presented. We thought we were going to be able to get on with the work of the people, but the Prime Minister came through with an economic statement that was really an ideological statement that sucker punched the Parliament of Canada, so we lost additional time again.

•(1015)

When the indicators were there in June, when it was obvious in September, Conservatives continued to deny that we were facing these challenges and it is only now that this stimulus package is coming forward. Whether it is enough, it may be the glass of water for the man who needs the gallon of water, but it is something. My

friend said it is like putting snow tires on in the middle of May. I know there is still bad weather ahead.

Thankfully for past Liberal governments, we went into this thing later than the United States because of a firm financial foundation that had been established and the consecutive surplus budgets experienced by past Liberal governments. In the short two years that the Conservatives have had the levers of government, we know that surpluses are no more. We know we are going into this budget with close to an \$18 billion deficit.

Yes, with our amendments, we will support these initiatives whether or not they are ready. I mentioned a couple of times the inability of the government. I refer to the article in *The Toronto Star* which said \$8 billion had not been spent. The inability of the government to make those programs work, to make those investments, to get those dollars into the economy is going to be the challenge and hopefully our amendment will allow us to best track that.

We do not have to reinvent the wheel here. There are shovel-ready projects out there and I have had the opportunity to meet with the warden in Inverness, Duart MacCaulay and John Boudreau in Richmond County and Billie Joe MacLean in Port Hawkesbury. These municipal leaders have projects on the shelf. They are shovel-ready, so the templates which are in place are the ones that should be used to get these projects up and going to get people back to work and to make sure that those projects move forward.

In Cape Breton—Canso we apologize if we might be a little bit cynical because the government has said the absolute right things. When we talk about investment in the Atlantic gateway program, the government has said the right things all along in making key investments, but we have seen not a dime. We have seen nothing spent on that program.

Conservatives have a twinning highway project from Port Hawkesbury to Antigonish which was announced five times and it is in the budget again this time, so that is just the gift that keeps on giving, but the work has not been done and those contracts have not been let. We are here to help the government get that money off the truck, get that money into the economy and get it done.

I would be remiss in addressing the House if I did not share with my colleagues some disappointment at the risk of picking one program over another, but the lack of acknowledgement for the widows and the veterans independence program continues to be a thorn in my side. I continue to be disappointed in the government when the Prime Minister unequivocally stated that he would support the veterans independence program when he made a pledge to Joyce Carter. Sue King phones every day and asks how the veterans program is coming along. Some 70% of the widows of our veterans still receive no assistance from that program and that is just wrong. It would have been nice to see some type of acknowledgement for that program. Again, I had to put that on the record.

Ronald Dipenta, a strong advocate for seniors, made interventions to my office on behalf of seniors who are experiencing tough times. It would have been nice to see an increase in the guaranteed income supplement. We have not seen that and it is unfortunate.

The Budget

•(1020)

When we look at the industries, I think the fishery is one that was neglected in this budget.

I will just wrap up with this comment, Mr. Speaker, you have been so gracious with the time allocation.

There are fish buyers who do not have access to capital to get up and operate this coming season. I know that is going to be a challenge. A lot of the time these are loan guarantees, and that would have been a program that would have certainly benefited the fishery and all those in that industry.

I have taken up enough of my allocated time. I would hope that some members might have some questions for me.

•(1025)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Cape Breton—Canso spoke of the need for key investments. Perhaps the member could inform the House what market research his party and the Conservative government would have relied upon to strike support for the renewable energy sector and the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council in this budget that he is voting for?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member has a great deal of depth in that particular area. Generally what we, and I think probably most members in this House, did after prorogation is we went out and met with constituents and stakeholders.

For the people showing up in my office who have not been afforded the opportunity to receive training monies, we do not need a whole lot of statistical information. We can look across the desk and see the stress and pressure these people are under.

Those who work in seasonal industries are not confident that those industries are going to be able to start up this year because the companies they have worked for do not have access to operational capital.

As far as specific information on background and research, there is enough in the faces of the people we deal with on a day on day basis to understand the challenges taking place right now in the kitchens of this country.

I do not know what being thrust into an election would do to help this economy move along. There has to be some stimulus. That stimulus has to get out there. Hopefully the government, with the acceptance of our amendment making sure that those investments are made, will best serve Canadians.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is along the lines of what the last questioner mentioned and it is for the ears of the government members as much as it is for my hon. friend here.

What does the absence of investing in Genome Canada, the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research mean? If we look at what is happening south of the border, President Obama is making a huge investment in these areas. He knows that research and development has a huge multiplier effect.

What that is going to mean for us is that with this huge investment by the United States we are going to see a loss of the brain trust that we have in our country, a loss of years of being able to draw in some of the best and brightest minds we have seen in health care, in the sciences and in engineering.

Starting in late 1990s the then-Liberal government made a huge change and made a huge investment in research and development which brought our country from being about sixteenth in the world up to about third or fourth in the world.

I would like to ask my friend, does he not think that this gross omission in this budget puts the hard work that we have done to get some of the best and brightest minds in our country in science, research and engineering in the sciences at risk? We will lose large numbers of some of the best and brightest researchers in the world, which is going to cause a really massive structural problem and a deficit for our economy.

We need the huge multiplier effect that is produced in science and engineering. It improves our economy significantly. This absence, this omission is really going to compromise our economy in a big way.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca has been a champion in this area and has certainly brought that to our Liberal caucus. He speaks very eloquently and very passionately about the importance and significance of those investments and the long-term benefits.

I vividly recall, back in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the whole talk around our university and college communities was about the brain drain, how we were losing the best and the brightest. Without rehashing too much of the history, we all understand that the research chairs had been established and those numbers have grown. We no longer hear about the brain drain.

If we do not make those investments, if we do not continue to support those initiatives, then once again we will place ourselves at risk. It is an incredibly important aspect; it is an incredibly issue. We want to come out of this period in time of economic challenges on the absolute best footing. I think those investments are wise investments to make, so that they do best prepare us for future jobs in the future economy.

•(1030)

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time this morning with the member from the beautiful riding of South Shore—St. Margaret's.

It is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to rise in the House today to speak on behalf of the people of Brant.

Brant is made up of the city of Brantford, the county of Brant, Six Nations of the Grand and the Mississaugas of the New Credit, a diverse community, rich in heritage.

Each community is unique but its people are bound nonetheless by a common history and a common cause: to contribute, to prosper and to give the next generation hope for a better life than they themselves have had. That is simple, some might say, and obvious, yet so often forgotten in the pursuit of personal agendas.

The Budget

Agriculture has been and always will be an integral part of Brant's history. While farm families in St. George, Paris and Burford grew the food we ate, thousands more, many of them immigrants to this land, built farm equipment in Brantford's factories like Cockshutt Farm Equipment, Massey Ferguson and White Farm Equipment.

Canada's farmers continue to strive to develop innovative, high quality food products for Canada's families and markets abroad. In Brant they form a solid economic foundation for the rural communities in which they live and work. Despite strong economic gains in some sectors over the past two years, Canada's farm sector is not isolated from the current economic downturn. Some farmers, such as livestock producers, are facing higher input prices and many are affected by low and volatile commodity prices.

Since 2006 the government has introduced major enhancements to agricultural programming. The new suite of business risk management programs launched in April 2008 provides comprehensive protection against income variability, natural hazards and disasters.

Our government's economic action plan announces new measures to build on this strong foundation. The government will implement a five year, \$500 million agricultural flexibility program that will facilitate the implementation of new initiatives, both federally and in partnership with provinces, territories and industry. This program will help farmers adapt to the pressures and improve their competitiveness. The plan announces proposed amendments to the Farm Improvement and Marketing Cooperatives Loans Act to help make credit available to new farmers and support intergenerational farm transfers.

At the birth of the last century, Brant was the third largest manufacturing centre in Canada, third only to Montreal and Toronto. Those first tractors made in Brantford's factories supplied a global market moving toward modernized farming.

Today global events are shaping the riding of Brant as they have in the past. A global recession originating in the United States threatens us here at home. The first priority for all of us is to protect each other during this global recession

Our government's economic action plan accomplishes this by, among other measures, extending EI benefits to a maximum of 50 weeks; providing \$400 million to support on reserve housing; providing another \$400 million for low income seniors housing; extending the wage earner protection program to cover severance and termination pay owed to eligible workers impacted by an employer's bankruptcy; and yes, tax cuts, particularly for low to middle income Canadians, a total of \$4.3 billion in personal income tax relief.

However, we must not forget the desire of Canadians to give to the next generation hope for a better life than they themselves have had. The economic action plan provides for \$12 billion in infrastructure spending not only to create jobs but to engage in nation building by building roads, universities and recreational facilities. The plan provides for two year targeted funding of \$165 million for the completion of drinking water and waste water infrastructure projects to address the health and safety priorities in first nation communities across the country.

Unprecedented economic times require creative economic solutions. The introduction of Canada's renovation tax credit is one such solution.

I dare say the vast majority of Canadians who enjoy the pride of home ownership have at least one project in mind to improve their home and their investment. Further, I would go so far as to say that every member in the House today has a project in mind for their home, if they own one, and this may not include the project that their spouse or partner has in mind. How do I know this? Experience. I have over two decades of construction experience specializing in home renovation, at first swinging a hammer, mixing concrete, sweeping the sawdust from the floors and later on, as the business grew, helping families at their kitchen tables design, develop and fulfill their dreams. For a time I served as president of the Ontario Home Builders' Association and as chair of the Ontario Renovators' Council.

I can tell the House from that experience that during the new home construction downturn of the early 1990s renovation work kept food on the table of many a tradesperson. Men and women, skilled and unskilled, were able to keep working and stay off the unemployment line.

• (1035)

Our government has listened, designed and developed the home renovation tax credit. This highly stimulative measure will provide up to \$1,350 in tax relief to reduce the cost of renovations for an estimated 4.6 million Canadian families.

The first-time homebuyers' tax credit will provide \$750 in tax relief to first-time homebuyers, money that can be spent by young families on furnishing homes, perhaps furnishing a nursery. As well, first-time homebuyers will be able to increase their RRSP withdrawal amount from \$20,000 to \$25,000 to purchase a home.

In addition, our action plan adds \$300 million over two years to the eco-energy home retrofit program, which is expected to support an additional 200,000 energy-saving home retrofits.

It is important to remember that there is a tenfold spinoff to home building and renovation spending. Manufacturing is supported to produce building products. Distribution systems deliver those goods to the work site. Retailers benefit from purchases by homeowners during and after the project is completed through purchases of appliances, electronics, window coverings, furniture and much more. As one old-timer said to me when I told him I was a renovation contractor, "Ah, renovation, that's a cat with a long tail".

The Budget

In closing, this week our government delivered an economic action plan for an unprecedented time in our history. It is a plan built on unprecedented consultation, a plan built on pragmatic and practical approaches, and a plan that responds to the needs of honest, middle-class Canadians, hard-working Canadians who play by the rules, just like the good people of Brant.

● (1040)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his remarks and comments on Brant. I recognize the great agriculture viability in that area. However, I was surprised that he is so supportive of the budget. The budget is a record of failure on the agricultural policies of the government.

We know that during the election there were commitments made for tobacco producers, some in his riding and neighbouring ridings. Where is the commitment to tobacco producers in this budget?

Beef and hog producers in his riding are very much in disarray. They are facing the greatest crisis in Canadian history in the livestock industry. There is nothing in the budget for them.

In fact, the government talks a lot about the \$500 million agriculture flexibility proposal it promised over four years in the election campaign. The budget claims it is \$500 million and now is over five years, but when we look at the budget document, it is really only \$190 million over five years. The rest is re-profiled agricultural funding.

How can the member go home and face his producers on that kind of record of failure, ignoring the agricultural industry and the primary producers that reside in his riding?

Mr. Phil McColeman: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question and comments regarding the agriculture industry and in particular how it is affecting our ridings. I can tell him that we had extensive prebudget consultations with many of the farmers in our communities, including pork and hog producers, grain and oilseed farmers, the tobacco producers and dairy farmers. I can assure him that we have listened and responded.

To correct the record, our offer to the tobacco producers stands. It is being worked on right now between the tobacco producers of Ontario and the Government of Canada. I can also tell him that what is lacking is the provincial government's participation in a buyout program to take the quota to \$1.74, which is being requested.

On that specific file, there is much happening. The revenue provided by our government to the tobacco farmers will be delivered in our jurisdictions. We listened to the pork and hog producers. We have extended the amount of time they have to pay back the loans they took out, which were of a one-year duration. They have now been moved to two- and three-year durations to give them time to work things out in their industry during these tough economic times.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is with interest that I heard the hon. member for Brant speak with pride about a relatively small amount of tax cuts for the middle class. When I did my 13 community road tour, people said that they do not want a small tax cut that they would use to buy a Chinese television. What they want is investments in Canada and in northwestern Ontario. They want health care and clean water. They want an urban aboriginal strategy, not just an on reserve strategy.

They want child care. They want adequate funding for aboriginal students who currently, through INAC, get along on half the stipend that the province of Ontario provides to non-aboriginal students. They want mass transit and a rail system across Canada that we can be proud of. Rather than renewed moneys for old technologies and nuclear and oil, they especially want sustainable energy, such as solar, wind and water.

Why is the hon. member for Brant not willing to invest in a Canada that we can be proud of?

● (1045)

Mr. Phil McColeman: Mr. Speaker, to the contrary, on all fronts, we are investing in infrastructure in historic ways. We are about to nation build through the infrastructure projects, similar to, as was mentioned by the member across, the 1967 initiative for recreational facilities. My community benefited from that initiative in 1967. My father, a firefighter, actually was part of the public fundraising side of it to produce that wonderful civic centre in our community, and it is time now to renew it.

In my riding the infrastructure development for universities and for all roads and buildings would be welcomed through this budget. I have had comments from constituents to date to indicate that. I am thrilled to go home and discuss what we are doing for the people of Brant.

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in debate today. I would like to take a moment to recognize the hon. member for Brant. I believe this was his maiden speech in the House, and certainly, we can see why he was elected by the good people of Brant. I congratulate him.

I would like to spend some of my time today in drawing attention to the aspects of the economic action plan that will directly benefit the residents of South Shore—St. Margaret's, my riding in Nova Scotia.

The plan will have a significant impact on the province of Nova Scotia. We will see an increase in federal transfers. We will see improvements to our infrastructure. We will see tax relief. We will see a strengthened province of Nova Scotia emerge from these turbulent economic times.

Nova Scotia will receive support through major federal transfers in 2009-10. This long-term growing support helps ensure that the province has the resources required to provide essential public services and contributes to shared national objectives, including health care, post-secondary education and other key components of Canada's social safety net.

The Budget

Total federal support for Nova Scotia since our government came to power has increased 14% and will continue to grow. Total federal support reached \$2.7 billion in 2008-09, a \$363 million increase from 2005-06. Nova Scotia this year will receive \$1.5 billion in equalization and the accord offsets this year, a 14% increase from when the Liberals were in government. By having equalization grow in line with the economy, we ensure the program remains sustainable and affordable, something I think all Canadians would support.

Nova Scotia will also benefit from an initial Crown share settlement payment of \$234 million this year. Our government has guaranteed that Nova Scotia is the chief beneficiary of its offshore resources. The Crown's share settlement payment along with those offshore resources signifies Nova Scotia's share of those resources, something which the previous government refused to share with the province of Nova Scotia.

\$334 million in gas tax rebate funding for 2007-14 has begun flowing and will flow to Nova Scotia municipalities through the extension of the gas tax agreement from 2010-14. That is \$334 million over a seven year period going directly into Nova Scotia municipalities. Even as Nova Scotia sees above average natural resource revenues, we will protect its equalization and accord offsets from declining under the current formula, with fiscal capacity measured exactly as in 2005.

Aggregate entitlements continue to grow by 3.5%. We are protecting transfer support to Nova Scotia. Federal financing to the province of Nova Scotia will be assured, dependable and predictable. Health transfers will continue to grow by 6%. Social transfers will continue to grow by 3%.

Nova Scotia will also benefit from continued, targeted support in 2009-10, including \$46 million as its share of the following: the \$1.5 billion clean air and climate change trust, the \$1 billion community development trust, the \$612 million patient wait times guarantee trust, the \$500 million public transit capital trust, the \$400 million police officers retirement fund and the \$300 million HPV immunization trust.

All of those funds and trusts continue to give dollars to Nova Scotia and continue to help the citizens of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia will receive \$14 million for labour market training as part of a commitment of \$500 million a year and new funding to provinces and territories beginning in 2008-09. Nova Scotia will benefit from the increased funding for infrastructure. We will be accelerating and expanding recent historic investments in infrastructure with almost \$12 billion in new infrastructure spending over five years.

That type of investment by the Government of Canada will provide Nova Scotia with its share of the \$4.5 billion over two years for infrastructure projects such as bridge rehabilitation on the national highway system. It will accelerate payments up to \$75 million over two years for infrastructure projects in Nova Scotia alone and provide \$3.9 million in one instance alone for harbour development at the lower east Pubnico wharf.

I, along with the member for West Nova, worked on this project. Although it is outside of my riding in Nova Scotia, this is a great project and the type of project that will ensure that the fishery will continue to prosper and gain momentum in Nova Scotia and not

become some relic of the past. By investing in our coastal communities and the wharf, we can ensure that the fishery that starts at the wharf has a wharf to return to, the processing industry remains strong and that it continues to be a viable part of Nova Scotia's economy.

There is action in the budget to support businesses and communities, addressing short term economic challenges facing sectors, such as forestry, regions and communities as a result of the global economic crisis. Let us be clear. There is a global economic crisis. We need to be very much aware and very careful where the future takes us.

Support for the forestry sector alone is \$170 million nationally over two years. The budget invests \$500 million nationally in the agriculture industry. I listened to the former member say that there was nothing in the budget for agriculture. Half a billion dollars on top of the money we have already invested in agriculture is a significant investment. There is support for shipyards, with \$175 million invested nationally.

