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Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 7, 2012

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

STRENGTHENING MILITARY JUSTICE IN THE DEFENCE OF CANADA ACT

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-15, An Act to amend the National Defence Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the motion that this question be now put.

Mr. José Nunez-Melo (Laval, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first, we oppose passing this bill at second reading.

On October 7, 2011, the Minister of National Defence introduced Bill C-15, An Act to amend the National Defence Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Bill C-15 is a response to two reports. The first was issued by the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, the Right Honourable Antonio Lamer, and the second was released by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

Our caucus believes that the bill does not meet its objective of standardizing the military and civilian justice systems. The bill also does not answer the key questions about reforming the summary trial and grievance systems. In 2003, the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada tabled his report on the independent review of the National Defence Act. The Lamer report contained 88 recommendations, but only 28 of them were incorporated into the legislation.

In 2010, Bill C-41 was introduced to respond to the 2003 Lamer report and the 2009 report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Essentially, Bill C-15 is similar to the version of Bill C-41 that came out of the Senate committee during the last Parliament.

Many significant reforms are proposed in this bill. The NDP caucus has been in favour of making the necessary updates to the military justice system for a long time now. Members of the

Canadian Forces are subject to extremely high standards of discipline and deserve a justice system held to comparable standards.

This bill has a number of flaws, which we hope will be addressed in committee if Bill C-15 is passed at second reading. It is thus very important to remember that, in the reform of the summary trial system, the amendments to Bill C-15 do not adequately address the unfairness of summary trials. Currently, a conviction at a summary trial in the Canadian Forces results in a criminal record. Summary trials are held without the ability of the accused to consult counsel. There is no right of appeal and no transcript of the trial.

Furthermore, the “judge” is often the accused's commanding officer. We believe that this is much too harsh for some members of the Canadian Forces who are convicted of minor offences. These minor offences include insubordination, quarrels, misconduct, absence without leave, drunkenness and disobedience of a lawful command. These offences can undoubtedly be very significant when it comes to military discipline, but they do not necessarily call for a criminal record.

I would remind the House that in committee in March 2011, the NDP proposed amendments to increase from five to 27 the number of offences that could be considered minor.

• (1010)

It is important to understand that a criminal record can make life after a military career very difficult. Being saddled with a criminal record can make getting a job, renting a place to live and international travel a real nightmare.

Second, there is also the question of reforming the grievance system with an external review committee. At this time, the Canadian Forces Grievance Board does not allow for external review. The NDP amendment proposes that at least 60% of the grievance committee members never have been officers or members of the Canadian Forces.

Although the amendment was adopted in March 2011, for Bill C-41, it was not incorporated into Bill C-15. It is important that the amendment be included again.

Finally, I would like to talk about strengthening the Military Police Complaints Commission. Bill C-15 amends the National Defence Act to establish a timeline in which the Canadian Forces Provost Marshal will be required to resolve complaints and protect complainants from being penalized for submitting a complaint in good faith.

Government Orders

The NDP believes that we must do more to strengthen the commission. Giving the Military Police Complaints Commission more powers in order for it to serve as an oversight body has been very misunderstood. There should be a legislative provision to give the commission more powers so that it can be authorized to investigate and report to Parliament. Our amendments are supported by the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association and retired Canadian Forces Colonel Michel W. Drapeau, an expert on military law, among others.

The summary trial is by far the most commonly used form of tribunal in the military justice system. It is designed to deal with minor service offences. The objective is to deal quickly with alleged offences within the unit in order to return the member to active service as soon as possible, thereby promoting and maintaining discipline within the unit. Courts martial deal with more serious charges handled by the system and can also deal with less serious charges, depending on the decision of the accused.

This is the definition and the objective of the grievance process:

Grievances involve matters such as benefits, personnel evaluation reports, postings, release from the Canadian Forces, medical issues and harassment—all matters affecting the rights, privileges and other interests of CF members.

Unlike in other organizations, plaintiffs do not have unions or employee associations to pursue their grievances. It is vital for the morale of Canadian Forces members to deal with their grievances in a fair, transparent and prompt manner.

Finally, we want to send a message to members of the Canadian Forces. Our caucus believes that members of the Canadian Forces have to comply with extremely high standards of discipline and that, in return, they deserve a justice system subject to comparable standards.

● (1015)

Mr. Jean-François Larose (Repentigny, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his speech. I was a member of the Canadian Forces and I went through some very challenging training. My experience has shown me that soldiers are subjected to conditions that are extremely different from what is experienced in the civilian world.

People are encouraged to join the Canadian Forces in order to gain experience and come out with some incredible tools. I made mistakes, minor ones. It happens to everyone. For example, you go before a superior officer and get charged, fined, patted on the back and told not to do it again. That is part of life's lessons. We are talking about young people who enlist at the age of 18, 19 or 20 and who need guidance. I do not think that providing guidance for minor offences involves encouraging young people to join the Canadian Forces, exposing them to extreme conditions and handing them a criminal record on their way out. That does not work.

Could my hon. colleague compare the military world and the civilian world and tell me whether it is normal to mix the two?

Mr. José Nunez-Melo: Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague from Repentigny for his question.

As I explained, there is a glaring flaw in the current bill regarding the two systems: civilian and military. The military side is too demanding, perhaps excessively so, when minor offences are

handled a certain way. It is excessive for members of the Canadian Forces to get a criminal record when they are found guilty of having committed these offences.

By comparison, there is more latitude in the civilian system. Our colleague from Repentigny explained it well. It would be ideal if we could move forward with our proposal to have civilians make up 60% of the Military Police Complaints Commission, and this would make for greater justice for the accused.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his excellent speech on a very important issue. It does not receive much attention, because we are discussing the military system, to which average Canadians do not have access, and about which they know very little.

This bill concerns the concept of justice. In the NDP we often talk about this government's lack of justice. We see it in this bill, and in general in the Conservative government's platform. It appears to give priority to punishment and to victims, for example, but in fact, it makes things worse and does not help in achieving this idea of justice.

I would like to ask my colleague if he could tell us something about this, not only in terms of this bill, but also with regard to the general experience we have here in the House.

● (1020)

Mr. José Nunez-Melo: Mr. Speaker, once again I thank my distinguished colleague for her precise comments and her question about the word "justice". It is true that the term "justice" is subject to adulteration, confusion and misinterpretation. In fact, the end goal of justice is to render a fair decision in every sense of that word, the whole nine yards.

When there are flaws, for instance, when the judge is the accused person's commanding officer, there is a serious problem. In my opinion, that should be corrected at second reading, using the amendments proposed by the NDP.

[English]

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as I start this speech, I am reminded of several historical situations where military commissions failed a society. I go back to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in the United States and the Mary Surratt case. She had run a boarding house where the conspirators had met but had nothing to do with the conspiracy. She was put before a military commission and she was not allowed to speak, and neither were her lawyers, and ultimately she and some others were hanged. That led to a change in the U.S. at that time, which gave every citizen habeas corpus rights, the right to face an accuser to get the evidence against them.

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Those who have been here for a couple of terms will know that I spoke out on behalf of Omar Khadr many times in this place, the reason being that the military commission in Guantanamo had been moved off-site to avoid the changes that had been brought in by the Mary Surratt case. From our perspective in Canada, that was seen as an abuse by some, and not so much by others.

In that light we look at our military justice and how it is applied in Canada. I in fact served in the Canadian Forces in 1963 and 1964, which seems like a hundred years ago now, but I was proud to do so. Fortunately for me, I was not in any severe difficulty but I noted at the time the difference between the administration, rules and regulations within the military compared to what civilians had to live with.

Here I would point out that his bill has been before us previously as Bill C-41. It went to committee and the New Democrats worked with the government of the day to try to improve that legislation. The bill did not return to the House and we wound up with an election, so we are back here with this bill for what is probably the third time at least. The good work done in committee the last time was not taken into account in this bill, because it does not include them.

The Minister of National Defence introduced Bill C-15. While it is called "An Act to amend the National Defence Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts", the government refers to it as "strengthening military justice". To my mind, strengthening military justice is about finding a way to balance the rights of military personnel in a similar fashion to what is done in civil society. Just prior to the time I went into the army in 1963, the non-commissioned officers could actually strike a person in the military. That changed just before I went in. There was a little trick they then used to get one's attention. They would stand up at attention and tighten our ties to the point of cutting off our breath. Of course, they were not striking the men any more but succeeded in getting their attention. While that may sound off-topic in this discussion, what we are looking at here is a justice system within the military that in many ways is a throwback to earlier times. That is something that should be addressed, and this bill goes part of the way in doing that.

While the New Democrats have stated that we will be opposing the bill, we are willing to work with the government when it gets to committee, presuming that the government takes it there, to do the best we can to improve it again because we argue that it falls short in key areas.

Our previous amendments included giving the Chief of Defence Staff authority in the grievance process to respond directly to Justice Lamer's recommendations. We felt that it was within the purview of the Chief of Defence Staff to have the authority. We also felt there should be changes in the composition of the grievance committee to include 60% civilian representation. In a democracy, this Parliament is supreme, but the civilian authorities also have to be supreme over the military.

• (1025)

The Canadian military has a great history of serving this Parliament, our country and Canadians. However, when it comes to the administration of justice and these tribunals, there should be a balance between military authority and civilian oversight. Including 60% civilian membership adds a level of accountability, as originally

foreseen in Bill C-41. For 10 years we have regularly heard from the government regarding its interest in accountability. Therefore, I am a little surprised that civilian membership was not included as part of the bill's provisions. Hopefully, we will be able to reason our way into that situation at committee and be allowed to add that amendment.

The provision that ensures that a person convicted of an offence during a summary trial is not unfairly subject to a criminal record is an important one because of the difference in accountability between a civilian court and a commission. The fact that some offences leave one with a criminal record in a military proceeding but not a civilian proceeding is blatantly unfair to the people who serve our country. A person in the military who has perhaps made a mistake would pay for that for the rest of their life, whereas if they had done so as a civilian they would not carry that burden.

Regarding reform of the summary trial system, the amendments in Bill C-15 do not adequately address the unfairness of summary trials. Currently, a conviction of a service offence in a summary trial in the Canadian Forces can result in a criminal record. The accused are held without the ability to consult counsel. That is why I made the linkage to the Surratt case and Guantanamo Bay as over-the-top situations. Those who do not know the military or have a military background would be quite surprised to know that in a summary trial in Canada the accused cannot consult counsel. We think that is fundamentally wrong. Also, there is no appeal process, nor are there transcripts of the trials. As well, the judge could well be the accused's commanding officer. Most people would see the obvious conflict in the fact that the officer was the very person who allowed the commission to proceed. We are very troubled by that.

At committee stage last March, when Bill C-41 was before us, the NDP amendments to expand the list of minor offences were carried. Again, that goes back to our making sure that our good service people do not receive criminal records for "genuinely" minor offences. We are not proposing that people get away with what they should not be doing, but the list of punishments that might be imposed by a tribunal without an offender incurring a criminal record could include a reprimand, a severe reprimand, a fine equal to or up to one month's basic pay, or some other form of minor punishment. The point is that it should not result in a criminal record. Obviously, if the offence were not worthy of time served, it should not be worthy of a criminal offence.

I want to go back to the question of civilian oversight and the need for 60% of the commissions reviewing these cases to be made up of civilian authorities. That balance is important; it would add to the credibility of the system. Over the last 50 years our military service has improved in many ways in this particular area of the justice system. This is an opportunity to move it further forward.

Government Orders

•(1030)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened closely to my colleague's speech.

Here is the distinction: a person is either a soldier or a civilian. As he understands the principle, why should a soldier really be treated differently from any other citizen?

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Speaker, historically in Roman and Greek times the Spartans had terrible disciplinary measures, which I will not go into, but they were pretty grotesque. There has always been severity in the kinds of punishment meted out in our military. In many cases that was used to drive people forward in battle, to ensure that they did their duty as seen fit. However, the reality is that we are not talking about people in battle. We are talking about people who, in their everyday duties as military personnel, come into conflict with the military's rules and regulations and find themselves before a tribunal without rights that are really essential to ensuring a balance.

Later today I will be making another speech on Bill C-377 and will talk about questioning authority. That is the one thing that the military does not wish a service member to do; the military sees that as almost an offence in itself.

We have to find a way to balance a genuine, and I stress the word "genuine", democratic and open process that is accountable within the military to those people who administer the so-called justice. The reality is that it is important that we ensure balance in this.

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his service in the 1960s. I too served in the military, but regarding the comments made by the member from Laval, I was also a commanding officer. I served for over 33 years and I understand the military justice system. I understand that soldiers can occasionally get into trouble and have to deal with that.

Nonetheless, the summary trial system does give the service member the opportunity to choose court martial or summary trial, and that person does have recourse to assisting officers and other elements that are put in place for them. Having been part of this for well over three decades, I saw this unfold. Here I would point out that Justice Lamer in fact made his recommendations with the military and military justice in mind, because soldiers do deserve a transparent system under the charter. On this I think we all agree.

Why does the hon. member feel this legislation should not go to committee? I think it should so that witnesses could be brought forward. We could talk about this there and look at implementing the remainder of the 88 recommendations, of which 29 are now in place.

•(1035)

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the member for the service he has given. I was unaware of it. We should occasionally pause and give credit to where it is due. I do not speak much about my personal service because I was only in the service in 1963-64 in a sapper apprentice program. I applied for release and went back to high school. I have never felt ingrained in it in the same fashion as someone who made a career in it.

When we discussed the matter with our critic, he recommended that we not support this legislation. However, the reality in this place is that the government has a majority and the chances are that the bill will go to committee.

I stressed earlier in my remarks that we are certainly willing to revisit the recommendations the NDP made in the past and to try to work with the government on this particular issue, because we think our amendments are of value. I do not want to appear in any way to be maligning our present system because I stressed how it has improved over the years. That was the point I was trying to make, that this is one more step along the long road of trying to ensure a balance. We have to keep improving our systems generally, including in the House and, in this case, our system of military justice to ensure that it is fair, balanced and just.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain (Manicouagan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was after listening to my colleagues' speeches on the bill to amend the National Defence Act that I thought it would be appropriate to speak as well to ensure that we explore the legal concepts associated with the matter before us.

I would invite my colleagues to go beyond the briefing notes from the House, to distance themselves from the talking points, but not from the party's position. I therefore invite them to conduct their own research and engage in an intellectual and mental exercise. I think our audience, those who watch us regularly, would like that. Sometimes the speeches we hear in this House can be redundant because people simply repeat the information they have been given, it is a rehash.

When I heard the speeches by my colleagues across the way, but particularly those of my own colleagues, some ideas seemed familiar. First of all, you must understand that I am a criminal lawyer. When I began to study law, we were told that the administration of justice in the military was different than what the common law courts applied across the country. That is why we spent very little time on the subject, or in fact none at all. I even wonder whether specialized courses were offered at the university, but I doubt it. However, we learned that people in the Canadian Forces were trained in it, that the JAGs, the ultimate decision-makers, were trained, that courses were given and that it was training that was observed first and foremost within the military.

