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Friday, December 5, 1997

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 5, 1997

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

• (1005)

PRIVILEGE

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: Colleagues, I am now ready to render a decision on the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton on December 4 concerning the draw for Private Members' Business.

On December 4 the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton rose on a question of privilege regarding a random draw to establish an order of precedence for additional items on Private Members' Business. While ruling that the matter did not constitute a question of privilege, I undertook to return to the House after having examined the situation about which the hon. member complained.

Notice of the draw was given on Wednesday, in accordance with Standing Order 87(2), and the draw is scheduled to be held today at 1.15 p.m. The member pointed out that a draw had recently been held on Tuesday, November 25, 1997, when 14 names were drawn.

The subcommittee on private members' business is planning to meet next week to begin the process of deciding which of the members whose names were drawn on November 25 have items which should be selected as votable.

The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton pointed out that there were already only two openings for additional votable items, one bill and one motion. By holding another draw at this time the subcommittee might be faced with having even more items from which to choose, namely nine bills instead of six. This, the member suggests, would put him at a disadvantage. In effect, he would have to compete against a slightly larger field of candidates for what was already a very small number of openings.

[*Translation*]

The member's concern is not at all unreasonable. At first blush it does appear that he might be disadvantaged by having to compete

against three additional candidates for the single opening for another votable bill. However, if we look at the process in more detail, the Chair is of the opinion that the member will not really suffer any prejudice.

[*English*]

First, we should note that unlike the draw itself, which is entirely random, the selection of votable items is based on the merits of the bills or motions put forward by members. Indeed Standing Order 92(1) specifically states:

In making its selection, the Committee—shall allow the merits of the items alone to determine the selection—.

The merits of the member's bill are not directly affected by the number of bills being considered by the subcommittee.

It is nonetheless true that the subcommittee is, on occasion, unable to choose as many votable items as it might like because the votable items selected after a previous draw remain in the order of precedence on the order paper.

As some of you may recall, the subcommittee in the previous Parliament was put in the unenviable position of not having openings for additional votable items following a draw. Unfortunately, votable items chosen at the same time all tend to remain on the order paper for approximately the same length of time, after which several openings may be created within a short period of time when they are put to a vote.

This is because all votable items may be debated for up to three hours. How many openings for votable items exist at the time the subcommittee meets to select additional votable items is something over which none of us have any control.

Members should remember that although draws are usually held when there are only 15 or 16 items remaining in the order of precedence, the standing orders do not stipulate that a draw cannot be held sooner. Standing Order 87(2) provides that:

The Clerk of the House, acting on behalf of the Speaker, shall, when necessary during a Session, conduct a random draw to establish an order of precedence for not more than fifteen additional items of Private Members' Business—

It is thus possible to conduct a draw even though there are more than 15 items in the order of precedence, provided it is considered necessary to do so.

Government Orders

The principal reason for not holding draws more frequently than we normally do is in order to limit the number of meetings of the subcommittee on private members' business.

• (1010)

The order of precedence used to contain 20 items, but in the 34th Parliament this was increased to 30, the present number, precisely because the subcommittee at that time wanted it so.

The Chair would point out that the subcommittee is by no means obliged to consider any new items placed in the order of precedence following today's draw. The subcommittee may confine its selection to the items added after the November 25th draw. Furthermore, members whose names are drawn later today will have until the end of the day Tuesday to designate which of their bills or motions are to be added to the order of precedence, and the subcommittee has 10 sitting days following the draw before it must begin the process of selecting votable items.

Moreover, and there is no way to predict this, some members whose names are drawn may not wish to be considered by the subcommittee. They may prefer that their bills or motions not be designated votable.

The Chair would also draw members' attention to the fact that the subcommittee may select an item as votable at any time before it is taken up by the House. Thus, if an item is not selected as votable by the subcommittee next week, it may still be selected in February. There may be more openings for votable items at that time.

Finally, the member suggested that since this draw is being held to remedy a problem arising from the accidental exclusion from the previous draw of a member with a motion, then the proper course would have been to conduct a draw for motions only. However, that would have meant that the number of bills in the order of precedence would decrease faster than the number of motions, causing more bills to be drawn next time.

Since Standing Order 87(1)(b) stipulates:

—the draw shall be conducted so that there shall be in the order of precedence an equal number of motions and bills originating in the House of Commons—

The Chair is of the opinion that any draw should be held for both bills and motions.

I thank the hon. member for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. This may seem to some like a lot of quibbling over numbers and technical details, but it reminds us all that in attempting to remedy a wrong done to one member, we must not cause harm to another.

After considering the situation thoroughly, I am of the opinion that the draw will not adversely affect the hon. member for

Sarnia—Lambton but will allow another member to have the opportunity to participate.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA MARINE ACT

Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of Transport, Lib.) moved that Bill C-9, an act for making the system of Canadian ports competitive, efficient and commercially oriented, providing for the establishing of port authorities and the divesting of certain harbours and ports, for the commercialization of the St. Lawrence Seaway and ferry services and other matters related to maritime trade and transport and amending the Pilotage Act and amending and repealing other acts as a consequence, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to be able to speak to members about Bill C-9 for this third reading debate. Before I talk about the bill I want to take a moment to acknowledge the critical role that has been played by members of the House, in particular those members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport, for their work on this bill, the very thoughtful improvements they have made which I think have illustrated very constructively the role that the committee system plays in our legislative process.

I also want to thank the critics for the other parties, the members for Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, Cumberland—Colchester, and Churchill because they have all worked in a very collegial fashion. They have brought forward very sensible recommendations. Some of them we have accepted, some for various reasons we have not accepted. In any event, it has been a very collegial process which I think is a testament to the way Parliament should work.

• (1015)

All members have displayed a great diligence in working to prepare what I consider to be a quality piece of legislation which will ensure the best marine transportation system for all Canadians.

There was also a great contribution made by the transportation community across the country. They stayed with us throughout the length of the process. They really were in for the long haul.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this bill has been in the works for many years, in fact about three years, and we have seen it debated twice in this House. It has been shepherded through that time not just within the House but within industry by one individual who I

Government Orders

want to pay a particular word of respect to today. That is my parliament secretary, the member for Hamilton West, who has worked diligently, was a member of the committee, the chairman of the standing committee on transport and who came forward with the recommendations. He was able to convince my predecessor that this was the route to go. He has stayed with this process and is now working very effectively as parliamentary secretary. All members of the House owe him a great vote of thanks, as I do as minister.

I hope some people will acknowledge that in the House. It is Friday, Mr. Speaker. I know it is early.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. David M. Collenette: The transportation community did show us where the cloth could be cut to make a better result for all. We owe them much gratitude for all their help with the bill.

Shortly after I became minister I did meet with port managers, the seaway and port users, ship owners and with pilotage interests. The message from all of these parties was the same. They wanted us to bring back the Canada Marine Act and to proceed as quickly possible to bring it through parliament. Although no one stakeholder got everything they wanted from the bill, they all agreed the compromises made represented a good balance of interests and that it is time to get on with implementing the improvements envisioned in the national marine policy.

We all know that marine transportation is vitally important to Canada's economic health. It makes an enormous contribution to our international trade, tourism and jobs. One of our government's central goals has been to strengthen Canada's economy and create a climate that supports job creation and investment.

To meet the objective in the marine transportation area, that is to make sure our marine system is efficient, competitive and operated according sound business practices, in this bill we are making important changes to Canada's port and seaway transportation institutions. By providing new governance and organizational arrangements through the bill, we will be able to bring decisions closer to the users who, when all is said and done, are the ones who must pay for marine facilities and services. In this way we forge stronger links to the communities that are served by and linked to our marine system.

As I said a moment ago, the journey to this point has been a long one, some would say an arduous one. In 1994 at the request of my predecessor, Transport Canada began a review of the management system for the marine industry and the regulatory regime. The following year the standing committee undertook the study of the marine sector under the leadership of the member for Hamilton West. A number of important recommendations emerged. Following the report, Transport Canada held regional meetings with shippers and industry and consulted with other key players in the marine sector. The result was the national marine policy that was adopted by the government in December 1995.

The policy is designed to bring a greater commercial discipline to the marine sector and to increase efficiency, to cut costs and to give communities more control over their ports. Also, it will allow the government to focus on its top priorities, safety, security and sustainability.

[*Translation*]

The purpose of the Canada Marine Act is to implement the national marine policy. This act was first introduced in June 1996, and it clearly reflects the objectives of that policy in many ways.

It defines the role of the federal government in relation to marine transportation. It establishes a fair collaborative framework for the management of commercial ports. It provides for the transfer of local and regional facilities to interested parties. It eliminates useless costs in the operation of ports, the seaway and the pilotage authorities.

• (1020)

New discussions were held with all stakeholders, and the Standing Committee on Transportation held hearings across the country when it conducted its review.

Based on the full range of observations gathered from interested parties during its review, the Standing Committee on Transportation proposed about one hundred changes, most of which were incorporated in the present bill. Also included are the amendments made by the House of Commons during its review of the former bill at the report stage.

As you know, Parliament was dissolved on April 27, 1997, before third reading of the bill in the Senate.

[*English*]

So we reintroduced the bill. When I talked with my critics about a quick passage through the House they were quite concerned that we bring the bill back as passed last spring in the House. We did that. I know that created a bit of controversy because there was some unfinished business that we have tried to tidy up in this round in the House.

We knew the marine system needed modernization. We knew that industry indicated this great support for the bill. So we were quite confident that with some flexibility and with some debate we could come to this stage of third reading reasonably quickly.

I would like to make mention here of a few key amendments that we have made during the consideration of the bill in this session. The first is the inclusion of Hamilton and North Fraser in the list of initial port authorities. I talked about that on Wednesday of this week when we did the report stage deliberations. Part of the problem there was there was unfinished business between the city of Hamilton and the harbour commissioners, unresolved issues that now look like there on the way to resolution. Therefore it only

Government Orders

made sense to bring the harbour commission in Hamilton into the fold and designate it as a CPA in this bill.

Similarly for North Fraser we thought about combining the two harbour commissions there into one port authority but there did not seem to be a consensus on that. Perhaps down the road under the new system there may be a move toward one port authority but for now we have included North Fraser as part of the schedule of those installations that should be designated as a CPA.

We also brought in an amendment to change board member qualifications for appointments by the three levels of government allowing for a wider breadth of experience in board composition.

On the issue of pilotage the legislation changes the completion date for a statutory review of pilotage issues to one year after the coming into force of the pilotage provisions.

A key feature of the bill which I cannot underscore too broadly is the creation of the Canada port authorities as an important new institutional model for management of our ports of national importance. From an efficiency and gains perspective we intend to free ports in the system from government bureaucracy and they are expected in return to be self-sufficient. I think that is a pretty good trade off.

A new port authority created under the auspices of this act would have the powers directly related to shipping, navigation, the transportation of goods and passengers and the handling of storage of all products. With government approval the port may also engage in other activities that support its port operations.

Port authority borrowing to support capital investments will be decided by private sector lenders base on the port authority stream of future revenues. The port authority will be able to pledge its own land and fixtures plus any fixtures on federal land that it manages as securities to support the borrowing. The authorities will be accountable through their annual reports and audits which are to be available to the public and general meetings which are to be open to the public.

Port authorities will also be subject to special examinations. These are combined performance reviews and audits and are required not less than every five years.

• (1025)

These are the kinds of reforms that the port communities have been asking for for many, many years and we are happy that we are now finally moving in that direction.

[Translation]

Human resources were a priority during development of the Canada Marine Act. We want to ensure that all employees affected

by these changes are treated fairly and that all applicable requirements of the Canada Labour Code are fully complied with.

Bill C-9 reflects our position that all marine facility employees presently under federal pension and benefit plans will be covered by similar substitute plans. Employees should not be penalized financially when leaving the public service plans.

The standing committee also emphasized the need to clarify the right of these marine facility employees to transfer their accumulated benefits into the plan they are joining with their new employer.

This was a concern for committee members from all parties in the House, and I am happy to announce that this was included in an amendment at the report stage. This is a good point.

This type of amendment demonstrates very clearly the constructive role of the committee review system, through which members can have input to enhance the bills referred to them.

[English]

The result is a bill that requires that marine employees leaving the federal plan under this policy be offered comparable benefits until such time as they and the new employer agree to change it. The bill also requires a new employer to set in place contribution rates no higher than the rates employees paid immediately before the transfer and to take all reasonable steps to negotiate a pension transfer agreement with Treasury Board.

Pension transfer agreements would allow benefits to continue to grow as service time accumulates with the new employer.

As I said in the House on Wednesday, these changes give us a bill that does the right thing, not only for our ports and the seaway but also for all of their employees. Now that the House is just about finished its work, we have in Bill C-9 a balanced package, one that gives Canada the right set of policies and the right set of institutions to link Canada and Canadians to the rest of the world.

The marine community wants this bill. It is very comprehensive and we should hasten it forward to the Senate to complete the legislative process.

I look forward to going to the other place and to working with my colleagues in that chamber to assure them of the objectives of the bill, to see what ideas they have and to work with them in a collaborative fashion to effect speedy passage in the Senate.

In conclusion, let us not forget the major achievement in this bill. The legislation meets the goals of the national marine policy and strikes a balance in how we manage our marine institutions and facilities. It complements the government's other transportation initiatives and is also an important element of the overall effort to prepare our transportation system for the next century.

However, and I have said it before and I will say it again, no matter what changes are made or how many services are commercialized, Transport Canada will continue to make safety and security of Canada's transportation system its first priority. The interest of Canadians and the Government of Canada will always be present in that particular area. However, under this bill we are giving the Canadian marine industry more flexibility in managing its own affairs in a commercial, efficient and effective manner.

I ask all members present to join with us on the government side to pass this bill so that we can complete the legislative process in the Senate, proclaim it early in the new year and get down to the business of giving Canada a terrific new vehicle to discharge marine policy as we move into the 21st century.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we all held our noses here. We voted for C-9 at report stage. We are going to repeat that exercise again today because most players in the industry have indicated that they want to get the show on the road, so to speak.

• (1030)

Almost everyone of course is happy to see the last of "Pork" Canada, and it has to be replaced by something.

It is truly a pity that not a single amendment proposed by opposition members in committee at the instigation of shipping companies, maritime associations, individual port corporations, stevedoring firms, unions or commodity shippers was accepted over the doctrine of Transport Canada bureaucrats. Surely all those amendments could not have been that bad. I simply do not understand what the minister meant this morning when he spoke kindly of our input in committee.

If nothing else, the exercise proved the futility of our committee system. Our committees, and I would have to say most especially the transport committee compared to others that I have sat on, are merely extensions of ministerial offices with government members dutifully lining up and saluting on cue. What a farce. Opposition members and government backbenchers are kept busy and kept out of trouble, and the illusion of sober deliberations is maintained.

The most poorly thought out section of the bill, and the one for which I have yet to hear a kind word from anyone outside government, is one which gives the government the right to collect a levy based on gross revenue from port authorities, a slice right off the top. The size of that levy under the terms of the legislation may be set quite capriciously by the minister. Different port authorities, because they have different financial circumstances, will have these gross levies set at different levels. Different ports are going to be treated differently.

Government Orders

Whatever happened to commonly accepted business principles? Whatever happened to fairness? It would have been very simple to set in the regulations a net levy which would have been paid by all the new port authorities irrespective of their basic financial situation. Because it would only have entered into their profits or would only have been taken away from their profits, it would not strangle a port which might be staggering under an extraordinarily heavy capital debt for example.

There are ports that are in the fortunate position of having made fairly major capital expenses while they were still creatures of the federal government so that the taxpayers from sea unto shining sea picked up the tab. They are going to be in hog heaven.

However, ports that have very heavy capital expenditures facing them that are going to have to be made after the formation of the new port authorities will then have to take on enormous debt for which they alone will be responsible. Yet they will be expected to pay off the top a levy on gross revenue.

Regardless of where they stand in competition with each other or in conflicts of interest with each other, I have yet to talk to one player in the industry who thinks that this is a good idea. The bureaucrats in Transport Canada think it is a good idea and the bureaucrats in Transport Canada get what they want in the transport committee and so we have a done deal.

I have a letter here from the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council. This is probably one of the biggest associations in Canada which is directly concerned with harbours, concerned with the movement of goods because it includes not only the port of Vancouver but it also includes the airport, the railway shippers and so on. The council really castigates this idea of forcing ports to pay off the top to the federal government. The federal government always has its hand in somebody's pocket. In this case it wants to put its hand into the pocket of an entity which it has created ostensibly to serve the public.

• (1035)

The Greater Vancouver Gateway Council mentions a few facts which I think should be taken into consideration in the House with respect to the competitiveness between Canadian ports and U.S. ports. In the case of these people it would be the port of Seattle.

There is much lower taxation in the U.S. In spite of the fact that there is much lower taxation, our federal government wants to slap an additional levy on the ports and make them pay on their gross revenue.

There is an ability in the U.S. to finance port development through the issuance of tax exempt bonds. Here in Canada the government is not even going to allow these new port authorities to mortgage or use as collateral the federal property which they will be administering.

Government Orders

The port authorities will be able to use only their own property or use the non-fixed equipment in the ports as collateral. Mostly they will have to hold out their hand, bend over to the financial institutions and say: "Please lend us some money. We will pay almost any rate of interest because that is the way it has to be. We do not have anything to back our loan". They not only do not have any physical means to back their loans, but one of the whole objects of the commercialization is to get the federal government out of the position where it has to take any responsibility for the port debts. These institutions which are ostensibly going to be independent are going to have the responsibility but they are not going to have authority.

Another thing which the gateway council mentions is that in the U.S. there are lower fees or no fees for government services such as dredging. It says there are no requirements to pay dividends or make special payments to shareholders. I have already mentioned that one. They are going to have to make a monstrous special payment to the federal government.

One thing the gateway council talks about but does not go into detail on is lower taxation. In the ports to the south, particularly Seattle and Tacoma, the port authorities actually have taxing powers, while our ports are paying taxes. Can you believe it? Government institutions that are supposed to be serving the public are going to be forced to pay taxes. This is bizarre. There is no place else in the civilized world I would say that has such a totally unprecedented way of beating up on their own government entities.

In this brave new world of port authorities, it is proposed that the boards of directors all be appointed with ministerial approval from nominees and that the minister in effect will have a veto power. Talk about patronage heaven. This is what we are supposed to be trying to get rid of when we get rid of "Pork Canada". It is the same old story, right back to the trough.

• (1040)

In addition the government has refused to consider proposed amendments which would provide for a more open system of appointing directors. It has also refused to consider proposals that would provide for greater accountability in the port authorities by addressing the problem of conflict of interest during privatization.

We all saw what happened during the privatization of NavCan. I do not have to continue beating that dog in this House. Everyone is aware of it. It was disgraceful.

Right now we have a port which is in the process of divestiture. We have a gross conflict of interest with lobbyists who used to be members of this honourable House. They are out flogging a deal on behalf of potential buyers who want to take over the port so they will have a fix on the only easily available means they have for shipping their product. This is not unprecedented but it is unheard of. It is the Liberal way.

Here we go again. The same amendments that were proposed to avoid conflicts during privatization would also have provided for more arm's length safeguards in the proposed five year audits. The audits are fine but let us have independent audits and not have the audits ultimately under the control of the minister.

I have mentioned another problem several times in this House and in committee. That is the problem of pilotage in particular on the St. Lawrence. Here is one case where all the stakeholders are not onside. All but one are on side. The one that is not on side is the pilotage monopoly.

The opposition to this monopoly goes right across the industry. It is not just the shipping associations. It is not just the shippers. It is not just the commodity producers in western Canada. It is not just the grain handling companies. Everybody wants to get rid of this except for those who benefit.

It is a tight little monopoly where people collect from \$80,000 to \$180,000 a year for nine months of work. They have all sorts of feather bedding provisions in their enabling legislation. They cannot be shaken off because it is so difficult under the terms of the act for masters of Canadian vessels, not foreign ships, I repeat Canadian vessels, who regularly ply our inland waters, who know them like the backs of their hands, to have themselves certified as pilots. It is virtually impossible. Somebody told me there are nine Canadian masters who have been certified to pilot their own vessels.

Nowadays when there are modern navigational aids like GPS, these experienced masters cannot write an examination to prove their competence, prove that they know the waters, show that they also have on their vessels the requisite GPS systems. They cannot get around this monopoly. It costs the Canadian grain farmer \$4 million in excess pilotage costs per annum in order to maintain this cosy little club.

• (1045)

There is provision in the legislation for a review of the situation. It is supposed to take place one year after the bill receives royal assent. I am not holding my breath that anything will come of it, but we will see how things work out. We are on the road.

Everybody made a lot of nice noises about the preservation of the pension rights of employees at the ports when they are either commercialized, as in the case of the port authorities, or divested.

I gather from reading the legislation—and I am fairly cognizant of it—that the employees of the bigger ports, the people who will be in the port authorities, will be reasonably well protected. However, if an employee works for a small port that will be divested, he is toast, absolute toast. There is nothing in the legislation to protect that person at all.

There are two classes of employees: those who work for the big guys and will continue to work for other big guys, and those who work for the small and rather vital ports in the hinterlands. Some of these port employees have 10 or 15 years of seniority and they are getting nothing. That is wrong, absolutely wrong.

This is fairly typical of what happens when bureaucracy runs amok. It is always the person with the smallest voice who gets the least attention.

I do not think there is any point in further belabouring this point. The deal is done. We have known for several weeks that nothing would be changed, nothing would be improved. We have been steamrolled, but because we do not want the shipping industry to be left in limbo with no legislation at all, we will support it.

I was talking to some shipping people last night. I told them I would vote for the bill. I thought I was going to get a punch in the head. Nevertheless we will do it. We have swallowed our pride. We have held our noses. We will support the legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak to Bill C-9 at third reading.

I thought I would approach my speech a little differently than we usually do in the House. Let me explain. As members know, in the British parliamentary system from which this Parliament sprang, the government introduces bills and the opposition naturally criticizes. Sometimes, when we meet with members of the public on the weekends they tell us that the opposition seems to be objecting for the sheer pleasure of it.

The new approach I wish to take is to talk about the points with which we agree in this bill. Then I will be able to mention the points with which we are not in agreement, and state our party's position on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, just before beginning, could you ask the chihuahua for Bourassa to do his barking outside the House? I am utterly fed up. It shows a lack of respect for the people who elected us. I am sick and tired of listening to him.

Mr. Denis Coderre: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

• (1050)

I will not sit still and allow someone of the ilk of that Bloc member to call me a dog. He has just insulted the members of the public who voted for me and I ask him to withdraw his words—

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The Chair was listening very attentively to the hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans. The Chair was also listening carefully to the rest

Government Orders

of the Chamber and did not hear the same words the hon. member heard.

However, I will pay more attention and if in my opinion any hon. member is obstreperous beyond the normal I will bring it to the attention of the House.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, you will look at the blues. I know you take your position in the Chair seriously. I did not call the hon. member for Bourassa a dog, I called him a chihuahua. There is a difference.

Some hon. members: Ha, ha.

Mr. Michel Guimond: A chihuahua is a small dog that yaps a lot but does not bite.

Some hon. members: Ha, ha.

Mr. Michel Guimond: I am pleased to see that the government whip has come back to keep order on that side of the House. I am trying to do the best I can as a parliamentarian.

I had started to talk about the points in this bill with which I agree, and it is very annoying to hear someone keep on yapping in the back.

I would like to correct some of the points mentioned by my colleague, the critic for the Reform Party, with respect to this bill. The Reform member seemed to be blaming the government for not holding public hearings at this stage of the new Bill C-9.

I will submit to you most humbly, and it is not my intention to annoy the government—the hon. parliamentary secretary knows that I am a highly critical parliamentarian and that when things are not going right, the parliamentary secretary is familiar with my good nature, of which you have just seen an example—you have seen that I am a peaceable fellow. However, when things do not suit me, I speak up for myself. But I also speak up when things do suit me.

In this case, the Government of Canada, the Liberal government, held very thorough public hearings in order to draft Bill C-9. Having been on the transport committee at that time, I can tell you that we visited 15 port communities, all of us on that committee. We visited the regions. We heard witnesses and were given briefs. We heard groups, corporations and ports people, who told us what they thought of the bill and what provisions they thought it should contain.

In addition, we held weeks of hearings in Ottawa. It cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, but we were exercising democracy. That is what is healthy about a democracy.