This budget will invest \$246 million nationally in cultural and arts programming and the tourism industry.

● (1050)

All of us in this place have a political bias. All of us tend to want to support, first, our constituencies; second, our provinces; and third, our national party. We look at the local picture, the micro-picture and the macro-picture of what is going on in the nation.

I seldom quote other writers in my speeches in the House but this time most of the budget and what it means to the ordinary man and woman on the street trying to work for a living, trying to make ends meet and trying to raise their families in Canada has been neatly written up by Ray Turchansky in the *Edmonton Journal*. He says, "The basic amount", in addition to government stimulus, "the budget hoped to give people the impetus to save and then to spend".

I think those are very correct and wise words. The basic personal amount, on which we pay no federal tax, already slated to go up from \$9,600 to \$10,100 due to indexing, now goes to \$10,320, after which we pay 15% tax.

Statements by Members

The 22% tax bracket started at \$37,885 in 2008. It was indexed to \$38,832 and now opens at \$40,727. The 26% bracket that began at \$75,769 last year was already bumped up to \$77,664 and now starts at \$81,452 this year. These are major tax reductions for Canadians who are finding it more difficult to make ends meet. This, along with the 15% tax credit for people 65 and over, applied to an age amount of \$5,276 last year, indexed to \$5,408 and now stands at \$6,408. These have been a major improvements to the taxation system.

There have been changes and gains to RRSPs and RRIFs. First-time home buyers acquiring or qualifying for a home can get a 15% tax credit on \$5,000.

This is a good budget. It is good for Canadians and certainly good for people in my riding of South Shore—St. Margaret's. I urge all opposition members to lay partisan politics aside and support the budget.

• (1055)

Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for South Shore—St. Margaret's went on ad nauseam about all of the benefits included in the budget and talked about the various tax breaks. There is one thing in the budget for which I have difficulty understanding the rationale and that is the removal of \$1.5 billion from Newfoundland and Labrador.

Could the member explain the government's rationale for making that decision?

Mr. Gerald Keddy: Mr. Speaker, the member for Random—Burin—St. George's would certainly know that the budget is good for Newfoundlanders and good for Atlantic Canadians.

The principle of having equalization increase along with the economy guarantees and ensures that equalization will be there for this generation and future generations of Canadians.

The budget and the tax breaks that go along with it, the investments in infrastructure, the investments in forestry, the investments in science and technology and the investments in tourism, are good for all Canadians and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Speaker: Although there are a few minutes left for questions and comments, in light of the hour, I will move on to statements by members, but we can resume questions and comments later.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

NATURAL DISASTERS

Hon. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on December 28, 2008, 11 young men went snowmobiling in the back country of the Elk Valley. Regrettably, only three returned. A succession of avalanches swept over them.

The deaths of Daniel Garry Bjarnason, Warren Ivan Rothel, Blayne Joseph Matthew Wilson, Michael Ernest Stier, Leonard Ernest Stier, Rodney Kane Rusnak, Thomas Michael Talarico and Kurt Jackson Kabel ripped a hole in the lives of their families and their community.

Sparwood residents embraced the families and more than 2,000 people from throughout the valley attended a memorial service in their memory. Tributes to these fine Canadians poured in from far and wide.

I wish, on behalf of all members of the House, to extend to their families, loved ones and their three friends who survived this tragedy, Jeff Adams, James Drake and Jeremy Rusnak, our deepest condolences.

* * *

SRI LANKA

Hon. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for three years, the Canadian government has watched in silence as innocent civilians in Sri Lanka have been victims of their own country's armed forces.

When aid workers were executed by soldiers, Canada was silent. When hospitals, schools and churches were bombed, Canada was silent. Forced deportations, countless atrocities, mass disappearances and still silence.

The Sri Lankan government heard that silence loudly and now has forced a quarter of a million people into the jungle while banning foreign journalists from seeing the truth.

There is no more time for silence. Civilians are today the homeless targets of government bombing and shelling. I call upon the Canadian government to finally stand up for the human rights of the Tamil civilians and join international efforts to prevent one of the greatest humanitarian disasters of the century.

* * *

• (1100)

[Translation]

CHILD SERVICES ORGANIZATION IN LAVAL

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, every time an abused child is trusting enough to share his pain, his problems or his secret with a worker at La Maison des enfants le Dauphin, he finds a listening ear and someone worthy of his trust. As Quebec filmmaker Rock Demers puts it so well, giving children a chance to laugh prepares them for life better than making them cry.

No doubt that is one of the main reasons this agency, which is a true Quebec success story, was presented with the 2008 Marie-Vincent Award, which recognizes outstanding work by an individual or organization in the field of child abuse prevention and treatment.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues join me in congratulating the whole team at La Maison des enfants le Dauphin in Laval, as well as the organization's many volunteers, on doing such an excellent job.

* * *

[English]

THE BUDGET

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative budget will not protect the most vulnerable, will not safeguard jobs today and will not create the new jobs of tomorrow.

Statements by Members

The budget contains \$60 of corporate tax cuts for every dollar to help the unemployed. In my riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan, people were hoping for much more. They know that it is their neighbours who help our local economy thrive, not bankers on Bay Street.

In recent years, six in ten unemployed men and seven in ten unemployed women failed to qualify for any benefits, even though they paid EI premiums. The rates for employment insurance are tied to the Vancouver labour market so our unemployed workers needed the maximum number of hours to qualify for EI.

Records at the Service Canada office in Duncan show that 600 more people applied for EI in the last quarter of 2008 than the year before. My constituents wanted the two week waiting period for EI benefits dropped so their neighbours would not need to wait for money and depend upon food banks to feed their families. They wanted the number of hours needed to qualify for EI reduced so more neighbours would receive EI and stop worrying about not making mortgage payments.

The budget does not work for the most vulnerable Canadians.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first, allow me to thank all of those in the Palliser riding who helped put me in this seat in the House of Commons. I thank my wife, Sandy, my campaign team, and, of course, the voters of Palliser.

I rise in the House today as a rookie member of Parliament. I consider it a privilege to serve my country as a parliamentarian. In this role, Canadians trust me and all of us as parliamentarians to behave in a professional manner and to act in the best interests of Canadians.

On January 27, faced with enormous global economic challenges, the government delivered an historic budget. This economic action plan is critical for our country. As such, I call upon all members to work together to ensure that this document passes quickly.

I was elected as a parliamentarian to act in the best interests of our great country and I intend to do so. I hope and expect that all members of this House will do the same.

* * *

LABRADOR INUKTITUT LANGUAGE

Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Moravian Church, one of the oldest Protestant denominations, was established in Labrador over 250 years ago.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Moravian missionaries and Inuit congregation members patiently translated the Bible into the Labrador Inuktitut language.

Over the centuries the language has evolved, and so a new translation was required. Some years ago a group of concerned Moravians and Inuktitut language experts started that monumental task.

With the support of the Canadian Bible Society, this work is now complete. Last week the new translation, *Gûdip Ukausingit*, was

launched at a special service and ceremony in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

On behalf of my constituents, I extend congratulations to translators K. Naeme Tuglavina, Amos Onalik, Sophie Tuglavina, Hilda Lyall, Andrea Webb, Sarah Townley, and Sabina Hunter, and to all of those who helped reach this important goal for the living Labrador Inuktitut language.

* * *

● (1105)

THE BUDGET

Mr. Ted Menzies (Macleod, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to emphasize the great investments that our government has put forth in its economic action plan.

This budget will provide tremendous benefits to my constituents in Macleod and to all Canadians.

For instance, budget 2009 introduced a \$500 million agricultural flexibility plan that will help farmers in my riding with rising input costs.

Our \$50 million investment over the next three years to expand slaughterhouse capacity is key to supporting our beef and dairy industries along with other livestock producers.

Seniors will also see new support through the increase in the age credit amount by an additional \$1,000.

As well, the new green infrastructure plan provides \$1 billion over five years for sustainable energy infrastructure.

This is a great initiative. I am eager for my riding of Macleod to be able to benefit from this fund, since Macleod is a renewable energy leader in this country.

* * *

[*Translation*]

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, students are once again among the groups that have been left in the lurch by the Conservative budget. Capping equalization will not solve this problem or correct the \$820 million shortfall for post-secondary education in Quebec. What is more, because infrastructure money will be allocated randomly in response to project submissions, instead of taking the form of federal transfers, there is no guarantee that post-secondary institutions in Quebec will get their fair share. Rather than solving the problem of education underfunding, the Conservative government is once again interfering in Quebec's jurisdictions.

Statements by Members

Even though the Prime Minister opened a door when he promised in 2005 to correct the fiscal imbalance, which is something all Quebecers want, the Conservative budget has slammed that door shut by not keeping that promise. For us in the Bloc Québécois and for other education stakeholders, such as the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec, the solution to university and college underfunding is to restore federal transfers to 1994 levels. We in Quebec need to give ourselves the tools to exercise our authority in the field of education.

* * *

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the economic action plan will boost Canada's economy through the construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure. The money will move quickly and construction will also start quickly. The project approval process will become more flexible and there will be less paper work and less red tape.

We have allocated \$212 million to renew the Champlain Bridge, which is the busiest bridge in Canada. Rehabilitation work will ensure that the bridge can continue to sustain traffic volumes and provide long-term safety benefits.

Work to be undertaken on the bridge includes improving access roads and the Île-des-Soeurs ramps. The government will invest in this project in order to align federal infrastructure with that of the City of Montreal.

Canada's economic action plan will help Canadians get through the global recession while ensuring that Canada will come out of this recession stronger than ever.

* * *

[English]

FIJI

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Fiji has just experienced massive floods that have caused millions of dollars in damage, displaced thousands of families, and killed several people.

All across Canada, Fijian families are concerned that the government has not reacted with any urgency. Canada has pledged no form of support to deal with this Fiji situation.

Canada has a long-standing tradition of providing humanitarian aid around the world. I ask the government to listen to Canadians of Fijian origin and provide the necessary humanitarian support that is needed for the people of Fiji.

* * *

OC TRANSPO STRIKE

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell the House that my constituents are extremely pleased that Parliament worked together to encourage an end to the OC Transpo strike. Many residents throughout my riding from Rockland to Russell, Embrun, Casselman and beyond faced considerable hardship commuting to their jobs in Ottawa during the

strike. They were delighted to hear last night that the transit strike has come to an end.

[Translation]

On behalf of the constituents in my riding, I would like to thank the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities for their work on this issue, as well as the members for Ottawa—Vanier and Ottawa Centre. With the support of the opposition parties, the members and senators were ready to stay late last night to quickly pass a bill to solve this problem.

The results show that the members of this Parliament can work together to help all Canadians.

* * *

•(1110)

[English]

THE BUDGET

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this February a number of students, including Christina Dymond, one of my constituents from the University of Alberta, will join an expedition to the Antarctic. The Students on Ice program takes students to the Arctic and Antarctic and offers a comprehensive field course on wildlife, history, geology and the environment. It is funded in part by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council. I am sure the House will join me in wishing Christina and the participating students a safe and rewarding expedition.

The polar regions have a profound significance for the earth's climate and ecosystems. Instead of lauding programs like this and investing in Canada's knowledge infrastructure, the budget, under the short-sighted guise of streamlining, slashes funding for the granting councils, including NSERC, which supports over 26,000 students and post-doctoral fellows in advanced studies.

The government must invest today in knowledge infrastructure and not kick the legs out from under Canada's long-term sustainability and competitiveness. Do not shortchange Canada's future.

* * *

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians were outraged to learn that the principal of a New Brunswick school banned the playing and singing of *O Canada*. Apparently he wanted to be inclusive.

This is political correctness run wild. There is nothing more inclusive than *O Canada*. It is a song that belongs to each and every Canadian.

The singing of *O Canada* is an expression of our collective pride in being citizens of one of the most prosperous and peaceful nations the world has ever known.

[Translation]

I hope that we can come together to convince the principal to reverse his decision and give *O Canada* back to the students in his school.

Oral Questions

[English]

This will demonstrate the importance of our national anthem as a symbol of our respect for this great country and the people who helped to build it.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in voting against the Bloc Québécois subamendment, the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party openly decided to abandon Quebec. Their Quebec representatives should have followed the example of two Liberal members from Newfoundland and Labrador who chose to oppose the budget because it is contrary to the interests of their province.

Thus, the Conservatives, propped up by the Liberals, are ignoring Quebec's concerns regarding the equalization ceiling. They are ignoring the many federal intrusions into Quebec jurisdictions. They are ignoring the unemployed, with only 47% having access to the employment insurance system. They are ignoring Quebec's manufacturing and forestry sectors that have been hit hard by the crisis.

The Bloc Québécois has put forward the unanimous priorities of the National Assembly of Quebec. They have been rejected by the Conservatives and the Liberals, who thus choose Canada over Quebec.

* * *

[English]

THE BUDGET

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the previous Liberal government had the foresight to make changes to the Atlantic accord, changes that helped the people of Newfoundland and Labrador get their economy back on track. However, since the current government has come to power, it has tried to claw back any advances the province has made, breaking an election commitment the Prime Minister made to the people of the province. This latest budget includes more harmful and offensive cuts to the province. Early calculations indicate cuts will amount to at least \$1.5 billion over three years. These changes are not right. They are not just.

I cannot help wonder if it is a direct retaliation for the “anything but Conservative” campaign the premier raised during the election.

This approach to federalism breeds an atmosphere of mistrust that will cause a number of problems. The province of Quebec and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador are targets of the Conservative government today.

Now is not the time to play politics. Now is the time to do what is right.

* * *

WARREN KINSELLA

Mrs. Alice Wong (Richmond, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my constituents are asking me why the Liberal leader is refusing to fire his top political aide, Warren Kinsella. Was Mr. Kinsella's

comment about tucking into a bowl of barbecued cat at the Yang Sheng restaurant here in Ottawa made in his role as Liberal Party spokesman?

His comments that Chinese restaurants serve cat meat deeply offended the Chinese community in Canada and have already been condemned in the *Sing Tao Daily*, *Ming Pao*, the *World Journal* and across Chinese language talk radio.

As Chinese Canadians and as people who appreciate the freedom and opportunity that Canada provides, my community and I are deeply offended by these racially ignorant comments from an official spokesperson for the Liberal Party. What hurts the most about Kinsella's comments is that he refuses to apologize to the Chinese community.

When will the leader of the Liberal Party realize the seriousness of this and when will we see an apology?

ORAL QUESTIONS

● (1115)

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the latest economic figures confirm a deepening recession in Canada. Real domestic product fell by 0.7% in November. Manufacturing and all major sectors are all sharply down.

However, while this was happening in November, and Canadians could feel that pain, the Conservatives were saying that they would still have five more surplus budgets. Their numbers were bogus and they knew it.

Does the government, now on probation, finally realize that it has to start telling the truth to its parole officer in this Parliament?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in our fall economic statement, which was not the budget by the way, we presented to the House the situation that was presented to us that day. Numbers were falling quickly. We recognized that.

In fact, we recognized this so early on as to the economic fall statement the year before where we took pre-emptive action, cut taxes, paid down debt, lowered the GST so Canadians would have more of their own money.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if they knew it all in advance, the plan certainly did not work. The Conservatives have to stop the spinning. The jig is up. The truth is out. Bafflegab will not work any more. Canadians and this Parliament are demanding the truth, complete accountability and real performance for a change.

For example, the Conservatives say that their budget will help small businesses to get loans through the Business Development Bank. However, since the budget, the BDC in Saskatoon is telling businesses that nothing has changed. It will not deal with those businesses because they were not customers in the past.

Oral Questions

What kind of help is that?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this provides a great opportunity to encourage my hon. colleague and all members on the other side of the House to support the budget.

The positions that we took, the stimulus that we put into the fall economic statement somehow, because of a threat of a coalition, seemed to not get passed through the House.

We will be bringing forward legislation that will allow BDC and EDC to help Canadians. I encourage all members of the House to support the budget.

* * *

TRADE

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, he should tell the BDC in Saskatoon to get its straight.

U.S. protectionism is about to make Canada's recession a lot worse. It is not good enough for those Conservatives to say they expect the Americans to live up to their obligations. The track record is not encouraging. On softwood lumber, the Conservatives capitulated. On the grain trade, despite 20 rulings in Canada's favour, the Conservatives caved in. On the oil sands, they let the Americans prohibit Canadian products.

How can we have any confidence that the government will actually fight for Canadian producers and exporters?

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do expect the Americans to live up to their international trading obligations. They have legal obligations under NAFTA. They have legal obligations under the WTO.

This is not the time for heightened rhetoric. This is the time for calm, reasonable discussions with our American counterparts. This is the time to seek an end to this type of protectionist talk. This is the time to move forward in a reasonable, practical way.

* * *

[Translation]

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister acknowledged yesterday that she was aware of what she described simply as "problems" at Chalk River on December 6.

Can she clarify for the House the exact nature of the details known to her or her office that day, and can she tell us exactly when she or her office was informed of these radioactive leaks?

[English]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister answered that question. She informed the House that there were difficulties on December 6 and that she was informed of those. She said that she was not aware of some of the details that later came to light. This is why she has asked the department, as well as the Nuclear Safety Commission, to get to the bottom of it.

• (1120)

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is the problem. On December 15, the minister released a statement on Chalk River. Eleven days after two radioactive leaks had occurred with no knowledge of the cause and with 7,000 litres of heavy water a day leaking into the Ottawa River, the minister told Canadians, "the reactor at Chalk River continues to produce isotopes reliably".

Was the minister negligent in the performance of her duties, or did she simply mislead Canadians?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Chalk River continues to produce isotopes for people around the world. The minister has asked officials and the CNSC to give a full report on what happened during the December shutdown.