However, there are recurring concepts in my colleagues' speeches, including the right to a lawyer, the independence and impartiality of the decision-maker and other concepts that refer to the charter. Those concepts rang a bell with me and I decided to investigate a little further. I spent several hours researching the topic last night and this morning. It was a last-minute minute decision, and we needed speakers on the topic. So I launched into my research and came up with a considerable amount of information, particularly on statutory instruments, the various acts and regulations that apply to the situation and to the bill under consideration here, but also on case law and doctrine.

Government Orders

The research I did was nevertheless basic, since it is impossible to grasp the ins and outs of an issue of this scope in a few hours. However, further on in my speech, you will see that several levels of legislative and regulatory authority apply to the situation, and I will go over them. I will stick very close to the statutory instruments at our disposal. That will be a change from what we have heard in this House to date. I think this is relevant and that the general public deserves to be informed about the scope of this matter.

The ins and outs of the military justice system are initially a forbidding prospect when viewed from the standpoint of legal practice in the field. By that I mean they may seem incomprehensible at first glance, reminding one that it is risky to adopt the vision and reflexes of a criminal lawyer in examining a bill that concerns, for example, summary trials in a military justice context.

When I began this study, I suspected that the principles that had been instilled in me during my years of legal training might possibly be applicable, but with certain qualifications. I was right, since some concepts that I had learned were tested when I actually looked at the authorities and at what applied in the military field. I noticed some subtleties and adaptations. So I like to think of the training given to JAGs and to people who work in the administration of military justice as additional training and that those subtleties and those transposed principles will genuinely help shed light on the specific characteristics of military life.

When I researched the statutes, I came to several major levels, which I will describe in a moment. The subtleties expressed there very much call for revisiting and exploring the material.

• (1040)

That is why I say it may be uncomfortable and risky at times simply to rely on notes prepared in the lobby in addressing these matters, which genuinely need to be closely examined. They are particular and specific enough that they require one to consider many elements that, incidentally, exceed the scope of a 10-minute speech.

Assuming that the officers presiding over summary trials render judicial decisions in the same way as common law courts, certain rules of procedural fairness and the principles of fundamental justice apply. Based on that assumption, I was subsequently able to conduct the statutory research necessary to examine the bill in question.

In their speeches, my colleagues invoked such principles as *audi alteram partem*—hear the other side. A person who is accused has the right to make his own claims. This is true in criminal law as well, whether we are talking about summary conviction or indictment. It should be understood that in the criminal courts, under common law, cases tried summarily lead to lesser sentences than cases involving indictable offences. Indictable offences can involve more serious crimes or repeat offences and are much more serious. They are treated more seriously by the courts. Those are concepts I verified to see if the same kind of reasoning applied in the military sphere.

I will refer to the laws on the books and to various tools that apply to a given situation. I will begin with the Constitution Act. It gives the federal Parliament the exclusive right to legislate in matters of military justice. That is the basis. I said there were several levels, and that is the first. It opens the door for all the other legislative tools.

Second, the National Defence Act sets out the organization of the Department of National Defence and the components and elements of the military justice system. It also addresses the concept of a criminal record. I will not discuss that aspect, because I think it deserves a study on its own, and I certainly would not be able, in 10 minutes, to describe all the ins and outs of transferring the sanctions applied in the military to criminal law. I have not grasped all the nuances that apply. That is why I will leave it for now.

Now, here is the third level, the Code of Service Discipline. This code is part of the National Defence Act and sets out the foundation of the Canadian military justice system, including disciplinary jurisdiction, service offences, punishments, powers of arrest, organization and procedures of service tribunals, appeals, and post-trial review.

That brings us to the fourth level. The procedure for summary trials and receipt of proof is set out in sections 108.20 and 108.21 of the Queen's Regulations and Orders, the QR&Os, which were made pursuant to the National Defence Act.

I said it was fairly specific and tricky, and this proves it.

I will now read the first part of section 15 of the Queen's Regulations and Orders, which applies to Canadian Forces members who insist on the right to have a lawyer:

For example, the Regulations do not expressly provide the right to counsel to the accused; however, the presiding officer has discretion to allow legal counsel to participate and, if so, to determine the level of participation to be allowed. When deciding whether to permit an accused to be represented by legal counsel at the summary trial, QR&O indicate that the presiding officer should, at the least, consider the nature and complexity of the offence, the interests of justice, the interests of the accused, and the exigencies of the service.

In closing, all of these elements accurately convey the complexity of the summary trial system within the context of the administration of military justice. In my opinion, this bill requires a review that would reveal a number of unknown factors and flaws to justify opposition at second reading.

• (1045)

[English]

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I applaud the member for doing his homework. I know he is a lawyer and clearly an intelligent young fellow who has done the comparison and looked at the Queen's Regulations and Orders, which is quite a large document.

Government Orders

We have had three chief justices, Justices Dickson, Lamer and LeSage, all doing this work and concluding very similar things, which is the military justice system needs something transparent on which soldiers can rely. The independent reports of former chief justices Dickson in 1997, Lamer in 2003 and LeSage in 2012 said that the summary trial system was fair.

Could the member show me some examples in his research where he could point to the summary trial being constitutionally deficient in any way or fundamentally unfair? Did you see that in any of your research?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Before I go to the hon. member, I would remind all hon. members to address their remarks and questions directly to the Chair and not to their colleagues.

The hon. member for Manicouagan.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question.

I would simply remind him of my final point regarding the right to legal counsel and the tremendous amount of flexibility that is granted to the decision maker, the arbitrator in summary trials. I have my doubts about this; some unanswered questions remain.

There is a tremendous amount of flexibility, and that alone is enough to justify revisiting and reviewing the procedures that apply to the summary process in the military justice system.

Mr. Jean-François Larose (Repentigny, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. He is himself a lawyer, and we are very impressed by the depth of his knowledge.

I wonder if he has any comments to make about the amendments proposed in March 2011 in the context of Bill C-41, which was similar to this one. We want to increase the number of minor offences from five to 27. As a former member of the military myself, I am curious to know why it was decided that only five minor offences are important, and not 27, considering the impact the army can have on us.

Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question.

I did not go over every offence that was suggested. At the time, I simply looked at the general documents. However, there are things like drunkenness that could lead to charges and a summary trial in the military justice system.

What I still have serious doubts about is the fact that these offences could ultimately lead to a criminal record. I did not address this issue and I would rather not go into it, because there are so many ins and outs and I have not been able to identify them all.

In any case, I have never seen that in my practice. It would be rather unfortunate and rather strange to see these offences and charges on someone's record, when doing a search with their name and date of birth, for instance. Personally, I have never seen that, and it would be somewhat questionable, especially considering how expensive it is to apply for a pardon, not to mention how long it

takes, with the RCMP taking fingerprints and so on. I have taken on a few such cases, so I know what a difficult process it is.

How can people get rid of this liability, once they have been convicted?

I submit this respectfully.

● (1050)

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are going to talk about military justice, which is a very special area within the justice system.

Military justice differs from traditional justice in that the goal of the former is to ensure respect for the military hierarchy, while the principle underlying the latter is to ensure harmonious relationships between equals.

In military justice, a general is not equal to a private, and vice versa. This is a major problem because capital punishment still exists in military justice. Quite simply, in military law, the use of lethal force can be authorized against an unarmed individual. The individual can even be taken by surprise. A classic example of this is a pilot who attacks a supply convoy identified as belonging to the enemy. The death penalty exists in military law; it is a rule of engagement. Soldiers are authorized to use force against a group of people identified as enemies. That is serious.

Because the use of force and violence is legal, it must be strictly controlled and disciplined. We can all agree on that. The problem is that these elements of control and discipline must not strip soldiers of their basic rights. I have some examples of trivial offences.

This is an example of insubordination. A soldier returns to the base on Monday. He did not sleep all night because his children were sick, he is a little irritable and he swears at a superior. Under current military law, with a summary trial he could be given a punishment that results in a criminal record. The soldier, who has sworn at a superior, will have a criminal record.

Under civilian law, and under labour law, when a person is punished for the first time, they are given a verbal warning. A note is made in their file and after one year it is removed. That is the difference: one individual is subject to military justice; the other is subject to the standard rules of labour law.

If the operator of a tank has an accident and injures someone, he may face a summary trial and be given a harsh punishment, which can result in a criminal record.

In my province, Quebec, unless the person is found to be criminally negligent, there will be no punishment. Under insurance law, the injured person will be compensated by insurance, and it stops there. There are no penalties, not even a report, if the person who caused the accident did not do so intentionally. There is no punishment.

It is different in military law. Military personnel may find themselves with a criminal record. In Quebec, an explosives expert who sets off a dynamite charge but has miscalculated its size will face charges under administrative law. He will be prosecuted for a professional error. He may be sentenced to take courses or private tutoring. In the military, a criminal record may be the result, and that is serious. A person is thus branded because of the simple fact he or she was in the military and committed an error that any civilian might have committed, with a completely different punishment, if any.

• (1055)

That is where this becomes unacceptable. It is important and essential to maintain respect for hierarchy and discipline in the Canadian Forces. Still, these people, who are giving their best efforts for their country, should not be branded for life. It is not easy to leave military life and find work with a criminal record, especially for offences that would not even lead to a court appearance in civilian life.

The Supreme Court considered the issue and found some things that needed correction. Bill C-15 does offer some corrections. Are they enough? Unfortunately not. Several elements are missing. Amendments have been made, but only 28 of the 88 recommendations in Justice Lamer's report have been retained. That is not many. All 88 recommendations were worthwhile. They were essential to give all our military personnel the same protection the rest of us have in our everyday lives.

One of these essential amendments concerned the fact that 60% of the members of the grievance board should be civilians, so that the person handling the grievance is not directly involved and has some independence from the officer corps. We are not rejecting the officer corps, whose expertise and knowledge are substantial, but civilians should be in the majority on the grievance board. That is not unreasonable. In addition, more authority should be granted to the Chief of Defence Staff in the grievance process. If he is looking into a grievance, he must have some authority to be able to collect pertinent information.

At present, a summary trial leads to a criminal record. That is a fundamental issue on which we absolutely do not agree. In order to warrant a criminal record, a person would have to be court-martialled, in a court where he would have legal assistance and be able to present a defence. If the offence is serious enough to warrant a criminal record, a summary trial is not appropriate; the matter should go straight to the Supreme Court. Out of more than 1,800 cases that were prosecuted, only 67 went to a court martial.

If the offence is deemed to be serious enough to appear on a criminal record, offenders should be tried through a court martial, where they will have the opportunity to present a defence and justify their actions before an independent judge rather than before their immediate supervisor.

We have heard some important quotations about this, including one from retired Colonel Michel Drapeau, who was the secretary to the Canadian Forces Chief of the Defence Staff for a number of years. He was responsible for writing the rules of engagement, which is a big responsibility. He said:

Statements by Members

...until you, the legislators, address this issue, it is almost impossible for the court to address any challenge, since no appeal of a summary trial verdict or sentence is permitted. As well, it is almost impossible for any other form of legal challenge to take place, since there are no trial transcripts and no right to counsel at summary trial.

That is exactly what must be corrected, and we must do so.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[*English*]

KENORA SWIM TEAM

Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Kenora Swimming Sharks on their fantastic showing at the Prairie Winter International Swim Meet in Winnipeg this past weekend.

Kayla Martin not only shattered her personal best time, knocking 2.6 seconds off of her 1,500-metre freestyle and more than a second off of her 200-metre freestyle, she also reached two national times in both events and took home gold and silver medals. Bryce Jones earned six medals of his own, taking home gold in the 100-metre backstroke and collecting five silver medals in other heats. Gabe Mastromateo, just 10 years old, took home two gold medals in the 100-metre and 200-metre breaststroke. Kira Kuzemchuk, Hanna Stoliker, Winnie Boucha and Olivia Kroeker, all took home gold, silver and bronze medals.

These Canadians are the athletes of the future. We are proud of the dedicated coaches and young athletes who train so hard. They instill a great sense of pride in our communities.

The Kenora Swimming Shark team is just another example of what is so great about the great Kenora riding.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Wednesday was International Volunteer Day.

In my riding, as in ridings across the country, many people give their time and expertise to support various causes in their communities. Thousands of people also volunteer in developing countries to help eradicate poverty, provide health care and education, and support democratic development.

I am referring to organizations such as SUCO, the Solidarité Union Coopération, which aims to build solidarity between peoples, as well as citizen participation, in order to create sustainable development based on egalitarian relationships. There is also Canada World Youth, which enriches the lives of young people who want to become true citizens of the world.

It is because of the hard work and solidarity of such organizations and their volunteers that we will be able to build a better world for one and all.

Statements by Members

[English]

CHRISTMAS SEASON

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Christmas season is a wonderful time of the year, a season of good cheer and good will.

With this wonderful spirit of Christmas upon us, I encourage all Canadians to take time out of their busy schedules to bless someone in need. Through donating an unwrapped toy to a toy drive, one can brighten a child's face all year. Through giving a food basket to a needy family, one could lift the weight off the shoulders of parents during this joyous season. Through rolling up one's sleeves to lend a pint of blood, one could positively impact the health of three people.

There are endless ways to give back and I encourage everyone to tally up good deeds to help their community, and not just to get into Santa's good books.

Finally, for those who choose to partake in a libation or two during Christmas celebrations, please arrange for a safe ride home.

Happy holidays everyone.

* * *

[Translation]

SAINTE-ANGÈLE PARISH IN SAINT-LÉONARD

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 28, 2012, I had the pleasure of attending the closing mass for the 50th anniversary celebrations of Sainte-Angèle Parish in Saint-Léonard.

What a way to celebrate an anniversary: with a ceremony in different languages presided by His Excellency Msgr. Christian Lépine, Archbishop of Montreal, who blessed 25 stained-glass windows, 22 of them illustrating the Apostles' Creed. The windows were designed by Léo Schryburt, who spent many hours creating them with the assistance of craftsman Gino Saracino. These exceptional works of art were made possible with the financial support of many parishioners who were proud to contribute to the beauty of their church.

I would like to recognize the exceptional work of Reverend Jean-Pierre Couturier, who has a talent for bringing people together. He managed to gather people of different generations and ethnicities to create a cultural community that reflects our country.

Congratulations to the members of this beautiful community and long life to Sainte-Angèle parish.

* * *

●(1105)

[English]

TOWN OF MELITA

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure to be in Melita on Saturday, November 24, to celebrate upgrades to its arena with help from our government's community infrastructure improvement fund.

While in Melita, the sense of pride for community was evident and something to be admired. The town was busy with events,

including the Santa Claus parade and a homemade dinner as a fundraiser for the rink, which was capped off with an exciting high school hockey game.

That night, many young figure skaters and hockey players came out on the ice to celebrate the community's hard work with the addition of a new ice plant, boards and glass. Whether it was high school and senior hockey players putting in hours of labour or local businesses putting in thousands of dollars of work without ever sending a bill, it is communities such as Melita that keep Canada strong for our young people.