I would like to point out that, as Bloc Quebecois members, when we were elected in 1993, we wondered about our participation in parliamentary committees. We asked ourselves whether parliamentary committees served any purpose and changed anything, wheth-

S. O. 31

er the government had preconceived ideas and in any case, since governments are elected to govern, whether it would govern? As a party, we wondered whether we should sit on the parliamentary committees. Together we decided that we opposed the empty chair theory, that we would take our seat and that we would play an active role in committees. And so I and other colleagues toured 15 communities so people could speak out.

However, I really regret that Bill C-44 died on the Order Paper in the Senate, in the other House. This is of greater concern for democracy. It is unfortunate that we had to start all over following the election on June 2.

• (1055)

The marine industry asked us to. This is why we agreed with the government to proceed quickly. This is why we had second reading yesterday and why we will complete third reading this afternoon and perhaps vote next week before Parliament adjourns December 12, because Canada and Quebec's marine community has asked us to pass this bill.

What I wanted to say in this regard is that I find it deplorable that the other House killed Bill C-44, which had given rise to considerable consultation. It is unfortunate that it was killed by unelected persons.

The interesting thing about democracy in Canada and Quebec is that members like me and my colleagues from all parties are democratically elected by the people and when we are no longer needed at the end of our term, we are told, as we say back home "Off to the doghouse with you"—and I would not want you to think that I have the hon. member for Bourassa in mind when I say this; this is just a colloquialism—and another representative gets elected. That is the idea.

That is not how it works for the members in the other place: the senators. They are friends of the government, appointed either by the Liberals or by the Conservatives. We will recall the Conservatives. Brian Mulroney appointed Senator Roberge, who was the general manager of the Ritz Carleton because, when Mulroney travelled to Montreal, he stayed at the Ritz Carleton. He told the manager he was going to appoint him as a senator. The Liberals did the exact same thing. In addition to her pension as a former Quebec Liberal MNA, Senator Lise Bacon gets paid as a senator. That is what we find unfortunate.

I notice, Mr. Speaker, that you are about to interrupt me to proceed to oral questions.

It is unfortunate that Bill C-44 was killed by unelected persons. I take this opportunity to remind the House that they killed Bill C-44 in the last Parliament and, as a result, we had to start all over by introducing Bill C-9 now before us.

I would now like to indicate which provisions in Bill C-9 we agree with. First, we find it interesting that the government would

give a high level of autonomy to local port authorities. We cannot disagree with Bill C-9 bringing management closer to local communities—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but it is almost 11 a.m. and statements by members must now begin. The hon. member for Bruce—Grey.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I draw attention to and sing praises of the country's unsung heroes, the roughly 5.3 million Canadians who volunteer over one billion hours to voluntary organizations and community groups.

International Volunteer Day for Social and Economic Development is a time when the world pays tribute to exceptional people who give of their time and energy for the greater good.

These exceptional Canadians ask not what can be done for them but rather how they can help. For the cynics who scoff it off by asking what difference that makes, the answer is more than can ever be measured. As Henry David Thoreau once said, goodness is the only investment that never fails.

Whether their efforts are in public education, fund-raising or administration, whether they provide one on one care for seniors or young children who are victims of family violence, volunteers leave an indelible mark on the lives of needy citizens.

We as a nation are indebted to volunteers—

• (1100)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Blackstrap.

* * *

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Mr. Allan Kerpan (Blackstrap, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the debate over Canada's biggest tax grab, Bill C-2, the parliamentary secretary to the minister stated that if a young person contributed \$1 to the CPP fund they could expect a whopping return of \$1.80 after only 30 years of uncertainty. Wow.

If the young person had a buck to invest which, first of all, is unlikely because they are already dead broke from Liberal taxes, but if they did happen to find a rusty old loonie on the street they would have to consider where to invest it. Would they rather mail that loonie off to Ottawa to a plan that is already \$500 billion in

debt in the faint hope of \$1.80 return if they are really, really lucky or would they invest it themselves?

Even at 5% return on that investment that loonie would turn into at least \$4 in 30 years. That would be in a safe or secure bank or credit union where they could visit their investment any time they wanted to.

One does not have to be a brain surgeon to figure out which is a better bet.

* * *

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE OF OXFORD

Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we mourn the victims of the Montreal massacre, I would like to share a positive story about women in my riding.

The Women's Employment Resource Centre of Oxford County provides women with the assistance needed to re-enter the workforce. The majority of women who come to the centre for help are on social assistance. While the centre still receives some funding from Human Resources Development, it has established a dress making business to supplement its income.

The centre trains women as designers and sewers and with the help of a Hamilton entrepreneur markets the garments across Canada. Its niche market is fashions for the larger woman and its label "Celebrating Size" is the best seller in the catalogue.

I helped cut the ribbon to open its new retail outlet in Woodstock. The pride of the women in their achievement was evident in their faces. I am happy to see the Women's Employment Resource Centre contributing to the gain of 30,000 full time jobs for Canadian women this November.

* * *

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Paul Mercier (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on the eve of the eighth anniversary of the tragedy that occurred on December 6, 1989, at Montreal's École polytechnique, it is with sadness that we remember how 14 young women were killed by a mentally insane individual.

Quebec and the whole international community were shocked by the massacre. This painful tragedy triggered awareness right across the country. The ribbon I am wearing today is a symbol to remind men and women that we must all make a contribution to end violence against women.

We will forever remember Geneviève, Annie, Hélène, Barbara, Anne-Marie, Maude, Maryse, Annie, Sonia, Barbara, Anne-Marie, Michèle, Maryse and Nathalie.

S. O. 31

To the families and friends of these young women, and to all the other women who are victims of violence, we say that we share their sadness and admire their courage.

* * *

[English]

FOOD BANKS

Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Daily Bread Food Bank is the largest food bank in Canada. It is a non-profit, non-denominational, charitable organization working to eliminate hunger in the greater Toronto area. With 800 dedicated volunteers, Daily Bread is supported by donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and community groups. It receives no government funding.

One million, two hundred thousand meals are distributed per month to 170 food programs such as neighbourhood food banks, children's breakfast clubs, drop-in centres and hostels for the homeless. Thirty-seven per cent of those using food banks are children and 33% are women, many of whom are victims of family violence and breakdown.

Sixty-five per cent of the food bank resources come from the food industry, manufacturers, producers, wholesalers and farmers who donate surplus products.

I encourage all members in the House to open their offices and their cupboards to collect supplies and donations for the needy as we enter the holiday season ahead.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Saturday, December 6 is the eighth anniversary of the Montreal massacre where 14 women were murdered at l'École Polytechnique.

On this national day of remembrance and action on violence against women, we reflect on the issue and the impact it has had on the 14 young women, their families and the vast numbers of women in Canada and around the world who have endured acts of violence.

In addition to the Firearms Act and changes to the Criminal Code, the federal government has been working with all sectors of society to raise awareness and promote institutional change on issues related to violence against women and children.

● (1105)

All members of society, men and women, need to be part of the solution to end this cycle of fear, isolation and desperation that living with the spectre of violence brings to women.

Our society is one of the casualties if this is not eradicated. We must—

S. O. 31

The Speaker: The hon. member for Crowfoot.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on December 6, 1989, 14 innocent young women needlessly lost their lives in the bloodiest mass killing in Canadian history. Today I and my Reform colleagues, and I believe everyone in this House, express our condolences to the families that still, after eight years, mourn the loss of their loved ones and the huge potential they offered.

We live in a progressively violent world where the value of human life is quickly diminishing. The killing of Reena Virk is a sad reminder of young Canadians' growing tendency toward violence. Robert Latimer's sentence of two years, regardless of his motive, demeans the life of his daughter and the life of all Canadians.

The government should be doing everything within its power to deter and stop the senseless killings and violence against women and the most vulnerable members of society, our children and grandchildren. Yet this government brought in conditional sentencing that allows hundreds of violent offenders, including rapists, to walk free and it supports unescorted weekend passes for convicted pedophiles. This is a betrayal of the memories of the victims of the 1989 massacre and is reprehensible.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on December 6, seven years ago, Peter Gzowski commemorated the first anniversary of the Montreal massacre by documenting the horrendous violence and abuse being experienced on that day at that moment in different communities across Canada by women and girls. It was a chilling reminder that the murders of 14 young students were not an isolated incident but only one particularly shocking manifestation of a sickness that permeates our society.

Unlike the tragedy at l'École Polytechnique, most violence, stalking, sexual abuse and murder of women and girls are perpetrated by men who are supposed to love them.

Today we remember 14 young women whose spirit, vitality and intelligence are lost to us forever. But we owe it to their memories to dedicate our public service to eradicating the poison in our society that deprived them of life just because they were women, the violence that continues to rob women of the right to a safe, productive and happy life.

* * *

DIANE FRANCIS

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we live in a democracy where everyone has the right to

express his views, but when I read Diane Francis' paper in the *Financial Post* of December 2, she made me sad. It is fine if she chooses to be a federalist, but there are limits to saying absolutely anything in the name of Canada's supreme interest.

When somebody says that Lucien Bouchard's government supports acts and political groups that it publicly denounces, I ask myself how far she is ready to go in her soiling campaign against Quebec. We had Mao's China, Stalin's Russia and, according to Diane Francis, we now have Bouchard's Quebec.

Despite what she may think, she harms everyone in Quebec, including federalists. And the more I read English Canada's editorialists and columnists, the more I wonder whether disinformation and stalinisation of sovereignist leaders are now part of fundamental Canadian values. This is a pretty shameful thing.

* * *

[*Translation*]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Ahuntsic, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, we will remember the 14 young women who lost their lives eight years ago, at Montreal's École polytechnique.

Like all victims of crimes, these young women and their families did not ask to become involved in the legal system. This tragedy had a major bearing on several acts passed by our government, including Bill C-68 on firearms, Bill C-27 and Bill C-55, to name just a few.

[*English*]

This week federal-provincial-territorial meetings of justice ministers in Montreal demonstrate once again our desire to work together with our provincial counterparts to ensure that Canadian concerns on this issue and others are addressed.

I invite all my colleagues to light a candle tomorrow on the national day of remembrance and action on violence against women in memory of the 14 young women whose lives were so needlessly and violently taken away.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow 14 families will grieve the eighth anniversary of the tragedy of l'École Polytechnique. This government has been free with its rhetoric on protecting women and children, but how far have we actually come?

Last month 31 year old Tony Pitcher received a four month conditional sentence to be served at home for sexually assaulting a young girl over an extended period of time. He can go to his doctor, his dentist, his work and his counselling, all on his own.

• (1110)

Has anybody considered his victim? Has anybody considered the community? How does this sort of inappropriate sentencing do anything to denounce the crime and deter similar attacks?

This government's record on conditional sentencing is abysmal. Many of those opposite helped pass this into law in 1995. It was never restricted to non-violent offenders in spite of over two years of incident upon incident of violent attacks on women and children. Punishment to the offender? To be sent home.

In memory of all victims of violence, I call on this government to rectify this most serious mistake.

* * *

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we remember the massacre at École polytechnique. I want to point out that one of the victims, Nathalie Croteau, was a resident of Brossard, in my riding.

Since this tragic event, the federal government has taken many measures to tackle the scourge of violence, including an act to control firearms; amendments to the Criminal Code, including Bill C-27; an increase of some \$30 million per year in the budgets allocated to the funding of community projects dealing with crime prevention; and, as of 1997-98, and for a period of five years, the federal government will also allocate \$7 million annually to initiatives seeking to prevent family violence.

This is just a small sample of the measures being taken by the Government of Canada to eradicate this scourge. They are the result of close co-operation between a number of departments, including Justice Canada, Health Canada, and also Status of Women Canada.

While we must remember, it is also very important to act.

* * *

[English]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 8 years ago 14 women were killed at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal. I rise today to remember them and to remember other women in communities across the country who have lost their lives because of violence.

S. O. 31

As a result of a private member's bill from former NDP MP Dawn Black, all members of this House from all parties pledged their support for making December 6 a national day of remembrance on violence against women.

Yet this week we have seen macho, angry, confrontational behaviour in this House, the kind of behaviour that members of this House pledged to end, the kind of actions not suitable in this House or any other house in Canada.

I call on all members of this House to reflect on the lives lost in Montreal and renew their commitment to end all forms of violence.

* * *

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1991, members of the House of Commons agreed unanimously to set aside a national day to remind us of our collective duty to ensure that the right of women to a life free of any form of violence was respected.

On December 6, on the occasion of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, we recall the tragic fate of 14 young women who were assassinated in 1989 at the École polytechnique for the sole reason that they were women.

I wish to pay tribute to the courage and dignity of survivors of acts of violence and to praise the numerous defence groups, parents and friends, whose support is invaluable to the women who are victims of this terrible scourge.

We must work together to put a stop to any form of violence against women.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS

Mr. Mark Muike (West Nova, PC): Mr. Speaker, the government is in the process of putting the final touches on its proposed firearms registration system.

Bill C-68, in its regulation, will not accomplish the government's stated goal of reducing crime involving firearms. The national registration system, which places the onus on law-abiding gun owners, will not reduce crime, as those planning on committing crime will not register their guns.

It is estimated that more than \$500 million will be spent on the implementation of the government's gun control package despite

Oral Questions

the fact that serious questions exist about the effectiveness of mandatory registration. This large sum of money will be spent with little or no impact on violent crime.

The PC party believes that changes to the Young Offenders Act, introducing DNA legislation and toughening the Criminal Code pertaining to criminal use of firearms would be much more productive.

As we pause to reflect on the tragedy of the Montreal massacre, the government should start addressing the fundamental causes of violence.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we reflect and remember all women who have lost their lives in brutal acts of violence. December 6 marks the tragic day that 14 female students were senselessly killed at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal.

As a society we all have a role to play in preventing all acts of violence. Communities across Canada will mark this day as a national day of remembrance and action on violence against women.

On behalf of my colleagues in this House, I would like to commend the many excellent organizations in my constituency and across Canada that are working to eliminate violence against women. A lot has been done, but there is still a lot more to do.

* * *

● (1115)

TREVOR ANDREW

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, Trevor Andrew of Falmouth, Nova Scotia, in my riding of Kings Hants, recently captured first place and a \$50,000 U.S. cheque in a snowboarding competition in Stockholm, Sweden.

Mr. Andrew, who started skiing at age 9 and is now 18, has risen quickly in one of the world's fastest growing sports. He is a two time reigning Canadian champion and is a World Cup Champion.

As of November 5, he was ranked by the Federation International de Ski as third in the world. Mr. Andrew is also likely to be a competitor in the 1998 Winter Olympics where snowboarding will debut for the first time in an Olympic event.

We pay tribute today to Trevor Andrew, a passholder at Ski Martock in Windsor, Nova Scotia. Trevor is a pioneer in his sport and we extend every best wish to his family and to this outstanding Canadian and Nova Scotian who is providing exemplary representation for Canada around the world.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are fed up with the high taxes they pay. They are also fed up with the fact that their disposable income has gone down under this Liberal government.

Can the finance minister tell Canadians today when their taxes are going to come down?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, they have already come down. In fact, the Minister of Human Resources announced a week ago that the employment insurance premiums would be cut by \$1.4 billion. In the 1997 budget we brought taxes down by more than \$2 billion over three years, helping students and the physically disabled. At the same time, we put more money in the hands of those families with children.

The issue really is, why did the Reform Party oppose those reductions in taxes?

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a recent poll shows today that the Canadian public are not going to buy the arrogance of this Liberal government. The finance minister said he helped. Well, let's take a look; 86 months of unemployment rates above 9%, all time record bankruptcies in Canada, the worst record since the dirty thirties under this Liberal government.

I ask the finance minister again, when will the government give Canadians tax breaks?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member should have looked at this morning's news. He wants to talk about employment. The fact is that there were 34,000 new jobs created last month.

There are members on that side of the table who talked about one million jobs being created some time before the year 2000. I am glad to announce that since this government has taken office, over one million new jobs have been created.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I do not buy the finance minister's line and neither do Canadians. If he had read the news this morning, he would have found that Canadians clearly understand the relationship between high Liberal taxes and job creation in this country. Canadians know that high taxes kill jobs.

I will again ask the finance minister on behalf of all Canadians, when are we going to get the tax cuts that we want and need for this economy to grow?

Oral Questions

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that having to ask three questions strains this member's capacity.

The fact is that I have already answered both of those questions. We brought taxes down and the Reform Party opposed it. The Canadian economy has produced over a million new jobs, 34,000 last month. That is a record we are proud to stand behind.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, last night the Liberal grinch stole all the hope of Christmas cheer from Canadians. Late last night the Liberal government legislated the largest tax grab in Canadian history, a 73% jump in CPP payroll taxes. It will start the second that Canadians shout "Happy New Year."

Will one of the Liberal grins please explain to Canadians why their opinion is not important? Why will they not give them the tax relief we want for Christmas?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the increase in Canada pension plan premiums is money that is going into the investment savings of Canadians on the one hand and, on the other hand, to make up for the \$600 million liability.

• (1120)

If the hon. member is against a tax increase, would he please explain it to the member for Calgary—Nose Hill who was calling for a 25% increase in personal income taxes in order to make up that liability.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the prime minister, a leadership rival to the finance minister, said to Southam News that he does not care that Canadians want tax cuts. He is Father Christmas and he knows that balance is best for the good little Canadian boys and girls. How balanced is a \$10 billion cash grab in the dead of night?

Working Canadians are not naive little children. We want tax cuts and we want them now.

Why will the Prime Minister not stop playing the grinch, taking and taking from Canadians, and give us the tax relief we need?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about \$10 billion. We had better understand where the \$10 billion came from. The \$10 billion is out of the Reform Party program. It is a \$3 billion cut in equalization payments imposed on the citizens of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It is a \$3 billion cut in old age pensions. That comes directly out of the taxpayers' budget. It is a \$3.5 billion cut in equalization payments for health care and education.

That is the Reform Party program. That is where the \$10 billion comes from.

Why do they not stand up and defend the fact that they would—

[Translation]

CALGARY DECLARATION

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Yesterday, the Liberal party was happily endorsing the mock consultations to be carried out by the Reform Party in Quebec on the Calgary declaration. Outside the House, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs admitted that these consultations could lead to some confusion over the significance of the Calgary declaration.

Will the minister now admit that the Calgary declaration is completely confusing and divisive, because everyone wants a piece of the pie: the Reform Party, native groups, francophones outside Quebec and now even the Saskatchewan Party?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite interesting to see how worried the Bloc and the PQ government are about the Calgary declaration.

In fact, it shows just how many values Canadians, Quebecers and other Canadians have in common. The fact that they are able to agree on the basis of these values shows that we do not have to separate and that we should stay together.

Mr. Pierre Brien (Témiscamingue, BQ): Mr. Speaker, now that the minister has finally admitted to journalists the confusion surrounding the Calgary declaration, he is surely able to enlighten us about another confusing thing.

Will he admit that there is confusion between his position and that of Reformers, because, on the one hand, the minister wants to constitutionalize the unique character of Quebec, and, on the other, the Leader of the Reform Party is asking his members to oppose anything to do with a distinct society clause?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, our disagreement was about the notion of special status. The Calgary declaration makes it clear that this is not special status.

But, since we are talking about confusion, take the 1995 referendum question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: This question mentioned an agreement and 43% of voters did not know what agreement was being referred to. It was the agreement between the three parties, signed by those parties. Only 10% of voters were aware of the existence of the bill

Oral Questions

mentioned in the question and, finally, 49% of those who voted yes thought that Quebec would become sovereign—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean.

* * *

MILLENNIUM FUND

Mr. Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, here is further evidence of the great reform brought about by renewed federalism. This morning, we learned that the government was about to increase the millennium fund from one to three billion dollars. Three billion dollars in new duplication, another flagrant violation of Quebec's jurisdiction and another example of inefficiency.

Can the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs make the commitment that he will give Quebec its fair share of the three billion dollars, as the federal government has always done over the past 30 years with the student loans program?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have to wonder why the Bloc Québécois is opposed to the improvement of the level of education of all Canadians, including Quebecers.

Mr. Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, not even Mr. Trudeau would have wanted to interfere in areas under provincial jurisdiction. I wonder what throne speeches are for, because in 1996 the government said it would offer opting out provisions to the provinces if it interfered in their jurisdiction.

• (1125)

Is the minister refusing to tell us right now if, yes or no, the federal government will give to the Government of Quebec its fair share of the millennium fund, since the Government of Quebec, on its part, has already made known its intention to use this right?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the millennium fund is not interference in Quebec's jurisdiction. It is based on the same principle as the grants given by the Medical Research Council.

The Government of Quebec was never opposed to such grants and, again, I wonder why the Bloc Québécois is opposed to improving the level of education of Quebecers and of all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

BANKS

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Qu'Appelle, NDP): My question is for the Minister of Industry, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday in the House in response to the bank profits going up by \$7.4 billion, the minister in his generosity announced that there would be a calculator on the website so people can shop around for lower bank service charges.

My question for him this morning is very simple. How is this calculator on the website going to help the millions of Canadians who are living in poverty in this country?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid the hon. member is a little bit confused about the value of competition in our society.

He expresses concern about bank service charges. What does he want to do in his usual socialist way? He wants to intervene. He wants to nationalize the banks. I guess an NDP run bank would have lower service charges. I do not know.

I think competition is the way to drive down service charges. We are making sure that Canadians can easily and directly compare all the offerings that are there in banks so that they can find the ones that provide the best and cheapest service for them. That is how to drive down service charges.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Qu'Appelle, NDP): What a stupid answer, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: I know that hon. members on both sides would not want to get into accusations as to whether a question or an answer is less than intelligent. I think the hon. member knows that and he would want to respect the rules of the House in that regard and avoid that kind of language.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, if low income people in this country are having trouble paying \$8, or \$9 or \$12 service charges in a bank, can the minister please explain to us how they can afford a computer and how can they afford Internet fees of about \$15 or \$20 a month so they can shop around for lower bank service charges? How can they afford this if they cannot afford those services charges in the first place?

Could he please answer the question?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think this member is hopelessly confused about the variety of issues that he is trying to put on the table here.

In fact, I am sure if he is really concerned about those issues he will support the government's agenda to make Canada the most connected nation in the world. He will support the idea of making connectedness available in every rural, remote community in Canada by the end of next year. He will support the idea of ensuring that access to the information highway is available at the cheapest rates possible to all Canadians.

This is part of obtaining the kinds of information that are vital to every Canadian of whatever income class to function in the new economy.

FISHERIES

Mr. Bill Matthews (Burin—St. George's, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Thousands of Atlantic Canadian fishermen and fish plant workers are unemployed because they have no fish to catch or process. Can the minister confirm for the House that the foreign nations of Japan, Russia, France, Cuba and the Faroe Islands presently have fish quotas inside of our 200 mile limit given by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct in saying that we have serious problems on the east coast.

We have, however, a substantial number of stocks which are in good shape. For example, as he is well aware, in dollar terms the value of landings in Atlantic Canada last year was the second highest on record.

I would point out, however, with respect to the foreign fleets where there is no Canadian company or fishermen who wish to fish a particular stock, where that stock is available we do under international law allow foreign ships to come in.

The reason for this is very straightforward. If we did not do that, we would then not succeed with respect to the nose and tail of the Grand Banks where we are using international—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Burin—St. George's.

Mr. Bill Matthews (Burin—St. George's, PC): Mr. Speaker, the fish I am talking about are inside of Canada's 200 mile limit.

I want to ask the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans this. Why do these foreign nations have fish quotas of cod, red fish, squid, tuna, silver hake, argentine, turbot and capelin when our own fishermen do not have any fish to catch and our plant workers do not have any fish to process?

• (1130)

The minister knows that I have a request in to him for 5,000 tonnes of Argentine to put the people of Burgeo back to work. Japan and Russia today are catching 8,000 tonnes.

Why is the minister allowing foreigners to take the fish when we should be catching it and processing it?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the concern with respect to foreign fishing is perfectly legitimate. I point out, though, that current fishing within the 200 mile limit is probably below 4% of what it was in the eighties when his government was in power.

Oral Questions

I also point out that if we do not permit stocks that are not being utilized by Canadian fishers to be taken by fishermen of other nations, we will not be able to protect the cod and groundfish stocks on the nose and tail of the Grand Banks. We cannot take an international law when it is to our benefit, reject it when it is not, and expect other nations to agree with us.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have had 86 months of 9% unemployment and the highest income tax rates in the G-7. These might be just numbers to members opposite but back home in our ridings families are hurting.

Excessive Liberal taxes make it impossible for Canadians to compete in the global economy. They make it impossible for ordinary people to find employment. Canadians have spoken clearly.

Will the government stop tinkering with its agenda and give Canadians income tax relief now?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have already demonstrated how the government, prior to the deficit being eliminated, began the process of income tax reduction.