We are very concerned about this issues. Obviously the health and safety of Canadians has always been our number one priority.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives and the Liberals were as thick as thieves yesterday, both parties rejecting the unanimous will of the National Assembly of Quebec by voting for a budget that clearly favours Ontario and western Canada to the detriment of Quebec. We are still searching the budget for signs of the big promises meant to correct the fiscal imbalance and provide adequate funding for post-secondary education.

Does the government understand that the only logical conclusion to be drawn is that it chose to put Canada first, to the detriment of Quebec?

[English]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking about logical solutions, that is why this government decided to put an end to fiscal imbalance. That is why we put a solution in place to fix equalization. Quebec's increase in equalization this year alone is 37% above where it was in 2005.

The government refuses to treat any province or any territory any differently than it does all of the rest.

[Translation]

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, now that the election is over, equalization agreements are no longer being respected and the supposed will to eliminate federal spending power is being brushed aside.

Given such clear evidence, will the government admit that in these difficult times, it chose to help Canada first, and tough luck for Quebec's priorities?

Oral Questions

[English]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the job of members of Parliament in the House to put Canada first. We will do that but not to the detriment of any individual province. We will treat all provinces and territories equally. That is why we continue to increase health transfers by 6% and social transfers by 3% to all provinces and all territories.

* * *

[Translation]

ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, not only has this government decided to ignore the priorities put forward by Quebec's National Assembly, but it is also attempting to reduce Quebec's weight and influence by proceeding with its electoral representation plan.

Will the government admit that, now that it has used the budget to seduce Ontario, it will not hesitate to sacrifice Quebec's political weight for purely electoral purposes?

[English]

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the representation of Quebec will certainly not be less than the 75 seats that it currently enjoys. We will be introducing legislation that will ensure Canadians are properly represented in the House.

I look forward to the support of all members of the House to support democracy.

[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, one does not need a math degree to understand that this will have a negative impact on the percentage of members from Quebec.

Ontario's premier has stated that the federal government will be giving even more seats to Ontario, thereby further diluting Quebec's political weight.

For the record, will the government confirm that it agreed to amend its electoral representation bill in favour of Ontario, while continuing to ignore Quebec?

• (1125)

[English]

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, one does not need a degree in math to see that 75 seats today is the same as what will be the number of seats in Quebec in the near future. We will ensure that all Canadians, including Quebecers, are well represented in this chamber.

Again, I look forward to working with all parties to ensure that the principles of Canadian democracy are maintained and enhanced.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to program reviews, Canadians know they

cannot trust that government. They know its record: cuts to the Food Inspection Agency, hidden cuts to status of women, ideological cuts to the Canadian arts and \$7.6 billion in allocated spending that never went out the door. Now it is planning hundreds of millions in new spending cuts.

Could the government please outline the programs it ideologically disagrees with and which ones are now up on the chopping block?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that the budget, which she intends to vote against, contains significant new investments in Canadian arts and support for artists.

Our government believes that we should carefully review every dollar spent in Canada. That is why we are conducting strategic reviews to ensure that every dollar we spend is absolutely as effective as it can possibly be.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, trust is in very little supply with the government. The Prime Minister talks tough about crime and law enforcement, but when it comes time to stand by those on the front lines, he leaves them in the cold.

The budget continues the government's betrayal of the RCMP wages by rolling them back after having signed a new contract with the RCMP only in November.

RCMP members are rightly disillusioned by this betrayal by the Harper government. If the RCMP can no longer trust the government, how can Canadians?

The Speaker: I would urge the hon. member, who is experienced in these matters, to avoid referring to hon. members by name. She will want to refrain from that activity.

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we value and respect the good work the RCMP is doing to keep our communities safe. It is critical, given our current economic circumstances, that we all tighten our belts. Everyone is being asked to do their fair share to help manage government expenditures. The RCMP is no different in this regard, and we appreciate its help.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, most Canadians think the RCMP is different, but that is the opinion of the government.

The government is full of lofty words and promises, but Canadians who actually look at the budget can see that the proof is not in the pudding.

The Conservatives are again making big promises to Tri-City residents about the Evergreen transit line. Yet the budget says only that the project could be funded. The Evergreen project still has to find millions in private capital, capital that simply is not there because of the credit crunch.

How does the government have the gall to continue to promise something that clearly may not happen—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transport.

Oral Questions

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to working co-operatively with the Government of British Columbia on the Evergreen line. The one big hurdle in the Evergreen line getting funded is the NDP voting against our budget.

The member opposite should support the government, support public transit and support British Columbia.

* * *

[Translation]

GENOME CANADA

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Genome Canada will run short of funding to honour its 2010 commitments, and what is more, it will be unable to fund long-term projects scheduled to begin this year. Since its inception in 2000, Genome Canada has received dedicated funding in each budget, but not this year.

Do the Conservatives realize that, in this time of crisis, some 2,000 highly skilled individuals working on 33 research projects will lose their jobs thanks to them?

[English]

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology), CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me be as clear as I was yesterday. In fact, I spoke to the chair of Genome Canada, Dr. Calvin Stiller, and he assured me that he was very satisfied and happy with the budget. In fact, this morning on the website it says, “Genome Canada is pleased with the federal government’s 2009 budget”. It goes on to say, “This is good news for the scientific community across the country”.

• (1130)

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State should have a look at today’s *Globe and Mail*.

Dr. Martin Godbout, president and CEO of Genome Canada, says that government funding does not coincide with project funding. Genome Canada cannot even ask anyone to propose research projects if it does not have money in the bank.

What does that mean? It means stagnation or, in other words, an end to growth in the cutting-edge research sector and an end to the creation of jobs of the future. What are Canadians going to believe: what Genome Canada says or the Minister of State’s blah, blah, blah?

[English]

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would certainly believe the facts. I would not do my research through newspapers. I would do my research through pure facts.

This government is absolutely committed to the scientific community across this nation: researchers, infrastructure, labs. That is why, prior to this week, we put 2.4 billion new dollars into science and technology and this week we put \$3.5 billion into the science and tech community. I appreciate the member agreeing to support this budget.

EQUALIZATION PAYMENTS

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the budget lock-up, federal finance officials informed provincial finance officials that the federal government will amend the O’Brien formula through its yet-to-be-delivered budget implementation act by deleting the option of a province to exclude 50% of its non-renewable natural resources, thereby leaving only the 100% exclusion option.

Is this true? I remind everyone that other changes to equalization were previously announced, like the GDP-based cap. However, this one is very different. It was never before discussed. Is it true?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member from western Labrador is representing his constituents by asking that question. Let me state the facts. This government continues to respect the Atlantic accords. In fact, Newfoundland and Labrador will receive a projected \$1.2 billion in offset payments between 2009-10 and 2011-12. This \$1.2 billion is on top of the \$2 billion upfront payment for Newfoundland and Labrador in respect of the 2005 accord.

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, west Labrador is a beautiful place, but so is Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, where I come from.

All Canadians are looking at their government, their ministers and parliamentary secretaries, the ones who are responsible for this budget, to lead us in a time of crisis. That leadership is missing. Providing straight answers to direct questions is what this is all about. It is what Canadians expect.

The O’Brien panel of experts made one specific, key recommendation concerning the handling of non-renewable natural resources: “A 50% exclusion option strikes the right balance”. Yet, this is the very recommendation, the one option now apparently being deleted by this government. This is not the time—

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my apologies to the hon. member. I guess it just proves that I need to spend more time in Newfoundland and Labrador. My apologies for that.

In fact, the transfers continue to climb for Newfoundland and Labrador, as a matter of fact, \$372 million this year alone through the Canada health transfer. That is an increase of \$11 million. The Canada social transfer which is \$164 million on top of \$3 million last year. However, let me quote Premier Williams: “The have-province role in fact means more money for us. We receive less money from—”

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

[Translation]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF CANADA FOR THE REGIONS OF QUEBEC

Mr. Claude Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government expects to revive the Quebec economy with this new budget. However, there was not one word about development of the regions, such as the Lower St. Lawrence, which have already been affected by cuts to non-profit economic organizations announced by this government.

Will the Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) restore funding to non-profits such as Technopole maritime du Québec and Corporation de soutien au développement technologique des PME?

• (1135)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) will work in partnership with all economic stakeholders from every Quebec region in order to implement a strategic plan to stimulate the Quebec economy.

Mr. Claude Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): The government has given more handouts to Ontario, in particular by creating a southern Ontario development agency. When can we expect this government to adopt a comprehensive and constructive approach for Quebec regions by restoring funding to these organizations?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC): Mr. Speaker, cooperation and solidarity are values promoted by the Quebec nation. I urge Bloc members to adopt these values and to vote for this budget in order to put in place the stimuli to create employment as quickly as possible.

* * *

GENOME CANADA

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State (Science and Technology) said yesterday that Genome Canada had the funds it needs to carry out its mandate. Yet according to that organization's president, there is still a shortfall, varying between \$60 million and \$160 million, that will affect calls for tenders for new projects.

Can the minister confirm today that the budget's silence does not signal a definitive cut to this organization's funding?

[English]

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology), CPC): Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that there are no cuts to Genome Canada. In fact, let me read one more time: "Genome Canada is pleased with the federal government's 2009 budget—". That is from the board of directors of Genome Canada.

This is good news for the scientific community across this country. This government is absolutely dedicated to the science and technology community, but the member over there intends to vote

Oral Questions

against all that support for our scientists, for our universities, for our colleges. That is a shame.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board gave a convoluted answer yesterday when he was asked for clarifications about the government's intentions regarding public sector compensation.

Are we to understand that, from what is stated in the budget, the government intends not only to force new salary conditions on the public sector in the future, but also to reopen collective agreements that have already been signed, as clearly indicated in last November's economic statement?

[English]

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Treasury Board's intention to treat public service workers equally and fairly during these difficult times, with responsible collective bargaining.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the 2009 budget reveals that if the government had fulfilled its budgetary obligations in 2007-08, it would have barely balanced its books, instead of the \$9.6 billion it claimed it had.

Is the real reason the government has been holding back on program spending for infrastructure and other job creation measures is to disguise the fact that the government's bad fiscal management already placed us on the verge of a structural deficit, well in advance of the current economic crisis?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, nearly \$8 billion in federal stimulus was lapsed in 2007-08. That means that instead of the \$9.6 billion surplus it claimed, the real number was less than \$2 billion, if the government had let the funding flow.

What did it do next? It increased spending by the billions and eroded the tax base. Is this why the minister has only spent 5¢ for every dollar budgeted for infrastructure over the last two years? Has he been instructed to pad the books?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. We are working constructively with the provinces, with the municipalities, on projects around this country. I am particularly pleased to tell the member that we are working very cooperatively with my friend and my premier, Dalton McGuinty.

Oral Questions

● (1140)

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the human resources minister said yesterday that she did not want to make EI too “lucrative”. That is unbelievable. That is an outrageous insult to the hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers who are facing job losses and those already there.

Does the minister believe that Canadians would rather be unemployed, at a fraction of their salaries, than to be working and supporting their families? That is the kind of Reform Party thinking that should have evaporated years ago.

How can the minister responsible for supporting Canadian workers be so meanspirited, so insensitive, and so out of touch?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are concerned for every job that there is a loss of or a layoff, and we are ensuring this House that we will look after the workers when we need to do that. We have extended the EI benefits by five weeks. We have injected millions of dollars with respect to training and retraining people to ensure they can get new jobs. Whether they are on EI or not, we will look after our workers.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the most recent data from Statistics Canada indicates the average EI benefits are \$331 a week. How lucrative is that? Does the minister really think that by enhancing the system, people will find it too lucrative? How could she be so out of touch with the needs of working families, just as she seems unconcerned that the waiting period for EI recipients has increased under her watch?

Employment insurance is not a money-making enterprise. It is a social safety net. Canadians depend on it and believe in that system. Is it too much to expect that the minister might share those beliefs?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we realize that there will be more claims and we have done everything in our power to enhance our resources: hire more people, bring retirees in, and extend the hours of operation to ensure we can process the claims expeditiously. We have invested significantly: \$1 billion in addition to \$1.5 billion for training and retraining; \$500 million for those who do not qualify for EI benefits and are not in the program; and an additional \$500 million for long-tenured workers.

We will be looking after our workers during this difficult time.

* * *

[Translation]

OC TRANSPO STRIKE

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night the City of Ottawa and the Amalgamated Transit Union reached an agreement to finally end the strike and submit to arbitration.

[English]

Would the Minister of Transport and member for Ottawa West—Nepean please inform the House of the actions taken by parliamentarians to encourage an end to this crisis?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we were all tremendously pleased that members of the House were able to work in a co-operative manner to get the buses back on the street, including the work of the Minister of Labour, the member for Ottawa—Vanier and the member for Ottawa Centre, as well as many other members.

To put together legislation that can be supported by all members of the House is good news and that was obviously one of the key reasons the city and the union came to an agreement on a proposal that had been refused just 48 hours before. The federal mediator had been pushing this idea since December 9. We are all pleased that this is over and it shows that we can work together in a spirit of co-operation.

* * *

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, less than two months ago the Prime Minister said, “The government will never engage in a fire sale of assets”. Now the budget says that his government is going to sell \$10.1 billion worth of buildings with no business case presented at the worst possible time to sell real estate. Where there is smoke, there is fire. This is exactly the kind of fire sale that the Prime Minister promised we would never see.

Everyone can clap.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of working together, I see everyone is enjoying a laugh today.

I might remind the hon. member that this has happened in cases before where the potential sale of assets was booked in a previous budget. In fact, that happened with Petro-Canada under the Liberal government.

This government, for the first time in 15 years, has actually undertaken a review of whether or not all of the assets of this government need to be owned by government. It is only common sense. We are dealing with taxpayers' money.

● (1145)

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it does not seem to have anything to do with reason or logic or common sense. It is more of a neo-conservative ideology.

Oral Questions

When Michael Fortier sold off seven surplus buildings, which were not surplus, we still needed them, to Larco developments, we had to lease them back for 25 years, fully rented for 25 years. It is like some wet dream for real estate developers to get a deal like that.

If there was any merit in selling off publicly-owned buildings, why do the Conservatives not table that business case in the House of Commons? Or is this just another example of neo-conservative ideology trumping reason and logic and economics?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have known this member for many years and I am shocked at that kind of language. He wonders why he does not get any claps from his own members when there is that kind of language.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a recent decision, the Immigration and Refugee Board refused a lawyer's request to hold the proceedings in French. This decision goes against his client's interests as he wishes to be represented by his lawyer in French in order to have the best defence possible.

What does the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration intend to do to ensure that the IRB respects this person's right to be defended by his lawyer in French?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question, and I would like to congratulate him on his appointment as immigration critic.

Obviously Citizenship and Immigration Canada respect Canada's Official Languages Act. All Canadian citizens have the right to receive government services in both languages—and this is the case for all board and court proceedings. I will enquire as to what is happening with this case.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Natalie Morin and her three children have been stuck in Saudi Arabia since March 2005. She wants to leave the country with her children, but she cannot do so without permission from her husband, Saeed Al-Sahrami. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Natalie Morin on December 22, so the minister is aware of the situation.

Since that meeting between his parliamentary secretary and Natalie Morin, has the minister taken any new steps to bring Natalie Morin back to Canada as quickly as possible?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a very complex family dispute with no easy solution.

As the member has stated, I just visited Saudi Arabia in December and I met with the Saudi authorities and visited Ms. Morin and her family.

We are bound, however, by both Saudi law and our own adherence to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, under which children cannot leave without the father's permission.

With the assistance of Saudi officials, we are working to facilitate an agreement between Ms. Morin and her husband for a positive resolution to the case.

* * *

STATUS OF WOMEN

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the 2006 election campaign the Prime Minister pledged to uphold the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We have another broken promise.

CEDAW recently issued observations on Canada's record for women, which many have described as serious, disturbing and scathing. CEDAW stresses the leadership responsibility of the federal government.

When will the government show leadership, take action, and honour its commitment to uphold this UN convention?

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has consistently demonstrated its commitment to advancing the equality of women.

Our government increased the budget of the women's program by 42%. This is the highest level of funding ever. No other government has shown this kind of support for Canadian women in the history of our country.

This government has done more than make announcements. Unlike previous governments, we are taking action.

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that was the wrong answer sheet. I would like the question answered.

The report's observations spoke to the ongoing poverty of women, lack of adequate child care, lack of legal aid, inadequate housing, and the desperate conditions of aboriginal women.

Canada has fallen to 83rd on the UN gender disparity index, near the bottom, all because of a lack of leadership from the Conservative government.

When will the government take this matter seriously? When will it stand up for the rights of Canadian women? The budget again failed Canadian women.

● (1150)

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure why the member thinks my answer sheets match hers.

Oral Questions

The original 1976 mandate of Status of Women Canada remains unchanged, and I quote, “to coordinate policy with respect to the status of women and administer related programs”. The mandate of the women's program was revised to include equality of women and participation in democratic life. The mandate of the women's program is to advance the equality of women across Canada. It is a mandate that this government takes very seriously.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to first nations, the Conservative government gives with one hand and takes with the other.

Every year infrastructure money is moved to pay for emergencies or underfunded social programs. In the estimates tabled yesterday, the minister is moving thousands of dollars from infrastructure to pay for increased education costs.

First nations cannot have any confidence that the same game will not be played with funds announced in the budget.

Why can the government not get it right and keep its funding commitments to first nations?

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, budget 2009 invests an additional \$1.4 billion over three years for aboriginal priority spending. There is new money for housing, for water, for all of those priorities on reserves. I simply do not understand where the member is coming from.

The members of the NDP have already made up their minds that they are not going to support this good budget.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the budget also wasted another opportunity to bring education funding for first nations up to the same standards that other Canadians enjoy.

Because the government is stuck in the middle of a funding review, first nations students across the country are left wondering if they will be able to get post-secondary schooling.