Community facilities provide places for families, friends and neighbours to gather together and by helping to improve them, we are ensuring united and prosperous Canadian communities for years to come.

I congratulate the community of Melita and I wish everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year.

* * *

[Translation]

MONTREAL'S WEST ISLAND COMMUNITY

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is already December. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to recognize those who work hard to make the West Island such a lively and colourful community as the holidays approach.

First, I would like to thank community organizations such as WIAIH, which provides services to families of people with intellectual disabilities and which organized an evening of celebration for its members involving a dinner, gifts, a dance and even a visit from Santa Claus.

I would also like to mention the CHSLD Vigi Pierrefonds and the CHSLD Vigi Dollard-des-Ormeaux, which organize family dinners during the holiday season. These two organizations recognize that the success of these events is a result of the work and dedication of volunteers, employees and management.

There are also seniors' clubs that are very active in the days leading up to the holidays. Club Les Ami(e)s des Deux Rives, Club d'Âge d'or St-Antoine du West Island and Club des aînés de Dollard-des-Ormeaux organize dinners and parties with dancing, singing and socializing in very good company.

Finally, I would like to mention that the West Island Assistance Fund and the West Island Mission offer meals and toys to families and children in need.

Yes, Montreal's West Island is a very vibrant community, and I am proud of it.

*Statements by Members**[English]***HUMAN RIGHTS**

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the protection and promotion of human rights is a hallmark of Canada's foreign policy. As a free nation, Canada is proud to promote and protect the fundamental liberties of people around the world. That is why our government is pursuing a principled, values-based foreign policy in working toward furthering human dignity, respect and tolerance.

We are speaking out on the issues that matter to Canadians, whether it is the role and treatment of women around the world, or the persecution of gays, or the cowardly and targeted attacks on those who pray in the sanctity of churches, temples, mosques and synagogues.

Canada is a beacon of light for the world because of our fundamental values of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We will continue to embrace these values and continue working toward furthering human dignity, respect and tolerance around the globe.

* * *

*[Translation]***HOLIDAY SEASON**

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to some extraordinary people and organizations from Saint Boniface who are bringing joy to the hearts of the less fortunate during this holiday season.

[English]

Janelle Campagne is a compassionate 11-year-old girl who has again organized her own toy drive. Going into her third year, she collects gifts for kids at the children's hospital.

[Translation]

Janelle, who is now in grade six at École Taché, said that she wanted to bring a smile to the faces of children who could not be at home for Christmas.

[English]

I am also proud to tell the House about CopShop 2012, a program that gives underprivileged youth an unforgettable day of shopping with a police officer.

Several of my colleagues from the Winnipeg Police Service spent the day at a mall in my riding with these very young youth, laughing, eating pizza and connecting positively with them. The students were then treated to a \$200 shopping spree, compliments of the St. Vital Centre.

I ask the House to join me in thanking Janelle Campagne, St. Vital Centre, and the Winnipeg Police Service for spreading the gift of joy this holiday season.

● (1110)

*[Translation]***KEMPT ROAD INTERPRETATION CENTER**

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Kempt Road Interpretation Center exhibit, the result of the hard work of Héritage Chemin Kempt, enables visitors to learn about this little-known aspect of Gaspé history.

Kempt Road, which was completed in 1833 and connects Grand-Métis, on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and Pointe-à-la-Croix, in Chaleur Bay, was built as an alternative to the Chemin du Portage, which passed too close to the United States. It was after the War of 1812 that it became necessary to move the road connecting Quebec and St. John, New Brunswick.

Originally used by the aboriginal peoples, Kempt Road helped with the colonization of the Gaspé, allowing colonies like Sainte-Marguerite-Marie and Saint-Fidèle-de-Restigouche to be founded in the area.

I encourage people to come visit the Kempt Road Interpretation Center to see the photos, documents and period artifacts. Visitors can also walk the road and visit a number of points of interest. The road is a real pilgrimage for walkers who allow themselves to be transported to the Gaspé of the past.

* * *

*[English]***MATHEMATICS OF PLANET EARTH 2013**

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an exciting Canadian initiative, Mathematics of Planet Earth 2013, which is being launched today with the Canadian Mathematical Society. This initiative will bring together over a hundred groups of mathematicians from around the world to help address and solve the diverse real-life global issues we all face, ranging from the algebra of epidemics to the calculus of forest fires.

Mathematics is often referred to as the queen of science and as such is a critical and essential element for understanding and finding solutions to our many challenges. Mathematics touches every aspect of our lives every single day.

With an emphasis on science, technology and engineering as well as mathematics education, this type of initiative helps ensure that Canada remains prosperous and globally competitive. I encourage my colleagues in the House to join me in lauding this significant initiative.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on December 6, Canadians paused to remember the 14 women from Montreal's École Polytechnique. Every day, women endure countless acts of violence, just because they are women. December 6 is a day of mourning and a reminder that we must take action.

Statements by Members

In Nanaimo—Cowichan, the Cowichan Women Against Violence Society is taking action. During its 16 days of activism against gender violence, its members are speaking out against violence and are speaking up for women. Organizations such as CWAV and the Haven Society are raising awareness and are providing support for women who have experienced violence.

Violence against women is often compounded by poverty. Food banks do their part by helping women who face violence access food and clothing.

I thank the Cowichan Women Against Violence, the Haven Society and the food banks in Nanaimo—Cowichan for the work they do to support women and their children who have experienced violence. Together we must continue to take action to eliminate the violence that so many women face on a daily basis.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one in five Canadian jobs is generated through exports. That is why our government is committed to an ambitious trade agreement with the European Union. Such an agreement would benefit workers and their families throughout my home province of Ontario in a wide range of sectors.

Here are a few examples. Farmers exporting top-quality crops, like pulses and oil seeds, would see permanent, duty-free access to the 500 million consumers of the E.U. Skilled workers in engineering, architecture and technology would see great access to the E.U. procurement market, which is worth an astounding \$2.4 trillion. A Canada–E.U. agreement would be expected to boost our bilateral trade by 20%. That is equivalent to a \$1,000 increase in the average Canadian family's annual income, or 80,000 new jobs for Canadian workers.

Once again, our government is delivering real benefits for hard-working Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

MOUNT ROYAL

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently participated in a series of important events in my multicultural riding, Mount Royal, including the 32nd anniversary of the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec, the 50th anniversary of FAMAS, the 50th anniversary of the Jamaica Association of Montreal, the 40th anniversary of the Côte-des-Neiges Black Community Association, and the 20th anniversary of the Mountain Sights Community Centre.

● (1115)

[English]

There is also the inspiring Leonard Cohen concert benefiting the 100th anniversary of the Herzl Family Practice Centre at l'Hôpital général juif.

Monday, December 10 is la Journée internationale des droits de la personne. Leaders of these organizations will join emergency responders, veterans, educators, physicians and religious, cultural

and other community leaders as recipients of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in a celebratory occasion in my riding honouring those who have bettered the human condition and touched the lives of so many, in my riding and beyond.

[Translation]

Congratulations to everyone.

* * *

[English]

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians from my riding of Prince George—Peace River and all other ridings across this country work hard for their money. The last thing they need is to spend more of their money on things such as gasoline. Sadly, this is exactly what the New Democrats intend to do. Thanks to their leader, the New Democrats want to impose a job-killing carbon tax on Canadians, which would increase the price of food, gas, electricity and everything else, including Christmas presents. Such a tax would be a financial burden on Canadian families.

Thankfully, Canadians elected our Conservative government, which will always fight such a tax. Our government will remain focused on jobs and economic growth, which is what matters to Canadians. Thanks to our Conservative government, since July 2009 we have created over 820,000 net new jobs. Thanks to our government, Canadians are getting back to work. Thankfully, once again, our Conservative Party will keep fighting the NDP's risky economic policies.

Further, I wish everyone across Canada, from my family, a very merry Christmas.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the F-35 fiasco may finally be coming to an end. The program that started with poor decisions, made behind closed doors, with phony numbers, is dying, through leaks and cabinet ministers settling scores.

The New Democrats first brought up questions about the F-35. More than two and a half years ago, the member for St. John's East asked the Minister of National Defence about the replacement of the CF-18. The minister had settled on the F-35, only to reverse himself minutes later, saying that there would be an open competition. This was the start of a never-ending series of debacles.

[Translation]

I would also like to thank those who had the courage to blow the whistle on the Conservatives' many slip-ups on this file, including the former assistant deputy minister for materiel, Alan Williams, who was determined to inform Canadians about what was going on. He showed that a dedicated public servant can have a tremendous impact by speaking out against Conservative mismanagement.

Oral Questions

Let us hope that we have finally closed the book on the F-35 fiasco.

* * *

[English]

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my constituents feel the effects of any increase in the price of goods. From gas and groceries to electricity, any change has a profound impact.

That is why my constituents and our Conservative government vehemently opposed the NDP leader's \$21 billion carbon tax in the NDP's 2011 election plan. This job-killing carbon tax would literally raise the price on everything. This tax would do nothing more than raise money to be spent on the NDP leader's pet projects.

I assure the House that my constituents and our Conservative government will never back down on opposing the NDP leader's \$21 billion carbon tax and will continue on the path of low-tax plans for jobs, growth and long-term prosperity.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians were dismayed yesterday to hear proposals from the minister's advisory committee on guns that would dismantle gun control in the country. Yesterday the Prime Minister said that he would reject one of those recommendations, but was silent on the rest. He had no comment on reckless ideas, like doubling the length of licences or reducing the frequency of mental health checks.

Will the minister explain why his so-called expert committee is recommending measures that dismantle gun control?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister spoke very clearly on this in the House. This is a committee that does not reflect government policy. What is being reported is not government policy. We have made clear our direction, and that is to reduce gun crimes and to tackle serious gun crimes. We would appreciate some support from Her Majesty's loyal opposition in making that happen with some of our legislative initiatives.

[Translation]

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the committee that advises the minister is unbalanced and full of extremists.

Yesterday evening, a committee member was asked about the possibility of including the voices of police officers and victims of gun crimes. He replied that being shot at does not make one an expert on gun control. For the Conservatives, victims are only useful for photo ops.

Will the minister dissolve the committee immediately and seek sounder and more diversified advice from police officers and victims of crime?

● (1120)

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made a very clear statement on this to Parliament earlier this week.

We have taken measures to protect public safety and specifically to fight gun crime. We hope that one day the opposition will support us on this important measure. We have introduced many initiatives and have seen some real progress when it comes to public safety.

[English]

We would really appreciate, for a change, the official opposition actually supporting some of the real measures—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. member for Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening, we learned that, supposedly, the Conservatives have finally abandoned Lockheed Martin and the F-35.

As the NDP has said many times from the beginning, it was a mistake not to hold a competitive bidding process. It was a mistake to hide the costs of the program.

Can the government confirm that the cabinet committee on operations has decided to go back to the drawing board in the process to replace the CF-18s and that it has given up on the idea to go ahead with a single supplier?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a seven-point plan. We are following our seven-point plan.

[English]

Our government has a seven-point plan, which we have laid out clearly for the replacement of the CF-18 aircraft. We are continuing with that plan.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives do not even know how to cancel a project properly. The deliberations of the cabinet committee on operations has been leaked and after years of defending the F-35 in the most insulting way to anybody who commented, the government will now, reportedly, restart the whole process, as the NDP has demanded for years. This issue has shown the worst of Conservative mismanagement.

Will the Conservatives stop these backroom leaks, share the truth with Canadians and release and table the KPMG report today?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet.

The government received the KPMG report and is in the process of examining it. The government will update the public before the House recesses.

[English]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to know the truth and yet the Conservatives have been hiding the truth from Canadians for years. The cabinet leaks are everywhere, the KPMG report is supposedly out, there is a program that no one will defend and now costs are estimated to be north of \$40 billion, a litany of Conservative failure and mismanagement.

When will Conservatives come clean, admit their misguided plan has failed and finally agree to have an open and transparent competition?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet. Our seven-point plan involves exploring options without the limitations imposed by the statement of requirements.

[English]

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Defence stated:

This is the right plane. This is the right number. This is the right aircraft for our Canadian Forces and for Canada...If we don't make this purchase, there is a real danger we'll be unable to defend our airspace, unable to exercise our sovereignty, or unable to share our responsibilities through both NORAD and NATO.

This is more arrogance from the minister. He was wrong on the plane, wrong on the numbers, wrong all together. Enough is enough. When will the minister resign?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, our government has a seven-point plan for the replacement of the CF-18 aircraft. We are continuing with that plan. As part of that plan, the government will be providing a comprehensive public update before the House retires for Christmas.

• (1125)

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we appear to have a Minister of National Defence who cannot defend himself. He further stated:

Let me repeat it. \$9 billion. I have no idea where these other figures are coming from. They're simply made up — or they're guessing. If this procurement is cancelled ... so another competition

can be held, it will cost taxpayers \$1 billion and will create an operational gap for the air force in the future.

"Everyone else is wrong, I'm right, they're making it up". Will the minister apologize to Canadians and resign?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have set out and are following a clear seven-point plan for the replacement of the aircraft. One element of that plan is to ensure job creation and growth in the aviation sector.

Job creation is the number one priority of our government. The proof of that is seen in this month's job creation numbers, with over 59,000 net new jobs, over 880,000 jobs now since the economic downturn. We now have the lowest unemployment since the economic downturn. That is leadership. That is a focus on job creation. We will continue that focus.

[Translation]

Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is sad that we no longer have a defence minister. We have only Lockheed Martin's salesperson of the month. If he has nothing to say, then this must be true.

It is appalling because this government has not only acted in a shameful manner but has also proven its incompetence. What is more, the government has shown its lack of integrity with regard to the management of public finances. There is only one thing left to do: if the minister has any honour left, he must stand up, apologize and resign as defence minister.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet.

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2011, the Prime Minister said that he found it disappointing and sad that some in Parliament were backtracking on the F-35s and that some were talking openly about cancelling the contract should they get the chance.

My question is simple: do the Prime Minister and his cabinet still feel the same way?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet.

The government will update the public before the House recesses.

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I could have predicted that response. Here is another chance.

In 2010, the Minister of National Defence said that if we did not make this purchase there was a real danger that we would be unable to defend our airspace, unable to ensure our sovereignty and unable to honour our commitments to both NORAD and NATO.

Oral Questions

Does the Minister of National Defence still stand by what he said in 2010?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet. Our seven-point plan allows for an options analysis, which is not limited by the statement of requirements.

Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what a surprising answer.

In 2010, the Prime Minister's spokesperson said it was the best plane the government could buy for the armed forces. When a fighter pilot has a long-range Russian bomber in its sights, that is an important point.

Are we going to have to live in fear of Russian bombers if the F-35 program is cancelled?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process for replacing Canada's aging CF-18 fleet.

Mr. Mathieu Ravnignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will try in the other official language.

[*English*]

The Conservatives wasted months stopping the Standing Committee on Public Accounts from reviewing the F-35 purchase. Then they did a complete whitewash of the Auditor General's report. They continue to refuse any attempt to determine who was responsible for this historical fiasco. Now we hear that the program is about to be cancelled.