The Reform Party's official position is that there should be no income tax cuts until the deficit is eliminated. Is the hon. member now standing in the House and telling the country that they have flip flopped and that prior to the deficit being eliminated they agree with us that we should begin the process of income tax reduction?

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, according to the Liberals' own statements they have balanced the books and it is now time for personal income tax cuts. They have been raised \$12 billion since they took office in 1993. Average Canadian families have \$3,000 less disposable income now than they had in 1993.

When will minister stand and give Canadians income tax relief?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the wealth of Canadian households is up. It is up substantially since we have taken office.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Hon. Paul Martin: Those are the numbers. Hon. members may have some trouble understanding them. They are Statistics Canada numbers and the hon. member should look to them.

I am asking a question. Have Reformers flip flopped on their position? Does it now believe there should be income tax reduction prior to the deficit being eliminated? If so, why do they not have

Oral Questions

the courage to stand and tell the world that once again they have swallowed themselves whole?

* * *

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the secretary of state responsible for the status of women.

In Canada, more than 51% of women have been victims of physical assault as defined in the Criminal Code. The tragic events of the École polytechnique serve as a painful reminder of this sad reality. It is our duty to fight the societal trend toward greater tolerance of violence against women.

Will the government make a commitment to attaining the objective of zero tolerance of violence against women?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the hon. member across the way being very interested in this issue. It is a great commitment of the government to reduce violence against women.

First and foremost, the biggest tool we have used is gun control legislation. Second, we are setting up \$32 million for crime prevention initiatives that will be aimed at the prevention of crimes against women. Last year we added \$7 million to the already extensive budget we have to deal with violence against women, which will go to housing and other initiatives.

In spite of that, in laws we have done a great deal and intend to do far—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Longueuil.

[Translation]

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am anxious to see the secretary of state defending women instead of her government.

A Department of Justice report indicates that the measures adopted in 1993 against stalking have had no impact. Of the 630 cases studied, 474 ended up being dismissed.

Can the secretary of state and her government commit to follow up on the recommendations in this report?

[English]

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have strengthened certain legislation over the last two years, anti-stalking legislation being one of them.

• (1135)

We have also initiated and are working on a SIN de-linking project that would give women who are stalked a new identity so that they can start new lives and not be victims of stalking.

Status of Women Canada also assists grassroots organization to deal with the issue of violence against women.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is remembrance and action day on violence against women. One of the most disastrous actions the government has taken was to introduce conditional sentencing for those who commit violent offences against women and children.

Eric Robertson committed a sexual offence against 10 young women between the ages of 18 and 4 years of age and was given a conditional sentence.

When will the justice official present in the House today commit to immediately limiting conditional sentencing to non-violent offences?

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

Why does the hon. member on a day like today choose not to support gun legislation again? That is one measure that would help.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was in a standing committee when the RCMP and other expert officials testified that the gun registration system, as proposed, would be unreliable and therefore, if used, would be unsafe not only for the police but for the public as well.

Will the member limit conditional sentencing to non-violent offenders?

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ with the hon. member. I was in the committee and the RCMP did not say in the context of those discussions exactly what the member has said.

Hon. members should be supporting gun legislation, especially on a day that we are commemorating such violent deaths.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN CENTRE AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

In a memo he signed June 5, the previous Minister of Justice made a commitment to provide \$1 million a year over five years in funding for the Canadian centre against sexual abuse. Today, the centre is saying they will not be getting the promised funding.

Could the Minister of Justice say whether the government still intends to honour its commitment and give the centre the promised funding?

Oral Questions

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will answer next week.

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let us make sure we understand one another clearly. The former Minister of Justice signed a letter saying he would give the centre \$1 million over five years. The centre is expecting this money.

My question is very clear: Can the Minister of Justice tell us today if the government will honour the signature of a former Minister of Justice and give the centre the money? That is my question.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the House that the matter is under consideration and that no decision has yet been taken. If I understand correctly, no one has signed a commitment to this centre on behalf of the government. We have a number of similar requests, and the government will decide shortly.

* * *

[English]

SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, during the recent APEC summit in Vancouver the local Seaforth Highlanders were replaced as the guard of honour because some bureaucrat thought they did not look Canadian enough. That bureaucrat came from the prime minister's office, his own staffer, Jean Carl.

The Highlanders are one of Canada's proudest regiments. Will the prime minister explain to the House why the Highlanders are not Canadian enough, and will he apologize for his incredible insult to this fine regiment?

Mr. John Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to state clearly that the regiment came with the attire that was requested. However the regiment that did replace them was a Canadian regiment.

I would also like to state clearly that they performed well as they have done on many occasions throughout Canada.

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the parliamentary secretary is not aware of the situation.

I met Mr. Smokey Smith, one of only two living Victoria Cross recipients. I know the prime minister and many cabinet members have also met him. Smokey Smith is a proud Seaforth Highlander, still proud of his regiment, still proud of representing and fighting for Canada.

• (1140)

Will the prime minister apologize to Smokey and every other Seaforth Highlander who put their lives on the line in defence of freedom in this country?

Mr. John Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say clearly that Sergeant Smokey Smith is one of the great heroes of our time.

The fact is that he and all members of the Seaforth Highlanders, a great regiment on the west coast, performed well throughout Italy in the World War II and obtained many battle honours.

However the regiment that replaced the Highlanders was a regiment that was prepared to do this and was easily accessible.

* * *

[Translation]

BILINGUALISM

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The increase in bilingualism in Canada masks the fact that French is losing ground. In fact, the latest census showed a decrease in the number of unilingual francophones. Obviously, bilingualism is growing in Canada at the expense of the French speaking Canadians.

What will it take for the minister to acknowledge the facts and ask the Prime Minister to address this issue in co-operation with his counterparts of the mostly English speaking provinces?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I already told the hon. member that we are making every effort, in co-operation with all our counterparts, to ensure that the language of the minority is taught across Canada. Unfortunately, the only government that did not and will not take part in this process is the Government of Quebec.

That having been said, I find it very interesting that the hon. member would show this kind of interest in francophones outside Quebec when there is not a word about them in the Bloc Quebecois policy documents.

* * *

[English]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Bill Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, questions have been asked today about the problems of violence against women. If women had their financial independence we know that often they would not have to endure this suffering.

Would the Secretary of State for the Status of Women tell the House what the federal government is doing to pursue the equality of women in the workplace and what programs the government has put in place to provide them with help in pursuing their careers?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the hon. member

Oral Questions

indicated that violence against women was linked with women's economic independence and autonomy.

The government recognized this and moved forward in assisting women to achieve post-doctoral studies in the new millennium in which we will be looking at technology as a source of jobs for women that are sustainable. We have looked at EI benefits and maternity benefits that will allow women to have up to five years in which to take training and return to work.

More than anything, the Canada pension plan's sustainability will have the child rearing option which will recognize that women—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Peace River.

* * *

TRADE

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what we are getting for our billion dollars. We know that Canada is being asked for a billion dollars for the latest IMF bailout of Asian countries, but what are we getting in return?

Will the Japanese lower their 20% tariff on canola oil? How about the Koreans with their 13% tariff? What has the government done to demand tariff reduction against our products in those countries?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a very substantial restructuring will be taking place in Korea following the IMF negotiations with that country.

Canada is very much a part of the trading world. We are very much a part of Asia. We are also an important member of the G-7. When the G-7 puts its money on the line and at the same time when the countries in that part of the world with which we trade substantially do the same thing, it is incumbent upon Canada to support the world's trading system and countries that are having difficulty.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians will note that there was no answer in that little presentation. It is important to note that there will be more IMF bailouts for southeast Asia. Canada will be asked to contribute more.

What are we getting out of it? Are we not demanding some tariff reductions on high tariffs against Canadian products? A 30% devaluation in currency in many of those countries makes our

exports more expensive and we still have to face 20% tariffs. What is the government doing about it?

• (1145)

Mr. Julian Reed (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada participates with the International Monetary Fund whenever there is a problem. Because we are a trading nation, we feel that we have to do that.

The economies of countries come and go. They wax and wane. When the opportunity presents itself, Canada is there with the International Monetary Fund helping out.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

We are all aware that TAGS was created to train fishers but recently when DFO had the opportunity to offer employment to conduct a survey, not one TAGS recipient was hired. Why were there no TAGS recipients hired to conduct this survey when the type of work required was what TAGS trained them to do?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member has failed to point out is that the people conducting the sentinel fisheries are in fact fishermen in the Atlantic fishery.

Obviously we could have shifted it from one group to another. That would be possible. But then of course the other group would complain about the group which we shifted it to.

It is essentially because there are relatively few sentinel fisheries which take place that inevitably there will be some people who feel they should have it instead of the people involved.

I can assure the hon. member that they are conducted by competent fishermen. The information gathered is extremely important to monitor the stocks of fish in the north Atlantic and we intend to continue with the sentinel fisheries.

Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is in direct conflict with what the officials in DFO said. They said that there was not enough time.

This shows the real reason why so many people on TAGS have failed to be retrained. It is because the government has run TAGS incompetently.

Once again, when is the government going to accept that TAGS failed because of Liberal mismanagement and when will it create a real retraining program for the fishers of eastern Canada?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. member's question is that we should give up on efforts with respect to the fishery and train people for something else. I would be very interested to see if she adopts that position, goes back to her own constituents and says, "There is no hope for the fishery. You will have to look for something else".

The TAGS program was put in place four years ago because we believed that it was important to have income support for people who, through no fault of their own, found themselves unable to fish. She may not agree but we felt it was important to support those people, help those people, and we will continue to do so.

* * *

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

The minister is surely aware of the controversy which he has created among the special care home operators in Newfoundland. The minister has given a grant of half a million dollars to a Liberal supporter to commence a new home even though existing operators have a high vacancy rate in the province of Newfoundland.

Why would the minister's department give a grant of \$500,000 in such a highly competitive industry with a vacancy rate when the businesses concerned do not even have—

The Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Human Resources Development.

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the project to which the hon. member is referring was assessed by the provincial government, as well as by Department of Human Resources Development officials. They deemed that it would be very helpful for the population in that area. It was done through a competitive process as well.

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC): Mr. Speaker, given the high degree of controversy surrounding this piece of patronage, would the minister agree to put this grant on hold until a full investigation is held and until the industry itself is consulted fully on the matter?

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a full investigation has already been made. It was made by the province and by the Department of Human Resources Development. The process was quite transparent.

Oral Questions

HOUSING

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the areas in which Canadians have world acknowledged expertise is energy efficient housing. With the international community gathered in Kyoto to develop an international agreement on greenhouse gas emissions, mostly caused by wasted energy, what is the government doing to increase the export of Canadian housing technology to world markets?

• (1150)

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that this week CMHC announced the creation of the Canadian Housing Export Centre. The centre will help Canadians to export Canadian housing technology products. Naturally as we know, exports create jobs and that is the priority of this government.

* * *

TOBACCO ACT

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Wanuskewin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the supposed Minister of Health, a former lawyer, has become pretty good at dragging his government into the law courts and paying out lots of money to lawyers for the Airbus boondoggle, for the obstruction of Krever, in the future for stonewalling hepatitis C victims.

If the government exempts auto racing in the Tobacco Act, other groups will be sprinting to the courts. He knows that. What possible defence will this government offer at that time in court for exempting one event but not others?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the close attention the hon. member pays to the activities of lawyers, I know he will be aware that this government is in court at the moment vigorously defending the Tobacco Act.

The Tobacco Act is under attack by tobacco companies. They claim it is unconstitutional. We say it is entirely valid. The court will decide. One thing is clear. The Tobacco Act puts Canada in a position of leadership throughout the world for vigorous and effective steps to reduce the incidence of tobacco use among its citizens and of that we are very proud.

* * *

[Translation]

ARMS SALES

Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Oral Questions

Yesterday, the minister stated in this House that Canada had, and I quote:

[English]

“The toughest export controls in arms of any country in the western world”.

[Translation]

If these controls are so tough, how can the minister explain that arms sales to Indonesia totalling approximately \$2 billion have been authorized when Amnesty International reports that, in East Timor, a number of people have been killed under dubious circumstances by security forces?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, under the export controls that we exercise, we do a careful evaluation as to any piece of article or artefact, determining whether it could be used for involvement in civil wars, involvement in the suppression of civil society. If it is simply a matter of a piece of equipment that could be a rubber boot or a parachute or some kind of electronic device for a ship, then clearly it is not eligible. It is for defensive purposes, not offensive purposes.

I would be very happy to offer the hon. member a full briefing on the export and import control act so he understands how it works.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

The minister will be aware that the failure to achieve financial targets in 1994 and 1995 has resulted in some last minute decisions to cut back. It is the government's version of the last minute club and it is civilians that are getting clubbed.

Why will the minister not confirm today that 3,800 additional positions in clerical, communications, logistics and engineering categories are being chopped at camps Gagetown, Borden, Wainwright, Shilo and Montreal?

Mr. John Richardson (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I cannot account for the numbers, but we are going through a restructure in the Canadian forces as part of our pull down in our numbers. We are concentrating our bases in a manner that will become more efficient and allow us to spend our tax dollars in a more wise fashion.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

As a member of the government in 1993 that did have the moral courage to order helicopters, only to see the Liberal government default on that order, I was really gratified today by the editorial in the *Globe and Mail* entitled “Here comes a chopper to chop off

your head”. It goes on to say that this government does not have the moral courage to order helicopters. It says that the EH-101 is undoubtedly the best helicopter but because it is politically undesirable, the government will not order it.

Will the minister prove the *Globe and Mail* wrong today, prove that the government does have the moral courage to buy helicopters and announce today to Canadians that it is going to order new helicopters before more Sea Kings crash?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are four companies that proposed helicopters. The government is evaluating the process. We are taking everything into consideration. Our purpose is to make sure that the helicopters we are going to buy are the best value for Canadian taxpayers. As soon as the decision is made, we will announce it.

Maybe the member should start not believing whatever is in the paper.

* * *

● (1155)

CHILD POVERTY

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Campaign 2000 reported last week that the number of children living in poverty is increasing. Today Parliament was challenged to end child hunger.

My question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development. Why is it that in a country as wealthy as Canada we have too many children living in poverty and going to school hungry?

Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question on the very important topic of child poverty.

Ensuring that children have a strong start in life is critical to Canada's future. The national child benefit is and remains a top priority for our government. The 1997 budget targeted and reflected our commitment with an \$850 million down payment for poor children in Canada. There is another \$850 million to come in this Parliament.

With our provincial partners we are creating more than a program but a comprehensive strategy to improve the well-being of Canadian children, which is supported by Campaign 2000. It is a proven method.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Allan Kerpan (Blackstrap, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this week the auditor general revealed to Canadians something they already knew. He stated that the Immigration and Refugee Board was a

slow, bureaucratic and patronage-ridden board. He said it takes up to two and a half years to get a refugee claim settled.

Does this government really think two and a half years is an acceptable time to settle a claim? A lot of Canadians want to know what the government is going to do about it.

Ms. Maria Minna (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcomed the auditor general's report. In fact, the auditor general's views and recommendations fit very well with what the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is already doing. The minister has appointed a task force to do a complete legislative review to deal with the process and to enhance our system.

The auditor general has also said very clearly that he did not want to see a patchwork situation because it is a complex issue. Some of the recommendations that the auditor general made are already being implemented by the department.

* * *

[Translation]

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie.

According to the accepted standard, industrialized countries must allocate a minimum of 0.7% of their gross national product to official development assistance. However, in 1997-98, the federal government will not even allocate 0.3% of its GNP to ODA.

Since additional budget cuts of \$159 million are anticipated in 1998, are we to understand that, at the rate things are going, the minister's target for development assistance will be 0.0% by the year 2000?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we mentioned on several occasions, our goal is to go back to the standard of 0.7% of the gross national product. Unfortunately, CIDA also had to do its share in the fight against the deficit.

Now that the situation is much improved, I am confident that, before too long, we can aim again for that standard.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL REVENUE

Ms. Louise Hardy (Yukon, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

Oral Questions

Over the last three years Yukon people have been audited by Revenue Canada in record numbers. The target of this massive audit is the northern residence deduction and the northern travel deduction. These deductions symbolize the federal government's responsibility in recognizing and helping to buffer the higher cost of living in the north.

Could the minister explain why the government is spending millions of dollars auditing low income northern Canadians without making any attempt to control tax abuses and loopholes enjoyed by high income Canadians and profitable corporations?

Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Revenue is not in the House because of official business. I will refer the question to the minister. I am sure that when the minister comes back to the House the appropriate answer will be given to the member.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance who should have a simple response. No rhetoric, please.

We know that Canada has the highest rate of personal income tax in the G-7.

• (1200)

Today's polls show that Canadians want fewer taxes. Quebec Liberals want to retire the debt, but cabinet members want to spend, spend, spend. A simple answer, please. Who is the Minister of Finance, the Santa Claus of finance, listening to, Canadians, his cabinet colleagues or the Liberals in Quebec?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the prime minister, cabinet, caucus, the Liberal Party, we listen to Canadians?

* * *

[Translation]

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE IN CANADA

The Deputy Chairman: I have to honour to table in the House, in both official languages, the second edition of the book entitled *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, written by Joseph Maingot, the former Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel in the House of Commons.

[English]

I am sure hon. members will join me in congratulating Mr. Maingot, who is in the gallery today, for this work which will be of great value to parliamentarians and to all those interested in Parliament and our national institutions.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Privilege

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

MOTION FOR PAPERS

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in order to help the government with the question I asked earlier during the oral question period, I would like to have the unanimous consent of the House to table in this House the ministerial directives and especially the letter signed in June 1997 by the former justice minister, who granted \$1 million over five years to the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres.

I have here the letter signed by the minister. I ask the unanimous consent of this House to table it.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Berthier—Montcalm have the unanimous consent of the House to table that document?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: There is no unanimous consent.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Like my colleague for Berthier—Montcalm, I ask the unanimous consent of the House to table for all the other parties a part of the Bloc Québécois' complete electoral platform where we deal with the francophone and Acadian communities, since we have been accused over the past several days in this House of not having mentioned them.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent—

Some hon. members: No.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay: I did not even get to finish.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member must sit down when the speaker rises. I am sorry, but there is obviously not unanimous consent in the House for the hon. member to table her document.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay: They are obviously afraid of the truth.

An hon. member: No means no.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. whip for the Bloc Québécois has a point of order.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, like my colleagues have just done, I would like to ask the unanimous consent of this House to table, and I imagine that this time the Liberal Party will agree, a passage from the Liberal Party's red book dealing with francophone communities in Canada, and which leaves very much to be desired—

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I think that it is obvious that today there is not much consent in the House to table many documents. Perhaps we can stop now making points of order.

I believe that the Chair has a notice on a matter of privilege.

* * *

[English]

PRIVILEGE

SECURITY

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I gave notice of a question of privilege as it pertains to the physical safety of members of this House.

We had an incident that occurred in this House yesterday.

An hon. member: It is closed.

• (1205)

Mr. Andrew Telegdi: The issue is not closed.

Mr. Speaker, if you could perhaps have the Reform Party follow its law and order platform and respect the—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member has a question of privilege I wish he would state it and never mind the interjections that sometimes happen. I am willing to hear his question of privilege but I would ask him to state it promptly.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi: Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege can be found under Beauchesne's citation 99 which will be helpful to you pertaining to the safety of members of this House. Another place you can find it is in Maingot, page 196. Another reference is in the Criminal Code pertaining to the issue of assault and threatening. Mr. Speaker, I would very much like to have you and your brother Speakers review those sections.

The issue in question is can we have threats of physical assault take place in this Chamber which are contrary not only to the codes mentioned but contrary to the Constitution of this country.

The issue at stake is can a member rise in his place and not be subjected to physical threats and violence.

The incident yesterday was not videotaped like the incident that was videotaped on February 4. Before the ruling came down on that particular incident Mr. Speaker gave assurances to this House that all the facts were going to be reviewed and the videotape was going to be reviewed but the whole issue as it pertained to the threat of physical violence, to the threat of assault, was not addressed.

If we are going to go about doing our business in this Chamber, it is incumbent on the Chair to ensure the safety of the members of this House and in cases where we have repeat offenders, it is something that this House cannot and should not tolerate. This House is based on representation and every member of this House

Privilege

should have the right to stand up and speak without having to worry about the physical well-being of his or her person.

That is my point of privilege and I expect Mr. Speaker to come back with a ruling on it, looking particularly at the issue of threatening as it is defined by the Criminal Code and assault as it is defined by the Criminal Code.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that the Speaker in the chair yesterday when this was dealt with said the matter is closed. I remember that distinctly.

Furthermore the member from the Reform Party who was involved is not here, nor is the person in the Conservative Party who was involved. I really think it is ludicrous to carry on with this and I submit that.

Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was in the House yesterday when the Speaker spoke and I want to disagree entirely with the remarks by the member for Elk Island.

What I heard the Speaker say yesterday was that the matter was closed for today but that he intended to review the tape and the blues of the remarks passed between the two combatants, as it were, in this case and that he was going to come back with a ruling.

This case is far from closed and should not be closed. But we will await the ruling of the Speaker on this.

I want to associate myself with the remarks from the Liberal colleague opposite.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to inform the House that I was present at the time of the disgraceful incident yesterday afternoon. I also understand that our Speaker has not made a definitive ruling on it. He has said that he would read the blues, view the videotapes, and then make his ruling.

It will also be far easier to make other appropriate comments when the members for Sherbrooke and Okanagan—Shuswap are present. I would, however, like to see you rule that the matter is not fully closed.

• (1210)

[*English*]

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments on this question of privilege. I do regard it as a serious matter. I understand the Speaker is considering this matter. In his consideration I hope it will not be simply regarded as a matter of order in the House.

What appears to have occurred yesterday was a series of acts and words that I believe amounted to intimidation of a member while the member spoke. From my point of view and respectfully on the

Richter scale that is quite a bit higher than a matter of simple order. It affects the right of free speech for all of us in this House. What occurred yesterday may have crossed the threshold into the impairing of free speech. If the member who had the floor at the time perceived intimidation—I had an opportunity to review his words and he did use the word intimidation—and if there was intimidation, then it was perceived as such. Setting aside completely any reference to the Criminal Code definitions, we have in this House a standard of conduct which we must uphold ourselves.

I refer the Speaker to an incident that occurred in the 34th Parliament in which a member impaired the movement of the Sergeant at Arms who was carrying the Mace. The member was asked to account for that at the Bar. Depending on how the Chair deals with this case, I would like the Chair to consider that as an option to deal with this issue once and for all so we do not have any repeated incidents of this kind.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, to give further clarification, I will read from *Hansard*. The Speaker said: “From what I have heard now I am not sure whether we have a point of privilege. What I will undertake to do is I will look at the blues and I will look at what was on the tape. If it is necessary, I will come back to the House”. That was the ruling. At the end of that he said: “This point is closed”.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think you have no choice but to shut this down and we will await the return of the Speaker after he has done what he said he will do.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair is concerned that we are getting into a bit of a debate here. I have heard some points of view on the issue. I would like a few moments to consult and then I will say something to the House.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, this is not a trivial issue. This is a very serious issue, especially for those of us who sit here. The member in question put in writing: “I do consider violence appropriate sometimes”. He put that in writing to a women’s organization and he even recommended that perhaps we should consider—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Deputy Speaker: The issue raised by the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo dealt with the safety of members of this House in the course of their participation in the proceedings of the House. There was some suggestion on his part that members should not feel threatened by other persons in the course of their work in debate in this Chamber.

There is no question that the hon. member has raised a point that involves a matter of concern to the House and to all members and certainly to the Chair. In that sense it is a very serious issue. However, the Chair is mindful of the fact that in the course of the work of the Chamber there is a security arrangement in place for this House. The Sergeant at Arms is sitting right here in the House

Privilege

and is able to assist if there is serious disorder in this House and is indeed here for that purpose, among others.

I know hon. members have considerable confidence in the Sergeant at Arms and in his ability to exercise the necessary restraint on those who might at some point get carried away. He has legions of people able to assist him who could come here at a moment's notice should that be necessary.

From the point of view of the protection of members of this House, the Chair is very well aware of the need for that and has made arrangements. There is an organization to assist the House should that necessity arise.

• (1215)

I think the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo in raising his point of order has raised a concern. I want to assure him of the seriousness with which the Chair regards the issue of the safety of hon. members. This issue is certainly one that is constantly in the mind of the Chair and will continue to remain there and in the mind of the Sergeant-at-Arms who is doing his duty here in this House.

I do not think there is a question of privilege that has been raised today by the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo that cannot be answered by the security arrangements in place in this Chamber.