Will the minister guarantee today that this review does not mean that there are more hoops for students to jump through and will he guarantee that the post-secondary student support program will remain a grants based program?

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government's commitment to improving first nations education and working in partnership with the province and first nations communities is clear.

The review we are doing was announced as part of budget 2008 and is to ensure that we are spending our money effectively to achieve the best possible results for aboriginal university and college students.

Whatever the concern, we have taken action. We will continue to take action. We are doing what is best for aboriginal students.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows, I am a retired teacher. One of the most important moments of each day was watching my students rise every morning for the singing of *O Canada*. Seeing our future generations show pride in their country means a lot to me.

I was very saddened to hear that the principal of a New Brunswick school has banned the singing of *O Canada* because he apparently believes it is not inclusive enough.

Will the government comment on this disrespectful and ill-informed decision to ban *O Canada*?

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), CPC): Mr. Speaker, as one of my colleagues stated earlier today, this is political correctness run wild. Canada is an inclusive country and we take tremendous pride in our national anthem. It is a song that is sung from coast to coast and it unites us as Canadians.

This government urges the principal to reverse his decision and bring back *O Canada* to his school.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Northside Civic Centre Society in my riding is waiting for action on an application it sent in for the construction of a new rink. The application has been sitting on a minister's desk since last spring. The community has raised its share of the money and has the site ready for construction.

Why do the people of Northside have to suffer so the federal Nova Scotia minister can cook the books?

• (1155)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said it has been on the minister's desk since early last year. I have only been the minister for two months.

I can indicate to the member opposite that we would be very pleased to look into his project and give it fair consideration.

The good news is our budget. We have a new program called RInC, and it sounds as though this project just might be eligible.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the people of Shannon were quite rightly furious when they found out that the federal government has known, since 1978, about the presence of TCE in their groundwater. They had been drinking water that the federal government knew was contaminated for 22 years. Ottawa completely abdicated its responsibilities. Not only did it fail to protect the people, but, through its inaction and negligence, it also condemned them.

Oral Questions

In light of this troubling information, does the Minister of National Defence believe that his government should make amends for the damage sustained by the people, starting with an immediate payout of the \$13 million in additional funding needed to complete work on the water system so that the people of Shannon can have uncontaminated drinking water? That is their right.

Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister is working with all of the stakeholders, including the municipality of Shannon, the City of Quebec, the Province of Quebec, Health Canada, Environment Canada, and the residents of Shannon. We believe that the best way to proceed is through the courts, not in the public arena.

It would be inappropriate for me to comment further on the matter at this time.

* * *

[*English*]

OMAR KHADR

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Mr. Speaker, clearly times have changed. A new day has dawned in the United States. The disgrace that was Guantanamo Bay will soon close, and military tribunals so devastating to fundamental human rights have been suspended.

The reputation of Canada must not be linked to such a disgraceful legacy. I ask the Prime Minister, when will the government relent and accept that Omar Khadr truly was a child soldier, do the right thing and bring Omar Khadr home?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have had the opportunity of mentioning it this week in the House, the Government of Canada's position has not changed. It is exactly the same position as was stated by the previous government.

This individual has been accused of very serious charges, including murder, terrorism and attempted murder. The new government of the United States, the new administration, has determined another course of action. We will wait and see until such time as decisions are made in that regard.

* * *

FOREIGN CREDENTIALS

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many newcomers to our great country continue to have difficulty finding the job that best suits their education and qualifications because their credentials are not fully recognized here in Canada.

Our Conservative government is committed to working with the provinces to make the recognition of foreign credentials a priority. Can the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism please tell this House how budget 2009 builds on this commitment?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue for new Canadians and our entire economy. That is why our government created the foreign credentials referral office and the Canadian immigration integration project overseas which, for the first time ever, is providing a head start for newcomers in the process of credential recognition before they even arrive in Canada.

It is why the Prime Minister met his platform commitment to raise this issue with the first ministers, recently developing a national action plan for credential recognition. It is also why we introduced \$50 million in additional investments to accelerate credential recognition, working with the provinces and the professional agencies. We are delivering for new Canadians.

* * *

PAY EQUITY

Mrs. Michelle Simson (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, will the government follow the example set by President Obama on pay equity legislation, or does the government believe Canadian women should have to get a U.S. green card to receive equal pay for work of equal value?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the time is right to move forward with a more modern and collaborative approach to ensuring equitable wages. This is a natural extension of the employer's duty to bargain in good faith and a union's duty of fair representation to its members. I might add that this is building on the work already done in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba.

This government is committed to the principle of equal pay for equal work, and we will proceed in that direction. Equality delayed is equality denied.

* * *

● (1200)

[*Translation*]

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, recent events in Chalk River raise some serious concerns about the safety of the NRU reactor, which, despite being over 50 years old, is still producing 70% of the global supply of medical isotopes.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources, who says she cares about the health and safety of the public, tell us whether she has a supply plan in place in case of a sudden shut-down, and can she make it available so that we need not relive the drama of December 2007?

[*English*]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the CNSC has assured the minister that the health and safety of Canadians is being protected in the production of the isotopes at the Chalk River facility. Obviously the health and safety of Canadians has been our number one priority since the beginning. That is why the minister has asked the officials in the department as well as the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to get to the bottom of this issue and to make a report to her.

*Routine Proceedings***POINTS OF ORDER**

DECORUM

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Winnipeg Centre, in one of his questions, used inappropriate sexist language, I would ask that he apologize to this House and anybody else watching this on television.

The Speaker: I see the member is not responding to the point of order at this point in time. I will review the matter and come back to the House if necessary.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

Mr. Pat Martin: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would seek unanimous consent of the House of Commons for the following motion: That in the opinion of this House, the government should extend an invitation to the President of the United States to make a joint address to both Houses of Parliament on February 19, 2009.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

PETITIONS

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by my constituents from Three Hills, Carbon, Trochu and Linden.

The petitioners are concerned about the availability of natural health products in Canadians stores. They are also concerned about the research and development of these products, the inspection regime required to oversee the quality assurance of these products and the penalties for infractions related to the mishandling of these products.

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour to present a petition signed by 40 of my constituents from Drumheller, Carbon, Brooks, Delia, Hanna and Okotoks in Alberta.

The petitioners are calling on Parliament to allow the disclosure and publication of the name and/or picture of any serious violent offender, regardless of the age of that offender. They want tougher laws for serious violent offenders and tougher consequences and jail time with no mandatory release at age 18.

They are petitioning Parliament in reaction to an incident one year ago where a six-year-old boy was held at knifepoint by an eighteen-year-old male who they say was out on bail for violent sexual assaults and awaiting sentencing.

My constituents have had enough of our criminal justice system mollycoddling violent offenders.

BULLYING

Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to table a petition containing thousands of signatures from people all across Canada, from the young to the young at heart, who are concerned about the serious issue of bullying; a serious problem that we face as Canadians and an act that has brought fear into the lives of many, including our young people.

Many organizations and individuals across the country are working to put an end to this type of behaviour. The petitioners are asking the government to recognize the work of these anti-bullying organizations.

[*Translation*]

They are therefore calling on Parliament to declare December 17 Blue Day, an official day to recognize the work of anti-bullying organizations in Canada.

• (1205)

[*English*]

DARFUR

Mr. Colin Mayes (Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present a petition signed by my constituents of Okanagan—Shuswap who are concerned about the atrocities in Darfur affecting well over 4.5 million people in the past years.

The petitioners call upon our government to use all diplomatic channels and appeal to the international community to pressure the Sudanese government to end the destruction in Darfur.

ASBESTOS

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by thousands of Canadians who would bring to Parliament's attention the fact that asbestos is the greatest industrial killer that the world has ever known and yet Canada remains one of the largest producers and exporters of asbestos in the world.

These signators point out that asbestos now kills more people than all other industrial causes combined in this country and yet Canada continues to allow asbestos to be used and promotes it, dumping it into third world countries.

These petitioners call upon Parliament to ban asbestos in all its forms and to introduce a just transition program for asbestos workers and the communities in which they live. They also call upon the government to end all subsidies to the asbestos industry, both in Canada and abroad, and to stop blocking international health and safety conventions designed to protect workers from asbestos, such as the Rotterdam Convention.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government and of the amendment.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I must ask my colleague from South Shore—St. Margaret's a question in light of what is happening in Nova Scotia. We have seen the devastating impact of this budget on the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and the untenable position in which it puts the people of that province. However, in Nova Scotia we have the spectacle of a premier saying that Nova Scotia will be okay. Even though the budget implication is that the money will be taken away, the premier says “don't worry, don't worry, it's okay, we made a little side deal over here”. There is nothing on paper, nothing to back it up except not to worry with a wink and nudge.

Knowing that my colleague's wonderful wife is a minister in the provincial Government of Nova Scotia, could he bring home a little piece of paper that she might scratch out and send it over to us so that we know for sure that Nova Scotia will be taken care of?

Mr. Gerald Keddy: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would know that the Premier of Nova Scotia's word is good and the Prime Minister's word is good. The Province of Nova Scotia will certainly get the full amount of its transitional fund delivered. It is an agreement between the Prime Minister and the premier.

I spoke to the premier last night and he thought this was a great budget. A lot will be delivered to the province of Nova Scotia.

The budget has a few hidden gems. I would ask the hon. member to take a look one of the little gems in the budget that has gone primarily unnoticed, and that is the proposal to spend \$5 million in two years on an independent task force to come up with recommendations to the Minister of Finance on a cohesive national strategy on financial literacy. These are the types of programs that can go a long way to help all men, women and young families, people who are trying to make a living and trying to get ahead in society, to plan their financial future.

• (1210)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two quick points. First, a professor emailed me this morning and he is very upset about the cut to the granting councils and the cut in money for science researchers.

Second, would the member commit to trying to lobby the Treasury Board minister to keep his word, to keep the commitment and to keep the honour of the government on the deal it had with the RCMP to increase its wages? A number of Yukon RCMP are very upset at this.

Mr. Gerald Keddy: Mr. Speaker, this is a very prudent and practical budget for these very trying economic times. The Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board, the Prime Minister and everyone involved in the budgetary process knew what the economy was doing and where the economy is going. We put

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together a budget that would provide a stimulus for the Canadian economy at a time when the economy needs a stimulus. The stimulus of \$35 billion this year and \$30 billion next year is unprecedented in Canadian history and is exactly what is needed in these very difficult and trying economic times.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to split my time, as I split my seat every day, with my colleague, the member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

The budget we are discussing is not perfect. It is quite imperfect, but it is at least a step forward from the economic update of this past November when the government carried on its tradition of putting politics before people.

After years of budget surpluses and sound fiscal management by previous Liberal governments, we now find ourselves in deficits and with a growing debt. The responsibility rests solely in the unsteady hands of the Conservative government.

This is a turbulent time for Canadians. Real people are suffering and many are worried about their future.

It is not easy for some politicians and political parties to set aside their personal wishes and personal ambitions to do what is best for the country. We should and the Liberal Party will. It is our view and my view that the budget needs to have an opportunity to work but there has to be strong oversight.

The government will be judged on its progress or lack thereof and it knows that it will face the Canadian public if it fails this test. In my review of the budget, I have placed the measures into three categories: first, measures that could be positive for Canadians but which will have to be watched very carefully; second, measures that do not go nearly far enough; and finally, measures that are totally absent.

In terms of measures that might be positive but need safeguards is the working income tax benefit. I think that WITB, a refundable tax credit that supplements earnings for eligible working low income families, is a positive program and it does help some families climb over the so-called welfare wall. The government is adding \$580 million, effectively doubling it, and, in fairness to the government, if this goes through it is a positive measure.

On housing, there are some measures outlined in the budget that go to support affordable social housing for seniors, aboriginals, persons with disabilities as well as incentives to retrofit existing social housing to make them more energy efficient. That should be good as well.

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On skills training, I believe the investments in what the government is calling the Canada skills and transition strategy will allow unemployed workers more time to find a good job and get the training to compete for tomorrow's jobs.

Those supports are welcomed by us as they will be welcomed by Canadians but they need to be tracked very carefully.

On deferred maintenance at universities and colleges, up to \$2 billion is dedicated to colleges and universities to address deferred maintenance; that is to say, repair the facilities that students and researchers use. That can be very positive but, again, the details are very blurry. I have significant concern about the provision that universities, community colleges, polytechnics, provinces and municipalities will be expected to kick in matching funds to get the money. In particular for smaller colleges and universities, and especially in my province of Nova Scotia, freeing up money to match federal money is not an option. As a professor said to me this morning, "This may be a gift we cannot afford". I think that is well said.

On research, we saw today the spectacle of the minister saying that we need not worry about the cuts. In Canada, eight or nine years ago we invested in research and innovation in a huge way at a time when the American administration of George Bush was cutting research funding. It was a perfect storm for us.

We now face the exact opposite. Under President Obama, the United States is investing in science at a time when we are not. Researchers across the country are concerned about that and they should be. One of the best ways to increase productivity is to invest in research. We will have to keep a very close eye on that.

There are provisions in the budget that are weak and not well thought out. Surely equalization is a prime example. We have seen what a devastating impact it will have on the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. In my own province we have this spectacle of a premier saying that it is okay, that he has made a deal with the Prime Minister. However, there is nothing on paper to say the deal is any good. That is so far from the Atlantic accord negotiated by Prime Minister Paul Martin and Premier John Hamm. It is a disgrace and it will need to be watched very carefully.

We were told there would be all kinds of changes to EI. There were great signals from the minister. We have added five weeks, which is good, and some training money. The government might though have used some creativity. If it had wanted to create stimulus, why would it not have eliminated the two week waiting period? That money would go into the economy right now, instead of adding five weeks at the end that some may use or some may not. It could have got rid of the two week waiting period and added three weeks at the other end so at least people could take advantage of the money now when they need it.

It is troubling to hear about wait times for the processing. The minister seems not particularly concerned and yesterday we had a headline saying that the government would not pay the unemployed to stay home. The minister in charge of employment insurance is saying that it may be too lucrative, that Canadians will flee from their jobs and jump on to employment insurance to make \$340 a week. That is a disgrace and an insult to working people in Canada. I

would encourage the minister and the government to get serious about employment insurance reform as we go forward.

• (1215)

Our leader has indicated a Liberal government will take the necessary steps to bring about changes to EI, in concert with stakeholder group, changes that are fair and treat workers equally.

In support for families, we could have done something significant for the poorest families in the country. There was some tinkering with the national child benefit, but it does not even help those who are most affected. That is a disgrace.

In terms of categories that are not even covered in this budget, what about early learning and child care? We continue to have a government that holds firm on its ideological opposition to any national leadership role in child care. Child care is a tremendously important issue for Canadians and this budget contains nothing to help working families with the difficulty and the cost of accessing child care services in Canada.

What we have now, sadly, is a small taxable benefit that does little or nothing to enhance access to child care and does not create a space. Families who want to go out into the workforce or go back to school in order to better live their lives are stuck again.

It was a Liberal government, led by the member for York Centre, that brought in a national child care program, a program advocated for for years by child care advocates across this country, people like Pat Hogan and Sue Wolstenholme in Nova Scotia, like Martha Friendly in Toronto, Monica Lysack from Saskatchewan, and many others who fought hard, only to see their success turn into despair when the government tore up those agreements. Again, politics trumps people. It is unacceptable.

One of the overarching concerns that touches upon a number of the issues that I mentioned is poverty. Poverty should concern everybody in this country. It is one of the issues on which, along with other colleagues from the human resources committee of the House, we worked in the previous Parliament, and I hope that the HUMA committee will again take up that work when the committees resume.

I hope that we will have in Canada a national strategy to combat poverty, something we do not have now and something for which I hold out very little hope under this government.

I was proud that our party brought forth the thirty-fifty plan in the past election. It placed poverty, and particularly child poverty, at the centre of our platform. It continues to be a national disgrace that we have so many children going to school with little or no food, whose basic needs are not met, and it should be a shame to us all.

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I believe that a Liberal government will one day, perhaps sooner than some think, end the dark ages of the Conservative government and replace ideology with hope.

We will say to all Canadians that we support: literacy, equality, the mandate of Status of Women Canada, the court challenges program, child care, proper funding and access to universities and colleges, and that we support the right of all people to live in a country that is generous and fair. Those are the beliefs of most Canadians and they are our beliefs as well. We will form a government that will once again place people first and politics last.

This budget will pass, but we will hold the government to account and the day will soon come when Canadians will have their say again.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech on the budget. He is certainly a person that we in this House recognize as one who holds the progressive notions of government.

We have not seen those of course in the Conservative government, yet today we have once again the spectacle of the government achieving support from the Liberals for a budget that has very little vision of where we are going, very little concern about those most affected by the downturn in the economy, and really no sense of where we are going to go once we come out of the current economic downturn, other than business as usual.

My question for the member is this. How does he see that his actions today in supporting the budget, and not working with us in coming up with a new answer, are really going to cast the direction for this country?

This budget is spending billions of dollars and putting us in a direction that will not help us once the recession is over. How does he see his actions here today serving Canadians three or five years from now?

• (1220)

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, we are not saying that this budget is perfect. If this budget were a school child, the report card at mid-term might say it is a D, but the student has to apply himself or herself a little more over the coming months and learn to play nice with others. That is in essence what we are saying about this budget.

The editorial in *The Chronicle-Herald* yesterday, headed “Grits make right call”, said:

Indeed, the opposition's job is to evaluate a budget's merits on balance, not to rewrite it to its liking or to force the government to make spending commitments it does not want to be responsible for...With his budget, Mr. Harper has already met the Liberals halfway.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Before I go to questions and comments, I remind the member not to refer to other members by name.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Yukon.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder how the member for Western Arctic, who just spoke, is going to explain his actions to his constituents. The NWT Chamber of Commerce supports the budget. There is money for infrastructure, northern housing and arctic research, all for his constituency.