Will someone over there finally come clean with Canadians and acknowledge that the government deliberately wasted Parliament's time and a lot of taxpayer money?

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process for replacing Canada's aging CF-18 fleet.

The government will update the public before the House recesses.

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[*English*]

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are up against the deadline on Nexen. Canadians are worried about this deal. Approving the Nexen buyout would give a Chinese state-owned company ownership over a huge slice of

Canada's natural resources, yet this massive decision is being made behind closed doors. There are no clear rules and no consultation with Canadians. That is unacceptable.

Will the Conservatives announce their verdict on this Nexen takeover in the full light of day, or should Canadians expect another last minute decision taken at midnight?

Hon. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we see day after day in this place is the two opposition parties taking very extreme positions on investment in Canada. The Liberal Party day after day would just rubber-stamp every transaction as it did when it was government. The NDP opposes every transaction.

This government will responsibly look at the Investment Canada Act and evaluate proposed transactions to the net benefit of Canadians.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, made up Conservative attacks cannot make up for the government's incompetence.

The Conservatives delayed decisions on Nexen and Petronas. Now they are delaying a decision on their own new investment agreement with China. It is clear Conservatives did not understand this agreement when they signed it, details like opening the door to unlimited foreign ownership of Canadian natural resources.

Instead of scrambling to understand their own investment agreement with China, will the Conservatives bring FIPPA to the House for a proper debate and a proper vote?

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP members just continue to make it up as they go along.

This foreign investment and promotion protection agreement with China will simply add reciprocity to investment in China. This will protect the interests of Canadian investors in China. Foreign investors have long had those same legal protections in Canada. This agreement will give Canadians equal protections when investing abroad.

What does the NDP have against investment? What does it have against trade? When will that party stop being an anti-trade party?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they are the ones making it up as they go along.

Approving the Nexen purchase would have major consequences for this country, particularly after the signing of the trade agreement with China. That agreement will give a foreign government corporation ownership of part of Canada's natural resources. The consequences are too important not to be honest with Canadians.

Oral Questions

Can the Conservatives promise they will make their announcement about Nexen on Monday, in the daytime, as it should be done? Or are they again going to wait until the stroke of midnight?

[English]

Hon. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, what this government will promise is that we will evaluate proposed transactions according to the provisions of the Investment Canada Act. Section 20 of the Investment Canada Act clearly lays out the criteria for net benefit. When the government makes the decision, it will be made in the net interest of Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Obviously, Mr. Speaker, senators, those residents of the lucrative retirement home for Liberals and Conservatives, think they can do whatever they like.

In between naps, these government cronies, from the height of their unelected office, have decided to fill their pockets with public funds. In the meantime, Canadians' household debt has reached record levels. Not satisfied with pocketing \$132,000 a year, three senators have been caught with their hands in the till, collecting money for their supposed "second residence" in Ottawa, even though they have lived in the capital for decades.

When are the Conservatives going to put an end to the grotesque farce of the Senate?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all parliamentarians here are familiar with the concept, which also applies in the Senate, that parliamentarians normally provide for a residence in their area that they represent as well as a residence here in Ottawa. Parliament assists the House of Commons, in our case, with the costs of one of those residences.

The Senate Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration is reviewing the matter as we have seen in the news to ensure that those rules are properly respected and indeed applied to all members. We want to see it also applied, of course, in this House.

• (1135)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives can say what they like, but when they look in the mirror, they see that they have abandoned all their former democratic principles.

Opposition to this archaic and outdated Senate was one of the rare positive points in the defunct Reform Party's platform. You know things are bad when we are longing for the Reform Party.

On the one hand, there are principles, and on the other hand is the chance to give friends presents, to appoint bagmen or architects of in and out schemes. The Conservatives have chosen the second option.

Is there not a single former member of the Reform Party who is embarrassed by the abuses they used to denounce, that are still going on today with their blessing?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about abuses. The party opposite is blocking a bill that would require financial transparency on the part of unions. We are talking about money that the unions are taking out of the pockets of workers by force.

[English]

There is a party over there that not only has one in three members of its caucus as former union bosses and bureaucrats, but a dozen of their national council are set aside just for unions. They took \$340,000 in illegal union money. The reason they are blocking the bill is that they just have too much to hide.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative propaganda machine has been in hyperdrive for five years on the F-35. Deny, spin and move on through contempt motions, an election and hundreds of hours in this chamber. Ridicule the opposition, ridicule officers of Parliament and spin Canadians.

In March 2011, the Liberals told Canadians the real costs of the F-35s. The Conservatives blatantly misled Canadians during the election rather than admit the truth. Will the Minister of National Defence resign now?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging fleet of CF-18s.

The government will provide a public update before the end of the parliamentary session.

[English]

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has come to this, that the parliamentary secretary of robo-answers will defend the minister when the minister will not defend himself.

The Conservative spin machine nearly achieved Mach speeds with the fake F-35 photo op. Ministers were photographed climbing in and out of a plane that will never achieve liftoff. Standing beside the fake plane, the Minister of National Defence proudly proclaimed in July 2010 that the F-35 was the only plane for Canada.

Now that it is no longer the only choice, will he apologize for the fake \$50,000 photo op, apologize for ridiculing the PBO, apologize for misleading Canadians—

Oral Questions

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging fleet of CF-18s. Our seven-point plan includes examining the options and is not limited by the statement of requirements.

Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I never thought that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works would be overexposed here in the House.

The cynics would say that both sides of this record sound the same. I hardly know what he will do.

Once again, I will try to ask a question of the Minister of National Defence, who has a lovely, happy smile and cannot answer questions.

Is he going to apologize to Canadians for having fooled them? Are the Conservative Pinocchios on the other side going to apologize and tell us how much they have fooled the public?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging fleet of CF-18s. Our seven-point plan includes examining the options and is not limited by the statement of requirements.

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[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week we learned that only one in three people who appeal EI decisions get a hearing within 30 days. Currently, the board of referees collectively spends almost 20,000 days a year hearing appeals. The Conservatives' new tribunal will spend less than half that time. The minister wants us to believe that this will speed up the process. Their actions defy common sense.

Why is the minister refusing to give unemployed Canadians the benefits that they have paid for?

● (1140)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are trying to make sure that Canadians do get their appeals in a timely manner. That is why we are changing from having several people working part time to full-time dedicated specialists who will conduct one-member appeals instead of doing them in triplicate, which is the usual government way.

Is the member honestly suggesting that we should not try to improve it and leave it in the failed state it is now?

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons we never vote for the Conservatives' budgets is that they cut staff to Service Canada and their budgets increase wait times for EI. We will always oppose Conservative budgets that attack EI benefits.

The minister is cutting the number of people hearing EI appeals from 700 to just 39. Under the minister's watch, people are being denied timely access to their EI benefits.

When will the minister take some responsibility and fix the mess that she has created?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the NDP members vote against the good benefits under EI, those which help Canadians. They voted against bringing in special benefits for the self-employed so that they could have access to the maternity, parental, compassionate and sickness benefits that other Canadians have. They also voted against an extra five weeks during the recession when people needed longer to find a job.

The NDP members are not voting for Canadians; they are voting against them.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister keeps telling us that her botched employment insurance reform will help unemployed workers, but that is false.

There are cuts at Service Canada, endless delays for claimants and fewer respondents at the Social Security Tribunal, and her department no longer even meets its own performance criteria. The minister is directly attacking those who need help most.

Will she deal with the fiasco she has caused, or will she let the situation deteriorate?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are improving the system precisely because we want to help and serve Canadians.

We are making changes to the employment insurance system to help unemployed workers find other jobs. We have also improved the job alert system to inform them of positions available in their field, in their region, but the NDP is opposed to that.

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister can try to make us believe that her reform is working, but her words are not fooling Canadians.

People living with disabilities already find it hard enough to enter the job market; they do not need to be penalized further by the fiasco caused by the minister. And yet she refuses to assist those who have contributed to the employment insurance fund.

Will the minister stop attacking persons with disabilities and help them enter the labour market instead?

Oral Questions

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what we want to do. That is why we have proposed a number of programs to assist persons with disabilities. For example, the Enabling Accessibility Fund has made it possible to finance renovations in more than 800 buildings in Canada to make those buildings accessible for persons with disabilities.

We also have programs to help them find jobs. Unfortunately, as expected, the NDP voted against all those initiatives.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is focused on what matters to our citizens, helping to create jobs, growth and long-term prosperity. While we are pushing a low-tax plan that will help create jobs, as always the NDP is pushing high-tax schemes to kill jobs.

The NDP's massive carbon tax would take \$21 billion out of the pockets of Canadians and would also cripple Canadian businesses, kill Canadian jobs and raise the price of just about everything.

Can the Minister of Finance update the House on the terrific state of the Canadian job market?

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette for the first relevant question of this question period.

What is actually important to Canadians are jobs, growth and long-term prosperity. The news this morning from Statistics Canada is terrific in that regard. More than 59,000 net new jobs were created in the month of November. The unemployment rate is down by two-tenths of a per cent to the lowest level it has been since the great recession of 2008-09.

As I say, this augurs well for jobs, growth and prosperity in Canada.

* * *

● (1145)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while CIDA is working on projects that are supposed to improve the social responsibility of mining corporations abroad, here at home the government is cutting funding for the Centre for Excellence in Corporate Social Responsibility. Once again the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

How can CIDA be a world leader when, at home, the Conservatives are making a mockery of our corporate social responsibility strategy?

[English]

Hon. Julian Fantino (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians can be very proud of the results that their hard-earned tax dollars are actually achieving abroad. Canada's

investments are providing food, education, health care and emergency humanitarian assistance to those who need it most.

We will continue to assure Canadians' hard-earned tax dollars are spent in ways that achieve the best possible results. Canadians expect no less.

[Translation]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my Bill C-398 would have been a simple way to reform Canada's access to medicines regime and, yes, it could have saved lives.

Many experts and high-profile organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders and UNICEF, among others, are saying so.

Bill C-398 would have allowed us to do more at no cost to taxpayers.

Will the Conservatives admit that they made a mistake by voting against Bill C-398?

Will they finally work with us to save lives in Africa and elsewhere?

[English]

Hon. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is addressing the real public health challenges in the developing world.

That is why we have invested \$2.85 billion toward maternal, newborn and child health, including the \$1.1 billion Muskoka initiative led by our Prime Minister, which secured the participation of the G8 countries toward a \$10 billion fund. We are achieving concrete results. Nearly 25 times more people are receiving HIV-AIDS treatment than were receiving it 10 years ago.

This government will continue to focus on the measures that actually work for people in the developing world.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the point is that this measure would have worked. The Conservatives had an opportunity to help some of the most vulnerable people in the world, and they chose not to do so.

International experts say this kind of life-saving legislation would have saved more lives. We have some Conservatives just spreading misleading information, all to justify their decision to vote the bill down for partisan reasons.

When will they stop this misinformation campaign and actually work with us to start to help save lives?

Hon. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. The misleading information that the hon. member is referring to was information provided at a previous committee hearing by independent expert public servants, the very people this member purports to represent in his riding.

We paid attention to those experts, and we also heard testimony that talked about the real measures the government is taking that are having an impact on people in the developing world.

Oral Questions

Back in 2002 we had 300,000 people receiving treatment for HIV-AIDS. Today we have more than eight million people. We will continue to focus on measures that are actually working.

* * *

SYRIA

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the conflict in Syria is escalating. Members of the House, like the international community, are increasingly concerned about the potential use of chemical weapons.

We strongly support the diplomatic efforts to prevent such atrocities. At the same time, thousands and thousands of refugees from Syria are facing deteriorating conditions.

Will the government now deliver on its commitment to provide additional support to these refugees, and will it expedite family reunification for those refugees with relatives in Canada?

• (1150)

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is the seventh largest donor to the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In particular, through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, we have made substantial commitments to the refugee crisis emerging from Syria, supporting those who have relocated to Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. We will continue to punch above our weight in that respect.

Finally, we have accelerated some 200 applications that were outstanding for family reunification by Canadians who have made applications for reunification of Syrian nationals.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again on the F-35, 14 months ago in the House, the Minister of National Defence said:

This is the best aircraft, the only aircraft...available to the Canadian Forces.... All of the experts agree, this is the best aircraft....

Given the recent disclosures, would the government like to revise its answer? Will the minister take responsibility and resign, or will the Conservatives continue to repeatedly mislead Canadians on the F-35, like they have for the last five years?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet. The government will update the public before the House recesses.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a Conservative did tell the truth about the F-35s, but it just so happens that he is no longer in the House.

On September 3, 2008, the Minister of Industry, Jim Prentice, admitted that there had never been a tendering process and that Canada was not committed to purchasing the F-35s.

Why did the Conservatives then distort the truth and refuse to hold this tendering process that the Liberals have been demanding for five long years? Why is the Conservatives' incompetence matched only by their ability to twist the facts?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet. The government has received KPMG's report and is in the process of examining it. The government will update the public before the House recesses.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development met with the chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Shawn Atleo, and three other chiefs to discuss the lack of funding for first nations education. Despite his lovely promises, the minister has been slow to act in this regard.

What commitments has the minister made to address the shortage of funding for first nations education?

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we provide first nations students with the tools they need to finish high school. Since 2006, we have built over 30 new schools and renovated over 200 others. We have equipped communities with better computers and school supplies, and we have introduced new programs to improve reading, writing and math skills.

The government clearly understands the importance of education. We are proud of working with first nations students to help them finish grade 12.

[English]

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in January the Prime Minister promised to work with first nations and to consult with them before introducing any policy changes. He broke that promise with unilateral changes to the Indian Act in Bill C-45.

On December 10, grassroots organizers of Idle No More will be gathering outside the constituency office of the Prime Minister, demanding more accountability from the government.

During these education funding negotiations, will the minister commit to a clear, open and honest process?

Oral Questions

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since 2010, the minister has visited more than 50 first nation communities and has had hundreds of productive meetings with chiefs, councils and aboriginal community members across Canada. In fact, we conduct over 5,000 consultations with first nations every year. Our government respects its duty to consult and, where appropriate, to accommodate first nations.

We will continue to work with first nations to create the conditions for stronger first nation communities.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our reserve members play an integral part in the missions that Canada asks the Canadian armed forces to take part in. As a former reserve commanding officer, I can tell the House that reservists must be treated fairly and equitably, and be provided the best care and support when they are injured serving Canada.

The ombudsman had recommended that the accidental dismemberment insurance plan be amended to ensure equity between regular and reserve force members. The minister committed to moving quickly on this issue.

Can he provide the House with an update on this very important matter?

• (1155)

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Etobicoke Centre for his service both as a soldier and parliamentarian.

Our government continues to improve programs designed to support our ill and injured military personnel and their families. As I indicated to the House, our government committed to ending the inequities between regular and reserve force members in cases of accidental dismemberment. This has now been done. We will be improving the accidental dismemberment program so that reservists who accidentally lose a limb will receive the same compensation as a regular force member.