With respect to the incident yesterday, his Honour, the Speaker, has taken the matter under advisement, as the hon. member for Elk Island has so ably pointed out to us. The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole, who was here at the time, indicated that as far as he was concerned the matter was not closed for certain purposes and that he also would review the matter with the Speaker.

I have no doubt that the Speaker, in considering the blues and the tapes that he will be looking at in this case, will consider the remarks made by hon. members today in the House. I will certainly draw those to his attention. However, I do not think it is necessary to go on with this any further. I believe that the safety of all hon. members is protected by the Chair and will continue to be protected by the Chair. I trust we can close the matter for today.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, without wishing to express my opinion directly on the matter, since you have just made a ruling, I would nevertheless like to raise a point in this House and to state that I greatly appreciate the fact that the Chair had the delicacy to hear the points of view of colleagues here, because yesterday the hon. members did not have that opportunity.

The Chair did, of course, indicate to this House its intention to review the blues and look at the videotapes, but the problem is that it will probably not be possible, using the blues or the tapes, to see or hear what was going on in the House at that point. That is why it is important to be able to hear from colleagues who were present at that particular time, and perhaps to appeal to all colleagues to exercise restraint and common sense and to respect the dignity of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that I am concerned by the fact that we have twice, in the space of as many days, seen colleagues involved in deplorable incidents which, in my opinion, injure the dignity of this House and constitute contempt of the institution.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair has heard the words of the hon. whip of the Bloc Québécois and I heard all the members who spoke today.

[*English*]

I know that the tapes do not always disclose everything, but I think the hon. member must be aware that there is a presiding officer in the House at all times and that the Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole House was here and saw the incidents as they occurred. I am sure that there were other hon. members who were here and saw what happened.

[*Translation*]

All members have the opportunity to speak with the Chair to explain what they saw and what they heard. I am sure that, if the Chair requires information from other members in preparing the ruling, it can be contacted.

For the time being, I think the subject is closed. I have indicated that there will no question of privilege today on members here being in danger. We have a system in place to ensure members are protected and it will remain in place.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I would like to add something.

The Deputy Speaker: If it is on this point, I do not want to continue the debate. We have spent nearly 20 minutes on the subject.

The whip of the Bloc Québécois has the floor, if it is on another matter.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to make sure I am understood.

What I have to say does not concern the matter of safety raised by our colleague. I wanted simply to express my concern regarding respect for the House of Commons and call on the goodwill of all my colleagues here in respecting the dignity of this institution.

• (1220)

The Deputy Speaker: I appreciate the words of the hon. member in that regard. I think all members want to protect the reputation of this House, and we will continue to work to that end. I thank the hon. member.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 12 petitions.

* * *

NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Hon. Hedy Fry (Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on December 6 Canadians across this country will join in marking our National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

It is a day of mourning for the 14 young women who tragically lost their lives in 1989, specifically because they were women. It is a day to reflect on the many women who continue to live and die in the shadow of violence.

More than one-third of Canadian women are the victims of sexual assault. One out of two have experienced physical or sexual violence as defined by the Criminal Code.

Systemic violence against women is a fundamental abuse of power. It is a violation of human rights. It is a cause and consequence of women's inequality.

For years women's organizations have worked to bring this issue into the public domain. Violence against women was high on the agenda of the recent federal, provincial and territorial ministers of status of women.

[Translation]

But the tragic turn of events in Montreal's École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989 galvanized a nation into action.

In the eight years since, we have collectively pursued a multifaceted strategy to end violence. A strategy that is founded on acknowledgement, support and prevention.

[English]

We have made some progress. Gun control legislation was a major initiative. One woman is killed with a firearm every six days in a private residence by a family member or close friend.

Routine Proceedings

Anti-stalking legislation, peace bonds, DNA evidence, denial of parole to known sex offenders and an additional \$7 million last year to the substantial sums spent by different federal departments are examples of the initiatives taken. As well, Status of Women Canada fund several holistic and community based violence prevention initiatives.

The violence against women continues and it is systemic. I applaud the YWCA distribution of the rose button on December 6 to promote anti-violence work in our community.

I am encouraged by the growing support from the private sector on this issue. I am inspired by the many commemorations across this country such as this year's unveiling of the Marker of Change Monument in B.C.

On this national day of remembrance I challenge Canadians to use our collective will to make Canada a safer place for our mothers, our sisters and our daughters.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Reform Party I would like to say that Saturday, December 6, Canadians across our land will join in the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This day came into being after the senseless murder of 14 young women in Montreal's École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989.

Since that fateful day, efforts have been pursued to deal with violence against women but they have been less than successful. The violence continues.

It takes many forms, not only physical but also sexual and psychological. What is more, violence affects women but it also affects men and it affects children. In my experience working in the emergency department patching up these battered people, I cannot help but think how tragic it is that we have not done more to prevent the situation from continuing to occur.

If we are to do this, we have to rethink our position on violence. We need to recognize that violence affects both genders. It affects men and women, the young and the old, the rich and the poor. In other words, violence is a problem of society and affects us all, regardless of our gender. We need only remember the tragic situation at Maple Leaf Gardens this past year.

We also need to implement judicial initiatives to strengthen anti-stalking laws, a strong DNA data bank, strengthen penalties against violent offenders and keep those who are a danger to others in society behind bars.

We also need to prevent these tragedies from occurring. This means early intervention and dealing with children in the first eight years of life to prevent situations so these people do not develop the fractured psyches which lead them to abuse other people in heinous ways. It is essential that this occur if we are to do justice to the memory of the 14 innocent women who died so senselessly in 1989.

Routine Proceedings

• (1225)

We have to come together to implement initiatives which work. Let us make a commitment today to honour the death of those women and the deaths, maiming and tragedies of people who are victims of violence across this land. We must act and we must do it today.

We will not forget. We must not forget. We must act.

[Translation]

Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I must tell you how profoundly affected I am by these tragic events. Let me remind the House that the women we are taking about today are from my generation.

I thank the hon. secretary of state for her poignant statement. It is reassuring to see that the government feels concerned. In fact, I would like to see the hon. secretary of state rise in this House more often to represent the interests of women.

I would like the parents and friends of the victims at the École Polytechnique and all the other victims of violence to know that, on this National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, our warmest thoughts are with them.

This day is more than a day to remember the victims, it is a day of action. I urge each and every one of you to talk about violence against women, denounce it and help ensure that society will no longer tolerate it. There must be zero tolerance for violence against women.

My colleague mentioned earlier the progress made in the fight against violence. While I agree there has been some progress, much remains to be done. Until all women can live in total safety, the fight must go on.

My hon. colleague talked about progress and about the measures taken by her government. Yet I do not remember hearing anything about concrete measures. She mentioned an additional \$7 million to fund family violence prevention initiatives, but she failed to mention that this amount is divided among seven departments. If we make the calculation, we see that this is not nearly enough. She mentioned anti-stalking legislation but failed to mention that enforcement is lacking and that the judicial system does not even have the resources required to deal with these cases with sensitivity and efficiency.

All this to say that there is still a long way to go. Actions to oppose violence against women must be taken on a daily basis. More importantly, the tragedy of violence transcends not only generations but gender. It is no longer incumbent on women and women's groups alone to act; all of us, women and men of all generations, must join forces to eradicate the scourge of violence against women.

[English]

Ms. Louise Hardy (Yukon, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to speak about this measure today. I remember where I was when the Montreal massacre occurred and I remember the devastation I felt. It was the same devastation I felt at the murders of Susan Klassen, Miranda Peters and, indeed, week after week, not only women but children who were murdered at the hands of those they trusted and loved.

This speaks to the depth of the problem.

The violence we are facing is structural. It is so deeply rooted that, in fact, in our justice system the defence of provocation is often used to excuse spousal violence, saying that an alleged insult is enough to provoke and excuse an angry murder of a wife by her husband.

When our government spends \$50 million on APEC, inviting representatives from countries with gross human rights abuses, and only \$200,000 to support women's groups or indigenous people's groups which fight for human rights and the safety of women in their communities, we have a contradiction in what we say and what we do.

The problem is so deeply rooted that in the last week there have been three incidents of violence and threats within this very House. A member of the Liberal Party challenged a female member of the New Democrats to step outside the Chamber.

If we really want to change the situation, we have to set an example here. We have to set it in our policies.

In our society women face poverty, less pay, physical abuse, sexual abuse and even murder, and they face it on a daily basis. To change this we must recognize women's massive role in unpaid labour and provide solid public pensions for those who stay at home to raise their children. We must recognize that that prevents violence.

We need pay equity. We need to make sure that wealth is fairly distributed.

• (1230)

We need to base our decisions on the well-being of families, on women, on our sisters and on our children rather than on the immoral whims of an open market.

Mr. Mark Muise (West Nova, PC): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Yukon has just stated, many Canadians will never forget what they were doing on December 6, 1989. It was a time marked with such sorrow and amazement that such a tragic event could happen, much less here in Canada.

As members all know, violence against women is all too common, but it unfortunately took such a tragedy to open our eyes to its extent. As other members have said in this House, it is truly the event that galvanized this country and the government into action.

On behalf of my party, I would like to extend our thoughts and our prayers to the families and the victims of the Montreal École Polytechnique as well as to all those who are affected by violence against women.

I agree that we have made progress in the eradication of violence against women but so much more needs to be done. As I said in a statement earlier, I do not agree that the current gun control legislation will do anything to prevent such a terrible crime from happening again.

[Translation]

Eliminating violence is an issue of great concern to us all, since each woman is someone's daughter, sister or mother. It is somewhat appropriate that the three most important women in my life, namely my wife and two daughters, are sitting in the gallery today. On their behalf, and on behalf of my party, I pledge to work with the government to make Canada a safer place for all Canadian women and men.

* * *

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NEWFOUNDLAND SCHOOLS

Mr. Gerry Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the orders of reference which were adopted by the House of Commons on October 28, 1997 and by the other place on November 5, 1997, the special joint committee has considered the subject matter related to the proposed resolution respecting a proposed amendment to term 17 of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada concerning the Newfoundland school system.

It adopted its report on December 3, 1997 in which the committee recommends that both Houses of Parliament adopt the resolution to amend term 17. I have the honour to table this report in both official languages.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to reply to the tabling of the report on the term 17 amendment.

On behalf of the official opposition party, I want to say we have attached to this report a dissenting report outlining our concerns. It must be emphasized that the Reform Party of Canada in no way wishes to impede the reform and improvement of any institution in a federal or provincial sphere. Rather, we encourage and support such efforts.

However, it has been made abundantly clear through the course of the joint other place and House special committee meetings that at least one of the minority groups, the Pentecostals, is not in

Routine Proceedings

favour of having their 1987 constitutionally entrenched minority rights extinguished by the majority.

It is this matter that we find troubling. We express our concerns that it may be precedent setting. Canada's beginnings and its future is due to its wonderful multicultural nature, citizens who came to Canada from all over the globe.

Minority rights have been entrenched in our constitution to reflect Canada's diversity. Members must carefully consider whether this request to extinguish minority rights is the beginning of the slippery slope and the beginning of the end of minority rights protection.

I urge all members to please vote with their conscience. We parliamentarians are charged with an awesome responsibility to be the defenders—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member is entitled to make a brief summary of his statement of the minority report but I think, perhaps, it is getting a little beyond that.

[Translation]

INDUSTRY

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Industry.

• (1235)

[English]

In accordance with its order of reference of Tuesday, November 25, 1997, your committee has considered Bill C-17, an act to amend the Telecommunications Act and the Teleglobe Canada Reorganization and Divestiture Act, and agreed on Thursday, December 4, 1997, to report it with amendments.

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): moved that the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on Wednesday, November 26, 1997, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from North Vancouver.

In moving concurrence of the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I want to emphatically inform and appeal to backbench members to stand up for their rights and duties in bringing forward issues which are of concern to their constituents and Canadians across the country.

We were asked to revive the mandate of the subcommittee of the 35th Parliament. It is instructive to read the motion that precipitated that study.

Routine Proceedings

That the committee undertake a study of private members' ballot items, to determine the possibility of allowing all or more such items to become votable, and to study the disposition of private members' bills at the committee stage.

The present committee basically went over the recommendations of the previous committee, made some minor changes and submitted the report. At present there are four major hurdles to cross before a private members' initiative can finally become law in our country.

The first hurdle is the random draw. I must admit that due to the sheer volume of items submitted, I see no practical way of solving this problem beyond extending the number of items which can be put on the order of precedence by multiple seconders. I must also add that it is possible that the large volume is due to the lottery system. The more tickets bought, the higher the probability of winning. Perhaps if we were to change it, the volume would be decreased.

The second hurdle is the appeal to the subcommittee to determine votability. This subcommittee currently works on consensus. In my mind it is offensive for a single member in this subcommittee to have the power to veto the votability of another hon. member's item. That is how this subcommittee works.

Over and over when members are discussing their private members' business in the House, they ask for unanimous consent to make it votable. Invariably there will be one member in the House who will say no, and the unanimous consent is denied. That one member in the House can deny that consent is no less offensive than one member of a five member committee also being capable of shutting down the initiative of a private member.

The third hurdle is quite obviously gaining the support of the majority of members in the House, including overcoming front bench control. I want to emphasize this, including front bench control. We keep saying that private members' business is a free vote. As a matter of fact, the front bench can control whether or not it even comes to the House. That is where the control lies.

The last hurdle is getting the bill back from committee. We have seen numerous occasions where a bill has been killed in committee by the tactic of simply not getting around to dealing with it. The committee report addresses some of these hurdles, but there is no recommendation regarding the original mandate of the committee, namely increasing the number of votable items. The primary thing the committee was to do, it did not do.

It is also instructive for members to know that when I proposed to append a minority report, it was declined by the committee of procedure and house affairs. We are, therefore, providing an opportunity for all members on both sides of the House to express themselves on this issue. I hope that all members will support what is being done here today.

● (1240)

In the 35th Parliament in the first session, 505 motions were introduced by private members and 12 passed. That is 2%. Of the 266 bills introduced, three received royal assent. That is 1%.

In the second session of the last Parliament, 355 motions were introduced and seven passed. Again that is 2%. Of the 344 bills introduced, six received royal assent. Again that is 2%.

We believe that all private members' business should be votable. At minimum, a start would be to arrange for more items to be votable. This could be achieved by a possible combination of increasing the amount of time spent each week on private members' business and by reducing the amount of debate time on each votable item.

In concluding, I wish to draw to the attention of all members here that the previous committee solicited written comments from all members. There were 45 replies and the overwhelming message from the majority of those addressed the frustration with the votability question.

Here is just one quotation from one of those presentations: "It is unacceptable that under a strange and archaic House rule, a lone MP can bring about the rejection of a broadly supported private member's bill".

Members should also know that all changes to standing orders, including those regarding private members' business, are subject to cabinet approval. Unless backbench members stand together, it is likely that there will be no changes and private members' business will simply consume a lot of time and effort without a significant chance of changing any laws.

I urge all members to stand up and be counted on this most important democratic issue.

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Elk Island has done an excellent job of articulating the frustration that is felt by many and perhaps the majority of the members in this place with respect to the handling of private members' business.

I know that is not unique just to this Parliament. It affects parliaments throughout the world. That frustration is fully justified. It is fully justified not just from the perspective of fairness within our own Canadian system, but also by comparison with the rules of those other parliaments. Many of them have made changes which do improve the private members' business function and the power of private members.

I read recently an article from the Political Science Department at Queen's University which was in the November 1997 edition of the publication "Policy Options". That article was written by Professor C.E.S. Franks. He wrote that private members are weaker in Canada than in most other parliamentary systems, that private

Routine Proceedings

members are not normally influential in Parliament, but that their position can be and should be strengthened.

One way to strengthen that position and the influence of individual members would be to genuinely overhaul the way that private members' business is dealt with in this place.

In that regard, as the member for Elk Island has explained, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs contains little more than a few crumbs of hope for meaningful change.

A brief scan of all the private members' bills and motions presently before the House seems to support the position that at least half of all the bills and motions have been drafted by individual members in what appears to be a way of recognizing lobbying or efforts put in by their constituents to have something done about a particular law or situation. They appear to address issues which generally the government refuses to acknowledge as a problem or else just simply does not want to put on its agenda but which the average Canadian views as quite important.

Bills and motions introduced to this place in both the previous and this Parliament on consecutive sentencing, elimination of section 745 of the Criminal Code, grandparent access to children of broken marriages, accountability of organizations which receive taxpayer funding such as charities, victims rights, are all issues and initiatives capable of attracting wide support of members and they certainly have the support of the general public, the voters and the taxpayers who pay the bill for what we do here.

• (1245)

Unfortunately, as the member for Elk Island has already mentioned, as we all know as private members here, even if an individual member is lucky enough to have his or her bill or motion drawn in the lottery we still have to overcome tremendous hurdles along the way to finally getting royal assent. It is virtually impossible.

After the lottery occurs and we make a selection among the available bills or motions, there is no guarantee that bill or motion will even be made votable.

Many members are suspicious that the government imposes its agenda through the workings of that committee. One of the government's own members during the last Parliament called the committee a cockroach committee because she said it meets behind closed doors and then it runs away from its decisions.

It is certainly true that the committee keeps no minutes and gives no reasons for its decisions. This fact alone is enough to encourage suspicion and an atmosphere of discontent and irritation among individual members.

However, it need not be so. Other jurisdictions have either made a much greater percentage of private members' bills votable or, as in the case of New Zealand, made all private members' bills votable.

The undeniable fact is that having a votable bill or motion dramatically increases the satisfaction level for individual members even if that vote is subsequently lost. Almost anyone can accept the democratic outcome of a meaningful debate followed by a vote. If the vote goes against the bill, the member can accept it, but to have never had the opportunity to have the vote in the first place is a devastating situation to occur.

There are many different ways in which the present unfairness could be addressed, for example making all private members' bills and motions fully votable. Admittedly, this would result in less private members' business getting to the floor of the House, but most members, perhaps the majority or perhaps all members, would be willing to take this trade-off in return for at least having the chance to have a votable bill if they do get to the floor of the House.

Another way of increasing member satisfaction with respect to votability might be to have more than one level of votability. For example, simple one line motions could perhaps be allocated one full hour of debate followed by a vote and referral to some sort of committee if the House so wished. That is one way of dealing with simple motions, or perhaps deferring the vote to another day when the government has votes planned any way, or if the hours of the House could be rearranged so that Private Members' Business took place, for example, all day Friday. Perhaps more business could be handled that way with most or all of the bills made votable.

A further suggestion would be to implement a system which puts responsibility on individual members to go out there and get a minimum number of signatures in order to be eligible for votability. At least then the competence of the bill or motion would be put at question and there would be a chance of getting really good quality material to the floor of the House.

Any combination of these suggestions or even some others would probably work out very well. In other words, it would only take a very little amount of creativity to find a much better way to accommodate private members' business within the system. In the end, the government can still prevent a bill or motion from receiving royal assent. So giving us a little satisfaction at the time of debate and vote certainly is not losing control as far as the government is concerned.

With all this in mind, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: "the thirteenth report be not now concurred in but that it be recommitted to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs with instruction that they amend the same so as to recommend that all Private Members'

Routine Proceedings

Business be votable and appropriate measures be taken to ensure an increased amount of time is available in the House for such business".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): In the opinion of the Chair the motion is in order.

• (1250)

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, without getting into a debate on the merits of the issue raised by the hon. member, I would like to point out to the House that there is a problem concerning the process put forward by Reform members on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The issue was discussed by the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business. While the subcommittee was drafting its report, the member for Elk Island made little or no comments. When the report of the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business was submitted to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, it was learned that the member for Elk Island wished to include a minority report. This minority report was never even discussed among members of the subcommittee.

Therefore, you can understand the natural and unavoidable reaction of the members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, who said there was a procedural or technical defect, since the member came up with suggestions that he never even bothered to submit to his colleagues on the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business.

Why should the member for Elk Island be granted the privilege, recognized in the Standing Orders of this House, of tabling a dissenting report, a dissenting opinion, when that opinion was never brought to the attention of the Subcommittee on Private Members Business? If a member has to or wants to submit or attach a dissenting report or opinion, he must first inform his colleagues of his dissenting opinion. Otherwise, as I was saying earlier, there is to all intents and purposes a technical defect.

Of course, we reacted properly, whatever the merits of the no doubt quite valid arguments presented by our colleague from Elk Island. We took the decision of refusing to attach his dissenting report or opinion to the report to be submitted to this House.

Therefore I think that our colleague from Elk Island is only adding insult to injury when he rises in this House to ask his colleagues to accept a dissenting opinion which was rejected by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and which was never discussed by the Subcommittee on Private Members Business.

Therefore, I ask all my colleagues in this House to reject this motion, again, independently of the merits of the opinions or suggestions expressed by our colleague and of the completely legitimate right of any political party in this House to attach a dissenting opinion to a committee report.

That is basically what I had to say. But whatever the motives behind the attitude of the member for Elk Island in making these suggestions, I disagree with some of the things he is proposing. But since I have risen to speak on the form and not the content of his proposal, I will stop here and ask my colleagues to vote against this motion.

• (1255)

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

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

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find consent that the vote be further deferred until Tuesday, December 9, 1997 at the expiry of Government Orders.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PETITIONS

POVERTY

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present a petition signed by over 2,300 individuals from all across Canada. The petition organizers, representatives from food banks and national anti-hunger groups, are here with us in the gallery today. The petitioners point to Canada's commitment under the United

Nations covenant on economic, social and cultural rights to maintain a decent standard of living for Canadians while poverty and hunger for too many have become a fact of everyday life in Canada.

The petitioners therefore call on Parliament to restore national standards for social assistance, to ensure that such standards are maintained through adequate funding to the provinces and to provide leadership in eradicating poverty and hunger in Canada.

FIREARMS

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to present a petition today. Pursuant to Standing Order 36, it has been duly certified and approved as correct. I am proud but it is very unfortunate that I have to present this petition. It involves a person who lost his life as a result of the use of a firearm.

In October 1996 a man pleaded guilty to taking the life of his neighbour with a sawed off 303 rifle. This man then hid the body and held the victim's mother at gunpoint. Contrary to the federal law which states that anyone using a firearm who is convicted of criminal negligence causing death will face a mandatory four year jail term, this person was sentenced to only two years.

Therefore the petitioners humbly pray, and so do I, that Parliament take action to intervene in cases across the country that fail to uphold the spirit and the letter of the law.

DEATH PENALTY

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with 37 names of residents from the Campbell River area in my riding. They ask parliament to hold a binding referendum on restoring the death penalty for first degree murder.

* * *

• (1300)

[Translation]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement Government Orders will be extended by 11 minutes.

Government Orders

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CANADA MARINE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-9, an act for making the system of Canadian ports competitive, efficient and commercially oriented, providing for the establishing of port authorities and the divesting of certain harbours and ports, for the commercialization of the St. Lawrence Seaway and ferry services and other matters related to maritime trade and transport and amending the Pilotage Act and amending and repealing other acts as a consequence, be read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Resuming debate. The hon. member for Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans has 40 minutes.

Mr. Michel Guimond: Forty minutes?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Pardon me, 30 minutes.

Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thought I had miraculously regained 10 minutes, since it seemed to me that I had already taken 10 of my allotted 40 minutes. I will continue my explanations for the next 30 minutes.

Just before we stopped for Oral Question Period, I had said that I had chosen, in a non-partisan spirit, to list in my speech the points of Bill C-9 with which our party is in agreement.

I had time to mention, but shall quickly do so again, that this bill will provide a high level of autonomy for local port authorities. Why did I say that? I would like to be clear, without referring to the directors appointment process, however. I must point out, though, that if the decision-making power is brought back to the regions, to the port communities, it will be far easier to make decisions that will take local and regional needs into consideration.

This is why our party also supports the abolition of the crown corporation known as Ports Canada. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, and I will repeat it because you were perhaps not in the Chair at the time, but during a speech at second reading I mentioned that the word Ports Canada should be spelled P-o-r-k-s Canada, because it was an institution that needed—and since we are into the bacon here—to be trimmed of some of its fat.

I remember having Arnold Masters, the president of Ports Canada, appear before the committee. I raked him over the coals on the subject of his expense account. I recall questioning him on his activities in Edmonton, where he had rented a room—and you represent Edmonton yourself, Mr. Speaker—at the Fantasy Hotel

Government Orders

in the West Edmonton Mall. Apparently the hotel is something else. This same Arnold Masters—

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur: A theme room.

Mr. Michel Guimond: My colleague for Berthier—Montcalm is proposing a theme room. Yes indeed, Mr. Masters rented a room called the Truck Room. Do you know what the Truck Room in the Fantasy Hotel in the West Edmonton Mall is? You literally sleep in the back of a pickup truck. They have a king-sized bed in the back of a pickup truck. The room also just happens to have a Jacuzzi that will accommodate six. The rate for this room rented by Mr. Masters, the president of Ports Canada, is \$280 a night. I am sure this incident is funny when you look at it from a bit of a distance.