I am glad the member mentioned the cut in research funds. I received an email from a professor from Yukon College this morning that said:

I just want to say that I am concerned about the proposed reduction in research granting councils tucked away in the new federal budget. Our neighbour is doubling research and we are cutting it...Reducing money for on-the-ground research does not make any sense to me whatsoever

Would the hon. member support me in asking for the government to maintain its honour with the deal it had with the RCMP negotiated settlement? The RCMP are integral to the north and have a very dangerous profession. We should honour our commitments to them.

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with my hon. colleague on his latter point. In terms of research, I too received an email from somebody very involved in research in my province and a national leadership role across the country. It said, “—I have had the chance to digest a bit more information about the impact of the proposal on research. In brief—it's not good!!!” One, two, three exclamation points. Three exclamation points.

We came so far eight years ago when we invested in CFI, more when the granting councils created CIHR and Genome Canada, and the Canada research chairs, all of the things we did. That was at a time when the United States was reducing its commitment to science.

As signalled in Mr. Obama's speech, the United States is now putting a real focus on science at a time when the Canadian government is levelling down its research commitment. In spite of what it says, it is levelling it down. The tri-councils, NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR are losing money. This is critical for Canada. This government needs to accept that fact and stop telling people it is not the case. It is the case. We are losing our function, purpose, and ability to attract and retain researchers in Canada. It is going to cost us big time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to say that it is an honour for me to follow my colleague from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, who gave an excellent speech on the budget.

[*English*]

One of the first things this budget brought to my mind was an interview I read a number of years ago with the then labour secretary in the Clinton administration, Robert Reich, who is, of course, a political and philosophical liberal.

In the interview he was talking, in frustration, about the neo-conservative winds that were still sweeping the United States at that point, that had begun with the Reagan administration. He was railing in a sense against these neo-conservative winds because those winds were denigrating longstanding, respected social safety net programs in the United States that had been in place for many years.

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At the time, the economy was good, everyone was happy, people were prospering and forgetting in a sense that some day they might need those programs such as employment insurance and different forms of medical insurance. Previous governments had been using this change in political culture that had been engendered by the good times to further denigrate these programs and make them seem dated and less valuable.

Reich said that one day middle-class Americans, who were earning good wages and salaries, would need those programs. He felt it was the role of the government, the Clinton administration, not only in its discourse but in its concrete actions, measures and policies to restore support for these programs. Now, of course, with the onset of the economic crisis, the point has been driven home more clearly than ever that Americans need these programs, like Canadians do.

I was watching *60 Minutes* last weekend and there was a very heart-wrenching story about a one-industry town in Ohio called Wilmington. I am sure other members saw it. It is a town that houses one of the hubs of the DHL express courier company. The town had been thriving but with the recession the courier company's network is shrinking and it is conducting waves of massive layoffs, one week after another. Sometimes both spouses had been employed there and now find themselves with nothing, barely enough money to purchase groceries and sometimes not able to do that. They face mounting health care bills. They were in tears while being interviewed by *60 Minutes*.

In one case a woman said what broke her heart more than not being able to put food on the table regularly was that she and her husband had to pull their son out of college before he graduated. It was a very sad tale. When I saw it, I felt terrible for them and I also felt grateful that I live in Canada where we have programs like employment insurance, publicly-funded post-secondary education, and a national health care system that is not perfect but is a safety net.

What I found disappointing in the budget was that the government had an opportunity to take a leadership role in this new era of hope and Obama-style vision. It had the opportunity to reinforce these programs through concrete spending measures at a time when Canadians need to have these reinforced, but it let the opportunity go by to some extent.

For example, we have to improve the employment insurance program at this time when unemployment is rising but we can also use it as a counter-cyclical economic instrument to help us get out of the recession. What better way to pump up the economy. What quicker, more efficient way to pump up the economy than to put money in the hands of the unemployed, who will spend it right away. Unemployed individuals do not have to wait until they file their tax returns; it would show up on a cheque right away.

• (1225)

The *Globe and Mail* called for this kind of reform to employment insurance. Forget the fact that we have to make the program better for compassionate reasons, but in terms of hard economic reasons that program could have been reformed and made into a counter-cyclical economic program. The government did not bite. It did not take the opportunity to do that.

The government also did not take the opportunity to further support the health care system. We know that in times of recession people suffer. They suffer stress and stress leads to disease and more hospitalization. We have done the research. The science shows it. The government may not believe in science, but what we have learned through science over the years is that these are facts, facts that are not debatable any more. Recessions lead to family problems, to stress, to disease and to hospitalization.

We had the foresight in our Liberal election platform to say that if we were elected, we would put \$1 billion aside to hire more doctors and nurses. Why did the government not take inspiration from that? We would have given it credit for doing the right thing. The government left another national program weaker when it could have made it stronger.

The government could have invested more in post-secondary education and research, but it did not. It seems to be cutting research.

What is really galling about the Conservative government is its systematic lack of foresight.

There will always be ups and downs in the capitalist economy, and we know this now. There will always be speculative bubbles. If it is not the dot-com bubble, it is a real estate bubble or it is a credit crunch like we are living through today.

I was reading an interesting article the other day that explained why we never seemed to learn that we would have some kind of speculative run and that it would come to an end. One of the reasons we do not learn is because the people involved in the markets at a particular time do not remember the last crash. When we say it has crashed before, they tell us it is different this time because governments have surpluses or inflation is low. They are blind to the possibility that it will happen again.

I am so proud to say that we had a finance minister who built in a \$3 billion cushion because he was wise enough to know that bad times would return.

• (1230)

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague touched on one issue that I thought was remarkable, and that was the \$3 billion fund that the previous government had allocated.

We are dealing with a deficit from the status quo in excess of \$10 billion. We are dealing with a stimulus package that will be taking the deficit to \$64 billion in two years. The situation comes back to cutting taxes, the fiscal policy of the previous government.

My colleague and his party will support the continuation of the same fiscal policy we have had over the past three years, which has led us to this point today. We had the opportunity within the laws and the directions of the Parliament we all sit in as members to change that. His party chose not to do that.

Could the member explain to me why now he says that the policy of tax cutting, of reckless abandonment with the good revenues of our country, is something that his party should support?

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Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, it is true that a \$3 billion cushion seems relatively small in respect to the kinds of deficits we are looking at this year, next year and going into the future. There is a reason that the deficit will be so large and that reason does not relate to the previous Liberal government.

As the member knows, the GST cuts brought in by the Conservative government will deprive the economy of \$12 billion a year. That is \$12 billion that could go into water infrastructure. That is \$12 billion that could go into science and technology. That is \$12 billion that could go into the arts, one of the country's biggest industries. It is a lot of money. I think that was an unwise decision by the government, but we are not voting on unwise decisions from previous budgets.

• (1235)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the floor indicated something to the effect that the government did not believe in science.

One of the obligations we have as members of Parliament is to reflect accurately what is in the budget proposal. It seems to me, from the comments that were made, that perhaps the member has not read the budget.

I would like to read a few excerpts from the budget, on page 138 and 139:

Dedicating up to \$2 billion to repair, retrofit and expand facilities at post-secondary institutions.

Providing \$750 million for leading-edge research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

Providing \$50 million to the Institute for Quantum Computing in Waterloo...

Allocating \$87 million over the next two years to maintain or upgrade key Arctic research facilities.

Providing \$250 million over two years to address deferred maintenance at federal laboratories.

It seems very clear to me that the government is very committed to research and innovation. Could the member explain how he could make a statement like he did in his earlier remarks.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the figures that the hon. member has read out. We are pleased with some of the funding increases. There is no doubt about that. We are supporting the budget.

However, we know that in a competitive world, it is not always about the absolute numbers; it is about how we are doing relative to our competitors.

We know that in the United States the Obama administration will pour billions and billions of dollars into science research. What do we see in the headlines today? We see headlines like Genome Canada has been forgotten.

It is good that the government has invested, but it would not have invested had it not been faced with the threat of a coalition government, so we have to take credit for some of those additional investments.

There was another article in the paper today saying that the Prime Minister is a Conservative in name only at this point, that he seems to have abdicated on all of his principles. If he has abdicated in the

direction of spending to stimulate the economy, then good for him and good for us.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in the House to speak to the budget. I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton—Strathcona.

Leading up to the budget speech, I talked to many people in my riding. Sadly, the issues that many people raised are simply not addressed in that speech. One of the things we had heard, and I am paraphrasing, is that people were looking for a budget that would protect the vulnerable. They were looking for a budget that would safeguard today's jobs. They were looking for a budget that would create jobs of tomorrow. On all counts, the budget has failed to do that.

I want to talk about some of the specifics I heard from people in my riding. Sadly, we will be going back to tell them that their expectations will not be met.

Money for housing is talked about in the budget, but the kicker with it, as always, is it requires matching funds. We were looking for innovative strategies that talk about some of the problems we see in some of our rural communities.

We were hoping the needs of rural communities would be addressed in terms of the diversity of housing and the kind of transportation infrastructure required for those communities. In the urban communities we were looking for money for retrofitting existing stocks of housing and some creative solutions towards homelessness. Because this money will be funnelled through the provinces and will oftentimes require matching funds, those houses simply will not be built in many of our communities.

There was certainly some mention of agriculture in the budget, but again it fell short. British Columbia has a different kind of agricultural economy than the prairies, for example.

We were looking for money that would support training for small and middle-income farmers, training on business and management development and basic production information. We were looking for support for community organizations, which are working towards increasing self-sufficiency for backyard and urban gardeners. We were looking for buy local initiatives, initiatives that talked about government procurement of local agriculture, initiatives that supported community-supported agriculture and initiatives that supported local processing facilities. Sadly, those were not in the budget either.

A community adjustment fund was announced in the budget, which would look at assisting communities like mine, where forestry is in transition. In the past the community development trust fund failed to meet the needs of forestry workers. Many of the forestry workers in my riding are in their late 40s or early 50s, so the transition fund did not work for them because they were not 55. For some of the transition projects that were funded, there was no requirement that forestry workers needed to be employed.

The community adjustment fund has no criteria outline saying that it will directly benefit forestry workers or manufacturing workers, and that is a critical piece. It is fine to stimulate the economy and provide some service to some of these projects, but it is the workers who are hardest hit who really do need the attention.

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Much has been made about infrastructure. My community would welcome infrastructure spending. The problem with it is that municipalities have a really difficult time coming up with their share of the money. Some of our municipalities are heavily reliant on single industries. Those forestry sector companies are struggling with profitability.

What is happening is municipalities are looking at a potential reduction in their tax base. They simply will not have the funds to contribute towards infrastructure projects, despite the fact that we have a critical infrastructure project in most of our communities.

We talked about the RCMP today. We had hoped to see in the budget a firm commitment to honouring the contract that was signed with the RCMP, honouring those wages that were part of that signed agreement. Sadly, what we heard is no. The government will not honour the agreements with the RCMP officers.

We do have solutions. One person in my riding put together a number of initiatives and she talked about community investment funds. She talked in particular about a community investment fund that would be an incubation fund, that would build practical know-how, share best practices and models and expertise, facilitate communication, outreach support and do pilot projects that benefited the local economy directly. That was absent in the budget.

● (1240)

The last element that was absent from the budget, and probably the most egregious, is employment insurance. We have heard the Conservatives say in the House that they have invested in employment insurance by adding five weeks onto the claims. That is great for the workers who qualify and I applaud that initiative. However, in my riding the sad fact is that many people have run out of employment insurance. They are forestry workers and they have not been able to work enough hours to qualify for a new claim. Adding five weeks simply will not help them out.

For every \$60 the government provided in corporate tax cuts, it provided \$1 for the unemployed worker. That ratio of 60:1 is simply not acceptable.

Yesterday the Minister of Human Resources said, "We do not want to make it lucrative for them to stay home and get paid for it, not when we still have significant skills shortages in many parts of the country". Tell me how lucrative it is for workers when the average employment insurance cheque is in the mid \$300 range. I would challenge the minister to live on \$300 a week in today's economy.

I have limited time so I will not be able to quote extensively from a couple letters, but let us put a face to what it means to be unemployed right now in Nanaimo—Cowichan and many other parts of the country. I have a letter signed by the United Steelworkers, the Truck Loggers' Association, Coast Forest Products Association, Forest Industrial Relations, and others. They wrote:

—28% of the current Forest Industry Unionized employees have worked less than 420 hours in the past year. And 39.6% have worked less than 700 hours.

These workers simply will not have enough hours to qualify for employment insurance.

Doug Morgan, whose story is typical of many, wrote:

I live on Vancouver Island in BC and work for Western Forest Products.... I have worked there for 28 years and I am 51 years old. I am writing this letter in hope that I can let people in government have a clear understanding of the crisis that the employees of this industry are in or are about to be in.... I have five weeks of Employment Insurance (EI) remaining on my claim and have not worked enough to have enough hours to start a new claim. The mill that I work for, as are most of the mills, is working only when they have to fill orders that they can get in these poor economic times. When my Employment Insurance claim runs out I will have no money coming in at all. With a mortgage to pay and a child about to go to college I have to find work some way to get by.... With the average age on the coast in this industry being 50 to 60 years old many employees of this industry are in or are going to be in the same situation.

He went on in the letter to talk about what should have happened in this budget. There should have been a reduction in the number of hours needed to qualify. There should have been a waiving of the two-week waiting period. There should have been a reconsideration of the benefit rate.

Tell Mr. Morgan that it is more lucrative for him to stay at home. I would challenge members of the House to talk to their constituents who are in that situation where they will not qualify, or where their claims are running out, or where there are no other jobs in those communities because they are heavily reliant on forestry, for example. Tell them how they are going to benefit from this budget when they cannot even qualify to begin with.

I am going to touch briefly on first nations. Earlier today during oral questions I talked about the fact that the estimates tabled by the minister this week clawed back money out of infrastructure and put it into seriously underfunded education. The big issue is that there is money announced for infrastructure and for other programs, but the big issue is whether or not that money will actually reach communities. Will it get on the ground for community members? Whether it is housing, education, or water, the budget simply does not make firm commitments of getting the money to where it is most needed.

Aboriginal women and the National Association of Friendship Centres have been left out in the cold. Aboriginal women are not mentioned in this budget, nor is the National Association of Friendship Centres, yet it provides a very valuable service to a significant number of urban aboriginal people in this country. That is a grave oversight.

● (1245)

Mr. Brian Storseth (Westlock—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague across the way mentioned some of her disappointments with respect to agriculture in this budget. I think it is important that we recognize what this government, the agriculture minister and the Prime Minister have done. She talked about farmers in her riding wanting more information. Farmers in my riding have lots of information. What they need is access to markets so that they can get the right price for their product.

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That is what this government has been focusing on. Bilateral trade agreements that had not been signed for a dozen years have finally started to roll out under this government. Just this January we had an agreement in principle with Hong Kong that will double our market share to \$26 million in the beef sector. There is \$145 million for the advancement of the Canadian bio-based economy. There is \$134 million for commercialization of new bio-based products. There is \$22 million for AAFC research and development projects. That is the history of this government. There is \$500 million for new agriculture and agriculture flexibility.

Can the member explain how she is actually going to vote against that?

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's question, but it also shows how out of touch the government is with the realities of farmers across this country.

The farmers in British Columbia are not like the farmers on the Prairies. We talk about western alienation. I can see that it is alive and well when we see agricultural policies when it comes to British Columbia. For many of our farmers, although trade has increased, real farm income has decreased. We also see that many farmers in this country have to work off farm. They need off-farm income in order to survive. The member talked about increased markets, but these farmers are barely making a living.

I want to see some real investment in some of the small farmers in this country. I want to see some real investment in government procurement policies that say that we will buy local. I want to see some real investment in local processing facilities. The current and previous governments' failure to recognize, for example, chicken processing and some of the meat regulations has meant that the farmers on Vancouver Island have had to get out of the business. They have to ship their livestock over to Vancouver. That increases stress on the livestock and increases the farmers' costs. We want to see some meaningful small farm policy.

• (1250)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a former president of our local aboriginal friendship centre, I am delighted the member raised the lack of mention of those centres in the budget.

I want to ask her about an issue related to self-governing first nations. There is \$50 million in the budget for the north, for housing, but it is for everybody. Some of that is intended for aboriginal housing, but it does not say how much or how they would get it. In the south, it is specifically targeted at \$400 million for on reserve, but in the north, it is not specified.

This happened the last time around. Our first nations were incensed that the government had not treated them as governments and did not give them the money directly. It flowed through other governments. I got a furious phone call from a vice-chief yesterday saying that once again there is \$50 million for the public at large, but there is no sense that it is going to be delivered directly to self-governing first nations. There is no sense of how much is for them.

They are once again incensed that although they are now governments as approved by this Parliament they are not being treated as governments and they are not getting the money to directly

flow to them. It is good that the much needed money for housing is there, but it is the process which they are very upset with.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the reason the New Democrats will not be supporting this budget.

Regarding the friendship centres, I just want to point out to this House that Canada's 118 aboriginal friendship centres have not had an increase in their budgets since 1998. Once again, there is another budget where there is no mention of them.

When it comes to self-governing first nations and housing, there are a number of problems with aboriginal housing as it is mentioned in this budget. First of all, it carefully does not talk about the fact that in the past the money that has come out has been strictly for market housing. We do not know if this money is going to be targeted for market housing. It does not talk about the process on how, in particular, self-governing first nations will access that money. They should rightly control that money.

Given past experiences on how this money is or is not rolled out, we do not have confidence that this money will actually build houses in aboriginal communities from coast to coast to coast.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to the budget. Similar to other members who have expressed such in the House, I also reached out to my constituents. I have also been receiving a lot of phone calls and emails from other people across the country who are concerned about what is not in the budget and what has been cut from the budget. It is well known in the House that I have a great interest and long-standing work in the area of the environment. Despite the fact that I heard a lot of concerns from my own constituents about there being no more funding for health care, no more funding for advanced education, much to my surprise, by and large the largest number of concerns expressed to me were that the highest priority they set for the budget is that they want more money to address climate change and protection of the environment. What I intend to address in the budget debate today is the shortfalls in that area.