This measure furthers progress toward fair and equitable treatment of reservists, who play such an important role in the defence of our country. It shows the tangible progress made on the ombudsman's report.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is amazing that the Minister of National Defence can actually get out of his seat.

The KPMG report will say that the costs of the F-35 are far closer to \$40 billion than \$15 billion, which is what the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence spun during the election. The Conservative government staunchly maintained that the F-35 was the only fifth generation plane available. For five years, the Liberal Party has been asking for an open, fair and transparent competition.

The Minister of National Defence has had multiple occasions today to stand up and do the honourable thing and resign. Instead, we got PS gibberish.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and put this minister out of his misery and fire him?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are determined to follow through with our seven-point plan and with our thorough and transparent process to replace Canada's aging CF-18 fleet. The government will update the public before the House recesses.

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[English]

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this month, another 60 temporary foreign workers will arrive in Northern B.C. despite an ongoing court challenge to the visas.

It has been three years since the Auditor General identified serious problems with the temporary foreign worker program. Yet, the Conservatives are still mismanaging this file and Canadian jobs are still being given away.

The minister claims that the program is finally under review. Will she stop the issuing of the visas and tell Canadians who is involved in this so-called review?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, issuing visas is not within the purview of the Human Resources and Skills Development Department. That happens over at Citizenship and Immigration Canada. That is just for clarity for the hon. member.

We are concerned that the system is not doing what we want it to do, namely to make sure that Canadians get first crack at every job in Canada. That is our goal and that is why we are working with the EI system and the TFW system to make sure that Canadians are aware of jobs that are available in their skill area within their geography. We want to help Canadians.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, everyone agrees that a sound education leads to a good job, but first nation students are not graduating at the same rate as other Canadian students. Clearly, the current approach to first nation education is not working.

Can the hard-working Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development please update the House on what the government is doing and how it is working with first nations to ensure that students on reserve have access to quality education?

Oral Questions

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is a tough but fair question.

We are equipping first nation students with the tools they need to graduate from high school. Since 2006, we have built over 30 new schools, renovated over 200 more, provided communities with better computers and school supplies, and introduced new education programs to improve students' reading, writing and math skills.

We recognize the importance of a grade 12 education and are proud to work with first nation students to help them reach that goal.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ms. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with the transfer of research jobs from the Language Technologies Research Centre at the Université du Québec en Outaouais to Ottawa, the Outaouais region is losing vital scientific expertise. The region's business community is condemning the departure of these researchers. Taking this unique francophone expertise away from a region that really needs it could lead to lost investment opportunities.

Why are the Conservatives getting rid of scientific expertise that is so vital for the Outaouais?

• (1200)

[*English*]

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Finally, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell the member opposite that there are still over 500 opportunities in Quebec for science to take place. However, I want to make a statement to our scientists, students and universities. On Wednesday of this week, the NDP voted against half a billion dollars for laboratory equipment, microscopes and so on. It voted against more money for our granting councils, some \$37 million in ongoing funding every single year. The NDP voted against that. It also voted against \$100 million for business research. On this side of the House, we stand up—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. member for Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers know that the gun registry saves lives. Community organizations and police forces want to keep it.

Yesterday, the Quebec government formally reiterated its commitment to introducing a bill to create a Quebec registry. All it needs is the data that the federal government is obstinately refusing to hand over.

Out of stubbornness, the Conservatives would rather wage an ideological and costly legal crusade than co-operate with a government that understands the importance of gun control.

What will convince the minister to put an end to this legal battle and simply hand over the data to the Government of Quebec?

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism), CPC): Mr. Speaker, when evaluating public policy, we must evaluate the outcomes, not the intentions.

On this side of the House, we know that the gun registry did not save lives in Canada. That is why we want to keep one of our election promises and abolish it. That is what we are going to do.

As for the Government of Quebec, it is free to create its own registry if it wants to. As far as we are concerned, this is not a way to save lives.

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[*English*]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the budget slashes critical services in northwestern Ontario and throughout rural Canada. Service Canada's Thunder Bay EI staff were laid off, the citizenship and immigration office closed, the local Canada Revenue Agency service closed, Veterans Affairs is closing, the Coast Guard communication station is closing and grain inspections have been slashed.

When will Conservatives start helping northern Ontarians instead of making them fly to Toronto for services?

Mr. Greg Rickford (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about who is helping whom in northern Ontario. The member has voted against restoring access for U.S. market softwood, and investments in forest product information—our great pulp—and the forestry long-term competitive initiative for workers, and against the green pulp and paper transformation program for workers in the environment.

One would think that before the member branched off into this line of questioning he would have understood the roots of his and his former party's position, the NDP. It appears that the only thing they know about northern Ontario and its great forest sector is that money grows on trees. Thank goodness that northern Ontarians leave northern Ontario issues with this government.

*Routine Proceedings***POINTS OF ORDER**

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Don Valley East, in a Standing Order 31, talked in glowing terms about CETA. However, Conservative members on the international trade committee have denied our request—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. This is not a point of order.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, treaties entitled: “Specific Annexes of the Protocol of Amendment to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures, done at Brussels on 26 June 1999”; “Agreement on Social Security between Canada and the Republic of Bulgaria, done at Ottawa on 5 October 2012”; and “Administrative Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security between Canada and the Republic of Bulgaria, done at Ottawa on 5 October 2012”.

An explanatory memorandum is included with the treaties.

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• (1205)

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 27 petitions.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development concerning the supplementary estimates (B), 2012-2013.

[*Translation*]

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

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities concerning the supplementary estimates (B), 2012-13.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food concerning the supplementary estimates (B), 2012-13.

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP) Mr. Speaker, I move that the seventh report of the Standing on Foreign Affairs and International Development, presented on Wednesday, November 28, be concurred in.

Recently our committee passed a report on Syria. In the House today I brought up the issue of Syria. We have to be seized with this issue because it is an important one. The report we passed was not a long report. In effect, it was a motion asking the government to do three things. We asked the government to provide more aid to help the refugees, who are now spilling over the borders of Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and so on. We estimate that this will continue to be a chaotic situation for those countries. We want to see more aid going to those countries, particularly Turkey. If members have been following the issue, they are probably aware that Turkey has made a proposal.

Before I continue, I should mention, Mr. Speaker, that I will sharing my time with my colleague, who seconded the motion, the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

The key is that we need to follow the three committee recommendations. First, we need to provide more aid and humanitarian support to the refugees. Second, we need to ensure that we also support Mr. Brahimi's mission. Mr. Brahimi is a special envoy of the United Nations who has been in Damascus trying to find a political solution to this ongoing crisis and war. The third recommendation is that we fast-track those Canadian Syrians who have family members in refugee camps right now.

I listened carefully to the minister's response to my question in question period today. He is not dealing with the issue. The report and the motion were unanimously supported by the foreign affairs committee in which we asked to fast-track the applications from refugees. We are not talking about the backlog or the previous applications, of which the minister said that there were something like 200. We are dealing with the present situation, which is the thousands of refugees who have left Syria to find a safe haven. The committee members said that the Canadian government should be fast-tracking their applications.

We have to put the context of this issue on the record. The situation in Syria is getting worse. Many more people are spilling over the borders. We need to see more support from the government because these people are now facing harsh winter conditions, which is threatening their lives. There have been warning signs about the potential use of chemical weapons by the regime and this will cause more refugees to leave. There is also the danger of sectarian violence. That is why we need to ensure we support Mr. Brahimi's role as a special envoy, because we need someone on the ground who is aware of what is going on in Syria.

Routine Proceedings

When the committee did its report that led to the motion, we looked at what was happening around Syria. We heard from representatives from neighbouring countries like Turkey and Lebanon. Most important, we heard from Syrian Canadians who had been in touch with people on the ground in Syria as well as those who were in camps. It was clear from their testimony that we could do more. We lauded the government for its initial provision of humanitarian support earlier in the year, but after hearing the reports from representatives from Turkey, Lebanon and the Syrian Canadian community, it was absolutely crystal clear that we needed to do more.

● (1210)

For instance, this is the situation on refugees as we heard from the charge d'affaires from Turkey. According to the UNCR, there will be about 261,114 recognized refugees. The numbers within the refugee camps are fluid. Turkey has 96,000, Jordan has 58,000, Lebanon has 65,000 and Iraq has 40,000. This information was received a couple of weeks ago, so it has now changed, but there were over 50,000 Syrians waiting at the borders who were wanting to be admitted into other countries, but they could not leave because they were undocumented. This is why we need to ensure we give more aid and support for the missions in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, et cetera.

None of us want to see these conditions continue. We want to ensure we are providing what we can, and that is why the members of the committee believe we should formulate a resolution to the House to ensure that the government will hear this message loud and clear. We have an urgent need to increase our humanitarian support.

To put this in a personal context, one of our witnesses, Faisal Alazem from the Syrian community in Montreal, provided the following testimony. He said:

Domestically, many members of the Syrian Canadian community are worried about the fate of their families in Syria or those exiled out of Syria, and they therefore request that in keeping with Canada's long-standing tradition of concern for the displaced and persecuted, our Canadian government facilitate bringing their family members to join them in Canada. Many members of the Syrian Canadian community are concerned that no priority processing or family reunification program is in place to assist their families affected by the humanitarian crisis in Syria. Such measures were taken in 2007 for Iraq...in 2010 for Haiti...The Syrian Canadian community is also hoping that Canada will admit a limited number of political refugees who face grave danger in Syria and in the surrounding countries, especially those with family members in Canada.

A Concordia University student, Kinda Masri, told the media recently, "she can barely reach her family in the coastal Syrian town of Latakia by phone. She said that she wanted to bring her family to Montreal, but her efforts so far had been in vain. She said, "I read the name of my friend who had been captured by security forces, and after 12 days he was delivered to his family as a" corpse.

Surely, everyone in the House can feel the anguish that our Syrian Canadian citizens are feeling. We had co-operation at the committee to pass this motion, and I hope we do. We heard other stories that were gathered by members' testimony and brought to committee.

A Canadian citizen wanted to bring here parents to Canada. The following information was provided:

Recently the regime forces invaded my family's neighbourhood and forced them to get out of the house without taking any of their belongings. My family couldn't stay in the city...because it was no longer safe as the fighting between regime forces

and rebels spread out all over the city neighbourhood. And now, they are still hardly finding any shelter to rent...

These people are caught in a trap between those rebel forces and government forces.

Another citizen who wants to bring siblings to Canada said that family members "live in suburbs of Damascus which is bombed and invaded by the Syrian army" so her brother and sister with their children have to keep moving from one building to another without any security or safety at all. They simply want to be able to sponsor them and bring them to safety here.

Another witness says, "I want to bring my brother and...(wife with two little children) because they are in danger in Syria". They are living in Homs city and their house was attacked by the regime. They are displaced from their home and have been displaced for more than eight months now and they are moving from village to village and are in big danger.

Another witness spoke of her husband of four years. She said:

My husband is Syrian. He went [there] 1 week before the situation changed in Syria and he's been there ever since. I would love to bring him to Canada to be with me (his wife of 4 years) and our daughters. He is in very difficult hardship. Nobody is there for him and he is going thru all the emotional and mental difficulties as all his family is in Syria.

These are testimonies and there is further testimony that we heard at committee about the horrific violence on the civilian population.

● (1215)

We are talking about the use of rape, civilians being bombed by their government and civilians being caught between both the rebels and government forces. They are innocent civilians. I want to underline that.

Our motion at committee asked that we provide more humanitarian support, that we fast track refugees and that we support the Joint Special Representative for Syria, Mr. Brahimi, in his mission. I hope the House will underline the importance of these three important initiatives. It is something we can do. Once we get to the vote, I hope members will vote unanimously in favour of this motion.

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all of us on this side thank the hon. member for Ottawa Centre for his speech. He has raised some moving and very tragic cases of individual suffering. We have seen it on our television screens. We find it reprehensible that air power is being used indiscriminately against Syrian civilians and that a government is literally butchering its own people.

Would the hon. member not agree that beyond the horrors we have seen recently and for too long, the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government would be intolerable, not just for us in this House and in this country, which has always stood for decency and against the use of weapons of mass destruction, but for the whole world and the international community? It is in light of that terrifying prospect that we all pin very urgent hopes on the work of Special Representative Brahimi to bring the members of the Security Council together to take the actions necessary to prevent this new and dangerous phase from being entered.

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his point and agree with him. We are hearing reports today that Secretary of State Clinton has been engaged with the Russians and the Chinese to do just that. We in the House are supportive of that. That is important for all Canadians to know.

I also want to underline that we have seen the use of torture. We talked about chemical weapons. We have already documented torture being reported in every single city and town throughout Syria. Government forces are using it in a diabolical way. We are talking not just about people implicated on the rebel side, which is horrific; we are also talking about the torture of children who are younger than my kids.

The world has to understand what is going on. As a country and as a Parliament, we need to do what we can to provide humanitarian support and ensure that we are also able to give safe haven in Canada to Syrians in Syria or on the borders so that they can be removed from the present danger.

● (1220)

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for speaking so passionately about the current situation in Syria. I have had a chance to hear from Syrian Canadians as well about the tremendous concern and worry that only they and family members who have gone through similar circumstances with family overseas could have.

I wonder if my colleague can speak a bit about the conditions and challenges in the refugee camps in the various countries that are accepting refugees. Why is it so important for Canada to support the needs in these refugee camps?

As he noted, it is very problematic that the minister spoke in general terms about Canada's commitment to the UNHCR rather than on the specific commitment Canada must make to the refugee camps that are accepting refugees from Syria.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Churchill for that question. She is asking what is happening to the civilians and about the conditions they are living in. She has a background in international affairs and knows that it is important that we supply all the necessary tools they need in the border regions if we can.

There is some aid getting into Syria, although it is very difficult to get it there. It is important, because we are talking about malnourished children. In some of these refugee camps in Jordan, Turkey and so on, they just cannot meet the demand. They do not have adequate sanitation. They cannot get food to people who need it. That means that there are more people being left inside Syria who cannot get out of Syria to the camps.

We are now hearing not only about the danger they are in because they are trapped. Within some of these internally displaced camps in Syria, there are malnourished children, and winter is coming. We are talking about starving children who need help. That is why we have to do everything we can not only to help them there but to bring as many as we can to Canada. That is our tradition, and that is what we should be doing.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I move:

That the hon. member for Ajax—Pickering be now heard.

● (1225)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. parliamentary secretary has moved a motion that is non-debatable and as such, other members cannot rise on the point of order until it has been dispensed with.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion 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): Call in the members.