• (1305)

Apparently, there are people in this House who find this funny. Personally, I felt like crying and pulling my hair out when I saw this expense account. How could Mr. Masters, the president of Ports Canada, justify renting a room like that at public expense? Ordinary people, the taxpayers, were paying for these luxuries. To say nothing of what the six-person jacuzzi was used for, but these things are generally not used for taking a quiet bath while reading the paper. Whatever the case may be, to ask the question is to answer it.

I could also bring up a certain all-expenses-paid golf tournament held by Mr. Masters for users of the port of Montreal and other ports at his secondary home in Vermont. The president of Ports Canada did not reside in Canada, he had a home in Vermont.

Indeed, this bill provides for the dismantling of Ports Canada. Our party fully supports this wise decision.

The bill also states that local port authorities will be required to present comprehensive land use plans. I submit that this is also an excellent idea, which truly reflects this government's commitment to bringing ports closer to the community.

I might add that there is one more thing that we agree with in this bill. The bill provides for the establishment of a non-profit corporation to manage the St. Lawrence Seaway. Again, it is a good decision and I congratulate the minister and the parliamentary secretary—the hon. member for Hamilton West—for including this provision.

However, I do have one reservation. Since we are talking about a facility and about equipment that we share with the United States, we will have to make sure the Americans do their fair share in terms of maintaining the St. Lawrence seaway, since they are a primary user of this facility. Again, while the legislation provides that the equipment and the maintenance work should be shared, we will have to see how this is achieved.

Canada is sometimes totally controlled by the United States, even though the prime minister may be golfing with the U.S. president, even though they may discuss certain issues during the game, while in the kart or at the 19th hole, over a stiff scotch. So, we will have to be careful. I do not want to sound anti-American, but we will have to ensure that the U.S. pays its fair share of the maintenance costs for the St. Lawrence seaway.

I am convinced that the government whip, who has a particular interest in the St. Lawrence seaway since he represents the city of Cornwall, agrees that the Americans must do their fair share.

There is another point on which we agree. Again, I will humbly say that I am very pleased that the government accepted to maintain pilotage activities in Canada, in spite of the lobbying by shipowners.

Our subcommittee, which looked at the future of the St. Lawrence seaway and Great Lakes network, was chaired by the Liberal member for Thunder Bay. Our subcommittee met American officials, as the parliamentary secretary surely remembers, since he accompanied us on that trip. When the subcommittee submitted its report, I was stunned to see a provision allowing foreign shipmasters to navigate on our waters without a competent pilot on board. This did not make any sense whatsoever.

A shipmaster from Bahrain, who speaks neither French nor English, could navigate on the St. Lawrence, around the northern side of l'île d'Orléans, in my riding, without being accompanied by a pilot. You may remember that, about two years ago, the *Alexita*, a ship flying the Swedish flag arrived on the St. Lawrence with one and a half million barrels of oil on board.

• (1310)

If we had followed the recommendations of the Liberal majority on this subcommittee, this vessel would have been allowed in without a qualified pilot on board. I am not an extremist when it comes to the environment but I think I always kept asking if we could afford an *Exxon Valdez* in the Montmagny archipelago, on the shores of Cap-Tourmente in my riding or of île d'Orléans, or across from Quebec City. Can we afford an *Exxon Valdez*?

I argued in favour of keeping mandatory pilotage by our experienced francophone pilots in the case of Quebec and the Lower St. Lawrence. Once again, partisanship aside, I thank the government for listening to the Bloc Québécois' arguments and keeping pilotage mandatory in this bill.

In the second part of my speech, I would like to talk about the parts of this bill with which we are not in agreement. First, we know that this bill provides for the divestiture of ports by the federal government. In other words, the federal government is getting out of daily administration and giving local port authorities more autonomy. I said that, as far as the increase in autonomy was

concerned, there is no problem. But while the federal government is handing ports over, it still controls the appointment of directors. Of course, we cannot agree with the fact that the minister will continue to appoint a large number of directors to port authorities.

The government should have used exactly the same process as it did with the privatization of airports. It can certainly appoint one or two representatives, but not a large number, and continue to maintain control. Appointments to the boards of directors of local port authorities represent a wonderful patronage opportunity. I could mention that, in the port of Quebec City, right after the October 25, 1993 election, we saw people who had been appointed by the Conservatives literally kicked out and replaced by René Paquette, for one, who is the president of the board of directors for the port of Quebec City, and a known Liberal organizer. There was the Liberal candidate in the 1993 election, Margo Brousseau, who was defeated by my former colleague, the member for Louis-Hébert, Philippe Paré. No sooner was the election over than there was a little political appointment to the port of Quebec City board of directors. So I think that the government could have been much more transparent and let the ports appoint their own representatives.

I would like to mention another matter that we do not agree with. Since I dealt with this issue at the committee stage, I did not raise it at third reading nor at the report stage, but we should have required better qualifications for these directors, other than simply require that they be card-carrying members of the party in power. We should have required board members to have recognized skills in certain areas. It was in that context that I stated that since one of the objectives of this act is to provide for a high level of environmental protection, it would be appropriate to have people with qualifications in that area as directors.

In addition, representatives from chambers of commerce or the tourist industry could be very helpful, for example in developing the market for cruises in Quebec City, and the requirement to have extensive experience in port operations could limit access to such resources. In addition, experience in land use management should be an acceptable qualification when the integration of a port to its community involves critical elements, as is the case in the Quebec City area. Therefore, we should have provided for a wider range of professional qualifications required to sit on the board of a local port authority.

• (1315)

Another thing we disagree with is the fact that the \$125 million port improvement fund for all of Canada announced by the minister and confirmed by the committee is, in my humble opinion and that of my party, clearly insufficient. We know that many ports need extensive renovation work, and I do not think we will go very far with \$125 million. In fact, this amount could be spent on the port of Quebec alone.

Government Orders

We will recall that when Jean Pelletier, the Prime Minister's current chief of staff, was running in the 1993 election as the Liberal candidate in the riding of Quebec, he met the board of administration of the port of Quebec with his team of candidates. He said "If we Liberals are elected in 1993, we will give you at least \$125 million to rebuild your facilities which, in some places, are literally falling apart".

The Liberals won the election, but Mr. Pelletier was not elected and we never heard anything more about the improvement fund for the port of Quebec.

At any rate, we submit that \$125 million for all of Canada is clearly insufficient.

Furthermore, this bill contains no provisions preventing the government from dipping into any accumulated surplus. Under the Conservatives, we saw the example of the port of Quebec, and this happened also in Trois-Rivières and in Montreal. The port of Quebec had \$33 million in its coffers as a result of good management. So the Conservative government then in power, led by the President of the Treasury Board, Gilles Loiselle, dipped into that fund twice: they took \$23 million the first time, and \$10 million the second time.

So here we have an example of a crown corporation that was penalized because of its good management. This \$33 million alone, invested at 10% interest, was sufficient for the normal operation of the port of Quebec, a \$3.3 million expenditure. It was not necessary to ask the government for new money. They came and took it away; it went up in smoke.

This bill contains no provision to ensure that money will not be taken away like that when there are economic downturns in the future. We hope this does not happen, but we should be ready if it does.

There is another matter, and this is the issue we raise in Motion No. 2 we tabled at the report stage. The limits of the port remain a contentious issue. We would have liked to see it made possible when the bill was passed to exclude certain parts of ports from port operations. You know very well that I was referring to the perimeter of Beauport Bay, which is a recreational and tourism site for the Quebec City region and, unfortunately, within the limits of the port of Quebec.

One never knows when the Beauport people could get a message from the Quebec Port Corporation telling them "Move your stuff. We are bringing in the bulldozers and making a pier longer, because we have got a contract with a container company". That is worrisome and I would have liked to have seen the government accept our amendment to Motion No. 2. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

Government Orders

The last safeguard left to me is the drafting of the letters patent. I trust that the government will be able to lend an ear to a region such as the Quebec City region and ensure that Beauport Bay can receive long-term assurance that it will be able to continue recreational and tourist activities for the benefit of the entire greater Quebec City region. The only hope I have for this is when they draw up the letters patent.

Another point of disagreement, we would have liked to see each municipality bordering on the port able to designate a representative. My colleague from the Reform Party said during second reading yesterday "Yes, but then if there are 12 municipalities there will be 12 representatives, and the boards of directors will end up with 20 or 25 members on them". In that connection, I would have been prepared, if the government had shown any openness about it, to support a maximum number for municipal representatives. We know how that will work. A representative of the biggest municipality will sit on the board, and so its interests will be heard. The other municipalities with less port area within their limits will have no voice. They will have to appeal to the bigger municipality in order to be heard.

• (1320)

So, we are not talking about fairness. They should have planned to have more than one municipality act as a director for local port authorities.

The last point is really important. I think the government made a serious mistake in rejecting our amendment yesterday at second reading, report stage. It would have enabled the employees of the new local port authorities and of the St. Lawrence seaway—the government neglected to do this—to participate in the pension plan of the Canadian public service known as superannuation. I consider this to be an arm-twisting contest between the Treasury Board and the Department of Transport. As you might suspect, we are hearing from public servants.

Listening to me, the thought may cross your mind that I am on a witch hunt and making things up because I am a member of the Bloc Québécois. Let me just tell you that I am not making anything up. I know for a fact that there was a power struggle between Treasury Board and Transport Canada officials. While Transport Canada wanted its employees in the new corporations to continue to participate in the pension plan, the order came—I cannot say whether it came directly from the President of the Treasury Board or from Treasury Board secretary Peter Harder—to object to their continue participation, that these employees will have to leave the public service pension plan et buy into another one.

As I said yesterday, I do not need to be an actuary to know full well that it costs more to maintain a pension plan for a small group of 575 employees—and I encourage St. Lawrence seaway em-

ployees to go to their MP, the hon. member for Stormont—Dundas and government whip, and tell him this—than to be covered under the large public service of Canada plan. The actuarial cost is different. It does not take a degree in actuarial science to understand that.

My point is that, in the long run, the bargaining power of these small groups of employees will be affected. I know that when the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Transport rises to speak in a little while and replies, as it were, to my speech, he is going to say that the member for Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans is an alarmist, that he is on a witch hunt, that Motion No. 21 represents an undertaking that each of the port authorities may have a comparable pension plan. What is he afraid of? Comparable, yes, but at what cost? I would like the government to prove to us that it will cost exactly the same.

Perhaps the committee should invite some actuaries in to explain to the government that the benefits of a small group pension plan are not comparable. The issue is not the benefits, but buying one for a group of 200,000 to 300,000 employees, as provided under the Public Service Superannuation Act. That is why I say that, in the long term, the bargaining power of port employees and St. Lawrence seaway workers will be affected by this decision and I humbly submit that, even though the amendment passed yesterday by the government because of its majority addressed comparability, it does not pass the test.

In conclusion, I think I have had an opportunity to express my views. I thank all members for their attention. I thank the government whip for maintaining discipline on his side. I do not want to start another debate, but it is obvious that the government has a good whip who has and who deserves respect. I do not know if it helps him to be praised by a member of the Bloc Québécois but I just want to show that I am not an extreme partisan. I think I am able to admit certain things, as you have seen from my speech.

• (1325)

You will read this in the airplane, Mr. Speaker, on your way back to Edmonton. You will see how I approached my speech. I looked at points of agreement and points of disagreement, but for all these reasons, I must unfortunately tell you that our party will have to vote against this bill at third reading.

[*English*]

Mr. Dick Proctor (Palliser, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus.

In the time available I will focus on five areas of concern that we have with respect to Bill C-9. The number one issue is the loss of a nationally integrated and coherent port and transportation system. We are also concerned about the policing of the new ports, the

Government Orders

privatization of them, the funding and capital expenditures required, and the superannuation plan.

Before I deal with those areas, however, I was interested in the earlier comments of the Minister of Transport today when he addressed the Chamber on Bill C-9. He acknowledged the help members of the standing committee had been in this area. Then I heard the member for Cypress Hills—Grassland lamenting that none of the opposition amendments had been accepted.

Prior to that statement I was going to encourage the minister responsible for transportation to have a word with his colleague, the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, because we certainly had that kind of treatment when that bill was before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

As a new member of the House I agree with the member for Cypress Hills—Grassland that committees to date have been a joke. I encourage members on the government side to see if we could not make them more meaningful in the near future.

The New Democratic Party is opposed to Bill C-9 for different reasons. I take the opportunity today to raise some of the concerns we have with the marine act. As I indicated, I want to turn first to the nationally integrated and coherent port and transportation system.

Our concern is that Bill C-9 will create a patchwork of privately run ports. With new mandates oriented to financial self-sufficiency, it is unlikely these ports will form an integral part of a coherent national strategy for meeting our transportation and regional development needs. Instead we will have a set of local activities unlinked to a national vision or plan.

I remind members of the House of what the member for Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre was saying on this subject earlier this week. Canada is the only country in the OECD that seems not to have a national transportation vision for the near future. Ultimately the proposed privatization will have negative implications for many people presently working in the port system and the maritime industry generally.

Despite assurances from the government about job security it seems likely that as a new strictly commercial oriented management approach is brought in, jobs will be lost within the longshore and among the administrative workers who presently work within the Canada Ports Corporation. We see similar examples with the alternate service delivery in the military, this rush to privatization the government is exhibiting time after time.

There is evidence from numerous other sectors that short term financial considerations will inevitably prevail over the preservation of jobs and the maintenance of fair working conditions.

As productivity and throughput considerations become more dominant the question is who will look out for the welfare of the

staff remaining in the service of the ports organization. Cuts to any workforce inevitably place additional pressures on the remaining staff. The added stress this creates is often reflected in increasing numbers of industrial accidents. There is nothing in the legislation to address this potential problem and concern.

On the item of policing of the new ports, the proposal to remove the port police from the newly created entity seems to us to be a most unwise step. Private security firms are not peace officers and traditionally do not enjoy the same range of powers enjoyed by the police.

• (1330)

It is likely that drug smuggling, which is already a significant problem and growing, will not be curtailed in any way and could well increase as a result of this legislation.

In fact, I want to remind the House of what the president of the Canadian Police Association was quoted as saying earlier this year. Neal Jessop said that abolishing Canada's port police will open the floodgates to the smuggling of drugs, guns and other contraband by organized crime. What passes through the ports, Mr. Jessop said, will end up on the streets of our towns and cities coast to coast. What he did not add but which needs to be added is that will incur additional policing costs and personal tragedies as a result of that.

This government's privatization of our national ports and disbanding Canada Ports police will be a serious blow to the fight against organized crime in this country. This government's actions have resulted, we think, in a serious setback in the efforts to control and stop organized crime activities.

It is a well known fact in the law enforcement community that organized crime and gang activity are thriving in our ports. The result of the federal government's disbanding of the ports police and privatization will open the doors for an increase in the destructive activities, as I noted, drug trafficking, weapons trafficking, auto theft and liquor and tobacco smuggling.

The Canada Ports police was created almost 30 years ago in 1968 and represented a highly specialized and dedicated police force with skills and powers specifically designed to combat organized crime, smuggling and gang activities.

Other jurisdictions, the United States being one example but there are many others, have experimented with similar privatization schemes for their ports and have had to re-evaluate their actions in the face of increases in criminal activities in those other countries and to reinstate specialized port police and take back control of the ports.

We note that with this bill Canada is going in a very different and, we would submit, wrong headed direction in this regard. It is noteworthy that numerous case files and ongoing investigations into organized crime and gang activities were either halted or

Government Orders

compromised with the removal of the Canada Ports police from the Vancouver port.

On the opposite coast, the Atlantic coast, in a few weeks the Halifax port police will be disbanded and we are sure that organized crime is waiting and marking the days on its calendar until that disbandment occurs.

In other words, with the privatization of our national ports, this government is putting out the welcome sign for gangs and organized crime and putting our communities and citizens at risk.

With regard to the privatization of ports consistent with the withdrawal of federal presence from other matters of concern to coastal residents, the privatization fits into an ongoing pattern where we are seeing this government withdraw from a host of activities and functions vital to the well-being of communities and here we are concerned about coastal communities.

Cutbacks to the coast guard, search and rescue capacity, the automation of lighthouses were the forerunner and backdrop to the port privatization. There are estimated to be approximately 500 public ports and harbours in Canada and it is safe to assume that communities with ports smaller than those of Vancouver, Halifax and Montreal will feel the brunt of this legislation.

The question that needs to be asked is why is the Liberal government turning its back on the legitimate needs of our smaller coastal communities.

In dealing with funding and capital expenditures, the bill fails to provide for the capital financing required to construct new port facilities at some future date. The submission of the Halifax Port Development Commission is highly instructive on this point and worth quoting:

The funding needed for construction of major port facilities can only be arranged in part, if at all, in the private sector. No private sector lender or investor can advance the bulk of such funding against user commitments which may or may not materialize when the facilities are completed, and if they do not materialize, may or may not continue until the funding has been repaid. Under such a scenario, funding can only come from governments which have the necessary financial resources and can justify, in the interests of promoting the economy of their constituents, the assumption of the attendant commercial risk.

Had Bill C-9 been in effect in the late 1960s, Halifax would never have been able to build and equip even one container berth and the harbour would long ago have fallen into disuse.

• (1335)

Should these ports be privatized, will they be required to disclose their capital expenditure plans for local community input and review? The kind of secrecy that normally shrouds the investment activities of private companies must not be allowed to

prevail within the ports where a range of public groups has a vital stake in the financial posture of them. Why has the government not chosen to make mandated public disclosure of financial plans a precondition for the transfer of the ports into the private sector?

I want to turn now to superannuation because the first version of this bill did not include the continuance of the pension plan for ports employees once the port is transferred.

Our caucus brought forward an amendment at committee stage which called for the continuance of the superannuation. The ports employees have belonged to that system for decades now and they have been devoted to achieving the success which the ports have had over the years. It would be most unfair for these employees to lose their pension benefits.

Those employees who planned their retirement based on that plan should have had the opportunity to continue with the plan. However, unfortunately our motion was defeated. A member of the Bloc introduced a similar motion at report stage, one which we were pleased to support, but again it was defeated. Then the Liberals introduced a motion for comparable employee benefits. Naturally it passed. It is certainly better than nothing, but we wanted it to go further, as did the Bloc, to protect employee benefits.

These are the major concerns we have with the bill, the failure of the nationally integrated and coherent port, the policing aspect of the new ports, the privatization of them, the concern about funding and capital expenditure, and the superannuation plan for long service employees at the ports.

As a result of the deficiencies which we find in the bill, we will be voting against it. We believe that Canada needs a nationally integrated transportation system and it will not be possible with privatized ports.

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, the process of going through the Canada marine act and the changes which will come about as a result of Bill C-9 has been very interesting. I have really enjoyed it. It was a little short for me because in the last Parliament the same bill was studied for three years. Our deliberations lasted only a few weeks. I am sorry it was only a few weeks because we did not have the chance to hear all the people we would have liked to hear. Nevertheless it was an interesting process. It was very refreshing for me.

We are going to support the bill in principle although, like all bills, it is not perfect.

There are four major parts of the bill. First, it designates all ports into one of three categories. Second, it addresses new management for the St. Lawrence Seaway, which will have a huge impact. Third,

Government Orders

it will change piloting. There are minimal changes to piloting, but not nearly enough. Fourth, it will eliminate port police.

With respect to port designations, all ports in Canada will have one of three designations. One of the designations will be for viable ports. These are the ports which make a profit. They can stand on their own two feet and are able to survive. They are put into one category.

Then there are regional ports. They are not viable, by definition. They are to be divested by the federal government and turned over to user groups, the province, municipalities or whomever. It is a very interesting approach because there is no formula for this category. They will all be negotiated separately.

The third designation is for remote ports, for which the federal government maintains responsibility.

Our biggest concern with the bill is the designation of regional ports. They will face an awful lot of problems. Examples of these ports are Pugwash, Parrsboro, and Shelburne in Nova Scotia.

Shelburne, for instance, suffered through the collapse of the fishery. Its people are making extremely effective efforts to replace the fishery to make their port viable. When I called the mayor of Shelburne, Mayor Comeau, he was in Massachusetts trying to arrange for a ferry between Massachusetts and Shelburne.

They have also arranged to bring cruise lines to Shelburne. They have come up with a lot of different commercial uses for the port. However, it is not enough to make the port viable.

• (1340)

They are going to need some help through this change from the present structure where they are owned by the federal government to being a regional port.

When I went to see the mayor of Parrsboro to see how the changes were going to affect his port, he did not know anything about the changes. He did not even know that there was a process. He had never even heard of the Canada marine act. They are going to be faced with a lot of decisions and I am going to help them through those decision as much as I can.

Pugwash is another port in my riding. It is going through the process right now.

As helpful as Department of Transport people are, the ports, the communities and the people involved do not understand the process. I hope that the government will take the time as this process unfolds and impacts on communities, that it will take the time to help people and help the communities establish the proper set-up. A wrong decision now could cause huge grief in the future. There are funds—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Excuse me. Before the Chair recognizes the hon. chief government whip, I would like to

acknowledge that the Chair neglected to ask for questions and comments after the speech made by the hon. member of Palliser. If the member for Palliser is listening, we had agreed earlier to forego the ten minutes of questions and comments. Could he please confirm?

Mr. Dick Proctor: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I apologize to the member for Palliser.

On a point of order, the chief government whip.

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among all parties and there has been a tremendous amount of co-operation to facilitate the end of this debate at third reading of Bill C-9.

I would ask the consent of the House not to see the clock and I move:

That at the conclusion of today's debate on third reading of Bill C-9, but no later than 2 p.m., all questions necessary to dispose of the said stage of the said bill will be deemed put, a recorded division requested and deferred until Tuesday, December 9, 1997 at the expiry of Government Orders.

I believe that would allow the member for Cumberland—Colchester to conclude his remarks.

[*Translation*]

The Bloc Quebecois member for Terrebonne—Blainville will speak for a few minutes. The parliamentary secretary will then say a few words, and this will conclude debate at third reading.

[*English*]

(Motion agreed to)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Continuing debate, the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester.

Mr. Bill Casey: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. Is there anyone else who wants to interrupt me? I do not want to miss anybody.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue on and I will be brief. Our main concern with this whole bill is the fact that regional ports were not allowed to make presentations at committee. They are going to be the ones that are most impacted by these decisions and most of them have no idea of what is going to happen. I hope that we, as members, will help them through this process.

It is going to have a profound effect on many of these ports. I mentioned Shelburne. The hon. parliamentary secretary has agreed to meet with me and officials from Shelburne and also the member for South Shore to discuss Shelburne and to make sure they can take advantage of any programs available through that transition. I make that offer to any port, any community that will be impacted by this legislation to contact us and we will help them with it.

Government Orders

Several problems we see with the bill have been mentioned by previous speakers. One is that ports police have been eliminated. It is not so much that they have been eliminated but there has been no strategic plan to replace them and no strategic plan to look after the people who are involved. Again, these are people.

My colleague from Saint John who spoke very eloquently on this issue on behalf of the ports police and defended their position is not here today. I would like to recognize her efforts on that because she is an untiring spokesperson for people who have a problem no matter what it is. The ports police were going through a tough time and she did everything she could to help.

On the piloting regulations, it is, as I heard other speaker say earlier, a closed shop. There is not competition. It is very tightly controlled. It completely contradicts the rest of the bill which is to make the process more efficient, more commercialized, free it up, local decisions, but still the pilotage problem exists. It is a very closed shop and there is no competition.

Another issue is superannuation for the employees who are affected. Under these legislation we put an amendment forth, as other members did, asking for superannuation to be extended to employees who lost their jobs and who had always had superannuation benefits.

• (1345)

The government made a commitment to provide that extension in some kind of bridge process. However, when the amendment was presented, it was only for the viable ports people who were going to Canada ports authorities. Again, the regional ports people have no superannuation benefits. We will still be pushing for that and hope the hon. members, the hon. minister and parliamentary secretary will help us with that.

Another amendment we had put in was to put the port of Hamilton back on the same playing field with every other port in Canada. Although our amendment was retracted, another amendment came right back in again from the government side and addressed the issue.

For the third time I say that our biggest concern is the impact on regional ports which by definition are not viable. The government has said, "These ports are not viable any more, therefore we do not want to have anything to do with them any more. We will turn them over to the user groups. We will turn them over to the municipalities or to the provinces". It will have a big impact on small ports.

In closing, we are going to support the Canada Marine Act. I am pleased to do so.