The hon. Minister of the Environment has described the budget as setting a new high watermark for eco-funding. In assessing whether the budget actually merits this accolade, let us recall the responses made to the economic and climate crises—and I remind the House we are not just in an economic crisis; we are facing also a serious climate crisis—by other jurisdictions and authorities.

The Budget

President Obama, in his first month in office, provided clear leadership by announcing measures to forge a new greener economy for his nation, a stimulus package that doubles the generating capacity of the United States renewable energy over three years to power six million homes; the financing of retrofitting of two million homes to save low income earners the average of \$350 a year; the retrofitting, not the sell-off, of 75% of federal buildings to save the government \$2 billion a year; loan guarantees to leverage \$100 billion in private investment in clean energy projects. He cleared the way for new rules to require production of more fuel efficient and cleaner cars, unlike Canada's government which missed the deadline. He also dedicated \$600 million for new federal fleet cars.

Germany has enacted a law that requires power distributors to purchase electricity from renewable sources for a fixed time at fixed rates above market prices. In other words, it is giving a leg up to the new green economy, as much as a seven times higher price for solar power. Germany now generates the most renewable energy worldwide and the largest production of solar panels and wind turbines in the world.

We are letting these businesses pass by. They employ one-quarter million people and a \$400 billion revenue stream for this sector, four times the figures since 2000.

The International Energy Agency has called on all governments to include green measures in their stimulus plans. "If governments are spending money for a stimulus package", it says, "why not spend it on renewables?" Its executive director said, "It stimulates the economy in the short term and in the long term it is sustainable. It kills two birds with one stone". Although perhaps not the metaphor an environmentalist might prefer, we get the message.

This week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, business people and economists alike voiced support for reduced reliance on dirty fossil fuels and support for green industries capable of creating jobs as the preferred path to ease the difficulties faced by businesses and workers alike.

The United Nations Environment Program has launched a \$4 million green economy initiative to get the global markets back to work. This initiative, funded by the European Commission, Germany and Norway, will deliver within two years a package for use by all governments to help make this transition. I hope that the government pays attention to this package.

According to the UNEP executive director, "The financial fuel and food crises are part of a much wider market failure which triggers deeper environmental impacts coupled with an over-reliance on finite fossil fuels". That renowned international organization recognizes that we face both an economic crisis and a climate crisis. Its intent is to mobilize and refocus the global economy toward investments in clean technologies and natural infrastructure. It has called for new creative, forward looking and transformational thinking. Instead of pouring more investments into the same old extractive short-term economy of yesterday, UNEP is advising nations, including ours, to move investments toward a new green economy.

●(1255)

Such an economy would be based on three pillars: valuing and mainstreaming nature, employment generation through green jobs and green policies, and the use of instruments and market signals to accelerate the transition to a green economy.

How do these brave, bold initiatives to start the economy and save the planet compare to the measures in the budget tabled before us in Parliament? The Minister of the Environment has advised we must read the budget in the context of the fall 2008 throne speech. That speech, coupled with policy and law reforms slowly being revealed to us, suggests a dramatically different path than that taken by President Obama, other nations or international institutions of the world.

Our federal government is granted extensive powers to forge bold new directions for reviving the economy and sustaining our living environment, powers that if exercised in a timely and effective manner could drive change for the better, trigger major shifts in investment and provide hope to Canadians for a sound and sustainable future. Counted among those important powers are the spending power, the taxation power and the regulatory power. Let us not forget the regulatory power.

The question we must ask ourselves in assessing whether we will vote for this budget is whether the government has actually used its taxation and spending powers in the budget to show leadership to establish a new high-water mark for the environment. Has the government followed the path of its G20 partners and delivered on its commitments to unleash a new greener energy future for Canada?

True, there is some evidence of new language and a tinkering at the edges of the old-style economy. Some of Canadians' hard-earned tax dollars are to be made available to them to renovate their homes or cottages or to build a deck. Some additional dollars would be set aside for the home energy retrofit program. Those with cash to spare to do both may potentially be rewarded with both a grant and tax relief.

Perhaps less of the pie has been allocated to those at the bottom end of the prosperity gap. Regrettably, no moneys are allocated for retrofitting the large rental housing stock.

What else is missing from the budget? Let me share just a few examples brought to my attention by my constituents, by renewable energy experts and investors, by energy efficiency entrepreneurs, by transit authorities and by respected scientists, simply to name a few I have consulted or who have contacted me.

The Budget

With regard to transit, a stated priority of the government is to get workers to their jobs in a cleaner, less smog-producing way. Despite the valuable contribution public transit makes toward this goal, not a single dollar is specifically committed to transit, and this despite a cost analysis by the Canadian Federation of Municipalities that for every billion dollars invested in infrastructure for transit, over 11,000 full-time jobs are created. Perhaps a few of the 167 priority transit projects identified by the Canadian Urban Transit Association as ready to go may eventually win the lottery and be funded under building Canada.

What about the clean and renewable energy economy? The budget purports to be transforming Canada into a green energy economy. Close to \$1 billion to develop and test so-called clean energy technologies singles out carbon-capturing sequestration, which has already received \$1 billion and even more from the provinces, yet zero new dollars are budgeted to incent the development, and most important the deployment, of renewable energy, save possibly support for one windmill on Prince Edward Island.

What about climate change? It is among the most pressing challenges of our time. How many references are made in the budget to this issue? There is just one, occurring when the government touts nuclear power as the singular solution to Canada's energy security and climate change goals.

Regrettably, what the government has done through streamlining is cut the very institutions that can develop the innovative transition and move it forward.

It has done nothing on water, despite calls by the first nations of northern Alberta and by leading scientists of Canada.

I call on the government and I call on the members of the House not to support the budget. We need to be forging a new green economy.

• (1300)

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the House today we have listened to speaker after speaker from the NDP tell us what was not in the budget. Notwithstanding the fact that they were invited to participate in the preparation of the budget and were invited to give their input, they chose not to participate much at all. In fact, a couple of weeks before the budget had even been presented, they were telling the Canadian people that they were not going to support the budget. That in itself is curious.

Now I am listening to all the things they say are not in the budget. Making a shopping list is easy once they have the budget.

All these things are now a matter of *Hansard*, and when this debate is over, I would ask members of that party to present a priced list of all of the things they brought up and tell the Canadian people how much money the things they say are not in the budget would actually cost. I would ask that they be honest and just do it.

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe it is necessary for me to price the costs of addressing climate change. That has been done very thoroughly by the experts in the federal environment department.

I have the big tomes that have been held back and finally released to the public. They document the major costs we are going to face and the liabilities, as yet unassessed, for the failure to address air pollution, the failure to address our depleting water resources, and the failure to address climate change.

Where in this budget is there any action to generally reduce the liabilities we are unloading on future generations?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for the member for Edmonton—Strathcona. I believe there are about 67 women sitting in this House, and I am very surprised that the Liberals, among others, are choosing to support the budget, as it contains a measure that, as a woman and a parliamentarian, I feel is completely unacceptable. In the budget, the economic statement and the throne speech, the Conservative government has repeatedly stated that it will not reverse its position and will continue to insist that the right to pay equity be a negotiated right.

Since when is a right negotiable? A right is a right. People have to demand it and secure it using the means available to them. I would like the member for Edmonton—Strathcona to tell me, as a woman and a parliamentarian, how she interprets the Liberals' support and the Conservatives' stubborn refusal to address this issue that affects women.

• (1305)

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I too am deeply disturbed at the lack of respect shown for women in this House. I too have received a lot of calls from constituents who are deeply concerned about this matter. We thought that we had made progress in Canada, that we were an advanced nation and that we were actually going to show equality for both sexes, men and women, in Canada. I am deeply disturbed not only that it was raised in the fiscal update but that the spectre is also raised again in this budget, and I am deeply disappointed that the Liberal Party has chosen to ignore that.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member brought up environmental issues in her speech. Does she think the government should work with members from all parties to ensure that our economy can adapt to the new environmental challenges before us?

We have feedback loops that are on the precipice of actually coming to pass. They would have a huge impact on our environment and on our economies.

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, as the environment critic I was looking forward to working with all the parties and to implementing a new green economy. Regrettably, the budget does not allow us to do that. We will simply be tinkering at the edges.

The Budget

One of the tools I mentioned was that in parallel with the budget's fiscal and taxation measures, we must have regulatory measures that would move us to this new economy. Regrettably, from rumours we are hearing, that trigger for better investment and for a cleaner economy will not be available to us either.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the economic action plan presented by our government on January 27.

Before I begin, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that I will be splitting my time with the member for Peterborough.

I would like to take a moment in my first speech in the 40th Parliament to thank the people of Kitchener—Conestoga for their continued faith in me and sending me back to Ottawa to represent them. I would also like to thank my wife, Betty, and our children, Gavin, Benj and Arja, as well as their families. I am incredibly blessed and could not do what I am doing here without their love and sacrifice.

This afternoon I speak on behalf of the residents of Kitchener—Conestoga. As was mentioned earlier this week by my colleague, the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo, we undertook, along with the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, a series of round tables with community leaders. From local governments to non-government organizations, from local businesses to multinational corporations, from agriculture to engineering to recycling, a diverse group shared its views. Each of them brought forward very valuable ideas as to what they felt were the most crucial economic issues needing our attention.

Participants were unanimous that expedited infrastructure spending, investments in housing, access to credit, support for new and traditional industrial sectors and building sustainable labour markets were the most credible choices to provide stimulus. There was some divergence over the relative priorities within that list. Municipal government representatives focused their conversations on the importance of infrastructure renewal and an expedited process for approving projects as a means to inject stimulus. Business leaders focused on the tightening of credit as a threat to Canadian business and jobs.

The sessions were remarkable for the lack of tunnel vision participants brought to the table. There was near uniform agreement that in the Canadian economy a balance of all these priorities must be found.

There was significant conversation regarding what should be included in the umbrella term “infrastructure” for funding purposes. Beyond the traditional roads, bridges and crossings, there was broad support for the inclusion of other necessary investments, including green energy initiatives and broadband access for rural areas.

A report from these prebudget consultations was then compiled and presented to the Minister of Finance. It is very obvious that our finance minister was listening because many of the suggestions that we received from these participants have been reflected in this government's economic action plan. Let me say that this plan presented by our Minister of Finance on Tuesday has been received very well in my constituency.

I am happy to say that my Waterloo region colleagues and I were not the only ones to engage Canadians in consultations regarding the unique challenge facing Canada's economy. The budget that we debate today is the result of the most comprehensive and inclusive prebudget consultations in Canadian history. I would like to extend my congratulations and thanks to the Minister of Finance and his parliamentary secretary, the member for Macleod, for their continued fine work and leadership on behalf of all Canadians.

Canada is being hard hit by a global recession that started in the United States. Businesses in my riding are being impacted negatively, manufacturing job losses have increased, and the demand for EI benefits and retraining opportunities have increased.

Our economic action plan addresses the need for extended EI benefits and enhancing the availability of training opportunities for those who have lost jobs.

By extending the work-sharing agreements by 14 weeks, more Canadians will be able to continue working. The \$1.8 billion directed toward increasing the availability of training opportunities will go a long way toward addressing the needs of many who have lost jobs in sectors which are very unlikely to ever return to the levels of employment opportunity they once experienced.

The strategic training and transition fund would support the needs of individuals who do not qualify for EI training, such as the self-employed or those who have been out of work for a prolonged period of time.

Other initiatives such as those targeting student summer jobs and the initiative for older workers will address specific demographics of those affected by this economic downturn.

The apprenticeship completion grant of \$2,000 will help to address the critical need for skilled labour, a problem which will only get worse unless young Canadians are encouraged to enter these worthy professions, and community colleges are equipped to train them.

That brings me to the commitment of our government to provide \$2 billion for the acceleration of new projects at our post-secondary institutions. Mr. John Tibbits, the president of Conestoga College, has been persistent in his call for greater emphasis on skilled trades training. Mr. Tibbits has the honour of being the leader of a college that for 9 of the last 10 years has been named the number one publicly-funded college in Ontario.

● (1310)

Mr. Tibbits had the following to say about our economic action plan, “We're very pleased with the Federal Budget. Our Federal Members of Parliament have listened to our concerns through pre-budget briefings. The budget responds directly to those concerns”.

I am very proud to say that Conestoga College is situated in my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga.

The Budget

One of the points I noted from our consultations was that, regardless of their sector, participants clearly recognized the long-standing need for municipal infrastructure renewal. This government understands that and will accelerate and expand recent historic investments in infrastructure with almost \$12 billion in new infrastructure spending over five years. This provides Ontario with its share of \$4.5 billion over two years for roads, bridges, buildings and broadband, and accelerates payments for infrastructure projects in Ontario.

I am happy that our government has provided more than \$1 billion over five years for the southern Ontario development agency program to help workers, communities and businesses in the region. In fact, Stratford mayor, Dan Mathieson of the Southwest Economic Alliance, said, "This budget is good news for southwest Ontario. It is good news for our communities, for our citizens and for our economy".

We have heard from many sectors that are giving their strong support to this play. The mayor of Kitchener said, "It is good news for the municipalities. That is probably an historic event in terms of the acknowledgement by the federal government that there is going to have to be a partnership as we deal with the infrastructure deficit that municipalities have been talking about for some time".

Our government is doing the right thing by cutting taxes and improving access to capital for the financial system. Since coming to office the government has provided \$78.3 billion in tax relief to the people and businesses of Ontario. Budget 2009 will provide an additional \$9.1 billion in tax relief. We have also made \$13 billion in additional financing available to crown corporations, such as CMHC, Export Development Canada and the Business Development Corporation, and increased their flexibility and capacity to provide capital to small business.

Our government will also provide Ontarians with \$1.3 billion through a temporary home renovation tax credit which will provide meaningful tax relief to help Canadian homeowners make improvements to their property while promoting broad based economic activity.

There is an additional \$407 million in support for first-time homebuyers through the \$5,000 first time homebuyers tax credit to assist them with the costs associated with the purchase of their first home. The \$5,000 increase of RRSP withdrawal limits will also assist first-time homebuyers in purchasing a home.

Budget 2009 also provides \$225 million over three years to Industry Canada to develop and implement strategy on extending broadband coverage to communities that are not currently served, beginning in 2009. Canada is one of the most connected nations in the world with the highest broadband connection rate among the G7 countries. However, there are still gaps in access to broadband, particularly in rural and remote areas. Our government is committed to closing the broadband gap in Canada by encouraging development of rural broadband infrastructure. Much of my constituency is comprised of rural areas, some of which do not yet have access to broadband Internet.

I have heard concerns about this gap since my election and I was very pleased to see this addressed in this year's economic action plan.

Another provision which brings great benefit to the Waterloo region is the \$50 million grant to the Institute for Quantum Computing. The institute is a world leader in research and teaching in the field of quantum information, a discipline that opens opportunities for the development of new technologies and opportunities for the creation of jobs.

Canadians sent the Conservative Party, led by our Prime Minister, to Ottawa with a strengthened mandate to steer this country through a worldwide economic crisis. They did so knowing that this is a government that is not afraid to make hard choices and it is not afraid to lead by example.

This economic action plan is what we need in these uncertain times. For all of us who have been sent here to represent our constituents in the House of Commons, we can never forget that we are here to represent those who have entrusted us with the serious responsibility to examine the issues and then to make the right choices.

• (1315)

It is my sincere belief that the budget represents the best possible plan to lead Canada through the troubled waters of the economic storm and that as we work together as a nation we will emerge even stronger than we are today.

May God keep Canada glorious and free.

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the member's attention to an article in *The Mississauga News* yesterday which reads:

Not only is the cheque not in the mail for Canadian municipalities, but the instructions for writing the cheque aren't even written yet.

Even though federal politicians trumpeted the billions in infrastructure dollars for cities in the federal budget announced Tuesday, municipal officials are still trying to determine just how the money will be dispensed.

It is unclear to what degree matching funds from the provinces and cities will be required, whether money will be distributed on a per capita basis or through applications, and exactly what kind of projects will be eligible.

What assurances do we have from the government and that member that the \$12 billion infrastructure money will flow to those communities that need it, like my own community of Mississauga—Streetsville? In Mississauga, we have already put together a long wish list of projects that include the revitalization of Civic Square, fixing fire halls and libraries, repairing roads, covering extra costs and the long-awaited rapid transit system.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, that was a pretty long list and I am not sure I will be able to cover all of her questions.

In our budget consultations in my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga, we met with many of the mayors who represent the Waterloo region. Each mayor was very confident that as we sit together and work in partnership, as I said earlier, we will be able to meet the challenges in front of us.

The Budget

As it relates to the timing of this, all of us in this chamber know that for the budget to be implemented it needs to be voted upon by members in the House to give it support. I thank the member opposite for indicating that her party will be supporting it.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of his remarks, the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga did a magnificent job of listing the challenges that are facing small businesses, workers and families across his riding and, of course, across Canada.

Thunder Bay—Superior North has serious problems in the forest industry and the budget has absolutely zero in it other than a tiny amount for marketing and research and development money for forestry. There is nothing for loan guarantees and nothing for targeted investments. We have a mill in Marathon that is at risk. Terrace Bay and Schreiber have lost one paper machine. Nipigon, Red Rock and Dorion have lost two mills. Greenstone has lost two mills and the forest work that goes with it. The list goes on.

I am an NDP member and a proud one, and I am a small business person. I would like to ask the hon. member why we seem to be about to replicate the worst deficit in the history of Canada under the Mulroney government of \$42 billion to \$45 billion. We are headed that way now. Why are we giving \$60 billion in tax cuts to large corporations but only \$1 billion to EI workers who are in desperate trouble?