● (1300)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 578*)

YEAS

Members

Adler	Alexander
Anderson	Baird
Bergen	Bernier
Boughen	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Calandra	Carrie
Clement	Daniel
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Fantino
Fast	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Flaherty	Glover
Goguen	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes	Hiebert
Jean	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Komarnicki	Lake
Leaf	Leitch
Lemieux	Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)	Mayes
McLeod	Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Obhrai	
O'Connor	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
Paradis	Penashue
Poillievre	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rickford
Saxton	Schellenberger
Sopuck	Storseth
Sweet	Toews
Truppe	Tweed

Routine Proceedings

Uppal
Vellacott
Sky Country)
Wong
Zimmer— 69

Van Loan
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Woodworth

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Bélangier
Boulerice
Coderre
Crowder
Dewar
Easter
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Larose
Liu
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Nunez-Melo
Perreault
Raynault
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Valeriotte — 33

Ashton
Blanchette-Lamothe
Brisson
Cotler
Cuzner
Dion
Genest-Jourdain
Harris (St. John's East)
Hyer
Laverdière
Marston
Nicholls
Pacetti
Ravignat
Scarpaleggia
Toone

PAIRED

Nil

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I declare the motion carried.

Resuming debate. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the whole House for the support it has shown for this concurrence motion and for the support that members are showing by being here today for the people of Syria, and to the members opposite for having brought this most important issue before the House on a Friday at a time when there are other issues on the front pages on newspapers.

We need, as Canadians, to be active. We need to be building on the proud legacy of engagement that we have had with the Syrian people, above all on the humanitarian front, but also to be speaking out for the larger issues of international peace and security that are at stake, because 40,000 civilian deaths is beyond comprehension for most of us. They have come quickly. They have come in horrific ways. It has been a civilian toll for the most part. The threat to Syrians has come from the air. It has come from snipers. It has come from bombs. It has come from a government using heavy weapons against its own population. From what we heard in this debate and in committee, the House is of one voice and of one mind in thinking that the despicable strategy of the Syrian government is absolutely reprehensible.

It does not accord with our values. We spoke about those on both sides of the House in question period and in the period for Standing Order 31 statements. We are concerned about the possible use of chemical weapons. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has been absolutely forthright on this point, joining his international partners, joining the whole international community, in reaffirming that any kind of use of these weapons of mass destruction is unacceptable. It runs against not only our values but the principles of the United Nations charter.

Every arms control agreement and framework that we hold dear has stood against the use of chemical weapons since at least the First World War. To think that a government could be using such weapons against its own people in 2012 boggles the mind.

It is important for us to be engaged on this issue. It is important for us to be thinking of our friends and allies in this endeavour. Obviously the one NATO nation that has a direct border with Syria is Turkey, and Canada supports the request made by Turkey to NATO for support in the defence of its own border.

NATO is a defensive line. Turkey is looking for support to defend its borders, seeing refugee flows, seeing bombardment coming across its borders, which is obviously targeting refugees who have crossed over in all innocence, trying to save their lives and their families. We stand with Turkey and other regional partners and believe they have the right to defend themselves and their citizens against the reckless Assad regime.

I do not think this is anything other than obvious to us as Canadians, but it may not be obvious to those in Syria who are seeing a distorted picture of events, given the state control of media. We call for calm, and we are calling on the Assad regime to stop drawing in neighbouring countries to this self-inflicted, violent struggle to hold on to power. It is the absolute lowest of the low in terms of the behaviour that reckless states can engage in.

It will end. We are confident that Bashar al-Assad's days are numbered, that he will go, that it is the will of the Syrian people that he go, and obviously the international community is more and more united on this point. The sooner that happens the better for Syrians, for the neighbourhood and for the world.

We are obviously looking to the Syrian opposition to take the lead, to the Syrian National Council, to pull those elements opposed to President Assad together. We have been encouraging the Syrian opposition to come together and the Government of Canada has been very clear on this point.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has played an active role in encouraging those groups to take that action. We congratulate them on the recent announcement that they made, which is a major step forward. However, to be successful, any opposition has to demonstrate that they have the support of the religious minorities. This is a fundamental issue for this government and for Canadians.

● (1305)

We judge our success by the status of our minorities, by the freedom they feel they have. We see that success in other democracies around the world. We encourage it in countries that do not yet have it.

For the Syrian opposition to be successful, it is going to need to be composed of Christians, Kurds, Alawites, Druze and others. We believe in a united opposition to ensure there is a place for all religious minorities in a new Syria.

With that, I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

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

Private Members' Business

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion 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): Call in the members.

•(1330)

[Translation]

And the bells having rung:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): At this time and in accordance with past precedence, as stated on page 571 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, I have no choice but to interrupt the bells as the motion that the debate be now adjourned has lapsed. Accordingly, the debate on the motion will be rescheduled for another sitting.

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

INCOME TAX ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-377, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations), as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

[Translation]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): There are five motions standing on the notice paper for the report stage of the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale's Bill C-377, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations).

[English]

While it is not usual for the Chair to provide reasons for the selection of report stage motions, in this case it has been decided to do so given that the Speaker has received written submissions from the hon. members for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale and Cape Breton—Canso, outlining exceptional circumstances surrounding the committee consideration of the bill.

[Translation]

As members know, consistent with the note to Standing Order 76.1(5), the Chair would not normally select motions that could have been presented in committee.

[English]

In the present case, however, there appears to be extenuating circumstances. The hon. members who have submitted motions at report stage were in attendance at the meeting scheduled for the clause-by-clause consideration of the bill by the Standing Committee on Finance. In addition, they had both submitted motions in advance of this meeting and these had been circulated to all members of the committee. At first glance, it would therefore appear that the amendments submitted by these members could have been proposed during the committee consideration of the bill.

In his submission, the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale explained the efforts that were made to ensure that the committee would actually begin the clause-by-clause study of the bill as scheduled in order to complete consideration of the bill within the prescribed deadlines attached to it. He reported that these efforts were unsuccessful and, as a result, there was no opportunity to propose amendments in committee.

The Chair has been met with this kind of circumstance before. On September 20, 2010, in the *Debates* on page 4,069, Speaker Milliken ruled on a case where the member for Scarborough—Guildwood faced a similar situation in relation to his Bill C-300, an act respecting corporate accountability for the activities of mining, oil or gas in developing countries. In that case, the Speaker selected report stage motions for debate because it had been established that the member had made clear attempts to have the clause-by-clause study take place so that amendments could be considered by the committee.

Similarly, in the case before us today, the Chair has carefully reviewed the sequence of events as well as the written submissions from the members for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale and Cape Breton—Canso and is satisfied that these motions could not be presented during the committee consideration of the bill.

•(1335)

[Translation]

Accordingly, Motions Nos. 1 to 5 have been selected for debate at report stage. They will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting patterns available at the table.

I shall now propose Motions Nos. 1 to 5 to the House.

[English]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-377, in Clause 1, be amended by replacing line 20 on page 1 with the following:

“labour organization is a signatory and also includes activities associated with advice, commentary or advocacy provided by an employer organization in respect of labour relations activities, collective bargaining, employment standards, occupational health and safety, the regulation of trades, apprenticeship, the organization of work or any other workplace matter.”

Private Members' Business

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-377, in Clause 1, be amended

(a) by replacing line 8 on page 1 with the following:

“labour organization”

includes (a) a labour society

(b) by replacing line 14 on page 1 with the following:

“committee or joint board of such organizations; and

(b) an employer organization, whether or not it has responsibilities related to collective bargaining, such as a federation of employers, a contractors' organization, a group that provides benefits to the employees of a member employer, a research agency involved in any type of research related to labour relations activities and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, a corporate vehicle such as a society, corporation, foundation, joint council or board.”

Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-377, in Clause 1, be amended by:

(a) replacing lines 1 to 7 on page 2 with the following:

“(2) Every labour organization and every labour trust shall, by way of electronic filing (as defined in subsection 150.1(1)) and within six months from the end of each fiscal period, file with the Minister an information return for the year, in prescribed form and containing prescribed information.

(3) The information return referred to”

(b) replacing lines 26 to 31 on page 2 with the following:

“assets—with all transactions and all disbursements, the cumulative value of which in respect of a particular payer or payee for the period is greater than \$5,000, shown as separate entries along with the name of the payer and payee and setting out for each of those transactions and disbursements its purpose and description and the specific amount that has been paid or received, or that is to be paid or received, and including”

(c) replacing lines 33 to 35 on page 2 with the following:

“(ii) a statement of loans exceeding \$250 receivable from officers, employees, members or businesses.”

(d) replacing line 4 on page 3 with the following:

“to officers, directors and trustees, to employees with compensation over \$100,000 and to persons in positions of authority who would reasonably be expected to have, in the ordinary course, access to material information about the business, operations, assets or revenue of the labour organization or labour trust, including”

(e) replacing lines 11 to 14 on page 3 with the following:

“consideration provided,

(vii.1) a statement with a reasonable estimate of the percentage of time dedicated by persons referred to in subparagraph (vii) to each of political activities, lobbying activities and other non-labour relations activities,

(viii) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements to”

(f) replacing lines 22 to 25 on page 3 with the following:

“provided,

“(viii.1) a statement with a reasonable estimate of the percentage of time dedicated by persons referred to in subparagraph (viii) to each of political activities, lobbying activities and other non-labour relations activities,

(ix) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on”

(g) replacing lines 33 to 40 on page 3 with the following:

“(xiii) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on administration,

(xiv) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on general overhead,

(xv) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on organizing activities,

(xvi) statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on collective bargaining activities.”

(h) replacing lines 1 and 2 on page 4 with the following:

“(xix) a statement with the aggregate amount of disbursements on legal activities, excluding information protected by solicitor-client privilege,

(xix.1) a statement of disbursements (other than disbursements included in a statement referred to in any of subparagraphs (iv), (vii), (viii) and (ix) to (xix)) on all activities other than those that are primarily carried on for members of the labour organization or labour trust, excluding information protected by solicitor-client privilege, and”

(i) replacing lines 4 to 13 on page 4 with the following:

“(c) a statement for the fiscal period listing the sales of investments and fixed assets to, and the purchases of investments and fixed assets from, non-arm's length parties, including for each property a description of the property and its cost, book value and sale price;

(d) a statement for the fiscal period listing all other transactions with non-arm's length parties; and

(e) in the case of a labour organization or”

(j) replacing line 29 on page 4 with the following:

“contained in the information return”

(k) replacing lines 33 to 35 on page 4 with the following:

“Internet site in a searchable format.

(5) For greater certainty, a disbursement referred to in any of subparagraphs (3) (b)(viii) to (xx) includes a disbursement made through a third party or contractor.

(6) Subsection (2) does not apply to

(a) a labour-sponsored venture capital corporation; and

(b) a labour trust the activities and operations of which are limited exclusively to the administration, management or investments of a deferred profit sharing plan, an employee life and health trust, a group sickness or accident insurance plan, a group term life insurance policy, a private health services plan, a registered pension plan or a supplementary unemployment benefit plan.

(7) Subsection (3) does not require the reporting of

(a) information, regarding disbursements and transactions of, or the value of investments held by, a labour trust (other than a trust described in paragraph (6)(b)), that is limited exclusively to the direct expenditures or transactions by the labour trust in respect of a plan, trust or policy described in paragraph (6) (b);

(b) the address of a person in respect of whom paragraph (3)(b) applies; or

(c) the name of a payer or payee in respect of a statement referred to in any of subparagraphs (3)(b)(i), (v), (ix), (xiii) to (xvi) and (xix).”

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-377, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing line 5 on page 5 with the following:

“comply with that section, to a maximum of \$25,000.”

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-377, in Clause 3, be amended by replacing lines 6 to 8 on page 5 with the following:

“3. This Act applies in respect of fiscal periods that begin after the day that is six months after the day on which this Act is assented to.”

● (1340)

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I seek the consent of the House for the following motion, which is particularly timely: That, in the opinion of the House, the government should designate the December 10 each year as national speak no evil day, where parliamentarians and citizens are called upon to partake in a day for the promotion of mutual respect and public civility, deploring (a) the increasing incidents and intensity of assault of an abusive speech in parliamentary discourse and debate and (b) the decline in civility and the corruption of public discourse.

Private Members' Business

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Does the hon. member for Mount Royal have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

● (1345)

Mr. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand the bells had started ringing earlier and we did not actually proceed to a vote. Could you explain why we did not proceed to a vote after the bells?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. parliamentary secretary asked why the vote was suspended at 1:30 p.m. It was because the time for government orders had expired and moving to adjourn the debate had become redundant at that point.

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I heard you clearly. Did government orders terminate at the regular time?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Government orders expired at 1:30 p.m., which is the regular time on a Friday.

Mr. Russ Hiebert: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to address report stage of my private member's Bill C-377 and the amendments I tabled to improve the bill.

I want to thank you for allowing my amendments to stand. It was disappointing to see the shameful tactics of the NDP members at the finance committee attempting to shut down debate and prevent these amendments from coming forward. This bill reflects the transparency that 83% of Canadians say they want to see from labour organizations. Nevertheless, the parliamentary process is robust and despite the NDP's efforts to prevent improvements to Bill C-377 for the benefit of labour organizations and all Canadians, the amendments I proposed are moving forward again.

There are a number of benefits to my amendments, and before I mention each of the individual changes in the bill, I will highlight a few major areas of improvement in particular.

First, there are several amendments that address the issue of privacy. Over the course of the last year I heard from a number of groups and individuals concerned about how various aspects of the bill might affect them. In particular, my amendments eliminate any uncertainty about reporting requirements for pension plans, health benefit plans and other regulated plans. They will not be required to report under Bill C-377 and neither will benefit payments to individuals from such registered plans. Let me be clear that it was never my intent that registered pension plans or health insurance plans report, or that the pension or health benefit payments that workers or their families receive be published. Regardless, the amendments before the House offer greater clarity that the regulated plans listed in the amendment will not report, and neither will payments from those plans to individuals be reportable under Bill C-377.

I have also removed home addresses from the reporting requirements. This change was especially important to those who serve in labour organizations, particularly for the police. I appreciate the input I received from the Canadian Police Association on the importance of this change.

Additionally, union employees earning less than \$100,000 annually will not be identified unless they are in a position of authority. The \$100,000 reporting requirement reflects similar legislation that has long existed in Canada, such as Ontario's sunshine legislation for the public service.

The second major area of change is that of cost savings to government. The opposition has been making much of the Canada Revenue Agency's report to the finance committee estimating the costs of implementing Bill C-377. Of course, those cost estimates were based on an unamended Bill C-377.

I have determined that significant cost savings will be achieved by the removal of the requirement that searches of union disclosure data be subject to cross-referencing, and by the requirement that all filings be electronic, therefore eliminating paper filings. Apparently cross-referencing is a feature that can substantially increase the cost of developing databases. While some government websites certainly offer this feature and it might become standard on such sites in years to come, I am not interested in driving up costs for the CRA just to have this feature at this time. Of course, requiring paperless filings can easily be seen as a way of ensuring savings. There will be no need for clerical help to transcribe filings into a usable electronic format and the CRA can take the filing data and post it on its website easily.

These two changes will reduce the CRA's costs substantially. Indeed, the CRA has confirmed that the estimated start-up costs of implementing Bill C-377 with my amendments will be less than one-quarter of what they would have been, and the ongoing costs will be less than half of what it previously estimated.