I would like to compliment the staff of Transport Canada who have done a fantastic job in negotiating the agreements that have already been negotiated with the ports. I am truly awed by their ability. They have made profound changes in communities. They

have been able to work with communities, work with the governments and the local people and have done a great job at having transferred these over.

Our part as a Conservative caucus will be to help those regional ports change. Of those ports that I contacted, some knew nothing about this legislation. They knew nothing about what was happening to them. Some misunderstood the process completely. Some had it in reverse. Some were resigned to the change, but did not know they could access assistance programs from the government to help them over.

On behalf of the Conservative Party members I would like to extend an invitation to any port that has a problem, that does not understand the process, that does not understand the details or how to access programs, to contact us. We will be glad to help them through the system.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Mercier (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government recently privatized three facilities in the transportation sector.

First, it was the Montreal airports, which are now managed by ADM, Administration des aéroports de Montréal, with the federal government keeping ownership of the facilities. Then, it was the ground facilities for air navigation, the management of which was transferred to Nav Canada, a corporation established for this purpose. This time, ownership of the facilities was also transferred. Now, the purpose of Bill C-9 is to transfer the management of marine ports to private organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I would really appreciate it if members opposite would listen. I guess my request is not being accepted. I will carry on nevertheless.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The hon. member has requested that we have the courtesy to pay attention to his remarks.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Mercier: Mr. Speaker, I will begin with ADM. In ADM's case, the board of directors' seven members are appointed by regional organizations, and the government is not represented at all. These seven members make up the board of directors and they hold all the powers. ADM is a totally independent organization.

As for Nav Canada, it is an organization which, unlike ADM, also has ownership of the facilities, but I will not discuss this aspect here.

However, the ports affected by Bill C-9 will have a board of directors made up of seven to eleven members, including one appointed by the province and one appointed by the municipalities. The other members, anywhere from five to nine of them, will be

appointed by the government, in consultation—but in consultation only—with users.

• (1350)

It is interesting to compare the structure given ADM and the structure given to seaports. The similarity of airports and seaports, over which Ottawa retains ownership, is obvious and one must wonder why there is such a difference in the level of autonomy given ADM, which is total, and that given ports, which is very limited.

Why was ADM given so much power? Why was ADM given complete autonomy when seaports are not getting any? I think I know why. Montreal airports were a hot potato. Mirabel was created by a Liberal government; so now we had two airports and no road or rail link between Mirabel and Montreal; having two airports was bad for competitiveness and one had to be shut down. Air Canada was lobbying to have Mirabel closed down. However, this was a hot potato the government did not want to handle. I suggest that this is the reason why ADM was given so much power.

Ottawa wanted to wash its hands of the surgery that had to be performed to move international flights from an airport developed to the tune of billions of dollars to accommodate international flights. This is exactly what it did. Every single question I have asked in this House regarding Mirabel have been met by the same answer from the transport minister of the day “ADM is in charge”. In other words, the Minister of Transport, just like Pontius Pilate, is washing his hands of the whole Mirabel mess. This is the easy way out.

To conclude, I say once again that when it comes to this government there is a world of difference between political logic and plain logic.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Resuming debate by previous agreement, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport.

Mr. Stan Keyes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was in the fall of 1994 that Transport Canada embarked on this voyage to change Canadian marine policy. Now today, just over three years later, it is my hope that the House of Commons will pass Bill C-9, the Canada Marine Act.

There are the ministers of transport both present and past, members of the Standing Committee on Transport both present and past, and literally hundreds of people in industry, labour and ports to acknowledge and thank for their continued support and contribution to the development of this policy. However, I would like to recognize the personal efforts of the current Minister of Transport,

Government Orders

the Deputy Minister of Transport, Margaret Bloodworth, and the Assistant Deputy Minister of Transport, Policy, Louis Ranger.

Thinking back a couple of years, I would like to single out the former Deputy Minister of Transport, Mr. Nick Mulder who had the courage to embark on these changes to marine legislation and then cleverly move on to life's challenges beyond government bureaucracy and leave all the tough sledding to others. It was Nick Mulder who hired Mr. Neil MacNeil who stuck with the marine policy development from the outset.

Neil MacNeil, now President of Canada Ports Corporation, and David Cuthbertson, now the Executive Vice-President of Canada Ports Corporation have been instrumental in developing the consensus with industry and communities to see these changes through. They are now responsible for closing down Canada Ports Corporation and establishing the new Canada port authorities. I know I speak for the ports and the users when I congratulate Neil and David for their achievements and thank them for their contribution.

I will speak for a couple of minutes because I realize we have to see the clock at two o'clock for the end of debate on Bill C-9 and I want to give a couple of minutes to my colleague from Wentworth—Burlington who has been waiting patiently to say a few words as well.

The opposition members may think we were short on our deliberations in committee. I want to remind them that it was the decision of the committee, and some of the opposition members voted with the government to not hear the witnesses again.

• (1355)

It was the witnesses themselves, the communities, the corporations, the port operators, the users, the shareholders, the stakeholders who came forward and said, “Look, you guys have been to our communities twice now. The committee has been here on the marine policy development. The officials were here on the heels of that policy development and then the transport committee was here again. We gave three speeches to you. You know what we need and you know what we want”.

As a result of all that consultation, a year and a half of consultations, we came up with Bill C-44, and the exact same bill has been brought forward to the House as Bill C-9. So the consultation did take place. It was thorough and quite frankly, everything that was achieved in consultations on Bill C-44 was the result of compromise and hard work by all of the players involved in this bill.

After all the years of extensive consultations with the shippers, the carriers and other levels of government we did find widespread support in the marine community. That is why we have reintroduced the bill, because we know that the community supports it and wants to see the bill enacted as soon as possible.

Government Orders

As a result of the passage of this legislation we will see a stronger, more efficient marine sector that will improve Canada's international trade performance. That means more economic growth and jobs for Canadians.

In conclusion, to leave a couple of minutes for my colleague, I want to thank everyone who was involved with the bill. We have done it again. It is my hope after our vote on Tuesday when the bill is in the hands of the Senate that the Senate will also see fit to recognize the request of the marine users and give speedy passage to Bill C-9.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have a few minutes to speak on Bill C-9. I would like to draw the attention of the House and the Canadian public to two major innovations in Bill C-9.

First, it is a giant step forward in developing accountability in arm's length institutions of government. The mechanisms of accountability in these new port authorities far exceed anything that existed with the harbour commissions and indeed with respect to many other types of organizations.

Second, I feel that the bill represents a reform in attitude of governments of the past and this government toward political patronage. Instead of harbour commissioners who were appointed indirectly by a regional minister, there is now a system of directors appointed to port authorities will all kinds of checks and balances to make sure that these appointees of the crown conduct themselves in a responsible manner.

With the old way of appointing harbour commissioners in my region there was one city appointee and two federal appointees. Under the new system the port authority in the city of Hamilton will have a federal appointee, a provincial appointee, a city or municipality appointee, and four appointees recommended by users in the area. The minister will listen to the users in the area who will name certain individuals who have competence in the field.

The bill explains at great length what type of competence is required of the people who are to become directors of the port authority. This is a huge step forward. It separates the directors of the port authority from political influence. This is hugely important.

I regret to say that in the history of harbour commissions across the country there have been too many instances where harbour commissioners have felt vulnerable or have come under the influence of area politicians. This bill changes that. It is an enormous step forward. It has a code of conduct. It requires annual meetings, financial reports, public accountability in large scale. I think all sides of the House, including the Bloc Quebecois should support this bill. I think the Canadian public will as well.

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent for me to move:

That the members of the House of Commons on the special joint committee to examine and analyze issues relating to child custody, parental access and the education of children after the separation or divorce of their parents be the following: Eleni Bakopanos, Carolyn Bennett, Robert Bertrand, Sheila Finestone, Paul Forseth, Roger Galloway, John Harvard, Nancy Karetak-Lindell, Judi Longfield, Eric Lowhter, Gary Lunn, Caroline St-Hilaire, Diane St-Jacques, Peter Mancini, Richard Marceau and Denis Paradis.

● (1400)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Does the Chief Government Whip have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

CANADA MARINE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-9, an act for making the system of Canadian ports competitive, efficient and commercially oriented, providing for the establishing of port authorities and the divesting of certain harbours and ports, for the commercialization of the St. Lawrence Seaway and ferry services and other matters related to maritime trade and transport and amending the Pilotage Act and amending and repealing other acts as a consequence, be read the third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): Pursuant to order made earlier this day, the question on third reading of Bill C-9, Canada Marine Act, is deemed put and a recorded division demanded and deferred to Tuesday, December 9, 1997, at the expiry of Government Orders.

It being 2.01 p.m., this House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

Ms. Colleen Beaumier (Brampton West—Mississauga, Lib.) moved that Bill C-208, an act to amend the Access to Information Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to start the debate on the second reading of Bill C-208, an act to amend the Access to Information Act. This bill goes to the heart of the act by addressing the issue of obstructing right of access. Provisions under this bill will also make such obstruction an indictable offence with significant penalties.

In 1983 Pierre Trudeau proclaimed the new Access to Information Act. To Canada's credit, this act is in existence in only 12 countries throughout the world, but in the 14 years since its inception, government bureaucracy has been sabotaging the intent of the act.

Testimony at the Somalia and Krever inquiries have led Canadians to believe it is not uncommon for officials to lose, destroy or tamper with documents. Those cases are only the two recent examples which have raised the public's ire.

In the 1996-97 annual report of the Information Commissioner, specific recommendations are made with regard to the need for sanctions. These recommendations resulted from the commissioners' investigations which were prompted by the Krever commission and the Somalia inquiry where the issue of document tampering and record destruction was raised.

Commissioner John Grace states:

These lamentable incidents of wilful actions taken by public officials for the purpose of suppressing information have been a wake-up call. As recommended in last year's annual report, there should be a specific offence in the access act for acts of omissions intended to thwart the rights set out in the law. Moreover, those who commit this offence should be subject to greater sanctions than exposure of wrongdoing. At a minimum, the offence should carry a penalty of up to five years in prison. Such a penalty is in line with that imposed in section 122 of the Criminal Code for breach of trust by a public officer. The stakes are too high for a slap on the wrist.

It is the intent of this bill to provide the very sanctions that Mr. Grace has recommended. Currently section 67 of the act states that no person shall obstruct the Information Commissioner or any person acting on behalf or under the direction of the Commissioner in the performance of the Commissioner's duties and function under this act. Every person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars.

Private Members' Business

I have not been able to find any instance in which this penalty has ever been imposed. It is up to this Parliament to put teeth into this law. Measures to ensure responsibility and accountability must become part of the act. We must send a strong message that these acts of destruction will not go unpunished.

Bill C-208 adds to the existing offences of the access act under section 67 by calling for an up to \$10,000 fine and/or up to a five-year jail sentence for persons destroying, mutilating, altering or falsifying records or not keeping "required records".

• (1405)

The issue here is accountability, the accountability of members of Parliament. Without access to the truth, how can we be accountable to our constituents?

When I ran to represent my constituents, I campaigned for a more open and transparent government. I promised that my minimal duty would be supplying them with the truth on government issues which troubled them. I had no idea that the problem with document tampering had become so widespread.

Ken Rubin, a dedicated Canadian who is well known as an advocate of public interest issues in Canada and to whom I am indebted for sharing his research with me, cites many examples of this abuse.

The most dramatic example of this occurred with the 1989 destruction of the Canadian blood committee records. It was only with the release of the Information Commissioner's report in January 1997 that Mr. Rubin learned that his first of several requests in the fall of 1987 for records related to private blood banks along with requests from a *Globe and Mail* reporter for information on the safety of Canada's blood supply had been the initial spark that had unfortunately led Health Canada to destroy the Canadian blood committee's records.

The Krever inquiry final report helps put the CBC record destruction episode in perspective. The real victims were those inflicted with tainted blood infusions, condemned in many cases to die and who could not have access to the crucial transcripts of the Canadian blood committee meetings to know why action had not been taken quickly enough to save them from infection.

As an access requester filing numerous requests on the 1993 Canadian forces event in Somalia on the aftermath, Mr. Rubin became aware of the attempted record destruction of national defence transitory response to media inquiries and the deceptive alteration of those records into shorter media response lines in order to respond to the requests of the CBC reporter. This other well known incident of record tampering is documented in the Somalia inquiry commission 1997 report.

There are other examples of record abuse that stand out. Right from the start problems with the access act began to surface. Upon the act's proclamation in 1983, Mr. Rubin and a *Kitchener-Water-*

Private Members' Business

loo Record reporter fought for five years, all the way to the Federal Court of Appeal in 1989, for the right to obtain Agriculture Canada's meat inspection reports reviewing how safe various meat packing establishments were.

Shortly after finally winning fuller access to inspection reports, Agriculture Canada and the meat packers then agreed to alter these reports, taking out inspectors' valuable written and often critical observations, leaving in only a check-off sheet with different boxes on matters like hygiene and sanitation.

Yet there is another example. In 1984 after winning the right to see the minutes of the Atomic Energy Control Board meetings from 1975 to 1982, which were requested for use in a series of news stories on matters discussing nuclear safety problems at the board, the AECB immediately cut down on what was recorded at its board meeting discussions, thus greatly sanitizing what was really publicly thereafter their board summary record.

There is yet another example. On March 9, 1989 a Health Canada official who is still with the department had ordered a scientist employed under him to "please destroy all copies of". He was referring to the draft copy of his critical report before continuing to gather records for responding to Mr. Rubin's request on the safety of the Meme breast implants. The original draft report had been done after reviewing reports and contact with Meme breast patients, manufacturers and experts. The memo was critical of the department's lack of moratorium action against further use of this medical device and stated that such implants were "unfit for human implantation". We have seen the result of that cover-up.

• (1410)

We have another one. Transport Canada, on April 13, 1993, finally located a key briefing memo dated August 11, 1991 from the head of the safety review team doing an August 1991 post-accident review on Nationair. The review was done after the disastrous July 1991 crash of a DC-8 Nationair charter plane. It was about the past safety deficiencies of Nationair airline operations. A partially released memo that went missing for so long found there were matters the review uncovered of "extreme concern".

The memo had been, according to Transport Canada, unfortunately overlooked despite a very specific request in September 1991 for this report, right down to naming the official who wrote it and stating accurately that he had done the memo on his computer at home.

Transport Canada also conducted dozens of air safety surveys in confidence with airlines. Many were done between 1990 and 1994. However, when Mr. Rubin discovered their existence and applied

for them, Transport Canada indicated that it had never even bothered to retain a copy of its own report.

After pursuing the matter, Transport Canada grudgingly, without the benefit of certifying the truthfulness of the responses, asked the airline companies that were given the reports for them back. The airline companies' response in those cases was that the copies they had received had already been destroyed or were missing. The few reports retrieved are still secret and the subject of a Federal Court action.

Again, when Mr. Rubin sought in 1989 projections by CIDA on the effects of the earlier announced financial cutbacks on a project by project basis, he was informed that the computerized records had been erased from their computers to make way for new projected estimates. This is not good enough.

In the 1980s, national defence used to provide, upon application, lists of briefing notes. Health Canada, until this year, used to provide comprehensive lists of health protection branch contracts. They were cancelled, reputedly, because of inadequate resources and because their management did not require them. Mr. Rubin believes, more to the point, these reference record indexes were too frequently leading to the discovery of embarrassing and significant operational activities of the departments. I have to say I agree with him.

Right now defending departments like these get off with nothing worse than maybe some adverse publicity. Until there are provisions in the act to ensure accountability of all levels of government, Canadians will be unable to receive the necessary legislative protection they deserve. They will also be deprived of the right to know why decisions are made and if these decisions sufficiently address issues affecting their lives.

The existence of sanctions in the law will also assist in providing Canadians with a more competent civil service, one less likely to commit acts of omission or carelessness.

In my life I have held, among others, two positions of which I am extremely proud. Needless to say, my present position is one of the most privileged to be had in our country. The other was that of a public servant. To serve your country to the best of your ability with integrity and honesty gives you a great sense of pride. I was not the only public servant who felt this way. In fact, all of my colleagues were among the most conscientious in the country.

I cannot imagine that my department was unique. In fact, I know it was not. The public service in Canada has attracted the best in the land and it is simply not right that the few exceptions be allowed to smear the entire service. It is not fair to these dedicated workers or to the citizens who rely on them.

• (1415)

The bill is about the protection of public records. It provides the necessary tools to prevent future occurrences of document tampering and destruction. It will strengthen democracy in Canada and go a long way toward restoring the public trust by protecting it from future violations.

I have spoken to members on all sides of the House about the bill. Some feel it does not go far enough while others believe it may go too far. On the whole, however, I have received overwhelming approval.

We are all here to serve our constituents. Those in the public service must serve, and if they betray the public trust they must be held accountable. If left unchecked we will surely face the dire consequences of our inaction.

We are still a young nation built on trust. Lack of trust will weaken our resolve to continue building an honest and caring society. I urge all members to support the principle of Bill C-208 by passing it over to committee for study.

By doing so, we will show Canadians we are serious about their right to access to information and are prepared to take strong measures to ensure that it is not jeopardized.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Brampton West—Mississauga not only for bringing the bill forward but for her comments in the House today. She is to be commended for this initiative. She is to be commended for the very frank and forthright manner in which she has laid so many facts before the House.

I also recognize this is a non-partisan effort. We all pledged to our constituents that as members of Parliament we were elected to protect the rights of the people and will seek to do so. When I see the hon. member bringing forward a bill with such an honest assessment of the justification for it, I am moved by it and I am encouraged by it.

What we see happening here is an effort on the part of members in opposition to bring about a more open, honest and straightforward government on behalf of the people we represent. We also see members concerned about the same issues and moving to do what we can to bring about a government that is more open so that we can accept without question or equivocation the honesty and integrity of our public service.

We elect governments to protect our rights and our freedoms, not to take them from us. If we are to have a peaceful country with the prosperity that flows from it, we must have the truth. From truth flows justice, from justice flows peace, and from peace flows prosperity.

If we deny the fundamental essential in that formula there is a breakdown of justice, peace of mind, and the prosperity that flows

Private Members' Business

from any country or any people that trust their institutions, base their actions upon truth, base their future hopes and plans upon the commitment, awareness and promise that the truth will not be held from them.

The hon. member mentioned a number of issues where documents were tampered with, where documents were perhaps concealed and where documents were difficult to obtain. She mentioned the Somalia and Krever inquiries. These are very serious matters where lives were lost. There was vested interest to frustrate efforts to obtain the truth about conditions. This is wrong.

• (1420)

I see the parliamentary secretary to the justice minister. It appears that she is prepared to speak to the bill. I cannot help but wonder what she will say. I can almost predict that she will not be in favour of it. If I am wrong I will be pleasantly surprised and will be the first one to commend her if she supports the bill.

It seems unusual that cabinet would dither when it is obvious a bill of this nature is needed. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary will amend the bill to strengthen it further. If that is the case she will have the support of members on this side of the House, certainly within our caucus.

The hon. member who introduced the bill referred to a number of cases which indicate that it is required. I also have cases which come to mind. One was an unfortunate incident that occurred when the government attempted to deport three suspected Nazi war criminals from Canada. Unfortunately, because there was a time delay in the minds of government officials handling the case, the assistant deputy attorney general did something which was interpreted as interfering with the judicial independence of the judge who was handling the three cases.

One of the three suspected Nazi war criminals was a man by the name of Tobiass. In his case the immigration documents upon which the crown was relying to base its case had been destroyed. If we look through the documents we find this statement:

All irrelevant immigration files were destroyed by its servants and are now not available. In addition the government cannot provide evidence of any one of its servants who interviewed Mr. Tobiass prior to his admission to Canada.

If this is the only process by which the government can rid the country of suspected Nazi war criminals, it is essential not to allow documents to be destroyed.

It will be very interesting to see this case go forward. It has been stalled or at least delayed for months by the interference of Mr. Thompson. I will be watching with interest to see how the crown will proceed against Mr. Tobiass when all the documents have been destroyed.

There is a need for the bill and for awareness on the part of senior public servants that if they alter, destroy or conceal a document they will face the sanctions the bill contains.

Private Members' Business

I am very much in support of the bill. The hon. member and her colleagues in the House today are to be commended. I hope the support my hon. colleague has for the bill on her side of the House will be greater than what I see today. It is a Friday afternoon and many members are on their way home or they have other duties to perform. This is not an indication of the strength of support for her bill.

Nevertheless it is very encouraging to see the kind of initiative, which often comes from the opposition in terms of opening up the government and making public servants more accountable to all Canadians and to all members of Parliament, being taken by a member on the government side.

• (1425)

My time has almost elapsed. I await with anticipation the words of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice to see whether she is prepared to support the bill, strengthen the bill, or simply oppose the bill.

The Deputy Speaker: By agreement we will resume debate with the hon. member for Wentworth—Burlington.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly support the bill and I thank my colleagues who have given me the opportunity to speak a little sooner than otherwise. I will be brief but I have something I would like to bring to the debate that is a little special.

In a former life I had a lot of experience working with the Access to Information Act. The reason a jail term is necessary, which is now missing from the act, be it two years or five years—I actually prefer two years—is that access officers are subject to fierce pressure from their superiors when there is a request for a document that is sensitive and maybe a little embarrassing. It takes tremendous courage on the part of an access officer to resist the kind of bullying that comes down from authorities. They simply say “You don’t want to release that. Don’t do it”.

Unfortunately, without a penalty the access officer may stand on his or her principles. I have to say “her” as well because I remember a few instances when access officers who were women went out on limb to get documents for me. The point is that they may go out on a limb but they stand a good chance of being punished later.

The beauty of a jail term is that when bureaucratic bullies try to twist the arms of access officers who they know they should release a document, all they have to say is “Send me a written note”. If the

access officer cuts the document and later on it is disclosed that the order was improper, it is the person up the line who will go to jail.

I emphasize that the beauty of a jail sentence is that it protects the line access officers and lets them exercise their judgement properly without being bullied from above.

I endorse this principle 100%. It will open doors everywhere if we can get some sort of jail sentences for those people who would flaunt the bill.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on Bill C-208, an act to amend the Access to Information Act.

First, I would like to congratulate the government member who is introducing this bill, the hon. member for Brampton—West—Mississauga. It goes to show clearly that private member’s bills are crucial to the vitality of this House.

This enactment provides sanctions against any person who improperly destroys or falsifies government records in an attempt to deny right of access to information under the Access to Information Act.

Right now, the Access to Information Act does not provide severe enough sanctions for this type of violation. Section 67 reads as follows:

67. (1) No person shall obstruct the Information Commissioner or any person acting on behalf or under the direction of the Commissioner in the performance of the Commissioner’s duties and functions under this Act.

This is serious. What are the sanctions?

(2) Every person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars.

Nowadays, \$1,000 is not a lot of money.

Bill C-208 is a bit more realistic. It makes it a criminal offence for anyone who tries to destroy or falsify official records or who omits to keep such records. Anyone found guilty of this offence is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to both. Already we see that the penalties are much heavier.

• (1430)

The obvious purpose of this bill is to meet, at least in part, the concerns raised by the information commissioner in his last two annual reports. But I believe that it is specifically designed to meet the concerns of the public in Canada and in Quebec. This is especially true following the Somalia inquiry, when people found out, in very disturbing circumstances, that truth with a capital *T* was not reality in government backrooms.

In fact, the awareness that this inquiry created in the public now makes it absolutely necessary that a bill like the one we have before us, Bill C-208, be adopted.

In his 1995-1996 annual report, the information commissioner expressed his deep concern that the Access to Information Act was not being rigorously enforced. This is what he had to say "After 13 years of operation of this Act, it is unfortunate to have to report several very disturbing manoeuvres to hinder the right of access to government documents, including destruction, falsification and cover-up". It should be noted that the commissioner's office conducted investigations into three major incidents during 1995-1996. That was only the tip of the iceberg.

For example, at Transport Canada, a high official—there are not tens of thousands of them—ordered his staff to destroy every copy of an audit report dealing with a project on which he knew that an access to information request had been made.

At National Defence, a journalist alleging that certain documents had been falsified before release to him under the Access to Information Act asked the commissioner to investigate. The outcome of the investigation was that the journalist's allegations were correct. Not only had the documents been tampered with before release, but orders had been given afterward to destroy the originals. What is very worrisome about this, is that those orders came from high up.

The information commissioner's third example comes from Health Canada. During the sittings of the Krever commission, testimony revealed that minutes of Canadian Blood Committee meetings had been destroyed in the late 1980s. According to the commissioner, the time has come to amend the Access to Information Act to provide sanctions in the event of flagrant violations of its provisions. He added that legislation considered toothless is rapidly depleted of content, if not totally cast aside.