• (1320)

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, the member noted in his remarks the challenges facing the forestry industry. I would like to point out that there are all kinds of initiatives in the budget that are targeted toward helping the forestry industry.

As well, there are EI benefits that will help retrain individuals and provide funding for those who would not normally qualify for EI benefits, those who may have been out of work for prolonged periods of time.

However, as it relates to the forestry sector, let me point out some of the initiatives that our budget includes. We are supporting the forestry sector with \$80 million over two years for the transformative technologies program. It is important that the money we invest not just simply go toward continuing to do business as we have always done it, but that it go toward investing in technologies that will make all of our industries more competitive and more efficient. That is why we have extended the capital cost allowance for all manufacturing and these kinds of industries.

I would return a question back to my colleague. How can he not support many of these initiatives that we have put in for the forestry sector which will clearly help the forestry sector through this difficult time?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to speak this afternoon in support of this budget, a tremendous economic action plan for Canada, a great action plan, very timely and something that I think is roundly celebrated by Canadians east to west and north to south.

On December 22, I had the honour of hosting an economic round table in Peterborough and I had a number of local stakeholders come

in and make specific recommendations on things that they would like to see in our budget. A number of the recommendations were not just outstanding recommendations that were incorporated in this budget, but they demonstrated that our finance minister and our Prime Minister were listening when we were handing in reports from everyday Canadians and incorporating those suggestions right into the budget.

I just want to refer to some of the suggestions that I heard.

Bryan Cathcart from Cathcart Trucking came forward and spoke on behalf of small business. He recommended reductions in small business taxes. I refer to the budget brief and I look at supporting small business. I look at, for example, increasing the amount of small business income eligible for a reduced federal tax rate by 11% to \$500,000 from the current limit of \$400,000. This is real money back into the pockets of small business so they can employ people, continue to be prosperous and invest in our communities.

Increasing access to credit was mentioned by a number of people who were there, including Jay Amer from the GPAEDC who spoke about our small businesses having a difficult time getting the credit they needed to conduct and grow their business. We look, for example, at the Canada small business financing program and the Business Development Bank of Canada, those extensions that we made specifically in this budget tremendously improved their ability to support small business. We see that once again that on this issue the government was really listening.

We had seniors' representatives there as well. Ralph de Groot, who is a retired superintendent of the RCMP, came forward and made specific recommendations with respect to the tax burden that seniors are facing in Canada and talked to us about how we might be able to help seniors so that they can meet their bill commitments and live the way they have become accustomed. We see in this budget that one of the major moves is to increase the age credit by an additional \$1,000. Our government increased the age credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 in budget 2006 and now we have increased it by another \$1,000 effective in 2009.

What does this mean? How will this benefit seniors? What did Mr. de Groot's advocacy win for seniors? This benefit will benefit 2.2 million seniors who will now be eligible to receive up to \$961 in annual tax savings. That is a lot of money for seniors in my community and that money will help them. In effect, \$961 is what many of them make in any given month.

We have already introduced pension income splitting, something that was incredibly popular among seniors in my riding. We also changed the age limit from 69 to 71 on RRSPs. We further reduced the mandatory amount that must be withdrawn when converting RRSPs to RRIFs, something that seniors have been really concerned about, especially given the decline in the market. They wanted to be able to leave their money in and we are allowing them to do that. Once again, the concerns brought forward by Ralph de Groot were listened to in our budget.

The Budget

The Peterborough Real Estate Association came forward. Barb Criegern and Carolyn Mills talked about the need for the government to assist homeowners and to assist real estate through what could be a difficult time. They talked about retrofit programs. Obviously the new home renovation tax credit, which this government brought forward, is something I am immensely proud of.

We now have a program where Canadians can improve their homes: green retrofits, improvements to their kitchens, maybe they have a new addition to the family so they need to renovate a bedroom, or maybe they want to finish a basement. For all of these things the government will now play a part, if they make that investment soon.

Those things will stimulate our economy because we know those inputs, whether it is lumber or drywall, are all made in Canada, which is a real stimulus to the economy. At the same time, the government will have a hand in helping everyday Canadians pay for renovations on their homes, to update their homes, to make them more efficient, to make them greener and to make them much nicer.

• (1325)

We have a lot of old housing stock in a city like Peterborough. This will help us retrofit those homes and really assist those homeowners.

They talked to me about the ability to leverage the RRSP investments toward the purchase of a home. That was specifically mentioned in the budget. One used to be able to take \$20,000 of one's RRSP and draw that down to put toward a down payment on a home. For years, the Real Estate Association has been coming forward asking for it to be indexed and moved to \$25,000. There is a specific member of our caucus who has worked very hard on that. That indexing is in the budget. This will help people buy homes and it is something that is roundly celebrated by real estate agents from coast to coast.

We now have the first-time home buyer's tax credit. Barb Criegern and Carolyn Mills of the Peterborough Real Estate Board talked at length about how we could assist first-time home buyers. That is a big market and it has the ability to really keep homes moving. If we can continue to assist people to move from rental to ownership, especially at this time of historically low interest rates, anything we could do in that regard would certainly be helpful.

The new tax credit of \$5,000 tax credit with a net value to them of \$750 is in the budget. This is the government helping first-time home buyers to enter into the real estate market at a time when we need people entering into the housing market so we can keep the economy rolling.

Judy Heffernan of the Peterborough Community Futures Development Corporation and Jay Amer talked to me specifically about the eastern Ontario development program. They had a recommendation to double the funding of that program because it had leveraged so much support and created so many jobs. That was a \$10 million-a-year program. They were advocating to take that from \$10 million and move it to \$20 million. Our government did substantially more than that.

We have created the new southern Ontario development agency. That is a \$1 billion investment over five years, and it is about time.

Regional economic development has existed from coast to coast to coast but not in southern Ontario. It has been an item of fairness for us. We looked at it and thought about how much more investment we could leverage and how many more jobs we could create in southern Ontario if we had a fund like this. They were looking for another \$10 million, but they received \$200 million per year. We outdid their expectations by about 20 times.

However, that is not all we did. We also re-extended the eastern Ontario development program, so that \$10 million fund is still in place for the next two years. We have the new SODA program, the southern Ontario development agency. That is going to create jobs and investments. We still have the eastern Ontario development program and that will be administered by the CFDC in Peterborough, Judy Heffernan and her associates, who do a tremendous job in attracting investment and creating jobs in Peterborough.

The president of Sir Sandford Fleming College, Tony Tilly, came to talk to me about a new skilled trades centre of excellence that the college would like to build. However, it really has a difficult time accessing the money that it needs to build the infrastructure. I have had conversations with the presidents of Brock University and the University of Windsor. I know the member for St. Catharines is here, a real advocate for Brock University.

What have we been able to create in the budget? What have we been able to lobby for? We did not only invest billions of new dollars in infrastructure, and that should never be diminished. We also created a new \$2 billion fund for post-secondary institutions and that \$2 billion will build the facilities that will create the great minds of tomorrow. This new skilled trades centre for Sir Sandford Fleming College will train the tradesmen of tomorrow. This is going to build the strong economy that Canada is going to need.

I could talk about this budget for hours because there is so much in it that is good for my community and every community from coast to coast to coast. However, I see that my time is up, but I appreciate the opportunity to speak in emphatic support of this great budget.

• (1330)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is the vision in the budget? A member from Nunavut yesterday asked about great vision, great potential projects that would get the north off diesel energy.

The Conservative member suggested we have put forth the facts on science. Therefore, I want to put forward the facts set out in annex 3 of the budget: cuts to the granting councils in 2009-10, \$17.7 million; in 2010-11, \$43 million; and in 2011-12, \$87.2 million. I want to get those on the record. The member said that improving infrastructure for science was good. This morning two professors complained that it was no good if at the same time the research professors and research staff who would use that infrastructure were decimated.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Speaker, the budget makes several very significant investments into science. For example, the board of Genome Canada has come out today specifically applauding budget 2009 for the commitments it makes in support of Genome Canada. Hundreds of millions of dollars per year over the next several years will go in support of that very important institution.

The Budget

We are supporting scientific research in our country because we want to be a leader in the world.

[Translation]

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the speech given by my hon. colleague from Peterborough and, if I understood correctly, there is a consistent theme running through this budget: only those who are rich, who already have money, stand to benefit from it.

Older people who unfortunately have to rely on the guaranteed income supplement do not have RRSPs or RRIFs. Nor can those older people enjoy a tax cut of \$900 a year, because they do not pay taxes. This budget does nothing for such people.

People who do not have adequate housing, who live in tents in Edmonton—as the hon. member should know—cannot benefit from the government's renovation program.

How does it intend to help our poorest citizens, men and women alike? I am speaking on behalf of all Quebecers and all Canadians. There is more to Canada than just Ontario.

• (1335)

[English]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: That is right, Mr. Speaker, Canada is not just Ontario and that is why our government does not discriminate between regions. This is why the new southern Ontario development agency is such a great advancement made by the government because of its fairness for Ontario.

The member specifically mentioned seniors and talked about housing for seniors. I reference page 14 of the budget in brief. The member can look at where it specifically details \$400 million over two years for the construction of social housing units for low-income seniors. This is on top of the 7% increase last year in the guaranteed income supplement. It is on top of the amount of money that we have allowed seniors to earn before we claw anything back from pensions.

Last, we know that the over 800,000 Canadians have removed been completely from the federal tax rolls, the overwhelming majority of those are low-income seniors. I know the member does not want us taxing low-income seniors, and we are not.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the member is asserting, that the budget continues moneys for research, I have heard from two senior researchers, one working in the area of neuroscience, the other in Arctic research, who say what is happening is the money for actual researchers and students is being yanked and given over for the purchase of equipment and buildings in the Arctic, neither of which are very useful if there are no people to use them.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro: Mr. Speaker, college and university infrastructure is useful. I know the member has the University of Alberta in her riding. There are \$2 billion for new infrastructure for colleges and universities. The member should vote in support of the budget because it will help people out right in her own riding.

[Translation]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel.

I am pleased to participate in this debate. First of all, I wish to state that this budget is completely unacceptable and that Quebecers agree on two things. The budget does not respect the consensus of the National Assembly of Quebec, which passed a unanimous motion containing several points. I would like to remind members that the motion addressed several points, including two very important ones: maintaining the equalization system—that is, not changing the formula—and not proceeding with the implementation of a pan-Canadian securities commission. The unanimous motion of the Quebec National Assembly is supported by a great number of people and there is a broad consensus in Quebec on this matter.

As the member of parliament for a riding hit hard by various cuts to the manufacturing sector, I note that this budget does not contain significant measures to support workers who have lost their jobs and who must make great efforts to find employment in a sector and an area where, every month, a plant closes or finds itself in trouble.

I would like to mention that, since 2005, the riding of Beauharnois—Salaberry has lost almost 3,000 jobs concentrated in a regional county municipality where the economy was based on a manufacturing sector with good, well-paid jobs and unionized workers. Their wages were spent on goods, houses, renovations, and taxes and kept the economy rolling in our area. In our city, the closing of the Goodyear plant alone eliminated wages worth \$85 million last year. To have a better idea of what this means, imagine motorcycle and watercraft vendors, renovators, builders, retailers as well as all merchants and contractors affected by the elimination of \$85 million in wages. And I have only mentioned Goodyear.

Just two weeks ago, Rio Tinto Alcan announced the early closure of its factory. The community was preparing for the closure of the Beauharnois factory, but only in two years' time—the time it would take for the community, economic development players and elected officials to come up with solutions that would enable workers to find other employment. But now, everyone is caught a bit off guard by Rio Tinto Alcan's unacceptable decision. Good, salaried jobs are being lost in the city of Beauharnois. This city has seen its factories leave one after the other and in the past two weeks has learned that 250 workers will be out of work.

I do not want to make a defeatist speech because our region is bursting with very dynamic stakeholders, players and elected officials who are capable of attempting to re-ignite the local economy, of rolling up their sleeves and of trying to entice investors and promoters to our area, which has its assets. It is the only municipal port in Canada; there is a highway and there are trains. We are well-situated, but it will take us more than one or two years to build the infrastructure and attract new businesses.

The Budget

While we are waiting for the elected officials and the economic development players to do their work, we must support the workers who have lost their jobs because they had decent salaries that allowed them to buy consumer goods and meet their financial commitments.

Following the recent Rio Tinto Alcan closure, 50 of the 250 workers were hired by an agency.

• (1340)

The unionized Alcan workers in Beauharnois made that compromise so that the plant would not have to close its doors for another two or three years, as they were promised. They were willing to make those compromises in their collective agreement and, unfortunately, agree to an agency. Since then, there have been two classes of workers in the plant.

Despite the union's compromises—as I said—nothing stopped Rio Tinto Alcan in Beauharnois from renegeing on its commitments and hastily closing the plant. Some 50% of the people hired by the agency were former Goodyear workers. These workers have now been through two major layoffs in two years. That is very tough for people to handle.

I do not know whether the members are able to close their eyes and imagine what they would do if they lost their jobs tomorrow. They would no longer be getting paid, and they would have to wait two weeks before collecting employment insurance benefits. We make reasonable money, so we can save a little. But for factory workers, even those taking home a good wage, it is hard to save money.

Nowadays, in my riding, workers call to tell me that, unfortunately, they did not work enough hours to qualify for employment insurance benefits. That is why I think that the unemployed are one of this budget's glaring omissions. The government may be using other measures or services to stimulate the economy, but the unemployed have nevertheless been forgotten and they need support during this crisis.

I would like to provide two specific examples in an attempt to reach the members opposite. We hear a lot of numbers and statistics, but this is about human beings, about people who are appealing to us, the members who live in ridings that are economically dependent on manufacturing.

I want to share some stories with you, but I am not going to make the same mistake that the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke made before the holidays, when she read emails from her constituents. She read them in their entirety, even though they contained racist, discriminatory, completely unacceptable, unparliamentary language. In spite of all that, the member took the liberty of reading them in this House. Needless to say, the disparaging comments in the emails were directed at the Bloc members. I will take the high road and summarize the emails I received, because Bloc members also get blasphemous emails criticizing the Conservative government and members. But because we behave responsibly and respectfully in this House, I will not follow that member's example. I hope the Speaker will soon make a ruling prohibiting such unparliamentary practices.

I would like to tell you a story about employment insurance that touched me deeply. A single mother came to my office to tell me that she did not qualify for employment insurance because she was missing five hours, just five hours. I had to tell her that for years, the Bloc and many social stakeholders and unions in Quebec have been calling for changes to employment insurance, but that the Conservatives have unfortunately turned a deaf ear.

I have a message for the government, because of the stories I have heard, like this single mother's and another woman's too. When this woman, who had recently given birth, went back to work, she was unfortunately laid off, but she did not qualify for employment insurance because she did not have enough hours. That is too bad, but it is women who give birth. We are still being discriminated against because the Employment Insurance Act is not geared to women. They do not go back 104 weeks to see how many hours this woman accumulated; they just look at how many hours she worked. It is one more injustice.

If the government really wants to support the unemployed, it should act quickly to change and improve the employment insurance program.

• (1345)

Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry for her wonderful speech. I would like to remind her of one point that has been forgotten in the government's economic action plan, in the budget, and that is the issue of seniors who receive the guaranteed income supplement because they do not have enough income. Legislation provides for a guaranteed income supplement; however, the supplement given by the government is below the poverty line set for Canada. These seniors are living below the poverty line. I think that the government could have at least planned to increase the guaranteed income supplement in its budget.

What does my colleague think about this in terms of the constituents in her riding that she knows?

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. We have heard many accounts from seniors in our ridings. Seniors' advocacy groups and organizations in Quebec have been asking for an increase in the guaranteed income supplement for some time. I think seniors know they can count on Bloc Québécois members to demand that this injustice be rectified.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that another consensus is emerging in Quebec regarding this budget, specifically, concerning farmers. I represent an agricultural riding and I can say that the consensus is that this budget does not meet the needs expressed by farmers in Quebec.

[*English*]

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was sharing some stories about her riding and I would like to take the opportunity to talk about my riding of Halifax.

There is a community in Halifax called Spryfield. It is a very large community, with urban sprawl and some inner city pockets. There is no licensed child care facility in the entire community of Spryfield. I met with the director of the YWCA Halifax and she asked, "How can we expect the economy to work when our women can't?"

The Budget

I am wondering if the member would share with us her thoughts about child care as an economic stimulus?

• (1350)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, child care is a big topic of debate in Quebec. We have created a child care system that is accessible for women and that we pay for through taxes. All women, all families—men, too—deserve to have adequate, quality child care facilities for their children. I encourage my colleague to exert pressure and to bring forward a motion or bill towards that end. As long as Quebec's jurisdictions are respected and full compensation is given, she will have the Bloc Québécois on her side.

[*English*]

Mrs. Bonnie Crombie (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too want to thank my colleague from the Bloc for her passionate description of the needs of the most vulnerable and how they are not met in this most recent budget. I wonder if the member can help me understand why the government would choose to add five weeks at the end of the EI period rather than eliminating the two week waiting period which would serve to get money into the hands of the needy more quickly.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Mississauga—Streetsville for her question. I believe that this decision is a purely mathematical one. We know that 50% of unemployed workers do not qualify and are not eligible for employment insurance. Adding five weeks at the end will cost less than eliminating the two-week waiting period. Even though that is what people who have just lost their jobs really need, it would cost more. The Conservatives want everyone to think that extending the benefit period by five weeks is really great, but they are well aware that a significant percentage of unemployed workers find work before their benefits run out. The government just wants to look like a nice guy. We are happy that they have added five weeks, but what workers really need right now is the elimination of the two-week waiting period. They need a cheque so that they can buy food and pay the rent.

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to follow my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry, who, as you know, is a proud Quebecker and a worthy defender of the rights and interests of her constituents.