A third area of change that my amendments would foster is in what will be reported. There are two significant changes here. The first is that less reporting will be required of unions' core labour relations activities. Instead of providing details of spending over \$5,000 on such activities as organizing or collective bargaining, an aggregate figure will only need to be reported. This reduction in the level of reporting detail required should lower the cost to labour organizations of complying with Bill C-377.

● (1350)

Second, for transactions where there is a potential for a conflict of interest, a so-called related party transaction, there will be full reporting on the details of those transactions. An example of a related party transaction might be when a labour organization buys a parcel of land from one of its directors. Bill C-377 does not comment on the appropriateness of such a transaction. It merely requires that it be reported. I believe everyone will agree that full transparency is called for when it comes to related party transactions.

I would like to address a few issues that have been raised by critics of the bill during its committee consideration and elsewhere.

Private Members' Business

First, critics have asked why the general public should be able to see the financials of unions they are not members of or contributing dues to. As we know, labour organizations operate tax free and their members receive full income tax deductibility for their dues and payments and receive their strike pay tax free. The deductibility of dues alone costs the federal treasury in the range of a half a billion dollars a year. I believe there is a genuine public purpose served by requiring financial transparency in all institutions that receive a substantial public benefit. It exists in government, crown corporations, charities and most recently on native reserves. Now we are extending transparency to another set of institutions that enjoy public benefits, that being labour organizations.

Second, critics have said that a \$1,000 a day fine seems designed to punish labour organizations. Compliance with Bill C-377 will not be an onerous burden, but there has to be a deterrent for non-compliance, as the official opposition already implicitly recognizes. In the present Parliament, Bill C-205, in the name of the NDP MP for Hamilton Mountain, seeks to impose a fine of \$1,000 per day for non-compliance with the new section of the Canada Labour Code. This is the precise amount of the fine in my bill. The NDP cannot have it both ways.

Third, critics have suggested that other than tax-free status, labour organizations do not actually receive any special subsidies or public dollars. Rather it is their members who do. While it is correct that many of the benefits accorded to labour organizations under the Income Tax Act, such as the deductibility of dues, are indirect rather than direct benefits, the effect is still the same. The benefits were created to support and maintain labour organizations.

The same is true of charities. Charities also do not receive public dollars or special subsidies. Instead, a direct tax benefit is given to donors. That benefit was clearly created for the purpose of supporting and maintaining charities. Just as it is legitimate to ask charities to publicly disclose how they spend the money that is ultimately derived from this public benefit, it is just as legitimate to ask labour organizations to do the same.

Fourth, a few have suggested that Bill C-377 would place unions at a disadvantage in labour negotiations, given that management would know details about the union's finances and its ability to sustain a strike. However, it is obvious that the willingness of workers to withdraw their labour in a bargaining dispute is based on far more important considerations than simply the amount of cash in the strike pay fund. The fact is, American and British unions, and for that matter a good number of Canadian unions which are already required to report in the U.S., have lived with financial transparency for a long time and it does not appear to have affected their ability to bargain effectively.

Another criticism sometimes levelled against Bill C-377 is that the list of financial items would be larger than required of charities. It is true that the list of statements that they would file is longer, but it simply recognizes the fact that labour organizations are more complex and administer a wide range of funds for activities, such as training, education and so on.

Finally, some critics have said that it is unconstitutional. They say that the bill nominally amends the Income Tax Act, but its real purpose is to regulate labour organizations, which is sometimes a

provincial matter. That is simply inaccurate. The bill does not regulate labour organizations and does not tell them how to spend their money. In requiring labour organizations to file a report, my bill does not even require an audit. The bill would amend a federal statute, namely the Income Tax Act. The bill is only concerned with matters that already fall under the Income Tax Act that have long been constitutional. I would refer critics to the existing sections of the Income Tax Act and to the fact that charities have done so for 35 years and no one doubts that it is constitutional.

I hope all members will consider how the amendments I have put forward will improve Bill C-377 and support these amendments when the bill comes up for a vote.

•(1355)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Resuming debate.

In order to participate, members must be sitting in their own seats. Is the hon. member for York Centre rising on debate?

The hon. member for York Centre.

Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak in favour of today's important pro-worker legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): There is a point of order.

The hon. member for Ottawa Centre.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, you have heard numerous times from us that we actually call the question. You looked and asked three or four times. The member was not in his place and was not ready. You heard us. I am wondering why you did not call the question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. member for Ottawa Centre has asked why the Chair went back two or three times. As this hon. member and other members know, it is the practice in this place that speaking order sequences are provided to the Chair. In this case, all caucuses provided the Chair with speakers. There appears to be some disagreement between the lists provided to the Chair and those who wish to participate in the debate.

In the first case, a member who was on the list chose not to participate. In another case, a member who was next on the list was not sitting in his own seat. It is prudent that the Chair ensure that members in this place who would like to take part in a debate have an opportunity to do so. There appeared to be confusion in this place. The hon. member for York Centre was next on the list and was sitting in his place. He did rise from his place and on that basis is recognized.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for York Centre.

Private Members' Business

Mr. Mark Adler: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of today's important pro-worker legislation from the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale. I also want to thank all my colleagues on the finance committee and the many witnesses who appeared before it who shared their thoughts and concerns during our study of today's bill.

I certainly applaud the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale for listening to the feedback we heard and for making some important amendments to this landmark legislation to address some legitimate concerns and to make a good bill even better.

Before starting my speech, let me acknowledge and highlight the work of its sponsor, our Conservative colleague from British Columbia, the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale. The member has truly done an incredible amount of homework and research on this legislation before Parliament today. He is to be applauded for his efforts in standing up for workers, not union bosses, as the NDP have.

Since his successful election in 2004, the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale has been a strong voice in Ottawa for his constituents and is widely respected as a parliamentarian. Little wonder, then, that for the past three elections, when his constituents went to the ballot box, they asked him to keep standing up for their concerns in Parliament. Today he builds on his record of advancing ideas and proposals that make Canada better with this important and long overdue piece of legislation, especially for Canadian workers.

Before I continue, I urge all Canadians who are watching at home today to write down the following Internet address on a piece of paper: www.c377.ca. This Internet site provides lots of additional information about this proposal, including actions Canadians can take to help ensure its success, such as filling out a petition or writing to their member of Parliament.

Let us now take a moment to examine the background of the bill, which would require transparency and public disclosure for organized labour organizations that receive considerable tax benefits.

All parliamentarians recognize that labour organizations play an important role in Canadian society by advocating on behalf of workers to ensure their health and safety on the job and appropriate wages and benefits. However, parliamentarians also recognize that the federal government provides substantial benefits to unions to support them in their work. Notwithstanding the generous tax benefits, unions are not required to disclose their financial activities in any significant detail.

As the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale has said, this bill is designed to provide for the financial disclosure of how those public benefits are used and how the dues of everyday workers are used. It would give workers and all Canadians simple openness and transparency to ensure that their dues and their taxpayer subsidies are not being abused by union bosses, as we have seen all too frequently. Indeed, only recently, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers sent a five-member delegation to attend a Free Palestine conference in Brazil and then demanded that taxpayers pay for it.

This kind of public disclosure will affirm and increase Canadians' trust in the work of these organizations, putting it in line with most other industrialized countries. For instance, it should be pointed out that disclosure requirements for labour organizations in Canada are in stark contrast to those in the United States, where detailed filings are publicly disclosed and are available on the website of the United States Department of Labor. Indeed, it even captures some Canadian unions affiliated with their larger American chapters.

Even France, a country with a strong left-leaning tradition, has ushered in rules that force unions to post their financial activities online, something unions themselves requested to improve trust and their reputations. It is time Canadian workers had the same rights as their American and European brothers and sisters, to use labour-speak.

I should note that registered Canadian charities have long been required, for over three decades, to disclose similar information. Indeed, this is, according to independent polling data, exactly what Canadians have been asking for. For the benefit of this House and all those Canadians watching at home on television or listening online, I would like to share some of this important independent polling data.

● (1400)

Specifically, the well-respected Nanos Research firm recently conducted a survey of Canadians and asked about their impressions of unions, particularly with respect to financial transparency and their use of union dues. This report entitled, "State of the Unions 2011", is the second survey of its kind conducted by Nanos. One thousand and one employed Canadians were polled between July 20 and July 25 of 2011. I would like to share with Parliament this important finding taken directly from the Nanos survey. It stated:

Findings showed that working Canadians surveyed agreed with greater financial transparency on the part of unions...83% of Canadians agreed with mandatory public financial disclosure for both public and private sector unions on a regular basis.

Support for mandatory disclosure of financial information by unions was strong across Canada, with over 70% of Atlantic Canadians saying yes, over 90% of people in Quebec agreeing, nearly 80% in the Prairies and over 85% in British Columbia. Even more impressive, a whopping 85% of unionized workers agreed that it was time for mandatory union disclosure of financial information. That overwhelming support has been reflected in a lot of public commentary that we have heard on Bill C-377 in the past year. I would like to take a moment to share some of that feedback with the House.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business stated:

—we feel that requiring unions to publically disclose how they spend those dollars will bring some measure of transparency to their operations, especially in light of on-going news that unions are using those funds to back certain political parties and candidates throughout Canada.

I should note that even some union leaders themselves have stood up and said they would support this push for more transparency and we applaud them. For instance, CAW Local 444 president Rick Laporte told *The Windsor Star*, "I don't have a problem with it...Our books are always open to our members and anybody can come to our meetings and see our financials".

Private Members' Business

A noted think tank had this to say this on the matter, “members would like to see where their dues are spent, and if that money was used to better the lives of said rank and file members, not fund exotic trips to communist get-togethers for union officials”.

I agree and that is why I ask all members to stand up for workers and support the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale.

● (1405)

Mr. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member suggested that it was a communist gathering.

An hon. member: This is not a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to say how happy I am to rise in the House to speak to private member's Bill C-377. That is not entirely true, however. I will spend a few minutes talking about it today. Everyone knows I have much to say on the subject. It is worrisome to me, as it is to the NDP, the labour movement as a whole, labour organizations and other associated organizations.

I would remind all members that the labour movement is the greatest democratic movement in our country's civil society. More than four million workers strong, it ensures that Canada and Quebec are, generally speaking, great places to live. Our working conditions, wages and occupational health and safety standards are what keep this country's economy running. Whether in the city or in the country, people can patronize businesses. They can go to restaurants and purchase goods. This historic legacy of the labour movement deserves to be recognized in the House. The very existence of the middle class is due in no small part to the battles that unions have been fighting for decades now.

Bill C-377 is obviously an odd bill because it is not transparent in the least. Generally speaking, a piece of legislation or legislative proposals are introduced to right a wrong, improve a situation, remedy a flaw or bring in measures that will benefit our constituents. It is not very clear what problem this bill is attempting to solve.

First, what is the objective or the goal of this bill? Where is it headed? It is not at all obvious. We have been told that more transparency is needed. The Canada Labour Code already requires unions to provide financial reports to members who request them. That is the law in seven out of 10 provinces. Last year, there were 4.1 million unionized workers and six complaints were filed. Six people said that they did not have access to documents and information to which they were entitled. Few organizations have a complaint rate as low as six out of 4.1 million.

There really is no problem. The Conservatives are trying to solve a problem that does not exist. This bill will create red tape and a bureaucracy and be very costly, not just for the unions, but also for ordinary citizens. Canadians will have to pay for the Conservative Party's whims. That is what is truly unfortunate about Bill C-377.

I mentioned it a few times when speaking in English to journalists who were scratching their heads. They were wondering what the

government was doing and why it introduced the bill. I told them that I could not figure it out myself.

● (1410)

[*English*]

It is a really costly solution for a problem that does not exist.

[*Translation*]

I very much like the expression “if it ain't broke, don't fix it”. Everything is fine, so I do not know why anyone would insist on imposing an additional administrative burden on labour organizations, which are the economic mainstay of our country and contribute to the vitality of our production. These are the people who produce our goods and services. They are also the ones who drive our economy, by living their lives and consuming goods.

So what are the mission and purpose of this bill? We do not really see its usefulness. Nor does the Canadian Bar Association, which, in its presentation, had a wonderful sentence about not really understanding what this bill was trying to accomplish.

I mentioned the costs, and that is definitely the first thing that needs to be discussed. This bill will be very costly for the organizations involved and for all taxpayers. The Canada Revenue Agency conducted two assessments. It did a cost analysis and estimated that it will cost \$2 million for first two years, and then \$800,000 a year indefinitely. That is the figure for 1,000 reports, since it assessed only about 1,000 organizations that would be affected.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's review, some 18,000 organizations will be affected. So that means it will cost not \$2 million, but \$2 million times 18. And that is just the initial budget forecasts. We have already seen estimated costs increase over time, instances when the cost seemed rather low or reasonable at first. We have seen that here at the federal level, but the municipal and provincial levels have seen it, too.

I think this is a slippery slope of red tape, paperwork and extra bureaucracy that will serve no purpose and will only be a waste of money.

We have a federal government that is slashing public services to Canadians. We have a Conservative government that wants to eliminate nearly 20,000 jobs, even though those employees are there to serve Canadians. At the same time, the Conservatives want to create new administrative obligations, even though they are making cuts.

How can the Canada Revenue Agency possibly take care of these 18,000 reports—18,000 copies' worth of fastidious, useless work—with fewer employees? I cannot wait to see that. How can it be done? No one has been able to answer that simple question. Actually, I do not see how this can be accomplished.

Private Members' Business

This legislation is aimed directly at democratic and transparent labour organizations: they are required by law to provide their members with this information. The bill creates a pointless burden. Why are these organizations targeted while others are not?

The other side argues that, since union dues are tax deductible, labour organizations' accounting books and financial reports should be open to everyone. Please note, however, that the people who need to know how their money is spent are those who pay union dues, and they already have that information.

In the interest of fairness, and to avoid discriminating against union organizations, the same rules should apply to everyone. For example, professional associations that also collect union dues and benefit from tax deductions, are not targeted by this bill. Apparently, it is not important for them to be because the tax benefit they receive should not force them to disclose all of their financial reports, even though the unions have to do so.

Why such a double standard? Why such a direct attack against unions?

We received part of an answer in parliamentary committee, when a Conservative member clearly said that this was not a matter of transparency at all and that it was a matter of what kind of involvement unions and the labour movement had.

Such is the basis of the Conservatives' thought process. It is not a matter of transparency. What they want is to stick their noses into the business of the labour movement. They want to know how much a particular union has spent on an awareness or public information campaign, a safe workplace campaign or a campaign to improve the pension plans of all Canadians. They want to stick their noses into the business of labour organizations and snoop around.

A fair rule should be applied to all organizations in Canada: as soon as they receive a tax benefit of some sort, their books should be open. That would be just great: thousands of organizations, businesses and companies would be required to disclose everything. It does not make any sense. If this does not make sense for companies and other organizations, then why impose it on the labour movement?

In closing, I am going to point out a few things. There are still major problems in this bill relating to privacy.

We have a Conservative government whose ideology is that government should not interfere in people's lives. We have colleagues who are really libertarians. They like small government, but suddenly, when it comes to the labour movement, it is time for big government. They want to know everything; they want to see everything. If someone receives a benefit of some sort, like pension or disability benefits, their name is going to end up on a website. People will be able to do a search and see it.