To go from that to saying that the current legislation is almost meaningless is but a short hop.

Again in his 1996-97 annual report the commissioner repeats that the current legislation cannot be effectively enforced. On the subject of tainted blood specifically, the commissioner calls the lawmakers to task saying that the deplorable examples of measures taken by officials to destroy information had sounded the alarm. As recommended in last year's report, the Access to Information Act should make it an offence to commit any act or omission aimed at denying rights provided under the act. Such an offence should carry a penalty of at least five years imprisonment, which this bill provides.

In short, how many reports will the commissioner have to write before the government and the members of the House of Commons get the message that it is time for reform? How long will we have to wait before we pass new sanctions that will make it clear to

Private Members' Business

managers and officials that the right to access to information is not to be denied and that to do so will result in sanctions.

• (1435)

Bill C-208 is a commendable piece of legislation, which we will support enthusiastically. However, it must be noted that this reform is incomplete in many respects. But we all know that anything can be improved. For example, we must be aware of the fact that documents subject to an access to information request are seldom destroyed or falsified by those who will really benefit from their disappearance. Indeed, in many cases, the order to take such actions comes from a superior or a high official.

The bill as drafted does not make any distinction between the person who commits the offence and the person who benefits from the offence. Therefore, the Access to Information Act should prohibit any employer or any person in a position of authority within a federal institution from retaliating or threatening to retaliate against a person who refuses to destroy or falsify a document.

A complete bill should include three types of offences: first, destroying or falsifying documents; second, ordering the destruction or falsification of documents; and third, retaliating against a person who refuses to destroy or falsify documents.

We believe the intent of Bill C-208 is commendable, and that is why we will support it. That is also why we hope to have the opportunity at some point to discuss Bill C-286, which deals with the falsification and destruction of documents, but also with access to confidential Privy Council documents.

[English]

Ms. Louise Hardy (Yukon, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. It indicates one of the reasons why we need parliamentary reform, to bring more power to the elected representatives of the people of Canada and to develop a system far more responsive to the needs of the citizens rather than protecting a non-accountable system.

There is a need for toughening up Canada's Access to Information Act to stop officials from tampering with right of Canadians to know the real facts and figures on policy, analyses and decisions. There is a need to put strong sanctions to penalize those destroying public information and sabotaging the public's right to know.

There is nothing in place to penalize offenders. The government has ignored calls from Information Commissioner John Grace. It his last two reports the commissioner has been calling for sanctions. There has been as of yet no action.

Canadians are increasingly cynical of government structures. When we see what some non-accountable bureaucrats or officials are doing and the cloud of secrecy behind government action, we can see that there is need to reform the overall governance system

Private Members' Business

and to make clear and accountable to citizens of this country all information on how decisions were made.

Penalties should be addressed not only to those destroying information but to those who delay access to information and to other abuses connected to the access to information.

The power of the information commissioner needs to be expanded to include stopping the growing circumvention of access to information documents. There is a growing tendency, as I have experienced, for information to define some documents as working papers or consultant papers.

I had applied for some documents and was told they were confidential. These very same documents had already been presented in two different public forums. It took a letter to the minister outlining this decision to get these papers. As everyone here knows, to do our job we need information and we need access to it on an honest and fairly quick basis.

There is a need to expand the concept of public records if we want to have an informed citizenship on policy development and implementation.

The number records under the Access to Information Act must be expanded to include certain crown corporations and restricted consultants and other reports. There is need to implement policies to protect professional civil servants willing to provide information on issues of significance for citizens of this country.

The repressive policy of enforcing secrecy at all levels must be eliminated.

• (1440)

This act will strengthen democracy in Canada because democracy is about discussion, not about force. We need the information to make good decisions. It is also about public trust, accountability and credibility, and about our credibility, yours and mine, for the people who sit here because we depend on the availability of information from the bureaucrats who form the foundation of our government.

In conclusion, I urge all members to support this bill as it will show the public that we are sincere in our work and sincere in allowing it access to information as much as ourselves.

Mr. Mark Muisse (West Nova, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-208, an act to amend the Access to Information Act.

It is well known that the Access to Information Act does not have enough teeth and actually even the information commissioner has said so in his most recent report.

Bill C-208 makes it an offence for a person who, with intent to deny a right of access under the Access to Information Act, destroys, mutilates or alters a record, falsifies a record or makes a false entry in a record or does not keep required records. A person found guilty would be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or to a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or both.

This is a very simple amendment that will give more teeth to this act.

For some time now Canadians have been losing confidence in their public institutions and especially in government. Canadians need to know that their federal government is truly working on their behalf and truly working well. Otherwise, people feel that both their votes and their taxes are wasted.

The Access to Information Act is one of the tools for the public to achieve that objective and this amendment proposed in Bill C-208 is simply helping to make the law more complete. The amendment will give more visibility, more access and more teeth to the Access to Information Act by including strong penalties for those who do their utmost to prevent its application.

That is not to say that more could not have been done to improve the act. For example, amendments could have been proposed to allow the public to have access to documents of the privy council which are currently confidential. In fact, many other amendments reflecting the information commissioner's concerns and expectations could have been tabled at the same time.

I am pleased to say that the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada will support this private member's bill and we invite all other parties to do so. We believe that this bill is a step forward in opening up the government to more public scrutiny and giving Canadians a stronger sense of public control and identity with their public institutions.

Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to begin by commending my colleague, the hon. member for Brampton West—Mississauga, for bringing this important issue for debate before the House and for her continued commitment to safeguarding the rights of Canadian citizens and assuring, as a representative of the people, that government becomes more open and accountable.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak on Bill C-208. The bill proposes to add to the Access to Information Act an infraction for destroying documents that are subject to the act with intent to deny access.

Before talking about the specifics of the bill, I wish to take a moment to provide some background to my comments. Canadians have had the benefit of a federal Access to Information Act since 1983.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

For fifteen years now, Canadians have enjoyed a high degree of access to federal government information. I must emphasize that Canada is one of the rare countries where such legislative measures exist. The law states that access must be granted to information on the federal government.

The government can only refuse access to information on the basis of a few very specific exceptions. Whenever the government refuses access to information, people have the legal right to file a complaint with the information commissioner and to have the government's decision reviewed by the federal court.

● (1445)

Access to government information is a fundamental right in a democratic system. Earlier this year, the Supreme Court of Canada stated that the overriding goal of legislation concerning access to information was to promote democracy.

As the court ruled, in *Dagg v. Minister of Finance, 1997*, the purpose of the right to have access to information held by the government is to improve government operations by making the government more efficient, receptive and accountable.

In fact, in totalitarian states, the people are denied this right and, as a result, they do not have this means of making the government accountable.

[English]

This is not to say that our Access to Information Act could not be improved upon and brought more up to date. I believe the hon. member is trying to improve the act with the amendment proposed in Bill C-208.

One can argue that there is a gap in the protection currently offered by the act since it does not contain a penalty for the deliberate alteration or destruction of a record. The act does contain a penalty but it is a penalty for obstructing the work of the information commissioner.

The act also authorizes the commissioner to disclose to the Attorney General of Canada information relating to the commission of an offence against any law of Canada by any officer or employee of a federal government institution. The bill before us today would add an offence for actions that one can legitimately see as actions that intend to defeat the purpose of the act.

For that reason, I would agree with the hon. member that the Access to Information Act should include a penalty for deliberately destroying documents that are subject to the act. I believe that such an action is unacceptable and therefore should be punished. For this reason, I support the general goal of Bill C-208. Did I surprise you? I do not however support the specifics of the bill and I will explain.

[Translation]

It could be argued that section 126 of the Criminal Code applies to a situation where a person wilfully destroys a document for the purpose of impeding the right to access provided under the Access to Information Act. Section 126 of the Criminal Code provides that "Every one who, without lawful excuse, contravenes an Act of Parliament by wilfully doing anything that it forbids—is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years".

The stiffness of the penalty provided in section 126 could make some wonder whether it is necessary to provide a penalty in the Access to Information Act for wilfully destroying documents that are subject to the act. They have in mind a specific penalty that would not be quite as harsh as the maximum of two years' imprisonment in section 126 for committing such a criminal act.

I am of the opinion that the penalty in the Criminal Code is probably too harsh and that, if a specific penalty is added to the Access to Information Act, it should be less harsh than the penalty now provided for in section 126 of the Criminal Code.

[English]

What is proposed in Bill C-208? It is to create an indictable offence with a maximum penalty of five years in prison which is a heavier penalty than the penalty provided for in section 126. For this reason, I cannot support the specifics of Bill C-208. I understand the hon. member wants to make the point that the destruction or alteration of documents is serious and we all agree it is but it should also be put into perspective.

In my view, a maximum of five years is too heavy a penalty for destroying documents. This penalty would be more severely punished than the offence of assault causing bodily harm, which is a hybrid offence that carries a maximum penalty of 18 months when prosecuted on summary conviction. Destroying documents, while undoubtedly serious, cannot be compared to assault causing bodily harm.

● (1450)

[Translation]

I wish to make another comment regarding the offence provided for in Bill C-208. When an offence is a criminal one, the accused may choose to appear before a judge and jury. This is a slow process.

In addition, an individual charged with a criminal offence is entitled to a preliminary hearing, which can also slow down the judicial process.

In my opinion, the destruction of documents is more comparable to the offence of mischief with respect to property, now provided for under section 430 of the Criminal Code. This is a hybrid offence and the maximum penalty, if the Crown decides to proceed by way

Private Members' Business

of indictment, is two years' imprisonment. But, if the Crown decides to proceed by way of summary conviction, the maximum penalty is a \$2,000 fine or six months' imprisonment, or both.

[English]

To conclude, I believe the need to create an offence for deliberate destruction of records in order to thwart the Access to Information Act is an issue that should be considered within the context of the reform of the act. I believe a case can be made that the addition of such an offence would strengthen the principles of openness and accountability that are inherent in the access to information legislation.

I also believe that particular attention should be paid to determining the appropriate sentence to be attached to the offence, which would be proportional to penalties provided for comparable offences.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, since my speech is extemporaneous, I shall address the question in a general term with respect to justice and doing things that are right in the country. I am not that rich on specific details on the bill since I have not had an opportunity to study the minute details.

I would like to comment on the statements we have just heard from the parliamentary secretary. It seems to me there is a habit in this House whenever a private member brings forward a motion. Even though it is filled with common sense and a lot of good ideas which are very useful and very broadly supported among Canadians, the Liberal government for the last four years plus a little bit has almost always been in opposition to the private member's initiative. It usually finds some small technical point.

For example, the parliamentary secretary spoke of the variance in sentencing for one misdemeanour versus another one. She said why should this sentence be greater than another one where the criminal offence seems to be more offensive to Canadians. We could say that over and over.

For example a person who under the new gun registration law fails simply to report the sale of a hunting rifle could end up with a greater penalty than a young person who killed someone. That is also an aberration in the sentencing structure and it is not sufficient reason to say we should just be against this whole bill.

I urge the government to support this initiative. The government should support it so that the bill will go to committee and when it is studied in committee, perhaps the committee in its wisdom will amend the sentencing structure so that at least we get something that will protect Canadians.

One has to ask the question, what is justice and on what is justice based? I contend that it is based on truth. Whether it is a civil suit

or a criminal case, someone is charged with an offence. In many cases we simply want to hold the government accountable. We want to find out what has happened. Have they done something that is wrong? Is there some accountability question?

I believe we err greatly if we get so tied up in our dealings with government, whether it is in the justice system or in any other system, and the truth is not available. Frankly, if a government official or someone in some other organization does something which is offensive to someone else and it is a chargeable offence, then they should have to meet those charges. The whole issue at stake here is the altering of documents which are being requested under access to information from government departments. Why on earth would we want to support a system which provides for the production of documentation which is false? There ought to be very strong penalties and strong deterrents against that type of thing.

• (1455)

Whether a person from the media, a person from the official opposition or one of the other opposition parties or indeed even a member from the government side wants to know what has happened, they should be able to get documentation which accurately reflects the truth. That is the heart of the issue here.

I strongly urge the government to support this bill so that when it goes to committee, sure, if there is something that it is not totally supportive of, let us work together. Let us make the bill work on behalf of Canadians, on behalf of the taxpayers of the country, on behalf of the victims of whatever the case is.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what you do for your bedtime reading, but the other night for my bedtime reading I was reading the deal struck with the former prime minister and the justice department on this Airbus scandal. When I was reading it I found it intriguing in one place. It said "The parties agree that" and then they went on to say that this was done strictly by the RCMP and by no one else.

I have a suspicion when I read words like that. If this is actual fact, why would one have to agree to it? It is as if we agree to say something that is not really quite true but it is a term of the agreement which gets us out of the conflict. That ought not to be. We ought to deal honestly, we ought to deal openly, we ought to deal truthfully with one another in all of these instances.

I hesitate to raise this example because it is very old. In fact, I will not be specific. I will just mention it in general. When I had some access to information requests several years ago, I received information back from the department that I had requested with a great amount of the document whited out. It was altered so that I could not see the truth. I was unable to reconcile the questions

which were troubling us because we were not able to get at the truth.

There was, of course, a justification by the President of the Treasury Board who said that these things were justifiably whited out but that was a legal technicality, one with which we disagreed. The effect of it was that the truth was hidden from us. We were not able to get down to the facts of the issue. So there was a cover-up. There was a whiteout of the actual facts.

We believe very strongly that for justice to prevail on behalf of Canadians, irrespective of what the issue is, we should be able to find out who did this, who did what, when did they do it and where did they do it. There should be answers to all of those questions which are totally reliable. Those documents must not be alterable simply to cover someone's, shall I use the phrase, political butt because they do not want to face the consequences. There should be total honesty and openness in the access to information that citizens, reporters and others ask for.

I also think that on a very broad basis the justice system and the government in general have an obligation. When they were running for election in 1993, the Liberals said "We will restore the confidence of Canadians in the integrity of their government". That was their promise.

Private Members' Business

I think right here in this bill they have another opportunity to make an attempt to fulfil that promise, a promise I venture to propose is not anywhere near being filled at this stage.

• (1500)

They have an opportunity here by saying yes, we will take all the measures we possibly can to make sure that access to information requests will reveal the truth of the matter. This is absolutely mandatory. It is an opportunity for the Liberal government. I urge the government to be in favour of this.

I have one point with respect to private members' business. I really hope that all private members, including Liberal backbenchers, everyone, will judge this bill on its merits and will truly vote what they believe and not be instructed by those who have some other political agenda.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

It being 3.01 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 3.01 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. GILBERT PARENT

The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. IAN McCLELLAND

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MRS. YOLANDE THIBEAULT

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. GILBERT PARENT (CHAIRMAN)

HON. DON BOUDRIA, P.C.

HON. ALFONSO GAGLIANO, P.C.

MR. STÉPHANE BERGERON

MR. BILL BLAIKIE

MS. MARLENE CATTERALL

MR. BOB KILGER

MR. PETER MACKAY

MR. PETER MILLIKEN

MR. CHUCK STRAHL

MR. RANDY WHITE

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session – Thirty-sixth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay — Columbia	British Columbia	Ref.
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary — Nose Hill	Alberta	Ref.
Adams, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Peterborough	Ontario	Lib.
Alarie, Hélène	Louis-Hébert	Quebec	BQ
Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	Lib.
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	Ref.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Victoria	British Columbia	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Quebec	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Brampton Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	Quebec	BQ
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke — Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Axworthy, Chris	Saskatoon — Rosetown — Biggar	Saskatchewan	NDP
Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Bachand, André	Richmond — Arthabaska	Quebec	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Bailey, Roy	Souris — Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Baker, George S.	Gander — Grand Falls	Newfoundland	Lib.
Bakopanos, Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Ahuntsic	Quebec	Lib.
Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West — Mississauga	Ontario	Lib.
Bélair, Réginald	Timmins — James Bay	Ontario	Lib.
Bélanger, Mauril	Ottawa — Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier — Montcalm	Quebec	BQ
Bellemare, Eugène	Carleton — Gloucester	Ontario	Lib.
Bennett, Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon E.	Lakeland	Alberta	Ref.
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères	Quebec	BQ
Bernier, Gilles	Tobique — Mactaquac	New Brunswick	PC
Bernier, Yvan	Bonaventure — Gaspé — Îles-de-la-Madeleine — Pabok	Quebec	BQ
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac — Gatineau — Labelle	Quebec	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Maurizio	Vaughan — King — Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont	Quebec	BQ
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg — Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth)	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonwick, Paul	Simcoe — Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Borotsik, Rick	Brandon — Souris	Manitoba	PC
Boudria, Hon. Don, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Glengarry — Prescott — Russell	Ontario	Lib.
Bradshaw, Claudette, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	Moncton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Cliff	Yellowhead	Alberta	Ref.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton — Melville	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	Quebec	BQ
Brison, Scott	Kings — Hants	Nova Scotia	PC
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Bryden, John	Wentworth — Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Bulte, Sarmite	Parkdale — High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Byrne, Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Humber — St. Barbe — Baie Verte	Newfoundland	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	British Columbia	Ref.
Calder, Murray	Dufferin — Peel — Wellington — Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Canuel, René	Matapédia — Matane	Quebec	BQ
Caplan, Elinor	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Carroll, Aileen	Barrie — Simcoe — Bradford	Ontario	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland — Colchester	Nova Scotia	PC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	Ref.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West — Nepean	Ontario	Lib.
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Federal Office of Regional Development — Quebec)	Outremont	Quebec	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	Guelph — Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon	Anjou — Rivière-des-Prairies	Quebec	Lib.
Charest, Hon. Jean J.	Sherbrooke	Quebec	PC
Chatters, David	Athabasca	Alberta	Ref.
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Quebec	Lib.
Chrétien, Jean-Guy	Frontenac — Mégantic	Quebec	BQ
Clouthier, Hec	Renfrew — Nipissing — Pembroke	Ontario	Lib.
Coderre, Denis	Bourassa	Quebec	Lib.
Cohen, Shaughnessy	Windsor — St. Clair	Ontario	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay — Nipigon	Ontario	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Ontario	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska — Rivière-du-Loup — Témiscouata — Les Basques	Quebec	BQ
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta — South Richmond	British Columbia	Ref.
Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	Quebec	BQ
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
de Savoye, Pierre	Portneuf	Quebec	BQ
Debien, Maud	Laval East	Quebec	BQ
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière	Quebec	BQ
DeVillers, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Simcoe North	Ontario	Lib.
Dhaliwal, Hon. Harbance Singh, Minister of National Revenue	Vancouver South — Burnaby	British Columbia	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent — Cartierville	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Discepolo, Nick, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Vaudreuil — Soulanges	Quebec	Lib.
Dockrill, Michelle	Bras d'Or	Nova Scotia	NDP
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland	PC
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay — Atikokan	Ontario	Lib.
Drouin, Claude	Beauce	Quebec	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis	Quebec	BQ
Dubé, Jean	Madawaska — Restigouche	New Brunswick	PC
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier — Sainte-Marie	Quebec	BQ
Duhamel, Hon. Ronald J., Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification)	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil — Papineau	Quebec	BQ
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	Ref.
Earle, Gordon	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	NDP
Easter, Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Arthur C., Minister of National Defence	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Elley, Reed	Nanaimo — Cowichan	British Columbia	Ref.
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	Alberta	Ref.
Finestone, Hon. Sheila	Mount Royal	Quebec	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Ontario	Lib.
Folco, Raymonde	Laval West	Quebec	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster — Coquitlam — Burnaby	British Columbia	Ref.
Fournier, Ghislain	Manicouagan	Quebec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women)	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Saint-Léonard — Saint-Michel	Quebec	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Quebec	BQ
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia — Lambton	Ontario	Lib.
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval	Quebec	BQ
Gilmour, Bill	Nanaimo — Alberni	British Columbia	Ref.
Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne	Jonquière	Quebec	BQ
Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Maurice	Châteauguay	Quebec	BQ
Godin, Yvon	Acadie — Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	Ref.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Gouk, Jim	West Kootenay — Okanagan	British Columbia	Ref.
Graham, Bill	Toronto Centre — Rosedale	Ontario	Lib.
Gray, Hon. Herb, Deputy Prime Minister	Windsor West	Ontario	Lib.
Grewal, Gurmant	Surrey Central	British Columbia	Ref.
Grey, Deborah	Edmonton North	Alberta	Ref.
Grose, Ivan	Oshawa	Ontario	Lib.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	Quebec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport — Montmorency — Orléans	Quebec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	Ref.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Hardy, Louise	Yukon	Yukon	NDP
Harris, Dick	Prince George — Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	Ref.
Hart, Jim	Okanagan — Coquihalla	British Columbia	Ref.
Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Charleswood — Assiniboine	Manitoba	Lib.
Harvey, André	Chicoutimi	Quebec	PC
Herron, John	Fundy — Royal	New Brunswick	PC
Hill, Grant	Macleod	Alberta	Ref.
Hill, Jay	Prince George — Peace River	British Columbia	Ref.
Hilstrom, Howard	Selkirk — Interlake	Manitoba	Ref.
Hoepfner, Jake E.	Portage — Lisgar	Manitoba	Ref.
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity — Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Iftody, David	Provencher	Manitoba	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Bruce — Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton — Strathcona	Alberta	Ref.
Jennings, Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce — Lachine	Quebec	Lib.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	Ref.
Jones, Jim	Markham	Ontario	PC
Jordan, Joe	Leeds — Grenville	Ontario	Lib.
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough — Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore	Nova Scotia	PC
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	Ref.
Kerpan, Allan	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Keyes, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	Hamilton West	Ontario	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont — Dundas	Ontario	Lib.
Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)	Edmonton Southeast	Alberta	Lib.
Knutson, Gar	Elgin — Middlesex — London	Ontario	Lib.
Konrad, Derrek	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	York North	Ontario	Lib.
Laliberte, Rick	Churchill River	Saskatchewan	NDP
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	Quebec	BQ
Lastewka, Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry	St. Catharines	Ontario	Lib.
Laurin, René	Joliette	Quebec	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun — Saint-Henri	Quebec	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	Quebec	BQ
Lee, Derek	Scarborough — Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lefebvre, Réjean	Champlain	Quebec	BQ
Leung, Sophia	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	Lib.
Lill, Wendy	Dartmouth	Nova Scotia	NDP
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Quebec	Lib.
Longfield, Judi	Whitby — Ajax	Ontario	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe — Bagot	Quebec	BQ
Lowther, Eric	Calgary Centre	Alberta	Ref.
Lunn, Gary	Saanich — Gulf Islands	British Columbia	Ref.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Labour	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
MacKay, Peter	Pictou — Antigonish — Guysborough	Nova Scotia	PC
Mahoney, Steve	Mississauga West	Ontario	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea — Gore — Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie — Lincoln	Ontario	Lib.
Mancini, Peter	Sydney — Victoria	Nova Scotia	NDP
Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Preston, Leader of the Opposition	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	Ref.
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg	Quebec	BQ
Marchand, Jean-Paul	Québec East	Quebec	BQ
Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister for International Trade	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin — Swan River	Manitoba	Ref.
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt — Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Ref.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Hon. Paul, Minister of Finance	LaSalle — Émard	Quebec	Lib.
Massé, Hon. Marcel, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	Hull — Aylmer	Quebec	Lib.
Matthews, Bill	Burin — St. George's	Newfoundland	PC
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo — Chilcotin	British Columbia	Ref.
McClelland, Ian, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Edmonton Southwest	Alberta	Ref.
McCormick, Larry	Hastings — Frontenac — Lennox and Addington	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, John	Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Edmonton West	Alberta	Lib.
McNally, Grant	Dewdney — Alouette	British Columbia	Ref.
McTeague, Dan	Pickering — Ajax — Uxbridge	Ontario	Lib.
McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga — Maisonneuve	Quebec	BQ
Mercier, Paul	Terrebonne — Blainville	Quebec	BQ
Meredith, Val	South Surrey — White Rock — Langley	British Columbia	Ref.
Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Bonavista — Trinity — Conception	Newfoundland	Lib.
Milliken, Peter, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	Ref.
Mills, Dennis J.	Broadview — Greenwood	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Maria, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Beaches — East York	Ontario	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Parks)	Parry Sound — Muskoka	Ontario	Lib.
Morrison, Lee	Cypress Hills — Grasslands	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Muise, Mark	West Nova	Nova Scotia	PC
Murray, Ian	Lanark — Carleton	Ontario	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Waterloo — Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Kenora — Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food (Fisheries and Oceans)	Bellechasse — Etchemins — Montmagny — L'Islet	Quebec	Lib.
Nunziata, John	York South — Weston	Ontario	Ind.
Nystrom, Lorne	Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	NDP
O'Brien, Lawrence D.	Labrador	Newfoundland	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London — Fanshawe	Ontario	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Victoria — Haliburton	Ontario	Lib.
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	Alberta	Ref.
Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Winnipeg North — St. Paul	Manitoba	Lib.
Pankiw, Jim	Saskatoon — Humboldt ...	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Paradis, Denis	Brome — Missisquoi	Quebec	Lib.
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Niagara Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Pierrefonds — Dollard	Quebec	Lib.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Alberta	Ref.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles—A.	Saint—Eustache — Sainte— Thérèse	Quebec	BQ
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development	Papineau — Saint—Denis ..	Quebec	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Quebec	BQ
Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Kent — Essex	Ontario	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Ontario	Lib.
Plamondon, Louis	Richelieu	Quebec	BQ
Power, Charlie	St. John's West	Newfoundland	PC
Pratt, David	Nepean — Carleton	Ontario	Lib.
Price, David	Compton — Stanstead	Quebec	PC
Proctor, Dick	Palliser	Saskatchewan	NDP
Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs	Hillsborough	Prince Edward Island ..	Lib.
Provenzano, Carmen	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	Lib.
Ramsay, Jack	Crowfoot	Alberta	Ref.
Redman, Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Reed, Julian, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Halton	Ontario	Lib.
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver — Sunshine Coast	British Columbia	Ref.
Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence	Perth — Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops	British Columbia	NDP
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords — Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration ...	Westmount — Ville—Marie	Quebec	Lib.
Robinson, Svend J.	Burnaby — Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois—Rivières	Quebec	BQ
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Health	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Saada, Jacques	Brossard — La Prairie	Quebec	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	Quebec	BQ
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	British Columbia	Ref.
Scott, Hon. Andy, Solicitor General of Canada	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	British Columbia	Ref.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming — Cochrane	Ontario	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Ontario	Lib.
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Alberta	Ref.
Solomon, John	Regina — Lumsden — Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	NDP
Speller, Bob	Haldimand — Norfolk — Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma — Manitoulin	Ontario	Lib.
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	Quebec	BQ
St-Jacques, Diane	Shefford	Quebec	PC
St-Julien, Guy	Abitibi	Quebec	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron — Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine, Minister of the Environment	Northumberland	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan — Shuswap	British Columbia	Ref.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville — Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	British Columbia	Ref.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew	Kitchener — Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Saint-Lambert	Quebec	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	Charlotte	New Brunswick	PC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	Ref.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Tremblay, Stéphan	Lac-Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski — Mitis	Quebec	BQ
Turp, Daniel	Beauharnois — Salaberry	Quebec	BQ
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton — Kent — Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Valeri, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	Stoney Creek	Ontario	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward — Hastings	Ontario	Lib.
Vautour, Angela	Beauséjour — Petitcodiac	New Brunswick	NDP
Vellacott, Maurice	Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Bruno — Saint-Hubert	Quebec	BQ
Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Eglinton — Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	New Brunswick	PC
Whelan, Susan	Essex	Ontario	Lib.
White, Randy	Langley — Abbotsford	British Columbia	Ref.
White, Ted	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Ref.
Wilfert, Bryon	Oak Ridges	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	St. Albert	Alberta	Ref.
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Ontario	Lib.
VACANCY	Port Moody — Coquitlam	British Columbia	

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib.—Liberal; Ref.—Reform Party of Canada; BQ—Bloc Québécois; NDP—New Democratic Party; PC—Progressive Conservative; Ind.—Independent.