What happens here in the House of Commons is not always funny, given that in an economic crisis, often it is the poorest members of our society who are affected. When I say “the poorest members”, that covers a lot. I am talking about people who have lost their jobs and who, when they were working, had decent salaries and were not in need. A case in point would be forestry and manufacturing workers, who earned a very good living and paid their taxes. It is always difficult to see people fall on hard times. It saddens me that the Conservatives are oblivious to this and that the Liberals are once again supporting the Conservatives because they are too afraid of what might happen if they voted against the Conservatives. That is the reality, and in an economic crisis, with the salaries we are earning, how can we not stand up every day in this House to defend people who have lost their jobs?

I will always be proud to be a member of a party that has always stood up for Quebeckers, especially those who have lost their jobs. I will not stop, because I come from a small community in the Outaouais. My riding is in the Outaouais-Laurentides region, which has a similar economy to the ridings of many other members of this House, from other political parties. That economy is based on forestry, farming and tourism. People say that it is not the workers who are seasonal, but the work. These sectors are particularly hard hit during times of economic crisis.

I see what there is in the budget for the forest industry, despite all the members from Quebec in this House, be they Liberals, Conservatives, NDP—there are still a few from those parties—or Bloc Québécois. I tell myself that it would be unthinkable to ignore the resolution passed unanimously by the National Assembly of Quebec. Only a Liberal or a Conservative would put party ideology ahead of people's interests.

The National Assembly of Quebec passed a unanimous resolution. The Parti Québécois is a sovereignist party, while the others, except for Québec Solidaire, are federalist parties, yet the resolution passed unanimously. I will read part of it:

That it insist that the federal government provide financial support to sectors experiencing problems, particularly the manufacturing and forest sectors, as it is doing for the automobile industry;

That is what the National Assembly was calling for, a demand that should be fought for tooth and nail by every member of this House who is from Quebec.

This budget gives the forestry sector \$170 million, although the auto industry was given over \$2.7 billion. I have absolutely nothing against the auto industry. It made its claim, and all the better that it obtained results. However the fact remains that the National Assembly asked for assistance for the forestry and manufacturing sectors similar to what was given to the auto sector. That was the unanimous request of the National Assembly, yet, as we all know, only \$170 million was given. I will break down how that \$170 million was divided within the forestry sector: \$80 million over two years for a transformative technologies program; \$40 million to develop pilot-scale demonstration projects of new products; \$40 million, also over two years, for the Canada wood, value to wood, and North America wood first programs; and \$10 million to support large-scale demonstrations of Canadian-style use of wood.

There is nothing in this budget to help businesses, absolutely nothing.

I see some members from the Outaouais region in the House, particularly, the hon. member for Pontiac. In his riding, the Smurfit-Stone paper mill closed just before Christmas. The sawmill just next to it, the Pontiac sawmill, closed. In my riding, there is a paper mill in Thurso, Papiers Fraser. I hope it does not close, and I will do everything I can; I will fight to keep it open. I simply cannot stand by and watch that happen.

The Budget

• (1355)

I do not understand why the member for Pontiac cannot stand up in this House against his own government, which is investing only \$170 million, when the economy in his own riding has been hard hit.

What good is having a salary when one cannot even defend the interests of one's constituents? Is it because one is a minister? Is it because one is looking out for oneself and worried about keeping the limousine?

It is simply disrespectful of constituents' interests. I could point to every Quebec member in this House who is not from the Bloc Québécois, any Conservative or Liberal, because once again, these members are putting their personal interests before the interests of their constituents. It was ever thus. And this is why politicians always come last in the popularity ratings because they often put their own interests ahead of those of their constituents. It is sad, because we are in the midst of a very serious economic crisis. Things are tough, especially when we see the help this government is giving.

I cannot ignore the repeated demands from both the Quebec government and workers in Quebec, and it is the same in the rest of Canada. When it comes to employment insurance, only 45% of those who pay into it are eligible. These measures were brought in in 1992 because we were coming out of an economic crisis. The federal government was facing an enormous deficit created by the Conservatives at that time. Employment insurance rules were tightened up. Today we have the same rules as those brought in in 1992 during a mini economic crisis. Imagine. Today we are talking about an economic crisis similar to that of the Great Depression. What about our workers, those who will lose their jobs? Only 45% will receive employment insurance.

In November, the Bloc Québécois reached out and presented proposals in this House. We were thanked by the Minister of Finance and congratulated by the Prime Minister because we were the only party to submit proposals. Our requests were simple: we wanted the two-week waiting period to be eliminated and the number of hours required to qualify for employment insurance to be reduced to 360. This would be covered by the \$2 billion program surplus. Instead, the Conservatives decided to freeze contributions and arranged for the surplus to disappear. This was mainly to avoid making improvements to the employment insurance program and ensuring that workers who might qualify in a crisis such as the one we are experiencing—one as significant as the Great Depression—would be entitled to benefits. The Conservatives said no to that.

There is no help for older workers. The program for older worker adjustment was abolished by the Liberals in 1996. Those 55 and older, who lost their jobs during massive layoffs, could benefit from such assistance until they retired at the age of 65. But no, they want to try to send people 55 and over to a retraining program even though we are already in the midst of a recession.

People will lose their jobs and there will be fewer jobs. They will try to retrain older workers to do something else. That does not make sense. Instead, we should try to give them a decent income until they reach retirement age. After all, they contributed to creating wealth while they worked in the manufacturing, forestry or other type of

industry. And yet, today, they are the ones being penalized and their right to claim some of the wealth they created is being taken away.

Once again, I find it hard to understand. As for the members from the rest of Canada, that is their problem. However, I have a great deal of difficulty with the fact that Quebec members, given their salary, do not rise in this House to defend, on a daily basis, Quebeckers who lose their jobs and that they do not rise when the time comes to vote on something as important as a budget and say, "I am against it because the heartless Conservatives do not want to help the most disadvantaged". I have a great deal of difficulty with that.

Once again, I am proud to be a member of the Bloc Québécois. Year after year, we are the only ones able to stand up in this house on behalf of our constituents.

• (1400)

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully, and with great pride, to my hon. colleague's speech. Like my fellow Bloc Québécois colleagues, I think we all know that a minority government is always on probation.

Can the member explain to me how the Liberal Party can denounce the budget with such vigour and passion, but at the same time, vote in favour of this budget without trying to amend or improve it?

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Laval for her question.

It is very hard to understand what the Liberals have done. The member used the word "probation", which I think was the word the Liberal leader used as well. He is talking about deadlines: March, June, December. Otherwise, the Conservatives had better watch out. The Liberals will get mean and nasty and bring down the bad old government.

We know that two months from now, in March, it will still be too early. Analysts and experts will tell the Liberals that it is not the right time and that they have to give this government time to react. The Liberals are talking about June. A report will be tabled in this House in late June, and if the Liberals are not happy with it, will there be an election on July 15?

The dates were carefully chosen. The last date is in December. The Liberals were careful not to choose October, because it might mean an election, so they decided to pick December. If the Liberals are not satisfied, will they prompt an election in mid-January? It makes no sense.

Once again, I can understand that the Liberal Party is in disarray. I see that every day as the chief organizer for the Bloc. The Liberals are in such disarray that they are willing to compromise their own ideas just to keep their seats. They are making sure they keep their nice warm seats and their \$150,000 a year, while our people are losing their jobs. I have a huge problem with that. Only a Liberal would do that.

[English]

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two questions.

The Budget

First, would the member comment on the lack of enthusiasm for bilingualism in the budget?

The second item was brought up by another Bloc member, but I did not get a chance to ask a question. It was a good point about there being a hint at regulatory change. Two of my constituents, Brook and Dustin, are very concerned that the government may sneak in, through budget implementation legislation, changes to the Navigable Waters Protection Act that would affect the ability we have had since Confederation to canoe on our rivers and to enjoy our rivers. It would take environmental assessments away from developments on rivers.

Would the hon. member comment on those two items?

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Laframboise: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that I will have enough time to answer the question.

With respect to the first part of the question, the part about women, my colleague is absolutely right, and my colleague from Laval did a good job of emphasizing the point. The only time the word “women” appeared in the budget was in the preliminary note explaining that the masculine gender included both men and women.

That is the plain truth. How representative of Conservative ideology.

Some dreamed of a vast daycare network. When they chose to support the Conservatives, the Liberals chose the wrong party because the Conservatives believe that a woman's place is in the home. That is just what they think. As for the rest of it, once again, if they wanted women to enjoy a better quality of life in this country, the Liberals should have thought of that before supporting the Conservatives. They chose to support the wrong party. That is a fact. But it will come back to haunt them. Today, they think everything is fine. We are just two days in, and they will finally be able to save their seats and their salaries. But eventually, they will realize how very hard it is to support the Conservatives. The Conservatives do politics from a certain ideological perspective, particularly when it comes to recognition of women. They are already attacking pay equity. The Liberals must be very aware of how the Conservatives intend to proceed on that front. With this government in power, women will have a very hard time achieving fairness and equity.

The Liberals should rethink this. They still have a few days left before the vote.

[*English*]

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the constituents of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar for putting their faith in me to represent them as their member of Parliament. I would also like to thank all of those who volunteered last fall, as well as my family members for their ongoing support.

Canada's economic action plan, budget 2009 is the result of weeks of consultation with thousands of Canadians. In preparation for this plan the Minister of Finance not only consulted widely with Canadians but obtained advice and input from some of the leading

economic and financial minds in our country. This is truly an economic action plan for all Canadians.

As the finance minister was travelling across the country consulting Canadians, I was also travelling across my constituency consulting the people of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar. As an aside, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister of Finance for coming to Saskatoon and listening to the people of Saskatchewan.

I went from meeting with residents and business and community leaders from the west side of Saskatoon, to hosting community meetings in the towns scattered throughout the rural part of the riding, to door knocking in the villages and hamlets that did not have a town hall to go to. Through these consultations I met with a wide range of people.

The people of Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar want this government to get on with the business of governing and they want this economic action plan to pass. Canada's economic action plan is economically stimulating, job creating and tax reducing. This plan finds the right balance.

There was a common theme in what I heard and what this government heard, namely, that investment in Canadian communities by way of roads, bridges and other projects is a good way to stimulate the economy and create prosperity for the future. This government is committed to following this advice in as quick a fashion as possible so that the stimulus provided for in this plan gets out into the Canadian economy to promote growth and job creation.

This government is stimulating the economy and creating jobs by investing in social housing. At this time of global economic uncertainty our government is committed to ensuring that the citizens who need assistance the most will receive it. This is why we are investing \$1 billion over two years to renovate and retrofit existing social housing units on a fifty-fifty cost share basis with the provinces. These additional funds for social housing are another example of this government investing in the future.

This economic action plan also dedicates \$400 million over two years for the construction of housing units for low-income seniors. Our seniors have worked many years to build this great country of ours, yet rising costs have made affordable housing difficult for some. We have heard their concerns and have acted prudently to address them.

These examples of this government's care and compassion for those who need a helping hand are just some of the reasons I support Canada's economic action plan.

I am also very pleased to see that this government is supporting prairie farmers and indeed all Canadian farmers by partnering with the provinces, territories and industry. It is contributing \$500 million to the agricultural flexibility plan which will assist farmers in dealing with the fluctuating costs of production, promote new innovations in farming practices and equipment, ensure environmental sustainability, and provide a resource for farmers when they are faced with market challenges or opportunities.

I am also very glad to find that this economic action plan includes an additional \$50 million over three years for the expansion of slaughtering capacity in Canada. The expansion of domestic slaughtering capacity will allow our producers to be less reliant on foreign slaughterhouses and will make our livestock producers less susceptible to commodity price fluctuations caused by regulations imposed by foreign governments.

This government is also supporting Canada's livestock industry by creating a market access secretariat to work towards expanding the market for Canadian products beyond the U.S. into other promising and potentially lucrative markets.

This investment and these other initiatives will not only help our cattle producers, but will create jobs, both now and in the future.

•(1410)

During a time of economic downturn, this government realizes that Canadians and Canadian businesses are hurting. We understand that when businesses are hurting, they cannot give their hard-working employees the raises they would like to.

Therefore, our government is giving a tax break to middle and lower income Canadians. Canada's economic action plan will increase the basic personal exemption amount by \$620 to \$10,320 for 2009. This action will directly benefit our most economically disadvantaged and those just entering the job market.

This action plan will again benefit lower income Canadians and, indeed, all Canadians by increasing the top of the first personal income tax bracket in 2009, as well as increasing the top of the second personal income tax bracket. Our government understands that this global downturn has been forced on Canada and should not be borne by hard-working taxpayers.

I believe that this economic action plan is right for Canada, right for Saskatchewan and right for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar. It is right for men and it is right for women. It is right for upper income Canadians and it is right for lower income Canadians. It is right for employers and it is right for workers.

I encourage all hon. members of the House to pass Canada's economic action plan budget 2009 next week.

The Budget

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It being 2:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the amendment now before the House.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the recorded division stands deferred until Monday, February 2 at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

•(1415)

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, I move that we see the clock as 2:30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It being 2:30 p.m., this House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:17 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

HON. MAURIL BÉLANGER

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. JACQUES GOURDE

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MR. JOE PRESTON

MR. MARCEL PROULX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	BQ
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	Ind.
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Baudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	BQ
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoulou	Québec	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	British Columbia	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	Ind.
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	BQ
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Ontario	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry ...	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île.....	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert.....	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack.....	Toronto—Danforth.....	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec).....	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River ...	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia.....	NDP
Lessard, Yves.....	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni.....	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway.....	Central Nova	Nova Scotia.....	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton.....	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc.....	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloway, Jim.....	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Mark, Inky.....	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette.....	Manitoba	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith.....	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Tony.....	Sault Ste. Marie.....	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville.....	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy.....	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East ..	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra.....	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	Lib.
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance..	Macleod	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	Québec	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Valeriotte, Francis	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ.	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Ind.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology)	Cambridge	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathyssen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Lib.
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Valeriotte, Francis	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska— Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River ..	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of January 30, 2009 — 2nd Session, 40th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:

Harold Albrecht
Larry Bagnell
Mauril Bélanger

Vice-Chair:

Rob Clarke
Jean Crowder
John Duncan

Marc Lemay
Yvon Lévesque
LaVar Payne

Greg Rickford
Todd Russell
Bruce Stanton

(12)

Associate Members

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Gérard Asselin
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Dennis Bevington
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Steven Blaney
Kelly Block
Sylvie Boucher
Ray Boughen
Peter Braid
Garry Breitkreuz
Gord Brown
Lois Brown
Patrick Brown
Rod Bruinooge
Dona Cadman
Paul Calandra
Blaine Calkins
Ron Cannan
Colin Carrie
Rick Casson

Michael Chong
Nathan Cullen
John Cummins
Patricia Davidson
Bob Dechert
Dean Del Mastro
Jean Dorion
Earl Dreeshen
Ken Dryden
Kirsty Duncan
Rick Dykstra
Ed Fast
Royal Galipeau
Cheryl Gallant
Shelly Glover
Peter Goldring
Jacques Gourde
Nina Grewal
Richard Harris
Laurie Hawn
Russ Hiebert
Randy Hoback
Candice Hoepfner
Ed Holder
Carol Hughes
Bruce Hyer
Brian Jean
Randy Kamp
Gerald Keddy

Greg Kerr
Ed Komarnicki
Daryl Kramp
Mike Lake
Guy Lauzon
Pierre Lemieux
Megan Leslie
Ben Lobb
Tom Lukiwski
James Lunney
Dave MacKenzie
Inky Mark
Pat Martin
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Phil McColeman
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James Rajotte

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Lee Richardson
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Gary Schellenberger
Bev Shipley
Devinder Shory
Joy Smith
Kevin Sorenson
Brian Storseth
David Sweet
David Tilson
Bradley Trost
Justin Trudeau
Merv Tweed
Tim Uppal
Dave Van Kesteren
Maurice Vellacott
Mike Wallace
Mark Warawa
Chris Warkentin
Jeff Watson
John Weston
Rodney Weston
Alice Wong
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Kelly Block
Bob Dechert
Earl Dreeshen

Vice-Chair:

Carole Freeman
Russ Hiebert
Pierre Poilievre

Bill Siksay
Michelle Simson
Paul Szabo

Ève-Mary Thai Thi Lac
Borys Wrzesnewskyj

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Associate Members

Jim Abbott
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Devinder Shory
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David Tilson
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Merv Tweed
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Maurice Vellacott
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Alice Wong
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair:

Alex Atamanenko
André Bellavance
France Bonsant

Vice-Chair:

Wayne Easter
Mark Eyking
Randy Hoback

Pierre Lemieux
Larry Miller
Blake Richards

Bev Shipley
Brian Storseth
Francis Valeriote

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Garry Breitkreuz
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Rod Bruinooge
Paule Brunelle
Dona Cadman
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Blaine Calkins
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Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Chair:

Charlie Angus
Rod Bruinooge
Dean Del Mastro

Vice-Chair:

Ruby Dhalla
Shelly Glover
Nina Grewal

Carole Lavallée
Roger Pomerleau
Pablo Rodriguez

Gary Schellenberger
Scott Simms
Tim Uppal

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Joe Preston
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Bev Shipley
Devinder Shory
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David Sweet
Glenn Thibeault
David Tilson
Bradley Trost
Merv Tweed
Dave Van Kesteren
Maurice Vellacott
Robert Vincent
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Mark Warawa
Chris Warkentin
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Rodney Weston
Alice Wong
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Chair:

Maurizio Bevilacqua
Paul Calandra
Olivia Chow

Vice-Chair:

Jean Dorion
Rick Dykstra
Nina Grewal

Jim Karygiannis
Alexandra Mendes
Devinder Shory

Thierry St-Cyr
David Tilson
Alice Wong

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Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

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