What is the public interest? How does it enhance the common good in our country and how are we a better society if personal information about people's lives is disclosed?

From the standpoint of the Constitution, this is a serious invasion, and I do not understand why a Conservative government is getting involved in it. Quite aside from what it will cost, this is not a bill that deals with the Canada Revenue Agency as such.

• (1415)

This is not a bill that deals with tax policy. It is a bill that deals with the organization of our labour movement and unions, and ultimately with labour relations. Under section 92 of the Constitution, those areas are subject to provincial legislation. We are going to end up in court. That will cost taxpayers more money, because of mismanagement and bad decisions on the part of the Conservatives.

[English]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hope to put a little light on the subject. The member opposite seems to have been more interested in fear-mongering than in actually dealing with the content of the legislative proposal.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak about Bill C-377, which is sponsored by the MP for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale.

Before I get into the details of the bill, I would like to begin today by taking a few moments to speak about the importance of labour organizations. All of us know that they play a crucial, multi-faceted role in our society.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. David Anderson: I do not understand why the opposition would be opposed to labour organizations. It seems that we are getting some heckling from members on the other side who do not agree with us when we say that they play a crucial, multi-faceted role in our society. They contribute to the Canadian workplace in many ways. Currently there are over four and a half million workers who are union members, representing over 25% of Canada's civilian labour force.

Strong labour management relations contribute to our country's economic prosperity and the economic security of all Canadians. Labour organizations play a direct role as advocates for organized labour. They are also important in the negotiation and enforcement of collective agreements and labour standards. Further, these organizations have played a pivotal role in the past in advancing some of the most fundamental improvements in the workplace. Issues they have contributed to include advocating for fair wages, reasonable working times, providing training and learning for employees, protecting vulnerable workers, improving working environments for women and promoting compliance with and enforcement of labour laws across Canada.

As a part of that, these organizations are given generous benefits through the tax system. Labour organizations are exempted from tax on their income, and members are entitled to deduct any dues paid to such organizations. Notwithstanding these generous tax benefits, labour organizations are not required to disclose their financial activities in any significant detail. This is despite the fact that they are democratic organizations supported by dues-paying members and are subsidized by the Canadian tax system.

Private Members' Business

We believe that democratic values go hand in hand with openness and transparency. Today's bill proposes to amend the Income Tax Act by requiring labour organizations to file a standardized public information return with the Canada Revenue Agency each year. Currently, there is no separate information return for labour organizations. By requiring such a return, the bill promotes better accountability to Canadians.

The bill will also improve the quality of information provided by labour organizations to their members and to the public at large. This would be done by requiring such organizations to submit not only their financial statements but also separate schedules that provide specific details on the activities in which a labour organization engaged in any given year and the amounts devoted to those activities. Examples of the information a labour organization would be required to report include details on any loans it made, its investment activities, the amounts spent on labour relations activities, as well as amounts paid to executives and on general administration.

Information submitted by labour organizations would be made available on the website of the CRA in a searchable format. In this regard, today's bill would enable members of labour organizations to satisfy themselves that their organization is operating in an appropriate manner. Canadian taxpayers would also have access to this information, making labour organizations more accountable for the generous tax benefits they are provided.

Finally, the bill proposes that any labour organization that did not file an annual information return within six months from the end of its fiscal period would be subject to a monetary fine for non-compliance. Quite simply, we believe that since labour organizations are provided the privilege of a tax exemption, they should be accountable to Canadians on how they operate and spend their funds.

In addition, there is concern about the quality of the information being provided by labour organizations. Even where disclosure requirements exist, these are often limited in scope. While some jurisdictions require that audited financial statements be disclosed to members, this, again, is not uniform across Canada. Further, financial statements present only limited financial information and may not provide information about the amount spent by labour organizations on particular activities important to their members, such as salaries paid to the executives or details of their political activities.

● (1420)

The level of detail disclosed in financial statements is generally left to the discretion of the organization. While members not satisfied with the disclosure may be able to approach their labour relations board to require their union to provide additional more-detailed information, this may be a cumbersome and expensive process and may deter many workers from accessing the information.

I will also highlight that registered charities are required to provide information to the CRA that is subject to public disclosure. Registered charities are also given generous tax advantages by the tax system.

First, as are labour organizations, registered charities are exempted from paying income tax. Second, in recognition of the

valuable services provided by charities, the Income Tax Act provides special incentives to encourage Canadians to donate. Registered charities are given the privilege of being able to issue official donation receipts for any gifts that they receive. Donors then use these receipts to reduce their taxes payable. To ensure that registered charities are accountable to Canadians for these tax privileges, all registered charities are required to file a registered charity information return, which is published on the CRA's website. This information enables the CRA to ensure that registered charities are operating in compliance with the rules and that they devote their resources exclusively to charitable activities. Transparency around this information also enables donors to verify their donations are being used appropriately and to determine which organizations they want to support. Through enhanced disclosure, Canadians can give with confidence, knowing that donations of their hard-earned dollars are used to support legitimate charities.

The registered charity information return contains information similar to that which has been proposed by the hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale. In addition to filing financial statements, which are available to the public, registered charities must file detailed information as to how they carry on their activities each year. While I am not proposing to provide an exhaustive list of these requirements, I will take a minute to highlight a few.

All registered charities are required to provide information regarding the charitable programs they carried on throughout the year, including details on any new programs. Charities must also provide detailed financial information regarding their financial activities during the year. The information generally includes: the charity's assets and liabilities; the charity's sources of revenues, including the total amount for which it issued donation receipts; income earned from business activities and the amount of government grants received; and the charity's expenditures, including the aggregate amount spent on charitable activities, administration, fundraising and political activities.

Further, to ensure that charitable resources remain within the charitable sector, when a charity makes a gift of its funds to other charities or other qualified donors it must attach a detailed statement that lists the organization to which it gifted the funds as well as the amount given. Charities are also required to provide specific details around other issues of importance to Canadians, such as the amounts they devote to foreign charitable activities, the salary levels paid to their highest-compensated employees as well as the amounts they pay to professional fundraising companies. The transparency regime for registered charities is an important tool in helping to ensure that Canadians can give with confidence to registered charities and that those charities are accountable for the tax privileges granted to them under the Income Tax Act.

Private Members' Business

In summary, I believe the proposals contained in the bill are consistent with those principles of transparency and accountability. These organizations are provided generous tax benefits in the form of exemption from income tax and the deductibility of dues paid by members. These organizations should be accountable to the public as well as to their members as to how they carry out their activities and how they are spending their resources. I therefore encourage all members to support the principles of the bill.

• (1425)

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me help my friends learn a little about how this actually works, as I am probably the only member of the House who was the financial officer for a large union. I spent eight years of my life doing that.

This whole idea that the government is suggesting, that there is this lack of transparency and that unions do not tell anyone anything and all of this information is hidden away from the membership somewhere in a secret vault, is absolute hokum. I will explain how this works, especially to my friend who lives nearby.

Any expenditure beyond \$100 needs ratification not only from the executive board but from the membership. That is right, all of the membership gets to vote on any expenditure beyond \$100. The limit of any local union, and any union pretty much across the country, to expense money on behalf of its members is only up to \$100.

When is that information reported to union members? It is reported monthly. This information is related both verbally and in writing. In my case, that is exactly what I did.

There is that dreaded audit that all of us fear on our income tax, but unions audit themselves continuously. These audits are conducted by outside auditors. In my case, KPMG used to do the audit. At one time, KPMG did an audit every six months because the organization was so large, but it eventually became a yearly audit.

Who else comes to visit unions? The folks who collect provincial taxes come to visit. They want to find out if the union has a hall that it rents out because taxes have to be paid on those things. They come and check the taxes as well.

Therefore, this idea that somehow there are no checks and balances in the system, that somehow the membership does not understand where the money is spent, or somehow we just collect the money, give it away and never tell anybody who we give it to is just false. That is not true. The membership always knows exactly where its money is spent. Members have the absolute democratic right when they do not like a particular expenditure to say no to it. They also have the right not to vote for a person the next time.

I can tell my colleagues across the way that I guess we did this so well, at least in my union, that I was elected three times as the financial officer. The members had no fear about how their money was expensed because they were always told how their money was expensed. In fact, we were more open than this government when it comes to the budget. The government had an omnibus budget bill that had less amendments to it than Bill C-377. That bill was so poorly put together in the first place that the Conservatives almost had to rewrite it to make it conform and be palatable to someone, but I have no idea who.

Clearly, this is not a bill that is supposed to be informative for union members or the general public. This is simply a bill that attacks unions across this country. There is no need for it and it should not be passed. It should just die on the order paper—

• (1430)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the matter is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper. The hon. member for Welland will have seven minutes remaining when this matter returns before the House.

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

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

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. JOE COMARTIN

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MR. NATHAN CULLEN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MS. NYCOLE TURMEL

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	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
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
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
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bergen, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	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.
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of International Cooperation	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	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 (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	Ind. Cons.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	Québec	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	NDP
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	NDP
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	Ind.
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	NDP
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	Ontario	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	CPC
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
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	GP
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, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Michaud, Éloïse	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude.....	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval.....	Québec	NDP
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.....	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre.....	Ontario	CPC
O'Toole, Erin	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec.....	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	NDP
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat.....	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève.....	La Pointe-de-l'Île.....	Québec	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	CPC
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm.....	Québec	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ...	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John.....	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert.....	Alberta	CPC
Ravignat, Mathieu.....	Pontiac.....	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	Lib.
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
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
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	British Columbia	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Ind. Cons.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	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.
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bergen, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of International Cooperation	Vaughan	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
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ind.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, 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.
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
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
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
O'Toole, Erin	Durham	CPC
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	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 Labour	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Groghé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	NDP
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	NDP
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	NDP
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	NDP
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	NDP
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Lib.
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	NDP
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
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Mississippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	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, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of December 7, 2012 — 1st Session, 41st Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Chris Warkentin	Vice-Chairs:	Carolyn Bennett Jean Crowder
Dennis Bevington Ray Boughen Rob Clarke	Jonathan Genest-Jourdain Carol Hughes	Blake Richards Greg Rickford	Kyle Seeback David Wilks

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Associate Members

Eve Adams	Corneliu Chisu	Ed Komarnicki	Scott Reid
Mark Adler	Michael Chong	Daryl Kramp	Michelle Rempel
Dan Albas	Nathan Cullen	Mike Lake	Romeo Saganash
Harold Albrecht	Joe Daniel	Kevin Lamoureux	Andrew Saxton
Chris Alexander	Patricia Davidson	Guy Lauzon	Gary Schellenberger
Mike Allen	Bob Dechert	Ryan Leef	Bev Shipley
Dean Allison	Dean Del Mastro	Kellie Leitch	Devinder Shory
Stella Ambler	Earl Dreshen	Pierre Lemieux	Joy Smith
Rob Anders	Rick Dykstra	Chungsen Leung	Robert Sopuck
David Anderson	Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay	Wladyslaw Lizon	Kevin Sorenson
Charlie Angus	Hedy Fry	Ben Lobb	Brian Storseth
Scott Armstrong	Royal Galipeau	Tom Lukiwski	Mark Strahl
Niki Ashton	Cheryl Gallant	James Lunney	David Sweet
Jay Aspin	Parm Gill	Dave MacKenzie	David Tilson
Joyce Bateman	Shelly Glover	Colin Mayes	Lawrence Toet
Leon Benoit	Robert Goguen	Phil McColeman	Brad Trost
Tyrone Benskin	Jacques Gourde	Cathy McLeod	Bernard Trotter
Candice Bergen	Nina Grewal	Costas Menegakis	Susan Truppe
James Bezan	Richard Harris	Rob Merrifield	Merv Tweed
Kelly Block	Laurie Hawn	Larry Miller	Dave Van Kesteren
Peter Braid	Bryan Hayes	Rob Moore	Maurice Vellacott
Garry Breitkreuz	Russ Hiebert	Rick Norlock	Mike Wallace
Gordon Brown	Jim Hillyer	Deepak Obhrai	Mark Warawa
Lois Brown	Randy Hoback	Tilly O'Neill Gordon	Jeff Watson
Patrick Brown	Ed Holder	Ted Opitz	John Weston
Rod Bruinooge	Roxanne James	LaVar Payne	Rodney Weston
Brad Butt	Brian Jean	Pierre Poilievre	John Williamson
Paul Calandra	Peter Julian	Joe Preston	Stephen Woodworth
Blaine Calkins	Randy Kamp	James Rajotte	Terence Young
Ron Cannan	Gerald Keddy	Brent Rathgeber	Wai Young
John Carmichael	Greg Kerr	Mathieu Ravignat	Bob Zimmer
Colin Carrie			

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Pierre-Luc Dusseault

Vice-Chairs:

 Scott Andrews
 Patricia Davidson

 Charlie Angus
 Charmaine Borg
 Alexandre Boulerice

 Brad Butt
 Blaine Calkins

 John Carmichael
 Dean Del Mastro

 Earl Dreeshen
 Colin Mayes

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 Wladyslaw Lizon
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 Tom Lukiwski
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 Bernard Trotter
 Susan Truppe
 Merv Tweed
 Dave Van Kesteren
 Maurice Vellacott
 Mike Wallace
 Mark Warawa
 Chris Warkentin
 Jeff Watson
 John Weston
 Rodney Weston
 David Wilks
 John Williamson
 Stephen Woodworth
 Terence Young
 Wai Young
 Bob Zimmer

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair: Merv Tweed

Vice-Chairs: Malcolm Allen
Frank Valeriote

Alex Atamanenko
Ruth Ellen Brosseau
Randy Hoback

Pierre Lemieux
LaVar Payne

Francine Raynault
Blake Richards

Brian Storseth
Bob Zimmer

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Rodney Weston
David Wilks
John Williamson
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young
Wai Young

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Chair: Rob Moore

Vice-Chairs: Pierre Nantel
Scott Simms

Scott Armstrong
Gordon Brown
Paul Calandra

Andrew Cash
Matthew Dubé

Parm Gill
Jim Hillyer

Rathika Sitsabaiesan
Terence Young

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Bernard Trotter
Justin Trudeau
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Merv Tweed
Dave Van Kesteren
Maurice Vellacott
Mike Wallace
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Chris Warkentin
Jeff Watson
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Rodney Weston
David Wilks
John Williamson
Stephen Woodworth
Wai Young
Bob Zimmer

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Chair:

David Tilson

Vice-Chairs:
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Jinny Jogindera SimsRick Dykstra
Mylène Freeman
Sadia GroguhéRoxanne James
Chungsen LeungCostas Menegakis
Ted OpitzRathika Sitsabaiesan
John Weston

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Libby Davies
Bob Dechert
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Earl Dreeshen
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Colin Carrie
Sean Casey
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Corneliu Chisu	Gerald Keddy	Michelle Rempel	Terence Young
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Mr. Bob Dechert	to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
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Mr. Greg Rickford	to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario
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