Anyone wishing to communicate with House of Commons members is invited to communicate with either the Member's constituency or Parliament Hill offices.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session — Thirty—sixth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (26)		
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	Ref.
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Ref.
Benoit, Leon E.	Lakeland	Ref.
Breitkreuz, Cliff	Yellowhead	Ref.
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Ref.
Chatters, David	Athabasca	Ref.
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	Ref.
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Ref.
Grey, Deborah	Edmonton North	Ref.
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Ref.
Hill, Grant	Macleod	Ref.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Ref.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Ref.
Kenney, Jason	Calgary Southeast	Ref.
Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)	Edmonton Southeast	Lib.
Lowther, Eric	Calgary Centre	Ref.
Manning, Preston, Leader of the Opposition	Calgary Southwest	Ref.
McClelland, Ian, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Edmonton Southwest	Ref.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Edmonton West	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Ref.
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	Ref.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Ref.
Ramsay, Jack	Crowfoot	Ref.
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Ref.
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Ref.
Williams, John	St. Albert	Ref.
BRITISH COLUMBIA (32)		
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay—Columbia	Ref.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Victoria	Lib.
Cadman, Chuck	Surrey North	Ref.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia—Pacific)	Richmond	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—South Richmond	Ref.
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Dhaliwal, Hon. Harbance Singh, Minister of National Revenue	Vancouver South—Burnaby	Lib.
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	Ref.
Elley, Reed	Nanaimo—Cowichan	Ref.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster—Coquitlam— Burnaby	Ref.
Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women)	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Gilmour, Bill	Nanaimo—Alberni	Ref.
Gouk, Jim	West Kootenay—Okanagan	Ref.
Grewal, Gurmant	Surrey Central	Ref.
Harris, Dick	Prince George—Bulkley Valley	Ref.
Hart, Jim	Okanagan—Coquihalla	Ref.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Hill, Jay	Prince George—Peace River	Ref.
Leung, Sophia	Vancouver Kingsway	Lib.
Lunn, Gary	Saanich—Gulf Islands	Ref.
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Ref.
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo—Chilcotin	Ref.
McNally, Grant	Dewdney—Alouette	Ref.
McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Meredith, Val	South Surrey—White Rock—Langley	Ref.
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast	Ref.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops	NDP
Robinson, Svend J.	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	Ref.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	Ref.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan—Shuswap	Ref.
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	Ref.
White, Randy	Langley—Abbotsford	Ref.
White, Ted	North Vancouver	Ref.
VACANCY	Port Moody—Coquitlam	

MANITOBA (14)

Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Lib.
Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg—Transcona	NDP
Borotsik, Rick	Brandon—Souris	PC
Desjarlais, Bev	Churchill	NDP
Duhamel, Hon. Ronald J., Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification)	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Charleswood—Assiniboine	Lib.
Hilstrom, Howard	Selkirk—Interlake	Ref.
Hoepfner, Jake E.	Portage—Lisgar	Ref.
Iftody, David	Provencher	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River	Ref.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Winnipeg North—St. Paul	Lib.
Wasylcia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North Centre	NDP

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Bernier, Gilles	Tobique—Mactaquac	PC
Bradshaw, Claudette, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	Moncton	Lib.
Dubé, Jean	Madawaska—Restigouche	PC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Herron, John	Fundy—Royal	PC
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy, Solicitor General of Canada	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	Charlotte	PC
Vautour, Angela	Beauséjour—Petitcodiac	NDP
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	PC

NEWFOUNDLAND (7)

Baker, George S.	Gander—Grand Falls	Lib.
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Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Byrne, Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	PC
Mathews, Bill	Burin—St. George's	PC
Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Bonavista—Trinity—Conception	Lib.
O'Brien, Lawrence D.	Labrador	Lib.
Power, Charlie	St. John's West	PC
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (2)		
Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth)	Western Arctic	Lib.
Karetak—Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Lib.
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brison, Scott	Kings—Hants	PC
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester	PC
Dockrill, Michelle	Bras d'Or	NDP
Earle, Gordon	Halifax West	NDP
Keddy, Gerald	South Shore	PC
Lill, Wendy	Dartmouth	NDP
MacKay, Peter	Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough	PC
Mancini, Peter	Sydney—Victoria	NDP
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	NDP
Muise, Mark	West Nova	PC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
ONTARIO (99)		
Adams, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Peterborough	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Brampton Centre	Lib.
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West—Mississauga	Lib.
Bélair, Réginald	Timmins—James Bay	Lib.
Bélanger, Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bellemare, Eugène	Carleton—Gloucester	Lib.
Bennett, Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Maurizio	Vaughan—King—Aurora	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Bonwick, Paul	Simcoe—Grey	Lib.
Boudria, Hon. Don, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Bryden, John	Wentworth—Burlington	Lib.
Bulte, Sarmite	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Lib.
Calder, Murray	Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Caplan, Elinor	Thornhill	Lib.
Carroll, Aileen	Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West—Nepean	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	Guelph—Wellington	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Clouthier, Hec	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Lib.
Cohen, Shaughnessy	Windsor—St. Clair	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay—Nipigon	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Lib.
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
DeVillers, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Simcoe North	Lib.
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Arthur C., Minister of National Defence	York Centre	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London North Centre	Lib.
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia—Lambton	Lib.
Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage	Don Valley West	Lib.
Graham, Bill	Toronto Centre—Rosedale	Lib.
Gray, Hon. Herb, Deputy Prime Minister	Windsor West	Lib.
Grose, Ivan	Oshawa	Lib.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Lib.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity—Spadina	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Bruce—Grey	Lib.
Jones, Jim	Markham	PC
Jordan, Joe	Leeds—Grenville	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Keyes, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	Hamilton West	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont—Dundas	Lib.
Knutson, Gar	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	York North	Lib.
Lastewka, Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry	St. Catharines	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Longfield, Judi	Whitby—Ajax	Lib.
Mahoney, Steve	Mississauga West	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie—Lincoln	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry	Ottawa South	Lib.
Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister for International Trade	York West	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie	Sudbury	Lib.
McCormick, Larry	Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Lib.
McKay, John	Scarborough East	Lib.
McTeague, Dan	Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge	Lib.
Milliken, Peter, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Mills, Dennis J.	Broadview—Greenwood	Lib.
Minna, Maria, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Parks)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Lib.
Murray, Ian	Lanark—Carleton	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Waterloo—Wellington	Lib.
Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Kenora—Rainy River	Lib.
Nunziata, John	York South—Weston	Ind.
O'Brien, Pat	London—Fanshawe	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Victoria—Haliburton	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Niagara Centre	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga Centre	Lib.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Lib.
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Willowdale	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Lib.
Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Kent—Essex	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Lib.
Pratt, David	Nepean—Carleton	Lib.
Provenzano, Carmen	Sault Ste. Marie	Lib.
Redman, Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reed, Julian, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Halton	Lib.
Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence	Perth—Middlesex	Lib.
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Health	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Lib.
Speller, Bob	Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine, Minister of the Environment	Northumberland	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Brant	Lib.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Lib.
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Lib.
Valeri, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	Stoney Creek	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward—Hastings	Lib.
Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Whelan, Susan	Essex	Lib.
Wilfert, Bryon	Oak Ridges	Lib.
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Lib.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Labour	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs	Hillsborough	Lib.

QUEBEC (75)

Alarie, Hélène	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	BQ
Bachand, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Bakopanos, Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Ahuntsic	Lib.
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier—Montcalm	BQ
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères	BQ
Bernier, Yvan	Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle	Lib.
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont	BQ
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	BQ
Canuel, René	Matapédia—Matane	BQ
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec)	Outremont	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon	Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies	Lib.
Charest, Hon. Jean J.	Sherbrooke	PC
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Lib.
Chrétien, Jean-Guy	Frontenac—Mégantic	BQ
Coderre, Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Dalphonde—Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	BQ
de Savoye, Pierre	Portneuf	BQ
Debien, Maud	Laval East	BQ
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbinière	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Discepolo, Nick, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Lib.
Drouin, Claude	Beauce	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil—Papineau	BQ
Finestone, Hon. Sheila	Mount Royal	Lib.
Folco, Raymonde	Laval West	Lib.
Fournier, Ghislain	Manicouagan	BQ
Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval	BQ
Girard—Bujold, Jocelyne	Jonquière	BQ
Godin, Maurice	Châteauguay	BQ
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans	BQ
Harvey, André	Chicoutimi	PC
Jennings, Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	BQ
Laurin, René	Joliette	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun—Saint-Henri	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	BQ
Lefebvre, Réjean	Champlain	BQ
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Marceau, Richard	Charlesbourg	BQ
Marchand, Jean-Paul	Québec East	BQ
Martin, Hon. Paul, Minister of Finance	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Massé, Hon. Marcel, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga—Maisonnette	BQ
Mercier, Paul	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food) (Fisheries and Oceans)	Bellechasse—Etchemins—Montmagny—L'Islet	Lib.
Paradis, Denis	Brome—Missisquoi	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles—A.	Saint—Eustache—Sainte—Thérèse	BQ
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development	Papineau—Saint—Denis	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Richelieu	BQ
Price, David	Compton—Stanstead	PC
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Westmount—Ville—Marie	Lib.
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois—Rivières	BQ
Saada, Jacques	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	BQ
St—Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	BQ
St—Jacques, Diane	Shefford	PC
St—Julien, Guy	Abitibi	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Saint—Lambert	Lib.
Tremblay, Stéphan	Lac—Saint—Jean	BQ
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski—Mitis	BQ
Turp, Daniel	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Venne, Pierrette	Saint—Bruno—Saint—Hubert	BQ
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Axworthy, Chris	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	NDP
Bailey, Roy	Souris—Moose Mountain	Ref.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Ref.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board	Wascana	Lib.
Kerpan, Allan	Blackstrap	Ref.
Konrad, Derrek	Prince Albert	Ref.
Laliberte, Rick	Churchill River	NDP
Morrison, Lee	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Ref.
Nystrom, Lorne	Qu’Appelle	NDP
Pankiw, Jim	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Ref.
Proctor, Dick	Palliser	NDP
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Ref.
Solomon, John	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	NDP
Vellacott, Maurice	Wanuskewin	Ref.
YUKON (1)		
Hardy, Louise	Yukon	NDP

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of December 5, 1997 — 1st Session, 36th Parliament)

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Chairman: Guy St-Julien

Vice-Chairmen: John Finlay
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Ghislain Fournier
Louise Hardy

David Iftody
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Gerald Keddy

Judi Longfield
Grant McNally
Lawrence O'Brien

Bernard Patry
Mike Scott
Bryon Wilfert

(16)

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René Canuel
Bill Casey

Pierre de Savoye
Gordon Earle
Reed Elley

Maurice Godin
Rick Laliberte

John Maloney
Maurice Vellacott

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Leon Benoit
Paul Bonwick
Rick Borotsik

Gerry Byrne
Jean-Guy Chrétien
Denis Coderre

John Harvard
Jake Hoepfner
Larry McCormick

Dick Proctor
Paul Steckle
Rose-Marie Ur

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Greg Thompson
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Sarmite Bulte
John Godfrey
Joe Jordan

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Deepak Obhrai
Pat O'Brien

Jacques Saada
Caroline St-Hilaire
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Monique Guay
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Francine Lalonde
Peter G. MacKay
Inky Mark
Rey Pagtakhan
Louis Plamondon
George Proud

Carmen Provenzano
Nelson Riis
Benoît Sauvageau
John Solomon
Elsie Wayne
Bob Wood

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Chairman: Dennis Mills

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Denis Coderre	Peter G. MacKay	George Proud	Suzanne Tremblay	(9)

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Sarmite Bulte	Steve Mahoney	Réal Ménard	Jacques Saada	(16)
Gordon Earle	John McKay	Maria Minna	Diane St-Jacques	
Jocelyne Girard-Bujold				

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Pierre Brien	Norman Doyle	Patrick Martin	Daniel Turp

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Rick Casson				

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Pierre Brien			

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David Iftody				

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Bob Mills

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TERM 17 OF THE TERMS OF UNION OF NEWFOUNDLAND

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Sheila Finestone
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Peter Goldring

Inky Mark
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Jason Kenney

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HON. GILBERT PARENT

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The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

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The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. IAN McCLELLAND

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MRS. YOLANDE THIBEAULT

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According to precedence

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The Hon. Herb Gray	Deputy Prime Minister
The Hon. Lloyd Axworthy	Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Hon. David M. Collenette	Minister of Transport
The Hon. David Anderson	Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
The Hon. Ralph E. Goodale	Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board
The Hon. Sheila Copps	Minister of Canadian Heritage
The Hon. Sergio Marchi	Minister for International Trade
The Hon. John Manley	Minister of Industry
The Hon. Diane Marleau	Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie
The Hon. Paul Martin	Minister of Finance
The Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton	Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Marcel Massé	President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure
The Hon. Anne McLellan	Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Hon. Allan Rock	Minister of Health
The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay	Minister of Labour
The Hon. Christine Stewart	Minister of the Environment
The Hon. Alfonso Gagliano	Minister of Public Works and Government Services
The Hon. Lucienne Robillard	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
The Hon. Fred Mifflin	Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
The Hon. Jane Stewart	Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
The Hon. Stéphane Dion	President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
The Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew	Minister of Human Resources Development
The Hon. Don Boudria	Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
The Hon. Alasdair Graham	Leader of the Government in the Senate
The Hon. Lyle Vanclief	Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
The Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal	Minister of National Revenue
The Hon. Andy Scott	Solicitor General of Canada
The Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew	Secretary of State (Children and Youth)
The Hon. Raymond Chan	Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)
The Hon. Martin Cauchon	Secretary of State (Federal Office of Regional Development – Quebec)
The Hon. Hedy Fry	Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women)
The Hon. David Kilgour	Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)
The Hon. Jim Peterson	Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)
The Hon. Ronald J. Duhamel	Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) (Western Economic Diversification)
The Hon. Andrew Mitchell	Secretary of State (Parks)
The Hon. Gilbert Normand	Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food)(Fisheries and Oceans)

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Ted McWhinney	to Minister of Foreign Affairs
Stan Keyes	to Minister of Transport
Wayne Easter	to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
Gerry Byrne	to Minister of Natural Resources
John Godfrey	to Minister of Canadian Heritage
Julian Reed	to Minister for International Trade
Walt Lastewka	to Minister of Industry
Claudette Bradshaw	to Minister for International Cooperation
Tony Valeri	to Minister of Finance
John Richardson	to Minister of National Defence
Ovid L. Jackson	to President of the Treasury Board
Eleni Bakopanos	to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
Joseph Volpe	to Minister of Health
Brenda Chamberlain	to Minister of Labour
Karen Kraft Sloan	to Minister of the Environment
Jerry Pickard	to Minister of Public Works and Government Services
Maria Minna	to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
George Proud	to Minister of Veterans Affairs
Bernard Patry	to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
Paul DeVillers	to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Robert D. Nault	to Minister of Human Resources Development
Peter Adams	to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons
John Harvard	to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Sue Barnes	to Minister of National Revenue
Nick Discepola	to Solicitor General of Canada

CONTENTS

Friday, December 5, 1997

Privilege

Private Members' Business—Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker 2787

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Canada Marine Act

Bill C-9. Third reading 2788
 Mr. Collenette 2788
 Mr. Collenette 2789
 Mr. Morrison 2791
 Mr. Guimond 2793
 Mr. Coderre 2793
 Mr. Guimond 2793

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Volunteers

Mr. Jackson 2794

Canada Pension Plan

Mr. Kerpan 2794

Women's Employment Resource Centre of Oxford

Mr. Finlay 2795

Violence Against Women

Mr. Mercier 2795

Food Banks

Ms. Parrish 2795

Violence Against Women

Mrs. Redman 2795

Violence Against Women

Mr. Ramsay 2796

Violence Against Women

Ms. Catterall 2796

Diane Francis

Ms. Dalphond-Guiral 2796

Violence Against Women

Ms. Bakopanos 2796

Violence Against Women

Mr. Cadman 2796

Violence Against Women

Mr. Saada 2797

Violence Against Women

Mrs. Dockrill 2797

Violence Against Women

Mr. Bellemare 2797

Firearms

Mr. Muise 2797

Violence Against Women

Mr. Harb 2798

Trevor Andrew

Mr. Brison 2798

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Taxation

Mr. Hart 2798
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2798
 Mr. Hart 2798
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2798
 Mr. Hart 2798
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2799
 Mr. Anders 2799
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2799
 Mr. Anders 2799
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2799

Calgary Declaration

Mr. Brien 2799
 Mr. Dion 2799
 Mr. Brien 2799
 Mr. Dion 2799
 Mr. Dion 2799

Millenium Fund

Mr. Tremblay 2800
 Mr. Gray 2800
 Mr. Tremblay 2800
 Mr. Gray 2800

Banks

Mr. Nystrom 2800
 Mr. Manley 2800
 Mr. Nystrom 2800
 Mr. Nystrom 2800
 Mr. Manley 2800

Fisheries

Mr. Matthews 2801
 Mr. Anderson 2801
 Mr. Matthews 2801
 Mr. Anderson 2801

Taxation

Mr. Ritz 2801
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2801
 Mr. Ritz 2801
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2801
 Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) 2801

Violence Against Women

Ms. St-Hilaire 2802
 Ms. Fry 2802
 Ms. St-Hilaire 2802
 Ms. Fry 2802
 Mr. Ramsay 2802
 Ms. Bakopanos 2802
 Mr. Ramsay 2802
 Ms. Bakopanos 2802

Canadian Centre Against Sexual Abuse

Mr. Bellehumeur 2802
 Ms. Bakopanos 2803
 Mr. Bellehumeur 2803
 Ms. Bakopanos 2803

Seaforth Highlanders

Mr. Hanger 2803

Mr. Richardson	2803
Mr. Hanger	2803
Mr. Richardson	2803
Bilingualism	
Mrs. Tremblay	2803
Ms. Copps	2803
Violence against Women	
Mr. Graham	2803
Ms. Fry	2803
Trade	
Mr. Penson	2804
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	2804
Mr. Penson	2804
Mr. Reed	2804
Fisheries	
Mrs. Dockrill	2804
Mr. Anderson	2804
Mrs. Dockrill	2804
Mr. Anderson	2805
Human Resources Development	
Mr. Doyle	2805
Mr. Pettigrew	2805
Mr. Doyle	2805
Mr. Pettigrew	2805
Housing	
Mr. Lee	2805
Mr. Gagliano	2805
Tobacco Act	
Mr. Vellacott	2805
Mr. Rock	2805
Arms Sales	
Mr. Turp	2805
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)	2806
National Defence	
Mr. Proctor	2806
Mr. Richardson	2806
Mr. Casey	2806
Mr. Gagliano	2806
Child Poverty	
Mr. Telegdi	2806
Mr. Pettigrew	2806
Immigration	
Mr. Kerpan	2806
Ms. Minna	2807
Development Assistance	
Mrs. Guay	2807
Ms. Marleau	2807
National Revenue	
Ms. Hardy	2807
Mr. Gagliano	2807
Taxation	
Mr. Borotsik	2807
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	2807
Parliamentary Privilege in Canada	
The Deputy Chairman	2807

Point of Order	
Motion for Papers	
Mr. Bellehumeur	2808
Mrs. Tremblay	2808
Mr. Bergeron	2808
Privilege	
Security	
Mr. Telegdi	2808
Mr. Epp	2809
Mr. Proctor	2809
Mr. Guimond	2809
Mr. Lee	2809
Mr. Epp	2809
Mr. Casey	2809
Mr. Bergeron	2810

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions	
Mr. Adams	2811
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women	
Ms. Fry	2811
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	2811
Ms. St-Hilaire	2812
Ms. Hardy	2812
Mr. Muiise	2812
Committees of the House	
Newfoundland Schools	
Mr. Byrne	2813
Mr. Goldring	2813
Industry	
Mr. Bellemare	2813
Procedure and House Affairs	
Motion for concurrence	2813
Mr. Epp	2813
Mr. White (North Vancouver)	2814
Motion	2815
Mr. Bergeron	2816
Division on amendment deferred	2816
Mr. Kilger	2816
Petitions	
Poverty	
Mr. Lee	2816
Firearms	
Mr. Casey	2817
Death Penalty	
Mr. Duncan	2817
QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER	
Mr. Adams	2817

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Canada Marine Act	
Bill C-9, Third reading	2817
Mr. Guimond	2817
Mr. Bellehumeur	2818
Mr. Guimond	2818
Mr. Proctor	2820
Mr. Casey	2822
Mr. Proctor	2823
Mr. Kilger	2823
Motion	2823

(Motion agreed to)	2823
Mr. Casey	2823
Mr. Mercier	2824
Mr. Keyes	2825
Mr. Bryden	2826
Committees of the House	
Mr. Kilger	2826
Motion	2826
Canada Marine Act	
Bill C-9. Third reading	2826
(Motion deemed moved, division demanded and deferred)	2826

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Access to Information Act

Bill C-208. Second reading	2827
Ms. Beaumier	2827
Mr. Ramsay	2829
Mr. Bryden	2830
Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral	2830
Ms. Hardy	2831
Mr. Muisse	2832
Ms. Bakopanos	2832
Mr. Epp	2834

Appendix

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